

Kingston Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held at 8.00pm on 9 January 2014

Present:

Simon Draper, Chairman (SD)
Tim Fitzjohn (TF)
Julie Conder (JCo)
Katherine Stalham (KS)
James Clear (JCI)
Peter Stokes, Clerk
Tumi Hawkins SCDC (arrived late)
Stephen Frost CCC (arrived late)

1. Apologies

None

2. Minutes of last meeting

Accepted

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1. **3.1 First Responder scheme:** the organiser, Mark Taylor, has reported that all equipment has been purchased, and some calls have been received. One Kingston resident has enquired about being a First Responder. More activity expected as the new group becomes established.
- 3.2. **3.2 Speeding through village:** the police are unable to return to measure vehicle speeds at the north end of the village. PCSO Alex Giltinane has offered to measure speeds using a hand-held device – results awaited.
- 3.3. **5.1 Cycleway between Kingston and Toft:** Cllr Frost advised that he is pursuing this but is awaiting responses from others. He was asked in addition to establish whether or not, in the event that a cycleway is built, Kingston would be likely to lose the free school bus currently provided to CVC. **Action: Stephen Frost.**

4. Correspondence

- 4.1. **Letter from Curtin and Co:** re proposed Bourn Airfield development. Agreed no action since Kingston is only marginally affected.
- 4.2. **Letter from Kingston PCC:** requesting churchyard maintenance grant of £636.30 - agreed for payment. **Action: Clerk.**
- 4.3. **Letter from Kingston PCC:** thanking KPC for magazine grant.
- 4.4. **Email from Jill Coleman:** re poster on green. Agreed not a major problem. Poster has now been removed. If fly-posting in village becomes more of a problem KPC will take appropriate action. Clerk to respond to Jill Coleman. **Action: Clerk.**

5. County Councillor's report

- 5.1. **A14 upgrade:** still on target to open in 2010. It is now agreed it will not be a toll road.
- 5.2. **2014-15 county budget:** being worked on now. £37m must be saved without reductions in ringfenced budgets such as education and welfare.
- 5.3. **Potholes and blocked gulleys:** we are encouraged to report these to both Highways Dept (Sharon Mahoney) and Stephen Frost.

6. District Councillor's report

See attached report (Appendix A).

7. Community Plan report

The plan is complete. It was agreed that KPC formally adopted it. It will now be sent to the appropriate officer at SCDC for their comments and approval. It will then be printed and distributed. It was agreed that the Plan would be reviewed every 6 months.

8. Village Hall upgrade project

- 8.1. Structural engineers (Gawn Associates) has been appointed to carry out the necessary tests and calculations in regard to the supports for the new roof of the small hall.
- 8.2. An energy survey has been carried out by a specialist consultant.
- 8.3. Invitations to tender will be sent out to selected builders in the next 2 weeks.

9. Open Spaces report

- 9.1. The drain at the top of Crane's Lane has now been cleaned.
- 9.2. Flytipping has been noted on Bourn Road where it crosses the stream. Clerk to report to SCDC. **Action: Clerk.**
- 9.3. Litter has accumulated generally in the village and surrounding roads. Litterpick to be organised for Sunday 2 March. Item in February parish magazine. **Action: Clerk.**
- 9.4. It was noted that the willow tunnel at the recreation ground is in poor condition. SD has a number of willow cuttings available from his garden, which he offered to plant to add to the willow tunnel. He will consult with Peter Reynolds as necessary to ensure the two types are compatible. **Action: SD.**

10. Clerk's report

- 10.1. **Bi-monthly report:** see Appendix A
 - 10.2. **Invoices for payment:**
 - 10.2.1. KPC contribution to WREN grant, paid to Landfill Communities Fund £5445.00 (already paid): agreed for payment.
 - 10.2.2. Clerk's expenses £114.38: agreed for payment.
 - 10.3. **Local Highways Improvement bid:** KPC has been invited to make a presentation to the selection panel to support their bid on 20 or 21 January. Clerk to attend and make presentation. **Action: Clerk.**
 - 10.4. **Changes to billing for streetlight energy:** we have been informed that due to a change in billing period, we will shortly receive an invoice for 6 months' energy (April – September 2013) followed by an invoice each October covering consumption from the previous October to September.
 - 10.5. **Budget and precept 2014-15**
 - 10.5.1. It was agreed that a grant of £20,000 would be made by KPC to the VHMC towards the upgrade project, and that an application would be made to the Public Works Loan Board for a loan of £20,000 repayable over 20 years to fund this grant.
 - 10.5.2. Applications for loans are a two-stage process, the first stage of which is an application to CAPALC for their approval. Agreed that the process would now be started by the application to CAPALC. **Action: Clerk.**
 - 10.5.3. The budget has been agreed at £1979 (this includes recovery of £5445 paid to the village hall upgrade fund via the Landfill Communities Fund – see minute 10.2.1).
 - 10.5.4. The precept has been set at £8605.
- See Appendix C.

10.6. Parish Council Banking

- 10.6.1. The current bank, Santander, has withdrawn internet banking for multi-authorisor users. It is therefore now not possible for KPC to use internet banking for payments.
- 10.6.2. Following a suggestion by JCo, the Clerk proposed switching to Unity Trust Bank. This bank specifically aims its business towards parish councils, charities, small businesses etc who need to separate the actions of setting up a payment and authorising it, and having multi-authorisors.
- 10.6.3. The Unity Trust Bank is registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). It was noted that although the Financial Services Compensation Scheme protects private customers from losses arising through failure of banks registered with the FCA, this protection is not available to parish councils. The only practical way a parish council can minimise the risk of losses is to choose a bank that is both large and reputable, and registered with the FCA.
- 10.6.4. It was also noted that Barclays Bank has said it intends to introduce banking suitable for parish councils sometime this year.
- 10.6.5. It was therefore agreed that since the Unity Trust Bank was not known to councillors, KPC would not change banks at this time. KPC will continue with its present banking arrangements and the matter will be reconsidered at the next meeting. In the meantime the Clerk will attempt to find out more about the Unity Trust Bank, including the extent to which it is used by other parish councils in the county. **Action: Clerk.**

11. Planning

- 11.1. **S/2666/13/FL single storey extension at Walkers Field:** agreed to approve this application.

12. Items for next meeting

KS advised that there have been problems when two buses travelling in opposite directions meet at the bus stop. There is not enough room for one bus to pass the other without one of them mounting the verge, causing damage. However since speaking to drivers, a solution has been found whereby one bus waits at a different part of The Green where there is room for two buses to pass.

13. Date of next meeting: 13 March 2014.

Meeting ended at 22:05

Signed.....

Date.....

South Cambridgeshire District Councillor's Monthly Report January 2014

1. SCDC Local Development Plan Consultation update

All the 7400 responses to the LDP consultation have now being registered. The council has sent out acknowledgements to all who responded and the comments can be viewed on the council website at <http://scams.jdi-consult.net/ldf>.

Next step is that the planning policy team will analyse all the responses, and the challenges and prepare a report that will go to the Planning Policy and Localism Portfolio Holder meeting taking place on **11 February 2014**. At this meeting, the Portfolio Holder will decide if the plan is ready to go to the inspector or if "minor" changes should be made. It is pertinent to say there will be resistance to making any changes, if medium to major changes are made, then the Council has to go out to consultation again. This will mess up the neatly planned timetable and the Council administration will try and avoid this like the plague.

If the plan is approved at the February meeting, then it will go to a special Full council meeting scheduled for **13 March 2014**. I would encourage as many people as are able, to attend both meetings. The future of your village and local environment is at stake.

A quick reminder that anyone who has not done so yet, should try and read the StopBAD response here at <http://bit.ly/StopBADdoc>.

2. SCDC Ltd

SCDC has set up a company which will buy properties and then rent them to the private sector at market rates. But they will not rent to anyone who claims housing benefit. These are not the same as Council houses – the Council is in effect becoming a Landlord competing with all the other property management companies locally. It does have two significant advantages. Firstly it can borrow at a discounted loan rate and secondly it already has an in-house housing management team. So it will borrow £7million (they'll be lucky to get 20 houses around here for that) and lend this money at an increased rate to the new company as well as a management charge for running these homes. This we are told will lead to Profit for the council, and the taxpayer should be pleased.

We have asked to be involved as part of an advisory group planning this project to which there was agreement.

3. Finance - Business Rates

As of April this year the District Council has been able to retain the business rates that it has collected though some has to be paid out to the County Council, police etc. Previously, this money has had to be paid directly to government.

This sounds like good news, unfortunately there is a sting in the tail. Payers of business rates have their rates set by an independent body and they then have 10 years in which to appeal against the set rate. So, South Cambs DC is now liable for all rate rebates upheld at appeal for the past 10 years. Unfortunately the number of appeals has exceeded what was expected so SCDC is now paying out significantly more money than we had anticipated. Not good for the bank balance!

However, if you have a business and you feel inclined to appeal against your business rates then go for it – everyone else has!

4. A14 Improvement Scheme by Highways Agency

Apparently, the government has now decided to do away with the proposed plan to operate a toll section along the new A14. If indeed it is true, that will be good news indeed.

This was as a result of the overwhelming response from many people and councils. (you can read my response at <http://bit.ly/A14Response1310> . Maybe if we are lucky, there will be a rethink on giving us the A428-M11 a movement to relieve congestion on the A1301 Madingley Road.

5. Broadband – Connecting Cambridgeshire

Updates are available on www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/parish/kingston but nothing has changed. It still shows that Kingston is expected to get superfast broadband sometime between September 2014 and September 2015, and it is likely to happen in stages. BT is playing the usual game of doing the easy bits first to be seen to be achieving something!

6. SCDC Community Awards scheme - reminder

The Community awards scheme for 2013/14 is currently open for nominations. The closing date for submitting nominations is 24 January 2014.

7. Casework

Your Councillor is here to help you. Please do feel free to contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services (housing, planning, benefits, council tax, bin collection etc). I can be contacted by phone, email or via my website. I hope I can help but even if I can't, then it's highly likely that I know someone who can!

8. Councillor Drop-in surgery

This normally takes on the first Monday of every month 6pm – 7pm at Toft People's Hall, and first Thursday of every month, 7pm – 8pm at the Caldecote Village Hall, small meeting room. Next surgery dates are Monday 3rd February and 3rd March in Toft, and Thursday 6th February and 6th March in Caldecote. In the meantime, if you need my assistance please contact me in the usual ways.

9. Dates for your diary

8 January 2014	10am	SCDC Planning Committee Meeting
23 January 2014	2pm	Full Council Meeting
24 January 2014	5pm	Community Awards Close of submission of nominations
3 February 2014	6pm-7pm	Councillor Surgery Toft People's Hall
6 February 2014	7pm-8pm	Councillor Surgery Caldecote Village Hall
11 February 2014	10am	Portfolio Holder Meeting, Planning Policy and Localism
13 March 2014	2pm	Special Full Council Meeting to discuss Local Development Plan

Tumi

Tumi Hawkins
8-January 2014

Email me @:	tumi@tumihawkins.org.uk
Follow on twitter:	http://twitter.com/CouncillorTumi
Facebook share:	http://www.facebook.com/itsCouncillorTumi
Link on LinkedIn	http://www.linkedin.com/in/tumihawkins
Read my blog at:	http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk
Call me on:	01954 210840

Appendix B

Financial report 15 Jan 2014

N.B. All figures exclude VAT

Item	Budget 2013-14 £	Expenditure YTD £	Budget minus expenditure YTD £	
Grass and Hedge cutting	2017	2031.39	-14.39	
Insurance	744	677.13	66.87	
Clerk's salary	1089	726.00	362.71	
Grants (section 137)	649	325.00	323.90	
Village Hall upgrade	800	5510.54	-4710.54	£5445 contribution to WREN grant
Audit fees	45	140.00	-95.00	
Village asset maintenance	1000	74.00	926.00	
Subscriptions	304	176.24	127.76	
Parish Magazine	400	470.00	-70.00	
Footpath lighting	112	0.00	112.27	
Miscellaneous and expenses	165	72.00	93.00	
Income other than precept	-115	-63.61	-51.39	Interest + allotments
Total	7210	10138.69		

Bank balances	Current account:	£899.11	
	Deposit account:	£3,286.88	

Appendix C

Budget 2014-15 agreed 8 January 2014

N.B. All figures exclude VAT

Item	Budget 2013-14 £	Estimated Expenditure 2013-14 £	Comments	Budget 2014-15	Comments
Grass and Hedge cutting	2017	2003	No more invoices. £276 received from CCC, £28 expected from Fasnacloich Estates.	1872	Last year's contract amount - £174 (protected verge) + RPI - contributions from CCC and Fasnacloigh Estates (assumed unchanged for 2014).
Insurance	744	677		677	5-year agreement until 31/5/2018
Clerk's salary	1089	1089		1111	RPI increase
Grants	649	962	£325 First Responder scheme, £637 churchyard grant	650	Churchyard grant incr by RPI
Village Hall upgrade	800	5445	10% contribution to WREN grant	16155	£20k grant to VHMC + estimated 12 months' repayment cost for loan - £5445 already paid to VHMC via LCF
Audit fee	45	140	External audit fee was payable, contrary to expectation, because of unusually high and unbudgeted expenditure the previous year (jubilee party + bench)	145	External audit fee likely to be chargeable again due to VH grant. Internal audit fee increased by notional £5.
Village asset maintenance	1000	74	RoSPA inspection. Cambs ACRE inspections discontinued.	500	Assume ongoing costs for RoSPA inspection only (+RPI) playbark and other misc. maintenance.
Subscriptions	304	176	SLCC, One.com, NALC, CAPALC. (Cambs ACRE: 5 year membership paid Jan 2012)	180	RPI increase
Parish Magazine	400	470		470	Annual grant of £470 now agreed.
Footpath lighting	112	56	6 months invoice expected	114	Full year, RPI increase
Miscellaneous and expenses	165	200		260	Nominal figure, includes £60 election charges

Income other than precept	-115	-154	£60 allotment rental, £4 interest, £90 Oil Club.	-20154	Assume as last year + WREN grant less KPC contribution
Total est expenditure less non-precept income	7210	11138		1979	TOTAL
To/from reserves	1020	-2908			
Precept agreed	8230	8230			

RPI increase 12 months to Nov 2013 (latest available figure)

=

2.0%

(source: Office for National Statistics, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Retail+Prices+Index#tab-data-tables>)

Council Tax base for Kingston:

Band D equivalent no of properties

2013/14	115.7
2014/15	118.6

Precept calculation to give each household RPI increase:

Precept per house in 2012/13:	$8230/115.7 =$	£71.13
RPI increase	$£71.13 \times 1.02 =$	£72.55
Total precept required	$£72.55 \times 118.6 =$	£8,605.01
LCTS discount (est)		£33.00
So precept that we receive would be		£8,572.01