

Kingston Parish Council
Minutes of Meeting held at 8.00pm on 11 May 2016

Present:

Tim Fitzjohn, Chairman (TF)
Julie Conder (JCo)
James Clear (JCI)
Peter Stokes, Clerk

1. Apologies

- 1.1. Tumi Hawkins, Keith Tan

2. Minutes of last meeting

- 2.1. Accepted

3. Election of Chairman and other officers

- 3.1. **Chairman:** Tim Fitzjohn was proposed by James Clear and, being willing to stand, was unanimously re-elected.
- 3.2. **Vice-Chairman:** James Clear was proposed by Julie Conder and, being willing to stand, was unanimously re-elected.
- 3.3. **Other Officers:** the following agreed to continue in the positions indicated. Open Spaces Officer: James Clear, Finance Officer, Webmaster and Facebook page: Julie Conder, Footpaths Officer: Trish Dunlop, Village Hall Management Committee representative: Tim Fitzjohn.

4. Matters Arising

- 4.1. **3.1 Communication problems with County Councillor:** in view of the impact this is likely to have on the Clerk's day-to-day dealings with CCC, and residents' ability to obtain support in any problems at County level, TF agreed to continue to pursue this matter. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to Cllr Frost before escalating the matter within the local Conservative party or CCC. **Action: TF.**
- 4.2. **3.4 Drain clearing work day in Crane's Lane:** this was a successful day with some drains cleared. The Clerk has subsequently had a meeting with Sharon Maloney from Highways and Brian Heffernan from the Flood and Water Team – see minute 11.6.
- 4.3. **10.3 Dog waste/litter bins:** two of these have been installed, replacing the old open bins. The third, next to the old well, is still awaited, Clerk to chase. **Action: Clerk.**

5. Correspondence

- 5.1. **Letter from SCDC** re changes to planning application processes: the main proposed changes affecting Kingston are:
- 5.1.1. More pre-application engagement, i.e. pre-application advice sought by applicants. KPC will be encouraged to attend these briefings, question applicants and express initial views.
- 5.1.2. A revised Scheme of Delegation, under which most routine applications will be determined by a designated officer rather than the Planning Committee. KPC can request that a particular application be referred to the committee, supporting this with relevant reasons. If the request is accepted, KPC is

strongly encouraged to send a representative to the Planning Committee meeting to support their submission.

5.1.3. Consultation forms (in a revised format) will be emailed to KPC without plans, which can be downloaded from the SCDC website.

5.1.4. Comments on these proposals are invited by 13 June 2016.

5.1.5. Training sessions are planned for 15 July 10:00am – 1:00pm and 23 November 1:30pm – 4:30pm. Agreed that TF and the Clerk will attend. TF to confirm which dates most suitable. Clerk to book places. **Action: TF, Clerk.**

5.2. **Email from Toft PC** re footpath 140/6: the footpath starts next to the bridge over Bourn Brook on Toft road, where there is a field entrance. The user of the field drives vehicles over the verge to deliver food for horses in the field. This has churned up the verge and access to the footpath making it hazardous for walkers. Agreed the Footpath Officer should contact the Rights of Way Team at CCC to see what action if any can be taken. **Action: TD.**

5.3. **Email from Caldecote PC** re subsidence on old railway bridge on Caldecote Road. Clerk has reported it to CCC.

6. County Councillor's report

6.1. No report

7. District Councillor's report

7.1. The Planning Inspector is to restart public inspection of the Draft Local Development Plan starting on 7th June 2016.

7.2. Results of elections last week – Conservatives still holding power, but lost 2 seats to LibDems. Makeup now Conservatives 36, LibDems 14, Independents 6, Labour 1

7.3. Preliminary results of the City Deal consultation on Better Bus Travel options was presented to the Executive in March. Next stage of work will be in September when they will consider which of the options identified in the consultation will be selected for further work/consultation.

8. Open Spaces report

8.1. The Litterpick was successfully completed on 16 and 17 April.

8.2. The hedge on the S boundary of the recreation ground needs trimming – Clerk to action. **Action: Clerk.**

9. Neighbourhood Plan

9.1. TF attended a workshop on preparing a Neighbourhood Plan organised by SCDC. It is a more formal process than a Community Plan, and must 'fit' within the Local Plan without being in contradiction with any part of it. After it is completed in draft form – with help from a designated officer at SCDC – it is subject to a referendum within the parish and must be supported by a majority of those voting. It is then formally accepted by SCDC and forms part of the Local Plan.

9.2. With a Neighbourhood Plan, the parish has more local power to accept or reject planning applications, and access to a source of funding, paid by developers district-wide. This funding scheme has or will succeed the present S106 funding.

9.3. Kingston can join with a neighbouring parish to produce a collective or joint plan.

9.4. There is a considerable amount of work involved in putting a Neighbourhood Plan together, and it may be that Kingston residents, having reviewed future development foreseen under the new Local Plan, decide that no further vision or protection is necessary and therefore a Neighbourhood Plan is not needed.

- 9.5. It was agreed that to start the process of assessing whether or not we need or want a Neighbourhood Plan, some initial consultation will be necessary. It was therefore agreed that TF will draft a document to be put in the magazine, either as an article or a separate insert, describing the nature and purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan, and the process to be gone through to achieve one. Residents' views will be invited.
Action: TF.

10. Meeting with BT and Connecting Cambridgeshire

- 10.1. The Parish Council met with representatives from BT and Connecting Cambridgeshire on 28 April.
- 10.2. We were advised that it had been agreed that fibre broadband will be supplied to the village by means of 'FTTP' (Fibre To The Premises), i.e. there will be no cabinet in the village.
- 10.3. Connection to the new service will be optional and chargeable. We were informed that the majority of houses within the village will have the option available by December 2016, with the remainder having it within the following 6 months.
- 10.4. Houses outside the village on the Toft Road already have fibre broadband available from the Toft cabinet.
- 10.5. Houses outside the village on Old Wimpole Road cannot be served by the village solution and will be served by fibre cables routed from Arrington.
- 10.6. Houses outside the village in Kingston Wood Manor do not at present have a solution in sight to provide fibre broadband.
- 10.7. It was agreed that JCo will prepare an item for the magazine explaining this information to residents. **Action: JCo.**

11. Clerk's report

- 11.1. **Bi-monthly report** – previously circulated. See Appendix A.
- 11.2. **Invoices for payment:**
- 11.2.1. NALC, LCR subscription £17.00 (cheque) – approved for payment.
- 11.2.2. SCDC, Allotments rent £30.00 (BACS) – approved for payment.
- 11.2.3. Aon, insurance premium £412.30 (BACS) – approved for payment.
- 11.2.4. CAPALC, membership fees £140.17 (BACS) – approved for payment.
- 11.2.5. Playsafety Ltd, playground inspection £92.40 (BACS) – approved for payment.
- 11.2.6. Valerie Seekings, internal audit fee £44.45 (BACS) – approved for payment.
- 11.2.7. Peter Stokes, expenses £94.54 (BACS) – approved for payment.
- 11.3. **Agreement of Governance Statements and Annual Return**
- 11.3.1. These were unanimously agreed.
- 11.4. **Approval of 2015/16 accounts and accounting statements in Annual Return**
- 11.4.1. These were unanimously approved
- 11.5. **Procedure for dealing with planning applications between meetings**
- 11.5.1. The Clerk advised that under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, KPC can delegate decisions to the Clerk or to a committee formed of Councillors.
- 11.5.2. It is unlawful to delegate a decision to a single Councillor (p33 of the Good Councillor Guide). Committees must therefore comprise at least two councillors, and their decisions must be taken at meetings which are open to

the public, have a published agenda etc as for a full parish council meeting (p31 of the Good Councillor Guide).

11.5.3. Decisions delegated to the Clerk should not include any involving expenditure (except minor amounts). Since no meeting is required for a decision delegated to the Clerk, the requirements of transparency and openness mean that such decisions also should not include those in which the general public, or a section of it, would have a significant legitimate interest.

11.5.4. It therefore follows that for non-contentious planning applications the Parish Council can delegate to the Clerk the initial decision of whether to respond 'Support', 'Object' or 'Has no recommendation', avoiding the need for a meeting. (Note that these three possible responses are those proposed in the new consultation form – see minute 5.1.3. They are similar to the current options.)

11.5.5. It was suggested therefore that consideration be given to delegating the following powers to the Clerk: For any planning application the consultation time window of which falls outside normal KPC meetings, the Clerk will assess the proposals. If in his view the application is not contentious and he considers the Parish Council would not object to it, he will also seek the view of another Councillor, normally the Chairman. If both are in agreement, the Clerk will respond 'Has no recommendation'. In any other situation an Extraordinary Meeting will be called. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the next meeting at which all Parish Councillors are present. **Action: all.**

11.6. Meeting with Sharon Maloney, Highways, CCC

11.6.1. The Clerk met with Sharon Maloney, and also Brian Heffernan of the Flooding and Water Team in Crane's Lane. The work already carried out, and work still to be done to clear all the drains, were discussed.

11.6.2. Brian made it clear that any watercourse not directly draining the Highway was not the responsibility of CCC, but of the landowner, and this includes the drain across the road from Ainola, and the whole of the ditch from Willow Cottage to Wainstones including the underground section.

11.6.3. Sharon will arrange for a contractor to clear the drain across the road from Birchwood and the underground drain from Wainstones to The Old Farmhouse as these both drain the highway directly and are therefore the responsibility of CCC.

11.6.4. It may be possible for the same contractor to clear the Ainola drain on a chargeable basis. Clerk has given this information and that in 11.6.2 above to the resident, who accepted her responsibilities and wishes to proceed along this route if possible.

11.6.5. Brian will arrange to write to all households from Willow Cottage to Wainstones to reiterate their respective riparian responsibilities.

11.7. Annual Parish Meeting 19 May

11.7.1. All reports have now been received apart from County Councillor and circulated to members. JCo to publish on the website. **Action JCo.**

11.8. Changes to audit regime 2016/17 and 2017/18

- 11.8.1. From 2017 new external audit arrangements will be in place. A new company has been formed: Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Ltd (SAAA), with responsibility to make audit arrangements for smaller authorities such as KPC.
- 11.8.2. Smaller authorities may formally opt out of using SAAA. It was agreed that KPC would not opt out. It will therefore be regarded as 'opted in'.
- 11.8.3. Under the new arrangements, for an opted in smaller authority such as KPC with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25k, an Annual Return must still be submitted, but an external audit will not be required except in very limited circumstances relating to financial irregularities. There will be no audit fee.
- 11.8.4. KPC could still occasionally require an audit if in a particular year its income or expenditure exceeds £25k, due to e.g. a large grant-aided project in that year.

11.9. Fence at permissive path on Toft Road

- 11.9.1. Barry Marsh has submitted an estimate of £220 to repair the fence. Agreed to go ahead at this price subject to permission from the landowner. **Action: Clerk.**

11.10. Verge opposite Thatches, Rectory Lane

- 11.10.1. The Reids have would like to place large stones along the edge of the verge opposite Thatches to discourage verge damage. Agreed that KPC had no objection to this.

11.11. Playground inspection

- 11.11.1. Excessive weed growth in playbark under climber. Low risk, agreed to spray with weedkiller. **Action: JCI.**
- 11.11.2. Playbark level low. Low risk, agreed to purchase two bags of playbark to top up and arrange for volunteers to spread. **Action: Clerk.**
- 11.11.3. Paintwork at top of slide in poor condition. Low risk, agreed to monitor, but no action at this time.
- 11.11.4. Toggle entrapment at top of slide. Low risk, agreed to monitor, but no action at this time.
- 11.11.5. Install protective surface for slide. Low risk, agreed to monitor but no action at this time.
- 11.11.6. Concrete exposed under low end of mound slide. Medium risk, see 11.11.2 above.
- 11.11.7. Finger entrapment on nest swing. Low risk, agreed to monitor but no action at this time.
- 11.11.8. Paintwork on swings in poor condition. Low risk, agreed to monitor but no action at this time.
- 11.11.9. Damage in tunnel. Agreed to inspect when spreading playbark – see 11.11.2 above.
- 11.11.10. Rotted timbers at either end of tunnel. Clerk is approaching the manufacturer to request that they rectify this but is having some difficulties with no replies to his emails. In the event that they refuse, agreed to purchase and install replacement timbers. **Action: Clerk.**

11.12. Changes to standing orders

- 11.12.1. Agreed to change Standing Order 4.2.12 to read: '*for every planning application notified to the council, record the Council's response to the local planning authority in the minutes of the meeting in which it was agreed;*'. Reason: to remove the requirement to keep file copies of planning applications as these are available on the SCDC website. **Action: Clerk.**

11.13. Changes to bank charges

- 11.13.1. Unity Trust Bank has advised that they are introducing a new service tariff. The changes for KPC are that they will no longer pay interest on current accounts, and they will impose a charge of £6.00 per month on our current account.

12. Planning

- 12.1. **S/0852/16/LB** Replacement of internal staircase to attic at Old Farm House. Agreed to respond 'no objections'. **Action: Clerk.**

13. Items for next meeting: none

14. Date of next meeting: 19 May (Annual Parish Meeting), 12 July (Parish Council Meeting)

Meeting ended at 22:15.

Signed.....

Date.....

Appendix A

Financial report 04 May 2016

N.B. All figures exclude VAT

Item	Budget 2016-17 £	Expenditure YTD £	Budget minus expenditure YTD £	
Grass and Hedge cutting	2032	0	2032	
Insurance	399	0	399	
Clerk's salary	1141	114	1028	
Grants (section 137)	667	0	667	
Village Hall upgrade	1288	644	644	
Audit fees	40	0	40	
Village asset maintenance	450	0	450	
Subscriptions	226	0	226	
Parish Magazine	475	0	475	
Footpath lighting	161	0	161	
Miscellaneous and expenses	720	0	720	
Income other than precept	-125	0	-125	
Total	7475	758		

Bank balances	Current account:	5912	
	Deposit account:	17864	