

Minutes of the meeting of Sonning Common Parish Council held on Monday 15 July 2013 at 20.00 hrs in the Village Hall.

Present: Mr Stoves (Chairman); Mr Greenwood; Miss Hunt; Mr Jones; Mrs Lewis; Ms Noble; Mr Rawlins and Mr Reynolds.

Mr D Robinson, Henley Standard, District Councillor Harrison and two members of the public were also present.

Apologies for absence: Mrs Diwell; Mr Fort; Mr Kedge, Mrs Phillips-Tilbury.

- 14/040 Declarations of Interests: None.
- 14/041 Public Question Time under Section 30 of Standing Orders: Questions were asked about the Community Governance review and the management of the Allotments.
- 14/042 Police Report: it was noted that this had been circulated previously by email.
- 14/043 Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 5 June 2013 were presented and ratified.
- 14/044 Minutes of previous meetings:
044.01 Planning Committee held on 17 June 2013 were presented and approved.
044.02 Parish Council meeting held on 17 June 2013 were presented and approved.
- 14/045 County Councillor's Report: Printed notes from Councillor Bartholomew were circulated and taken as read.
- 14/046 District Councillor's Report: Councillor Harrison outlined SODC plans for 'The Big Clean Up' to take place shortly. After questioning he agreed that he still needed to put forward dates to discuss car parking problems in the village.
- 14/047 Parish Clerk's Report; Noted.
- 14/048 Delegation of Powers during August: A motion to delegate the Parish Council's powers to deal with urgent matters to the Finance Committee during August when there is no meeting was approved unanimously.
- 14/049 Neighbourhood Development Plan progress: Mr Greenwood advised of progress made in surveying and auditing the surveys for SON15 (CE School site) and that there would be a full public NDP update on the evening of 19 July.
- 14/050 Skatepark progress: Mrs Lewis advised that the Planning Application is with SODC; that funds had been raised at the summer fete and by donation from Nottakwire; that liaison with Club SC was working well and that the next major external funding decisions are expected in August.
- 14/051 Matters for future consideration: To report footpaths and hedges along them at next meeting.
- 14/051 Clearing up Brinds Copse: This was raised under the ten o'clock rule and concerned a proposal through the Parish Clerk (attached) to carry out various works. After considerable discussion it was agreed that the Parish Clerk should be authorised only to carry out the fencing along the Tall Trees boundary and the reduction, if possible, of the Beech tree in Brinds Close. The remaining works to be put on hold pending a members visit to the site before the next meeting in September. It was also noted that the large Oak tree along the footpath between Wood Lane and Grove Road may require urgent attention once inspected by a tree surgeon.

The meeting closed at 21.05.

Next meeting: Monday 16 September 2013 at 20.00.

Chairman: Dated:

Clearing up Brind's Copse
A motion under the ten o'clock rule.

This plot of land was donated for the benefit of the village residents but without any funding to maintain it and no covenanted or other specific restrictions on its actual use or even sale.

The larger plot behind it (2A Grove Road) has been clear felled under a Forestry Commission Licence granted to the developers who own it but as yet they seem unable to progress to any application for its use and they will be required to replant some of it next year.

As members know the need to do something about our plot has been looming for a while. It has now come to a head with complaints about the growth overhanging the Brinds Close garages and the use of the cover by youngsters to build dens etc and also to get onto the garage roofs with bikes and cause damage there.

The main part of the plot is heavily overgrown with holly that is up to 40 feet high and there are also a number of self seeded Sycamores and other saplings on the perimeter and inside that are adding to the problems. There is also a very large Beech tree on the corner leaning over towards the houses in Brind's Close.

In consultation with a tree surgeon it is proposed that approval be given to:

1. Clear the trees, scrub and other vegetation that is not TPO protected from this site at a cost of about £2,000. The suggestion is that we get the holly and all the saplings etc cleared down as phase one and then take out the rest of the non-protected trees after that.
2. Pay for work, once approved by the Forestry Officer at SODC , to reduce the huge Beech tree and also to replace about 30 metres of rusted away chain link fence alongside Tall Trees.
3. Carry out other minor works to secure the site.

It is proposed to budget for up to £3K for these works.

It should be noted that there is a further problem in that the bank behind the garages is eroding and pushing up against their rear walls causing dampness inside. This will have to be addressed soon, hopefully as part of a long term plan to prevent the plot being an ongoing drain on funds.

The motion is to authorise the Parish Clerk to progress with the works described above to a budget of up to £3,000.