

Kingston Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held at 8.00pm on 12 January 2012

Present:

Simon Draper, Chairman (SD)
Tim Fitzjohn (TF)
Julie Conder (JCo)
Katherine Stalham (KS)
James Clear (JCI)
Fiona Whelan CCC
Peter Stokes, Clerk

1. Apologies

Tumi Hawkins

2. Minutes of last meetings (5 Nov 2011 and 19 Dec 2011)

Accepted

3. Matters arising from meeting on 5 Nov 2012

- 3.1. **4 Community Plan update:** Tim Fitzjohn advised that a flyer was being prepared and would be distributed at the end of January. This will contain a brief questionnaire about residents' attitudes to the idea of a community plan, and the results of this will inform the design of the main questionnaire. It was agreed that if possible an on-line version of the main questionnaire should be made available as well as a paper version. It was suggested that a copy of the main questionnaire should be provided 'per adult person' rather than 'per household' and that consideration should be given to providing a separate questionnaire for children. **Action: TF.**
- 3.2. **5.2 Visit by SCDC Chief Executive:** Simon Draper reported that this had been very successful, and those involved had been impressed with the time Jean Hunter had spent in Kingston.
- 3.3. **5.5 Volunteer playground reports:** Monthly reports have been provided by a resident since December (see minute 9.6). It was suggested that they might be provided at more frequent intervals in the summer months when usage is higher. Clerk to contact Paige. **Action: Clerk.**
- 3.4. **6.1 Maintenance of footway lighting:** SCDC have now confirmed that they will be responsible for all maintenance of footway lighting including replacement when necessary. Contracts between parish councils and Balfour Beatty or any other contractor will not be necessary. KPC will continue to be responsible for cost of power.
- 3.5. **6.6 Willow tunnel at playground:** The Clerk confirmed that the willow tunnel has been replanted. Mr and Mrs Venn have agreed to provide water as required during dry weather. A water butt will be installed on the boundary between the Venn's property and the playground, which will be filled by the Venns as required. A hose will be provided to allow volunteers to water the willow whips or any other new plantings as required from the butt.
- 3.6. **10.4 Parish Magazine editor:** there has been no response to the recruitment flyer distributed in December, but it is understood that Ron Leslie (currently living in Canada but returning to Kingston in May or June) has expressed an interest. Agreed that it would be suggested to Peter Reynolds that he contact Ron Leslie to confirm the interest and supply any information that Ron Leslie might need. **Action: Clerk.**

- 3.7. **12.1 Thermal Imaging camera project:** Katherine Stalham is to put an item in the February magazine. **Action: KS.**
- 3.8. **Reports of actions completed or ongoing (no discussion unless requested):**
 - 3.8.1. **5.6 and 6.3 moving 30 mph speed limit on Bourn Road:** application has been submitted for funding under Local Highway Improvements scheme.

4. County Councillor's report (see Appendix A)

- 4.1. Councillor Steve Harangozo has produced a document summarising an approach for funding the reinstatement of the discontinued Friday evening bus to Cambridge and back – see Appendix B. A meeting has been arranged for 17 January at Comberton Library to discuss the way forward – Julie Conder to attend. **Action: JC.**
- 4.2. On 26 January the CCC cabinet member with responsibility for libraries will visit Comberton library between 7.00 and 8.00 pm. All users of library services are encouraged to be at the library at that time to demonstrate local support for the Comberton branch.
- 4.3. No details of the budget for 2012/13 are yet available, but parish councils may expect further cuts in services previously provided by CCC, which parish councils will then be expected to provide.
- 4.4. Following the withdrawal of the proposal to increase county councillors' allowances by 25%, an independent panel has been convened to look at councillors' allowances. Views will be invited from members of the public.

5. Correspondence

- 5.1. **Letter from SCDC with details and application form for Community Chest capital funding:** this could be used to pay for professional fees (such as architects' fees) for the village hall upgrade project. Agreed that the documents will be passed to the village hall upgrade sub-committee. **Action: Clerk.**
- 5.2. **Letter and email from CCC regarding replacement programme for streetlights:** Kingston's 25 streetlights are due for replacement in the second half of 2014. Leaflets etc will be distributed about three months beforehand. Information on the planned changes will not be available until then.
- 5.3. **Email from Peter Reynolds re Orchard:** see minute 8.2.
- 5.4. **Email from SCDC on housing strategy consultation:** noted.
- 5.5. **Various emails re invasive species along Bourn Brook:** agreed that access would be allowed to conservation groups who are controlling invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam and Giant Hogweed along the Bourn Brook valley. See also minute 8.3.
- 5.6. **Email from Fiona Whelan – two issues regarding County schools:** see Appendix A.
- 5.7. **Letter from Kingston PCC** thanking KPC for grants for the magazine and for churchyard maintenance.
- 5.8. **Letter from NALC** with new guide: 'Planning Explained'. Further information available at www.planninghelp.org.uk. Copies of guide to be obtained for all councillors. **Action: Clerk.**

6. District Councillor's report

No report.

7. Village Hall upgrade project report

Katherine Stalham reported that an architect has now been selected. A meeting of the full VHMC is to be held on 19 January to agree this and other proposals. It is expected that work will not start before mid-2013.

8. Open Spaces Officer's report (see Appendix C)

- 8.1. **Allotments:** weeds are now growing again. James Clear will spray the three allotments not yet planted with 'Roundup' in March. Agreed that Clerk will contact these tenants to advise this intended action and ask them to contact him if they prefer no spraying. **Action: Clerk, JCI.** Also there are some dead trees in the hedge on the west side – James Clear will remove these. **Action: JCI.**
- 8.2. **Orchard:** needs more fruit trees. Decision needed on fallen mulberry tree – possibly cut right back to area around old root to promote fruit, trimming the main trunk for children to use as a play facility. Areas of brambles need to be cleared. Fruit trees need protection and some may need replanting. Village 'tea parties' have been held on the orchard in 2009 and 2010, and in 2011 a children's party was held. It is hoped to hold similar events – or possibly a combined event - in summer of 2012. Agreed that a site meeting would be held to consider and decide on further action. Clerk to set up a Doodle poll with suggested dates. **Action: Clerk.**
- 8.3. **Swards:** see also minute 5.5. Simon Draper is to talk to conservationists from the Wildlife Trust following an offer from them of a visit and advice. In the short term a plan is needed for management of the area, but in the longer term it is recognised that there is no use to which the Swards can be usefully put in view of its position – distant from the village and close to a busy road. It was suggested that it could be leased to a conservation organisation, or possibly to Toft village, under a long-term arrangement. Simon Draper is to discuss this with the Wildlife Trust at a meeting that has been arranged for 16 January. **Action: SD.**
- 8.4. **Litter:** there is an accumulation of litter on verges in the parish. Clerk to organise a Litterpick for March. **Action: Clerk.**
- 8.5. **Phone box:** the phone box near the crossroads is destined for removal by BT. The Parish Council has previously declined various options to keep the phone box in situ, with or without its phone. It was agreed that BT should be contacted again to find out the current programme for its removal, and to ask if we could keep the empty phone box. **Action: Clerk.**

9. Clerk's report

- 9.1. **Bi-monthly report:** see Appendix D.
- 9.2. **Invoices for payment:**
 - 9.2.1. CCC – footway lighting energy charges £132.30
 - 9.2.2. SLCC – subscription for 2012 £61.00
 - 9.2.3. Peter Reynolds – willow tunnel £126.00 (already paid)All approved.
 - 9.2.4. Cambridgeshire ACRE – subscription for 1 year at £30 or for 5 years at £120.
Agreed to pay for 5 years membership.
- 9.3. **Budget and precept for 2012/13:** The Clerk had previously circulated a draft budget. This was accepted with various amendments – see Appendix E for final version. The precept was agreed at £7214, which is calculated so that, taking into account the change in number of tax-paying households in the village, the precept per household compared to the previous year will increase by the RPI over the 12 months to November 2011, i.e. 5.2%. **Action: Clerk.**
- 9.4. **Grass cutting contract for 2012 season:** agreed to ask Stuart Buchan to quote for the 2012 season on the same basis as for 2011, but including annual cutting of

hedges at the allotments. The quote can be accepted providing the increase is not more than 5.2%. **Action: Clerk.**

- 9.5. **Playground inspections – contracts for 2012:** agreed to renew the Cambridgeshire ACRE contract at £334.74 for three inspections. The annual RoSPA inspection will continue until cancelled.
- 9.6. **Playground inspections – monthly reports:** reports for December and January have indicated no problems except some damage to the chain link fencing at the south-eastern boundary. As the damage is not significant it was agreed that no repairs would be carried out for the time being.
- 9.7. **Kingston Oil Club:** 14 people in the village bought their oil through this arrangement in 2011. Kingston Parish Council has received a commission of £45.
- 9.8. **Code of Conduct:** the Standards Committee of SCDC has advised that under the Localism Act 2011 all parish councils must adopt a Code of Conduct, which Parish Councillors will be bound to observe. SCDC are working on a model code of conduct which they recommend all parish councils adopt. KPC already has a Code of Conduct, adopted on 19 July 2007 but it was agreed that the new version will, subject to approval when seen, be adopted.

10. Planning

- 10.1. **S1732/11 The Old Rectory:** permission has been granted for change of use of part of the paddock to enable the drive to be re-aligned.
- 10.2. **S/1745/11 Former United Reformed Church:** permission has been granted to replace a window with french doors and install an internal partition.
- 10.3. **S/1442/10 Church Cottage:** the appeal to the Planning Inspectorate to build a two-storey side and rear extension and detached garage has been dismissed.
- 10.4. **S/2246/10/F Kingston Barns:** the appeal to the Planning Inspectorate for change of use to holiday accommodation has been allowed.

11. Items for next meeting: Katherine Stalham raised the question of a village party or similar celebration for the 2012 Olympic Games, but no action was agreed.

12. Date of next meeting: 8 March 2012.

Meeting ended at 10:15 pm

Signed.....

Date.....

- **School Issues**

Changes to Admission numbers at Comberton Village College.

When the new secondary school is opened in Cambourne in September 2013, Cambourne will then be removed from the Comberton Village College catchment area. Existing Cambourne children attending CVC will be entitled to remain until they finish year 11, but from 2013 new Cambourne pupils will not have an automatic right to a place at CVC.

At the same time the CVC Pupil Admission Number is likely to be reduced from 300 per year to 240. This will apply to year 7 to start with - with an ongoing reduction each September for the incoming year 7. This means that hopefully there will be correspondingly less traffic and congestion at the College when there are evening "events".

The Annual Consultation of Admission Arrangements

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Published Admission Number List 2007 - 2013 - This is a list of the Published Admission Numbers (PANs) for each of the county's schools, and highlights any proposed change to the PAN for admissions in 2013 - 2014.

If you wish to comment or respond to any of the proposed arrangements please complete and return the Response Document which is available from the webpage, and return this to David Clark, Assistant Education Officer, Strategy and Commissioning/School Organisation and Planning, Cambridgeshire County Council, Box CC1206, Castle Court, Cambridge, CB3 0AP, or by email to david.clark@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

- **Local Buses**

The meeting we discussed at the end of last year will take place at Comberton Library on Tuesday 17th January at 7:45.

The meeting is primarily to discuss reinstatement of the late Friday night No. 18 Bus service from Cambridge to Cambourne (stopping at Kingston!!) Tumi and I will report back but it would be useful to have someone from Kingston PC there as we'll be looking at funding streams from local transport funding and top ups from local Parish Councils along the route.

- **County Council Budget**

Councillors will be briefed on the outline budget proposals so I'm afraid I don't have any further update. I'll feed back as soon as I possibly can.

- **Madingley Rise**

Just a quick reminder that the County Council's Highways Department is due to start work on improving the safety of Madingley Rise in the next few months.

The work will need to be carried out in several phases because of County Council budget constraints but the money available for the first phase will see an improvement to the overtaking lane, and a longer approach to the turn offs at the crossroads for Madingley and Coton. The work is very overdue, but none the less very welcome – in particular because this is one of only two County accident reduction schemes to have been approved for this year. Congratulations to all who have campaigned so hard to get this work carried out.

APPENDIX B

*Councillors Steve Harangozo and Fiona Whelan,
representing villages in the Bourn Valley*

Outline approach for funding two additional scheduled bus journeys on Friday nights serving villages in the Bourn Valley

Background

In April 2011 financial pressures on CCC led to the withdrawal of substantial financial support for two scheduled journeys of the No. 18 bus that ran on Friday and Saturday nights. A large number of residents in Comberton as well pupils of Comberton Village College (CVC) living in villages in the Bourn Valley asked us to investigate alternative options to re-introduce these journeys on Friday nights only when demand is greatest (279 people signed a petition which has just been presented to CCC). Here we outline what we believe is a viable approach for re-introducing these Friday night services, namely a 1915 approx. service to Cambridge and a 2315 return journey.

Demand for evening bus service on Fridays

It has been found that there was significant ridership on the Friday night services formerly operated by Stagecoach on the No. 18 route. Up to 45 passengers used the late return journey from Cambridge, many of them travelling to Comberton but also to villages beyond. Other former passengers made local journeys between villages and Friday was again their preference.

We wish to emphasise that the lack of fare revenue, and hence large subsidy, when Stagecoach provided these services was because most passengers used weekly tickets, the majority being young people. We believe the large demand on Friday nights rules out community transport options as a practical alternative. It is also the case that a community transport option, even if practical, would require some level of ongoing financial support. We believe our proposal for scheduled buses would probably demand a comparable and small amount of support once the services become well used as in the recent past.

Proposed funding method

We propose that revenue funding for the two scheduled bus journeys on Friday nights would be from two sources:

- The main revenue would come from charging fixed fares on these services. A flat fare of £3.50 is proposed for either a single or return journey. CVC pupils have confirmed this would be acceptable. Weekly travelcards or daytickets would not be permitted if Stagecoach was chosen as the operator
- A financial contribution both from local parish councils along the route and aided by CCC

REPORT ON VILLAGE OPEN SPACES

I have made a preliminary inspection of the village open spaces and set out my comments as follows:-

The Allotments

One of the new Tenants has made a start on winter digging – no movement on the other two plots. The plots have ‘greened up’ considerably over Autumn and action will be required by early Spring by the Tenants to control this growth.

The hedge to the west of the plots needs some attention and contains a number of dead trees. These are small and do not pose an immediate problem but should be removed – probably the responsibility of the adjoining landowner.

The Village Green

In good order – no action necessary.

The large oak tree will one day become too large for the small Village Green but let's enjoy it in the meantime. It may be necessary to remove some of the lower branches of the trees in a few years' time to facilitate mowing.

The Orchard

A decision needs to be made on the level of management required here. Many of the trees are in a very poor condition (see Peter Reynolds email of 28th September 2011) and several new trees have died. Either we allow the Orchard to become a wilderness or urgent action is necessary. I think there is an argument for removing many of the old and diseased trees and replacing them with new Ornamental and Fruit Trees. If we are to retain the old trees some hard pruning, cutting back and clearance of the debris should be done before the end of March.

The Swards

As this land does not have any particular function I am not sure what comments to make.

Presumably, it is the intention to leave this as a conservation area with minimal management. However, the land is at present poor grassland with many weed species and I am sure more could be done to encourage a better habitat for wildlife. There is also the possible problem of giant hogweed and other evasive species that need to be controlled.

The perimeter adjacent to Bourn Brook has been fenced with posts and wire but in places the fence is broken. Young trees have been planted (some very recently) and these will need attention over the coming years if they are to survive.

I think a discussion is necessary to decide how this land is to be used. Are we to let nature take over and merely cut the grass once a year, or be involved in more active management? I cannot see that there could be any other use for this land but it is not an ideal situation for a 'nature reserve' being next to a very busy road.

The Recreation Ground

Already under close supervision and any problems identified.

Generally

Whilst walking around the outlying areas of the village I was horrified at the amount of litter along the roadsides. This is particularly evident where the ditches have recently been flailed. I am not sure whether a village 'litter pick' is still a viable proposition but this is a problem that needs action.

It is a shame the old BT phone box is in such a poor state as this does let down the overall impact of the Village Green. It stands at a slightly unusual angle and needs cleaning and painting. Can we do anything to improve this?

Appendix D - Financial report: 8 July 2011

N.B. All figures exclude VAT

Item	Budget 2011-12 £	Expenditure YTD £	Budget minus expenditure YTD £	
Grass and Hedge cutting	1768.00	2055.66	-287.66	No more invoices. No payment received from CCC or Fasnacloch Estates
Insurance	744.00	744.39	-0.39	No more invoices.
Clerk's salary	1005.00	0.00	1005.00	
Grants (section 137)	614.00	614.00	0.00	No more payments expected
Audit fees	165.00	347.00	-182.00	No more payments. External audit fee higher than usual due to high expenditure on playground
Village asset maintenance	1351.00	495.81	855.19	£119 to be claimed Clerk's expenses
Subscriptions	160.00	104.95	55.05	SLCC subscription (£61) and Scambridgeshire ACRE subscription (est £26) not yet paid.
Parish Magazine	601.00	1162.00	-561.00	2009, 2010 and 2011 payments
Footpath lighting	214.00	0.00	214.00	Invoice for £132 not yet paid
Miscellaneous and expenses	150.00	191.24	-41.24	Includes VH rental. £130 Clerk's expenses to be claimed
Income other than precept	-8.00	-86.67	78.67	Allotment fees, interest
To reserves	284.00			
Total	7048.00	5628.38		

Bank balances	Current account:	292.07
	Deposit account:	9715.98

Appendix E - budget 2012 - 13

N.B. All figures exclude VAT

Item	Budget 20011-12 £	Estimated Expenditure 2011-12 £	Comments	Proposed budget 2012-13 £	Comments
Grass and Hedge cutting	1768	1765	No more invoices expected. £263 from CCC and £28 from Fasnacloich Estates	1856	RPI increase
Insurance	744	744	no more invoices expected.	744	3-year agreement
Clerk's salary	1005	1005		1057	RPI increase
Grants (section 137)	614	614	No more payments expected	646	Churchyard grant incr by RPI
Audit fee	165	347	No more payments expected	169	Applicable ext audit fee £120 + last years int audit fee + RPI
Village asset maintenance	1351	630	£495 spent to date. £120 to be claimed.	1000	estimate
Subscriptions	160	192	Includes subs for SLCC and Cambs ACRE, not yet paid	202	RPI increase
Parish Magazine	601	1162	Payments made for last 3 years.	400	Annual grant of £400 now agreed.
Footpath lighting	214	132	Power invoice not yet paid. Maintenance to go back to SLDC.	139	RPI increase
Miscellaneous and expenses	150	331	Includes Clerk's expenses of approx £140 not yet paid.	250	estimate
Income other than precept	-8	-87	Allotment fees, interest.	-114	Allotment rental £60 + interest on £9k at 0.1% + Oil Club commission est £45
Total est expenditure less non-precept income	6763	6836		6350	TOTAL
To reserves	285	212		864	
Total/precept	7048	7048		7214	£62.83 x 114.8

RPI increase 12 months to Nov 2011 (latest available

5.2%

)

(source: Office for National Statistics <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/cpi/consumer-price-indices/november-2011/index.html>)

Council Tax base for Kingston: Band D equivalent no of properties

2011/12	118.0	
2012/13	114.8	
Reduction:	3.2	2.71%
Precept increase to give RPI increase per household		2.36%

59.73	Band D equivalent last yr
62.83	Band D equivalent x 1.052

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I think a discussion is necessary to decide how this land is to be used. Are we to let nature take over and merely cut the grass once a year, or be involved in more active management? I cannot see that there could be any other use for this land but it is not an ideal situation for a 'nature reserve' being next to a very busy road.

The Recreation Ground

Already under close supervision and any problems identified.

Generally

Whilst walking around the outlying areas of the village I was horrified at the amount of litter along the roadsides. This is particularly evident where the ditches have recently been flailed. I am not sure whether a village 'litter pick' is still a viable proposition but this is a problem that needs action.

It is a shame the old BT phone box is in such a poor state as this does let down the overall impact of the Village Green. It stands at a slightly unusual angle and needs cleaning and painting. Can we do anything to improve this?

Appendix D - Financial report: 8 July 2011

N.B. All figures exclude VAT

Item	Budget 2011-12 £	Expenditure YTD £	Budget minus expenditure YTD £	
Grass and Hedge cutting	1768.00	2055.66	-287.66	No more invoices. No payment received from CCC or Fasnacloch Estates
Insurance	744.00	744.39	-0.39	No more invoices.
Clerk's salary	1005.00	0.00	1005.00	
Grants (section 137)	614.00	614.00	0.00	No more payments expected
Audit fees	165.00	347.00	-182.00	No more payments. External audit fee higher than usual due to high expenditure on playground
Village asset maintenance	1351.00	495.81	855.19	£119 to be claimed Clerk's expenses
Subscriptions	160.00	104.95	55.05	SLCC subscription (£61) and Scambridgeshire ACRE subscription (est £26) not yet paid.
Parish Magazine	601.00	1162.00	-561.00	2009, 2010 and 2011 payments
Footpath lighting	214.00	0.00	214.00	Invoice for £132 not yet paid
Miscellaneous and expenses	150.00	191.24	-41.24	Includes VH rental. £130 Clerk's expenses to be claimed
Income other than precept	-8.00	-86.67	78.67	Allotment fees, interest
To reserves	284.00			
Total	7048.00	5628.38		

Bank balances	Current account:	292.07
	Deposit account:	9715.98

Appendix E - budget 2012 - 13

N.B. All figures exclude VAT

Item	Budget 20011-12 £	Estimated Expenditure 2011-12 £	Comments	Proposed budget 2012-13 £	Comments
Grass and Hedge cutting	1768	1765	No more invoices expected. £263 from CCC and £28 from Fasnacloich Estates	1856	RPI increase
Insurance	744	744	no more invoices expected.	744	3-year agreement
Clerk's salary	1005	1005		1057	RPI increase
Grants (section 137)	614	614	No more payments expected	646	Churchyard grant incr by RPI
Audit fee	165	347	No more payments expected	169	Applicable ext audit fee £120 + last years int audit fee + RPI
Village asset maintenance	1351	630	£495 spent to date. £120 to be claimed.	1000	estimate
Subscriptions	160	192	Includes subs for SLCC and Cambs ACRE, not yet paid	202	RPI increase
Parish Magazine	601	1162	Payments made for last 3 years.	400	Annual grant of £400 now agreed.
Footpath lighting	214	132	Power invoice not yet paid. Maintenance to go back to SLDC.	139	RPI increase
Miscellaneous and expenses	150	331	Includes Clerk's expenses of approx £140 not yet paid.	250	estimate
Income other than precept	-8	-87	Allotment fees, interest.	-114	Allotment rental £60 + interest on £9k at 0.1% + Oil Club commission est £45
Total est expenditure less non-precept income	6763	6836		6350	TOTAL
To reserves	285	212		864	
Total/precept	7048	7048		7214	£62.83 x 114.8

RPI increase 12 months to Nov 2011 (latest available

5.2%

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(source: Office for National Statistics <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/cpi/consumer-price-indices/november-2011/index.html>)

Council Tax base for Kingston: Band D equivalent no of properties

2011/12	118.0	
2012/13	114.8	
Reduction:	3.2	2.71%
Precept increase to give RPI increase per household		2.36%

59.73	Band D equivalent last yr
62.83	Band D equivalent x 1.052

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