

Minutes of the meeting of Sonning Common Parish Council held on Monday 19 March 2012 at 20.00 hrs in the Village Hall

Present: Mr Kedge (Chairman); Mr Stoves; Mrs Diwell; Mr Fort; Mr Greenwood; Miss Hunt; Mr Jones; Ms Noble; Mrs Phillips-Tilbury; Mr Reynolds; Mrs Lewis and Mrs MacGowan.

Also present: County Councillor Viney, District Councillor Harrison, PCSO Rawnsley and one member of the public.

12/180 Apologies for absence: None.

12/181 Declarations of Interests by Members on Agenda Items: None.

12/182 Public Question Time under Section 30 of Standing Orders: None.

12/183 The Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 7 March 2012 were presented approved and ratified.

12/184 The Minutes of previous meetings:

184.01 Planning Committee held on 20 February and 7 March 2012– were presented and approved.

184.02 Parish Council meeting held on 20 February 2012 – were presented and approved.

12/185 The Police Report: PCSO Rawnsley advised the meeting that there had only been a few minor incidents over the past month. There is a Police open meeting on 4 April outside the Post Office.

12/186 The County Councillor's Report: Councillor Viney described how the Localities budget had been used in the village for placing dropped kerbs and repairing the pavement in Wood Lane damaged by roots; updated the council on mergers of Trading Standards and Fire & Rescue services across county boundaries; advised that the new structure of OCC would mean her taking responsibility for nine parishes against six now; agreed to pass on to Highways the Parish Council's compliments for the high quality of the work done in rebuilding the Wood Lane pavement.

12/187 The District Councillor's Report: Councillor Harrison reported: That the District Council has now agreed to reduce its number of Councillors from 48 to 30 for the next election. Detailed implementation depends on the Boundary Commission but it is certain that all wards will become single councillor ones; that the SODC element of Council Tax for 2012/13 is reduced by 2.5%; that two members of SODC staff won the Young Local authority of the Year award beating 18 other teams; that SODC is about to open its Community Investment Fund of £500K to grant applications for community projects. In answer to a question he advised that the planning permission granted for 201 Kennylands Road would count as a windfall not as part of the Core Strategy allocation.

12/188 Parish Clerk's Report: This was noted with particular reference to progress being made with the Co-op car park.

12/189 Planning Committee: Mr Greenwood proposed changes to the membership of this Committee to appoint Mrs MacGowan as a full member and to change the status of Mr Kedge from ex-officio to that of a named reserve entitled to vote if the Committee would otherwise be inquorate. This resolution was approved unanimously.

12/193 Widmore Pond: (This item was advanced up the agenda) Mrs Diwell briefed the Parish Council on a range of matters to do with the history and operation of the Widmore Pond Committee and the Pond itself. A significant file of papers has come to light as a result of her enquiries. An extensive and constructive discussion then took place about aspects of managing the pond and regularising the status of the Pond Committee. At the end of this Mr Fort moved that a formal set of ToR for the management of the pond should be presented at the next meeting of the full council (16.4.2012) having been devised and agreed between Mrs Diwell, Mr Fort and the Parish Clerk. This was approved unanimously.

12/190 New Speed Indicator on Peppard Road: OCC Highways, prompted by Councillor Viney, have offered to install a new speed indicator on the southbound side of the B481 just before the 30 mph sign by the Bird in Hand. The Parish Council's share of the cost (50%) is £2,675.00. Mr Jones proposed that this contribution be approved and that the Finance Committee issue the cheque immediately so that installation can proceed. After some discussion about various traffic calming measures it was resolved to authorise immediate payment of this sum.

- 12/191 **Play Area Inspections:** Mr Kedge proposed that: ‘In the light of the known usage of the three Play Areas in Sonning Common and the nature of the play equipment therein, it is agreed that fortnightly inspections by a councillor using a formal checklist then recorded by the Parish Clerk plus the annual inspections by a qualified external body will reasonably fulfil the Parish Council’s duty of care.’ The resolution was carried unanimously.
- 12/192 **Skatepark land acquisition:** The Parish Clerk briefed members on the offer by the Trustees of RUFVC at Bishopswood Sports Ground to sell to the Parish Council a plot of land sufficient for the construction of a new Skatepark. The price agreed, subject to (i) contract and (ii) planning consent and (iii) confirmation of unfettered access, is £7,000 plus the legal expenses of both parties. After discussion it was proposed that, once the caveats above have been dealt with and the Police have confirmed their satisfaction with the site, the contract should be brought to the full Council for approval before signature. This was agreed unanimously.
- 12/194 **Neighbourhood Plan:** Mr Greenwood briefed members on the work of the team – now to be referred to as the Neighbourhood Planning Working Party. The focus of work is on the Sites and Allocations aspect rather than a total Plan at this stage. Members were told of the Design Day – “Sonning Common Tomorrow – Today” planned for 28 April centred on the Village Hall and asked both to be prepared to take part and to alert friends and family to the event.
- 12/195 **Internal Audit matters:** The Parish Clerk advised members that at the next meeting they will be asked to consider minor amendments to the Financial Regulations and associated sections of Standing Orders and to approve both in their entirety. They will also be asked to approve updated Risk Assessments and Asset Registers. This was noted.
- 12/196 **Annual Parish Meeting:** Mr Kedge asked that members send him their suggestions for the conduct and content of the meeting of the electors on 14 May.
- 12/197 **Matters for future consideration:**
 Finding and funding a bus shelter on Kennylands Road by the Essex Way bus stop (Mr Kedge).
 Possibility of increasing the number of Councillors (Mr Kedge). The Clerk advised of notification just received that a Boundary Commission review of Parish Council boundaries will follow that now taking place of the District Council.

The meeting closed at 21.50

The next Meeting will be on Monday 16 April at 20.00 hrs.

Chairman Dated