

# Swainsthorpe Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015

Present      Glynis Frost (Chair)                      Julie King (Locum Clerk)  
                 Paul Frost  
                 Paul Webster  
                 Yvonne Folkard  
                 Brian Lincoln (from item 7)

Members of the public: 10 including Colin Foulger – County Councillor and Phil Hardy – District Councillor.

## 1. Election of Chair

**Glynis Frost was elected unopposed, proposed by Paul Frost, seconded by Yvonne Folkard, all in favour.** Glynis said that she was happy to take on the role until the annual meeting in May but by then hoped that there would be someone else on the Council who would take over.

## 2. Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

This was signed by Glynis and witnessed by the Clerk.

Glynis thanked Julie for the work she had undertaken to arrange the first meeting of the new Council and Yvonne Folkard and Paul Webster for agreeing to join. She welcomed Phil Hardy newly appointed District Councillor and Colin Foulger, County Councillor.

## 3. Election of Vice-Chair

**It was agreed not to appoint a Vice-Chair.**

## 4. Apologies for Absence.

None

## 5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015

**These were agreed and signed as a true record of proceedings with no amendments.**

## 6. Declaration of Interest for Items on the Agenda

None.

## 7. Councillor Vacancies

It was noted that following the resignation of Janet Flower and Tony Talby, the Parish Council had been left inquorate and South Norfolk Council had appointed Yvonne Folkard and Paul Webster as Councillors to fill these vacancies. This still left three vacancies unfilled since the election which the Parish Council was free fill by co-option.

Glynis spoke of her concern regarding the recent situation that left just her and her husband on the Council. She said that it was important that the Council was inclusive and representative and therefore there was a need for people to fill the vacancies.

Brian Lincoln offered to join the Council. He said that he had lived in village for 42 years, was interested in joining the Council to see what went on, to sort things out and move things forward.

It was recognised that Brian currently held the Parish Council contract for grass cutting in the village. Julie advised that the Council would need to be careful to demonstrate in future that the process of obtaining quotes and agreeing a contractor was transparent and fair and that Brian was not involved in the process.

**It was agreed to co-opt Brian Lincoln, all in favour.** Brian signed his Declaration of Office and joined the meeting.

## 8. Clerk Vacancy

It was noted that following the resignation of Tony Talby, there was a vacancy of Clerk to the Council.

- a. It was agreed to appoint Julie King as Locum Clerk at SCP 26. It was agreed that she would present a time-sheet for hours worked and details of all expenses incurred at each meeting, so that payment could be made.
- b. The vacancy had been advertised with a deadline of the end September, two responses had been received so far. **It was agreed that the advert was appropriate.**
- c. **It was agreed that all Councillors, along with the Locum Clerk, would meet on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October to shortlist for interview.** Applications would be circulated prior to this.

Councillors expressed a wish to appoint a professional, and if possible, qualified clerk with experience of the sector.

- d. A model contract, job description and salary scales had been circulated and it was agreed that these would also be discussed when Councillors met on 5<sup>th</sup>.

## 9. Planning

- a.
  - i 2015/1740 The Old Rectory, 6 Church Road – Demolition of existing garage and replacement with new garage extension.  
Paul Frost had looked at the plans and said that the replacement garage was to be built at the same position as the existing one, on the same footprint, with a slightly higher roof. The garage was behind the property so was not visible from the road and no one overlooked the site.  
**It was agreed to recommend approval.**

Paul Frost said that he had been in contact with the Environment Agency regarding his concerns with the discharge of water from the car wash into the brook beside. He explained the history of the site including the withdrawal of a previous planning application for a car wash and development rights that had been obtained as the car wash had been in operation, without objection, for the necessary time. The Environment Agency had now opened a case and would be writing to the operators of the site regarding the runoff.

Paul Frost said that, following the request from the Planning Authority for the road around the field behind Sugar Beat to be removed, the owners had appealed. An inspector would be appointed to look at the case, timescales were not known at this stage.

A discussion took place regarding the process for making comments on planning applications and **it was agreed in future that applications would be circulated amongst Councillors prior to the meeting and all applications would be considered at meetings.**

#### **10. Maintenance of The Green in the Village**

Glynis outlined the history. The Green and play area were owned by Swainsthorpe Community Charity Trust (SCCT), who were therefore responsible for the maintenance. Concern had been raised by some of the members of PIGS (Project Ideas Groups), the group who raised money for the charity to enable the progression of the Community Hall and Green, that their well earned money was being spent on grass and hedge cutting of an area that was perceived to be a common area for the village.

The issue had been raised at the March meeting to gather further information and a proposal to pay £1,000 per year for the next three years to the Trust had been tabled at the May meeting, however no discussion took place and no decision was made, as a point of order was raised.

The need for a formal request from the Trust was considered, along with other information that Councillors would need in order to consider the matter further.

**It was agreed to ask the Chairman of the trust for a written proposal, an indication of the current financial position of the Charity (latest accounts) and a breakdown of historical costs associated with The Green and play area including: hedge and grass cutting, maintenance of the play area and insurance. It was also agreed that to ask the Chairman if they were able to attend the next meeting to explain the proposal and to answer any questions that Councillors may have.**

Consideration was given to the requirement of the Parish Council to show that it had assessed the need of the Charity before any money was granted and the form of the grant, either absolute or by way of the Parish Council taking on the maintenance and instructing the contractor directly, thus allowing for the

reclaiming of any VAT.

## 11. Parish Partnership Scheme 2016/17

It was noted that Norfolk County Council would once again be running their Parish Partnership Scheme for minor highway improvements. Councillors were interested in investigating the purchase of a SAM2 device (portable vehicle activated speed sign) and **it was agreed that the Clerk would circulate information for further consideration at the next meeting.** It was noted that the closing date for applications was 15<sup>th</sup> December.

## 12. Finance

### a. Bank Mandate

It was noted that there were no longer any cheque signatories on the Council. **It was agreed that Yvonne Folkard, Glynis Frost and Paul Webster would be signatories and the bank mandate was completed and signed accordingly.**

### b. **The following were approved and would be paid once the mandate had been agreed by the bank:**

i SCCT	Path and bank clearance	£130.00
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## 13. Public Open Forum

Phil Hardy, District Councillor said that he had been elected in May and was pleased to see the Parish Council up and running again. He spoke about the Long Stratton Area Action Plan which had recently been examined by the inspector. Following a request by the Chairman of Newton Flotman Parish Council, which Phil had raised with the Leader of South Norfolk Council, the inspector had agreed to look into the impact of traffic volumes when considering housing growth.

Phil also spoke about the grants available from South Norfolk Council and asked that anyone with ideas get in touch.

Colin Foulger, County Councillor spoke of the split of responsibility between the District and County Council. He gave examples of areas of responsibility, but suggested that any queries be initially raised through Clerk who would be able to signpost to the relevant authority.

A member of the public raised a concern at the speed of traffic on the A140. They suggested that the speed limit be lowered to 40mph stating that the pub was now very active and this, along with the car wash and sales at the old garage site, created the possibility of accidents. Colin Foulger agreed to raise the issue with Highway Officers and would keep the Parish Council informed.

Concern was expressed regarding the speed of traffic through the village, including over the level crossing, and whether the speed limit could be reduced to 20mph. Colin advised that 20mph was used on housing estates and would not be considered appropriate for Swainsthorpe.

The possibility of starting a Community Speed Watch scheme in the village was discussed and the Clerk agreed to circulate information to Councillors for

consideration at the next meeting.

Concern was raised regarding the speed of vehicles west of the railway line and the possibility of traffic calming. Colin Foulger advised that Highways would not consider traffic calming in that location.

Concern was expressed regarding the cars parked for sale on land belonging to Highways outside the garage on A140, these obstructed the view of those turning out of Briar Lane. The Clerk would speak with Highways.

**14. Any other business – for information only**

The Clerk said that she had received the insurance renewal after the agenda had been published. The insurance renewed on 1<sup>st</sup> October and was a joint policy with SCCT. Having looked back at the proportion paid by each organisation in the past the Clerk would be asking SCCT to pay 32% of the bill with the Parish Council responsible for the remaining 68%. As there were not currently any cheque signatories and therefore it was not possible to access Parish Council funds the Clerk would be asking South Norfolk Council to pay on behalf of the Parish Council, this would have to be paid back to South Norfolk Council once the bank mandate had been agreed by the bank.

**15. Items for Next Agenda**

To consider adopting Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and a Code of Conduct – the Clerk would circulate model documents prior to the next meeting.

To begin to consider the grass contract for 2016.

**16. Date of Next Meeting**

**It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 14th October.**

The meeting closed at 9.17pm.

Signed .....

Date .....