

Minutes of the meeting of Somerford Keynes Parish Council (SKPC), 1st June 2020

Present: Cllr R. Sleeman (RS, Chairman), Cllr. M. Keegan (MK), Cllr M. Rigby (MR), Cllr A. Stradling (AS), Cllr G. Valentine, Cllr J. Whitwell (JW), W. Cartwright (WC, clerk), Cllr S. Parsons (SP) (Gloucestershire County Council, GCC), Cllr T. Berry (TB, Cotswold District Council (CDC) and 0 members of the public.

Held by Zoom conference due to the coronavirus

1. Apologies: Cllr R. Elsey (RE)

2. Declaration of interest: None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 11th May approved. Proposed MK, seconded JW.

4. Clerk's report

4.1 Keynes Country Park (KCP): Victoria Hadnett (General Manager, Cotswold Country Park and Beach) had informed SKPC that due to the park being shut during the Covid-19 crisis and the fact that visitors were still coming to the site, that the permissive paths had also to be closed the prior weekend due to health and safety reasons. It was noted that many cars were continuing to park on verges and the likelihood was that public were still entering the park. Action: WC to keep contact with the new manager and request for any updates on the situation.

4.2 Village lake: There had been a request from a parishioner to use the village lake for wild water swimming training. RS discussed that when donated to the village, its sole intention for future development and funding was for ecological purposes and as a nature reserve, and therefore all swimming should be prohibited. The current signage states no swimming and it was unanimously agreed that this prohibition must be continued. A parishioner had recently written to SKPC to inform she had seen some swimmers, and it was agreed that the purpose of the lake to be enjoyed as a nature reserve, and no swimming should be reiterated in a newsletter. SKPC had received notice that the postponed great crested newt survey would now take place on June 5th. Helen Sweet had kindly paid her donation for the hand post rail along the board walk, and SKPC wished to once again thank her for her kind generosity. Actions: a) WC to inform the Village Lake Management Committee of the SKPC unanimously voted decision. b) RS to ensure clarity of use of the village lake be included in the next newsletter c) WC to thank HS.

4.3 LME cycleway: Nothing further to report.

4.4 Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP): Nothing further to report.

4.5 Flooding: Nothing further to report.

4.6 GCC Highways:

Village gateway signs: Nothing further to report on progress due to the coronavirus. A parishioner had written to SKPC objecting to the village gateway signs. However, the results of the parishioner survey had given wide support for the installation and the feasibility, design and matched funding had been already agreed by Gloucestershire County Council. It was agreed that the village gateway sign project continue as originally planned earlier in the year. Action: MK to respond to parishioner.

Spine Road flooding: Nothing further to report.

Kennel footpath: The landowner had sprayed the overgrown grass with grass killer and AS/MR had volunteered to shear back the dying sprayed grass this week and were thanked. Action: AS/MR to inform WC once completed.

Other footpaths: Nothing further to report due to the coronavirus. Action: RS to contact Mike Barton (MB, GCC, Footpaths) and raise all identified issues.

"The Street" footpath damage: Nothing further to report due to the coronavirus. Action: WC to maintain awareness of timescales and continue to stress the urgency of repair.

4.7 Parish Field: MR had spoken to Jo Pendleberry (JP, Waterland) regarding her request for a change in current lease conditions regarding car parking. Due to coronavirus, the original June meeting had been rescheduled to July and it was agreed to consider more fully once Waterland had re-opened and defer any decision at the current time until after the July meeting. Action: WC to inform JP.

4.8 Neighbridge: The continued issue of parking on verges had worsened due to the partial easing of the lockdown of Covid-19 (the allowance to travel anywhere for exercise) and the extremely hot weather, and it was noted parking had begun to extend further into the village. Cotswold Water Park Trust (CWPT) had installed metal gates and, at times, was closing the site to avoid large gatherings due to Covid-19, but the public were ignoring this information and entering via the Thames path which remained opened. The lake was also being used for swimming and there were issues of increased littering. All of these identified issues have been growing over the past years, but due to the current situation of Covid-19 restrictions were even more apparent. It was agreed that SPKC explain to parishioners all the communication that had been done in the past with CWPT, Highways and the Police, the current situation and

future advice. It was agreed that during the gradual easing of the Covid-19 lockdown period, the best option would be to formally write to CWPT to request for continued opening and free parking during this period, as well as to check that enough visible signs were displayed about no swimming. Action: RS/SP to write to the Chair of CWPT to request these remedial measures during lockdown.

4.9 Road speed limits: Nothing further to report

4.10 Second defibrillator: Nothing further to report

4.11 Cotswold Community site: Nothing further to report.

4.12 Trees/hedges/verges: Nothing further to report.

4.13 Training courses: Nothing further to report.

4.14 Other matters:

Covid-19: Newsletters had continued to be produced updating parishioners of developments and on-going issues, such as reintroduction of the garden waste collection scheme, social distancing and kind offers of help by volunteers. Village website: Peter Watkins had sent a document regarding how the website was currently updated and potential future development for future consideration by Councillors. Peter Watkins had updated the website with accounting information and was thanked. Action: Councillors to consider current website and development, and WC to thank PW for his continued excellent updating of the website.

Cheques: Given the current coronavirus pandemic and virtual meetings, AS raised the issue of whether internet banking could be instigated in the future. It was thought, however, two signatories were legally needed to raise any payments. Action: TB (CDC) to investigate and let WC know the current position.

5. Planning matters:

20/01610/CLEUD – Certificate of lawful existing use/Certificate of existing lawful development and use of the site as a builder’s yard and associated storage buildings at Land Parcel known as the Lane Garden, Ewen Road Somerford Keynes. It was agreed that the original objections in 2004 remain, but that it is recognised that these have no bearing given the past 16 years of existing use.

6. Financial Matters:

6.1 Expenditure; Village Lake - Wheelbarrow £99.99, Clerk’s salary - £673.20

Agreed *en bloc* Proposed AS, Seconded MR.

7. AOB/Questions: None

Next monthly meeting date of the Parish Council: Monday 6th July 7.30 pm, Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.