

# Kingston Parish Council (KPC)

## Minutes of Meeting Held at 7.30pm on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024

### Present

Sue Dagleish (SD) (Chair) (Clerk)

Julie Conder (JC) (Vice-Chair)

Miki Ellar (ME) (Parish Councillor)

Mark Nicholls (MN) (Parish Councillor)

Paul Wheeler (PW) (Parish Councillor)

Meeting commenced at 7.30pm

### 1 Apologies

None

### 2 Approval of Previous Minutes of Parish Council Meetings

Minutes from Parish Council Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024 approved and signed by SD.

Minutes from Extraordinary meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2024 approved and signed by SD.

### 3 County Councillor's Report - Nothing to report

### 4 District Councillor's Report - Nothing to report

### Matters Ongoing

### 5 Cranes Lane/The Green – road surface/water issues

It was agreed SD would send an email to The Crawshaw family to ask if they would be willing to contributing towards remedial work on the drainage ditch that runs between their property and parish council land as they kindly agreed to last year. PW will obtain a quotation for the required work.

### 6 Surface water and Flooding in Kingston

PW informed the meeting that he is still awaiting contact from the County Council regarding problems with the drains in Cranes Lane and The Green. He mentioned that the problem with the drain on The Green might actually be the responsibility of the parish council if the break in the pipe lies below the grass in the Green itself rather than under the road. Further details will be provided once more information is available.

### 7 Play Park Repairs

SD discussed the repair of the goal posts in the Play Park. It was suggested that at a cost of between £500 and £700 to purchase replacement permanent goal posts this was not something the parish council could carry out at present time. It was decided instead to ask households in the village, via the parish newsletter, if any family might have a set of goals posts that they no longer use and would like to donate to the village – we would then pay to have them installed. If there are no offers of goal posts then we will obtain a quotation to renovate and paint the existing goal posts and install new nets.

### 8 Grass Services Contract Tender Update (PW)

PW advised that he has carried out further research with various companies offering grass cutting services and has now narrowed the selection down to a final two who are willing to quote for the work required. The two figures quoted as an annual cost are:- £6750.00 and £4020.00. It was felt that the higher figure of 6750.00 was not appropriate in view of our annual parish precept income of £11718.00. It was therefore

decided the PW would contact the contractor tendering the lower figure to arrange for a final quotation and draft contract that we could consider. It was also discussed whether the new contractor would be able to carry out a one-off visit to the village in October to carry out works to prepare the village for the winter season – it was thought this would also give the contractor the opportunity to familiarise himself with the various areas of the village ready for when the contract starts next spring.

## **9 Re-wilding of area request**

Following a request from a villager that the parish council consider re-wilding in the village it was decided that areas beside highways would require to be continued to be cut due to safety considerations. It was felt that The Green, The Orchard and the Play Park should also be cut however it was agreed that on a trial basis an area of Swards would be re-wilded to see the effect on the area. It was also felt that this could be beneficial for the willow trees in the area as it would prevent them being damaged by grass cutting machinery.

## **10. 20MPH Speed Limit**

SD discussed the responses to the article in the parish magazine regarding the proposed 20 MPH speed limit request for the village. It was agreed that there were more emails in support of the installation of a 20 MPH limit than those against. Copies of all emails will be stored in a folder in the clerk's email account.

## **11. Open Spaces Report (MN)**

MN reported that one tree in the Orchard had a damaged limb and that he would look at it and take remedial action.

MN reported that his twice-yearly litter pick has been started and that he has collected 5 black bin bags of rubbish from around the village so far. He highlighted the difficulties of carrying out a litter picking exercise on the main B1046 road due to the hazards of traffic which travels at speed. The subject of a group litter pick was also discussed but it was felt that this should not be considered at the current time.

The permissive path beside the bridge on the B1046 was also discussed as work had been carried out to cut back overgrown plants. This route has a metal barrier installed at one end to prevent it being used by motor cycles which could present a danger to pedestrians using the route.

## Matters Arising

### **12 Parish Council Publication Scheme Documentation (SD)**

It was agreed that the Publication Scheme and the Cambridgeshire Guidance to Parish Councils on Keeping Archives documents would be published on the parish council web site and also stored on Dropbox.

### **13 New Parish Clerk Recruitment (SD)**

A draft advertisement for the role of parish clerk was discussed. The pay scale level was also discussed and it was felt that as we are looking to recruit a professionally qualified parish clerk we should advertise salary within a pay scale rather than detailing specific hourly rates. It was felt that LC2 would be a suitable level. SD explained that the council faces a difficult situation as our precept is low compared with many other

villages which limits the level of salary we can afford to pay. The role of parish clerk is becoming increasingly complex as the scope of the job is the very similar regardless of the size of a village. SD will finalise the draft advertisement and also contact SLCC to confirm the costs to advertise for a 4-week period.

In the meantime, SD will continue to cover the role of parish clerk,

#### **14 Unity Trust Banking (SD)**

SD advised that two letters had been received from Unity Trust bank advising that fees will now be charged on a monthly basis for the parish council bank accounts. \*\*

#### **15. East West Rail (SD)**

Nothing to report

#### **16. Kingston Charity - Appointment of Trustees**

It was voted and agreed that Peter Reynolds and Donal O'Donnell would be appointed as trustees of the Kingston Charity. The Parish Council wanted to express their gratitude to both Paul and Donal for all the excellent work they do for the Charity.

#### **17. Field Road - road sign repairs**

These have been completed.

#### **18. Un-occupied Property in Cranes Lane – obstruction from vegetation.**

It was reported that the problem of overhanging vegetation has been dealt with by MN. We will continue to monitor the property over coming months. It is believed that the property is currently in probate therefore it may be some time before a new occupant can be found. If there are further problems with vegetation, we will look to contact a member of the family who owns the property for assistance.

#### **19. Kingston Emergency Plan and Safeguarding Procedures (SD)**

SD advised that an email had been received from Cambridgeshire ACRE via Paul Wright of the Village Hall Management Committee advising that organisations should review their emergency plans and safeguarding procedures documentation in light of the recent events in Stockport. SD agreed to review the parish council's current Emergency Plan and Safeguarding Procedures documents and update as necessary. Draft copies of the amended documents will be forwarded to the Parish Council for approval.

#### **20. ESPO Street Lighting Renewal**

We still await details of the renewal costs for our village street lighting for the new contract term which commences in October 2024. We have been advised by both ESPO and Total Energies that it was too early to obtain a quotation when we contacted both organisations at the start of September. SD will contact ESPO again this week to ask for further clarification of costs when the new term commences on 1 October 2024. In particular, we require clarification of the standing charges as this element is unclear at the present time.

#### **21. Active Hierarchy Consultation (SD)**

SD agreed to submit the parish council's response using the online form.

**22. Budget Discussion 2025/26 – effect of increased costs for grass cutting, clerk Salary and street lighting on future parish council budget.**

A brief discussion was held to consider the effect possible increases in these three areas would have on the parish council’s budget for the next financial year. It was agreed that the topic would be discussed again in detail at the November Parish Council Meeting as part of our annual precept budget setting exercise.

**23. Invoices Paid and for Approval**

Company	Service	Date Paid	Amount	Paid by:
Buchans Landscapes	Grass cutting Services – outstanding invoice dated 31 May 2024	10 July 2024	580.56	B/P
Total Energies	ESPO village street lighting July 2024	6 August 24	22.51	D/D
Ely Tool Hire	Hire of Ride on Lawnmower and Brush Cutting Machine (2 Day Hire as first Cut following loss of grass cutting contractor)	8 August 24	414.60	B/P
One.com	Parish Council Website Subscription	12 August 24	179.70	B/P
Paul Wheeler	Expenses for Weed Killer and Petrol for grass cutting	27 August 24	41.81	B/P
Ely Tool Hire	Hire of Ride on Lawnmower and Brush Cutting Machine (1 Day only)	2 September 24	306.60	B/P
Mark Nicholls	Purchase of New Padlock and Keys for the gate at the Swards	6 September 24	39.60	B/P

All invoices agreed for payment.

**24. Bi-monthly Report (JC). See Appendix B**

JC reported that the finances were as expected for the time of year.

**25. Items for next meeting to be held on 10 September**

Continuation of items covered in this meeting.

**26. A.O.B**

Bus Franchise Consultation – JC agreed to look into this topic and would report back to the council.

Parish Online - the Parish Council has applied for and received the necessary APGB licence that allows public bodies to access high resolution arial photographs. This licence is free for public bodies and is funded centrally by the government.

The meeting finished at 9.48pm.

Minutes reference: 20240910

Signed: .....

Date: .....

## Kingston Parish Council

### Financial report 31 August 2024

*N.B. All figures exclude VAT*

Item	Budget 2024/25 £	Expenditure YTD £	Budget minus expenditure YTD £	Additional Information
Grass and Hedge cutting - Expenditure	2,914	1,525	1,389	2 invs Buchans (£968); lawnmower hire (£557)
Grass and Hedge cutting - Income	(311)	(306)	(5)	Fasnacloich and County Council
Insurance	467	300	167	New insurer
Clerk's salary	3,101	497	2,604	2 months
Grants (section 137)	850		850	Churchyard maintenance, fixed sum (Stuart D paying excess)
Village Hall upgrade	1,288	644	644	PWLB 1 of 2 tranches paid
Audit fees	78	80	(2)	
Village asset maintenance	1,035	1,274	(239)	Defibrillator pads; bus shelter cleaning last yr; RoSPA inspection; tree surgery £1k
Subscriptions	569	396	173	Paid: ICO, CAPALC, one.com
Parish Magazine	862		862	
Footpath lighting	353	106	247	New supplier (5mths)
Miscellaneous and expenses	1,000	55	945	allotments rent paid to SCDC; village hall hire last yr; bank charges
Income other than precept	(488)	(274)	(214)	interest; ditch clearance receipt
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,718</b>	<b>4,297</b>	<b>7,421</b>	

<b>Bank balances</b>	Current account:	2,173	<i>see below</i>
	Deposit account:	25,356	
<b>At 31 August 2024</b>		<b>27,529</b>	

### Reconciliation of bank balances

Balances brought forward	Current account:	3,465	
	Deposit account:	16,357	
		<b>19,822</b>	
Net expenditure as above		(4,297)	
Other items:	Precept income	11,718	
	VAT refund received	849	For financial year 2023-24
	VAT incurred on net expenditure 2024-25	(563)	To be recovered
<b>At 31 August 2024</b>		<b>27,529</b>	<i>As above</i>