

**Minutes of Spaldwick Parish Council Meeting held at 8 pm
Thursday 16 October 2014 in the Community Room at Spaldwick Primary School**

Present: Cllrs Rice (Chairman, presiding), Jackson-Rimmer, Johnson, Leach, Plummer, Smith and Wakefield, the Clerk (Mr D Stowell), County Councillor Bywater and 10 members of the public. Two representatives from HACT were also present during item 4.

1. Apologies for absence - none, all members were present.

2. Declarations of Interest

A) To declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest in an agenda item - none

B) To receive any outstanding Declarations of Interest Forms – none

3. Community / Village Hall – to receive report from the AGM. As it was apparent that most of the members of the public present were concerned with this topic the Chairman decided to bring it (agenda item 10) forward to this point.

The Chairman (who is also Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee) informed the meeting that it is the Village Hall Management Committee's intention to hold an AGM as soon as possible. The possibility of holding it immediately before today's Parish Council meeting had been considered, but in the event it was not possible to give the necessary period of notice, hence the AGM has not yet been held and consequently there can be no report from it. He emphasised that an AGM would be called with the appropriate notice as soon as possible.

4. Public Open Forum

Several members of the public spoke of their concern that the Management Committee had failed to keep villagers informed of progress towards the provision of a new Village Hall since the October 2010 survey which indicated 92% of those responding supported the concept of a new hall with 75% support for either of the sites under consideration (Bury Close & land east of Playtimes). Questions were raised as to whether there was still that degree of support for the project and whether a new hall would be sustainable in terms of income and volunteers to manage the hall.

There was concern that the Management Committee was maintaining an unnecessary veil of secrecy over their discussions with other parties whilst one of those, HDC Planning, have been openly speaking about them.

In particular, concern was expressed that the Management Committee has not been complying with the Governing Document (Conveyance and Trust Deed dated 1 July 1980) of the registered charity 'Spaldwick Village Hall', for example by not having regular committee meetings and no recent Annual General Meeting. There was objection to the recent use of the term 'Community Hall' as this could be confused with the 'Community Room' at the school.

A group of ladies, who said they saw no need for a new hall, pointed out that there is a real need for a bus shelter to protect bus users from adverse weather conditions, and asked that the Parish Council should give serious consideration to providing one as soon as possible.

The Chairman thanked members of the public for the comments which would be taken into account by the Village Hall Management Committee or the Parish Council as appropriate.

At that point Jo Philpott spoke about HACT Ring & Ride which provides a door to door pre-bookable service to Peterborough (Mondays and Tuesdays), Huntingdon (Wednesdays), St Neots (Thursdays) and Cambourne (Fridays). There is a membership fee of £10 per annum. Fares are payable but are free to those holding a CCC bus pass. There are also monthly Ring and Ride services to St Ives, Bar Hill, Cambridge and Stamford and in addition there are day trips throughout the year to other destinations in East Anglia and the surrounding area. The Chairman thanked the HACT representatives for attending and said that copies of the information provided would be passed to the Spaldwick News editor and the Spaldwick.com webmaster with a view to publicity being given to their services.

5. **Minutes of Meeting held 11 September 2014** were approved and signed.

6. **Matters arising from minutes (not on the agenda)** - none.

7. **Finance**

Quarterly Budget Review - The Clerk presented a statement of receipts and payments to 30 September 2014 and the bank reconciliation at 30 September which had been checked by Cllr Smith prior to the meeting. After discussion of the statement it was resolved that it be accepted as evidence that the accounts are being correctly maintained.

External Audit - The report from the auditors, Littlejohn LLP, that "on the basis of our review, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met" was noted.

The following payments were approved:

100603 PKF Littlejohn LLP, External Audit 2013/2014, £120.00 (inc £20.00 VAT)

100604 Margaret Armer, reimbursement of cost of strimming & weed killing around trees at Cockway Lane carried out by Allan's Gardens, £45.00.

8. **Planning**

The following new application which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting was considered.

1401408FUL, Conservatory to rear of 4 Stow Road, Spaldwick.

The Clerk reported that as the documents submitted showed no access from the dwelling into the conservatory, and the wall materials were described as 'brickwork to match existing and white UPVC' whereas the existing external walls are rendered and painted white, clarification was sought from the applicant's agent, who replied by sending an amended drawing with an internal access door added between the utility room and the conservatory. He also stated that the masonry parts of the conservatory are to be finished brickwork, with the type and colour of brick being agreed with HDC prior to commencement of work. The external doors and window frames are to be white UPVC. Taking this further information into consideration, it was resolved to **recommend approval**, the council having no objections to the proposal.

The following applications determined by the Local Planning Authority were noted

1301639FUL, 4 dwellings to rear of 5 -17 Stow Road - **Permission granted.**

N.B. The requirement of Policy CS4 that the development should provide 40% affordable housing has been discounted on the grounds that development of the site would not be viable if a contribution to affordable housing were made.

1401231FUL, Extension and Annexe, Coton Farm House – **Refused**, it being considered that the proposed extension would have a harmful and unacceptable impact on the scale and character of the existing dwelling and the appearance of the rural area. Suggested amendments to address the policy concerns were offered by the LPA but were not acceptable to the applicant.

9. **Assets – Provision / Maintenance**

War Memorial Refurbishment – the Clerk reported that he had made no progress recently as he is still trying to obtain a sketch to clarify what is being proposed. Suggestions from members as to a simpler way of displaying the indecipherable inscriptions will be considered.

Footpath notice board – Cllr Johnson agreed to look at the possibility of fixing the board displaying footpath map(s) back to back with the notice board on the Village Green.

Trees & hedges at Ferriman Road Public Open Space – The Clerk is to obtain 2 quotations to cut back the trees to fence height along the boundary with numbers 32-40 Ferriman Road.

Trees on Village Green – It was noted that a large branch on the tree adjacent to the Village Sign had fallen down during a recent calm night, luckily causing no damage. This highlighted

the fact that trees owned by the Council should be inspected regularly and due regard given to any recommendations made by the inspector in order for the insurance to be valid. The Clerk gave a brief summary of the various proposals considered during the past 3 years, prior to a discussion on the possible options, the outcome of which was that the Clerk would approach at least two experts for advice on the trees' current condition and any necessary remedial work, and also investigate the possibility of Garlic treatment recently featured on TV.

Children's Play Area Ferriman Road – Cllr Rice reported that he had inspected the area on 2 August and 21 September and had passed copies of the check lists to the Clerk for filing. He stated that all checks were passed satisfactorily except for the surfacing under the Climbing Frame and See-Saw where the replacement rubber sealant appears to be coming out of the gaps between tiles which had been re-laid earlier in the year. He tabled a sample length of sealant which illustrated the problem. The Clerk is to ask the contractor who did the work to carry out appropriate remedial action. The Clerk will also remind Fergusons to cut back the hedges around the area as soon as possible.

Other Assets – nothing reported

10. Highways, footpaths, byways etc. – The following updates were noted

Street Lighting PFI – High Street design details are awaited from Balfour Beatty.

Local Highway Improvement Initiative 2014/15 – the kerb improvement near the High Street post box is still to be carried out; the project engineer is due to start design work on the Thrapston Road footway improvement scheme.

Local Highway Improvement Initiative 2015/16 – The bid for 2 flashing 30 mph signs has been submitted to CCC. It is due to be assessed in early November.

The Clerk reported that he had been informed by the project engineer that CCC would be happy to consider a third within the application if the Parish so desired, the £10,000 limit being on the CCC contribution rather than the overall scheme cost. In order for the application to be increased to three, the Parish would need to commit to paying £5,000, rather than £1,000. With regard to the detail of design and siting of the signs, he said that this could be considered at a later date when he would work with the Parish to find the most suitable location. Following a brief discussion it was resolved not to change the application to 3 signs.

In response to a suggestion by Cllr Bywater, the Chairman agreed to present the case to the review panel if there is a convenient vacant slot. The Clerk will negotiate this.

The following problems were reported to CCC on 6 October by Mick Ager

Waymark Post at end of Long Lane where it meets the bridle path is not in situ (may have been removed or knocked over during harvesting). The post is leaning against the hedge but is rotten and needs to be replaced or repaired in some way.

Footpath across field opposite Petrol Station - Crops were harvested on 1 September and since then the footpath marking is missing or very unclear and needs re-instating.

The following report was received from the CCC Rights of Way Officer on 7 October

The byway access onto Stow Road near Beam End is now greatly improved as Mr Eayrs has tipped a load of subsoil there to create a ramp which makes it much safer to use particularly if someone wants to get onto the road. The problem with this is that the bollard that did block access during the winter months needs to be reset and Mr Eayrs has offered to do this shortly.

Poor visibility at Ivy Way/High Street Junction – in response to a complaint that the grass-cutting contractor is not cutting back the growth to the east sufficiently to ensure adequate visibility for drivers leaving Ivy Way, the Clerk will ask Fergusons to resolve the problem.

11. Bus Service changes - awaiting CCC appraisal of comments received by 30 September

12. Village Grass Cutting

Cllr Johnson reported that he had been unable to arrange for the overgrowing hedge in Stow Road to be cut back first, as the person he had approached is not licensed to work in Stow Road. It was agreed to take no action at this time as the current mown width is considered to be adequate.

- 13. Water courses, drainage and flood risk measures** – to receive progress reports
- A) Ditch adjacent to Willow House connecting sheep field to the Brook – The Clerk reported that he is trying to arrange a meeting with Cllr Mike Baker and the Wheelers to clarify what further action, if any, the volunteers who had cleared some of the area should take. The Clerk was asked to take into account the foul smell which indicated a health hazard.
- B) Tree in Brook north of A14 crossing – as the tree has not yet been removed the Clerk will contact the Environment Agency direct rather than follow up the previous report made via Cllr Baker and the Internal Drainage Board.
- 14. Correspondence**
- Woolley Hill Wind Farm visit** - Saturday 1 or 8 November at 11.30 am (for between 1 and 2 hours). Cllr Leach reported that he had already accepted the invitation; Cllrs Johnson, Rice and Wakefield also expressed an interest in visiting the site on either day. The Clerk will inform the organiser.
- South Cambs Parish Council Conference and Community Funding Fair** – Tuesday 28 October, 10 am to 3 pm (free including all refreshments). Members who wish to attend were asked to inform the Clerk.
- Local Joint Committee**, Lionel Thatcher, Clerk to Kimbolton & Stonely PC has emailed to say that the first meeting will be held at The Civic Suite, Pathfinder House on Monday 24 November 2014, commencing at 7pm. The invitation has been sent to all parishes to the west of the A1 as far north as The Giddings and to the east of the A1 between A14/A1198 and A428. County and District Councillors for the area will be invited as will principal officers. Light refreshments will be provided. The agenda is being compiled and will include such things as the drastic reduction of County Council services and rural policing. Nearer the time the Meeting will be advertised Members He asks to be informed as soon as possible of any matter appropriate to the agenda.
- 15. Any other business**
- Street Lighting Energy** – It was noted that the Clerk, under his delegated powers concerning minor expenditure, is proposing to confirm the correctness of the CCC inventory which shows light PC1 in Church Lane to be owned by the PC; and to confirm that the PC wishes to continue with the existing service provided by CCC to collect the payment for energy costs on behalf of Southern Electricity plus an additional 5% administration fee.
- Pond in Stow Road** - it was reported that a pond in the grounds of a house in Stow Road had recently been filled in. It is understood to have been included in a survey of ponds carried out a few years ago. The question arose as to what happened to the survey and whether certain ponds, and in particular this pond, had been given some form of protection. The Clerk will investigate.
- Donation of Bulbs** – Cllr Leach reported that he had been given 20 hyacinth bulbs by Roger Haines for use in the planter boxes. Members expressed their thanks for this kind gift.
- Manor Farm House** – it was noted that Richard Johnson Restorations of Somersham has started work on the restoration of the building. It is understood work was stopped for a short time recently by the Planning Authority but has now resumed with their agreement.
- Bus Shelter** – The Clerk was asked to produce a costed proposal for a shelter in Royston Avenue, for discussion at the next meeting.
- 16. December Meeting** – It was resolved to change the date to 18 December as the scheduled date of 11 December conflicts with a major school event.
- 17. Next Meeting** – Thursday, 13 November 2014 at 8 pm (Cllr Leach tendered his apologies for being unable to attend))

In the absence of any further business the meeting closed at 9.45 pm