

MONK SOHAM PARISH COUNCIL

(Draft) Minutes of a Meeting held on Tuesday 3rd September 2019

The meeting commenced at 1900 at the Bedfield Sports Pavilion

09/19 - 01 Present

- David Entwisle (DE - Chairman), Graham Wigley (GW – Vice Chairman), Julian Sayer (JS), Charles Bagnall (CRB), Cliff Arndt-Snelling (CAS), and Caroline Berkley CJB).
- Geoff Robinson (GR), as Parish Clerk.
- Matthew Hicks (SCC and MSDC Ward Councillor for Item 09/19 – MH)

09/19 – 02 Apologies for Absence

- Julie Giles (JG - approved).

09/19 - 03 Declaration of Members Interests.

- GR reminded the councilors of the need to notify any changes to their circumstances which may affect their Declaration of Members Interests. He stated that all current declarations were now on the MSDC system.

09/19 - 04 Public Open Session

- There were no members of the public present.

09/19 - 05 Minutes of the AGM (14th May 2019)

- These were agreed and signed by DE as an accurate record.

09/19 - 06 Action Points from the Minutes

- GR had written a letter of thanks to Gay Clarke following her resignation.
- The Church PCC had still to contact JS regarding the provision of a cabinet to contain the WWI book of remembrance. DE to facilitate with Geoff Artiss.
- The Broadband situation was briefly discussed, with all households now receiving some form and varying improved speeds. GR stated that Openreach had installed Superfast Broadband yesterday at his home (2nd September 2019) and he was receiving 150 Mbps.

09/19 – 07 Minutes of the 2019 Village Meeting (14th May 2019)

- These were agreed and signed by DE as an accurate record.

09/19 - 08 Action Points from the Minutes

- JS stated that improvements area around the notice board had now been completed by Terry and himself. Thanks were expressed to both Terry and JS and it was unanimously agreed that the area now looked excellent. Terry and JS will continue to maintain the area on an ad hoc basis.
- JS also suggested a seat to be placed in the area and this was unanimously agreed as being a good idea. He will obtain costings.

09/19 - 09 Police Report

- GR stated that the Suffolk Police crime website showed no recorded crimes in the village for the period March to July 2019.

09/19 -10 Report of District & County Councillor

MH attended and stated that the salient points of his pending report were:

- The latest schools figures showed excellent improvements, particularly in GCSE results and in respect of children in care. These figures were above the national average. Debenham High

School had again come out top with Thomas Mills not far behind.

- The new records office, known as The Hold, in Ipswich had been completed. In addition to the information available, it boasts an exhibition centre and auditorium. It is expected to be widely used by a range of people and organisations.
- There was great concern at the drop in the national take-up of the secondary measles vaccination, which was extremely worrying. MH emphasized that the need to reverse this trend by public education and that publicity was urgently required to reverse this trend.
- Local Trading Standards Teams supported by the national organisation had stopped huge numbers of dangerous goods at the Port of Felixstowe, usually made in China. This work is vital to community safety and was to be applauded.

09/19 - 11 Financial Update

- GR explained that income since the last meeting consisted of the 2018/19 VAT refund of £4.75.
- Expenses during the same period had been the MSDC parish election costs of £104.78.
- Pending expenditure consisted of the Clerk's first half salary (£321.00) PAYE (£54.00) and expenses (£123.43), all of which were approved for payment. The Clerks expenses included £30 for two wreaths from the Royal British Legion to be laid during an imminent visit to Somme cemeteries. In addition, an invoice was awaited from Robert Girling.
- GR produced an estimate for the rest of 2019/2020 which showed a potential surplus of £1288 at 31st March 2020, without prejudice to any unforeseen expenditure during the current year.
- JS raised the subject of the Clerk's salary which had not increased over many years, which would make his replacement difficult in the event of his retirement. GR explained that overall it was based on LGA rates supplied by SALC but he had been happy with his current salary. After a brief discussion it was generally agreed that one solution may be to increase the precept for 2020/21 to address this matter. GR agreed to research the subject and circulate some relevant information in time for the next meeting.

09/19 - 12 Planning Applications

- DC/17/05907 (Hill Cottage – discharge of conditions) – approved by MSDC
- DC/18/05088 (The Long House – Garage Conversion to House) – MSDC decision still awaited.

09/19 - 13 MSDC Revised Joint Local Plan

GR introduced the background to this topic and where the timetable for the new local plan now sits. This formed the basis of a detailed discussion, the salient points of which was:

- The proposed Joint MSDC/Babergh plan had been produced in August 2017 to replace the 1998 version which was universally accepted as being out of date.
- GR had been tasked at that time to contact MSDC to establish why Monk Soham had been listed as a "Hinterland Village", but no map of Settlement Areas had been included. This he had done and was asked by MSDC to try and produce a proposed map of Settlement Areas for their consideration.
- GR had then produced a draft map of possible Settlement Areas for both Monk Soham and Monk Soham Green, marked in green. However, due to some concerns and a lack of a workable timescale, these were not submitted to MSDC under the consultation process. The Parish Council did, however, express concerns to MSDC regarding their proposal to align Monk Soham to Debenham rather than Framingham under their "Cluster" policy.
- On the 6th August 2019 GR had attended a MSDC briefing session in Stowmarket, the purpose of which was to now introduce the Joint Local Plan "Preferred Options". He stated that it had been a poor meeting but that he had asked why Monk Soham had been omitted as a "Hinterland Village" from the revised document. This had totally confused the MSDC officials present and they could not explain the reason, stating that it was an obvious error. GR was then urged to contact the policy group pointing this out and enclosing a generic "red circle" showing Settlement Areas that could be possibly established in Monk Soham and Monk Soham Green.
- GR produced the previous draft "green" Settlement Area maps during the meeting for examination and said that one option would be to now forward these to MSDC instead of the requested generic "red circle" maps. After detailed discussion of the various options, it was agreed that it was down

to MSDC not the Parish Council to consider where any Settlement Areas should be. This would ensure impartiality, the use of the expertise of the policy team and ensure parity with other villages.

- Accordingly, GR was tasked to follow-up on his discussions with the policy team from the 6th August 2019 and enclose the requested maps with the suggested generic “red circles” marked. but not to forward the previous specific draft “green” maps. The need for the policy team to consider and produce Settlement Areas for both was also to be stressed as being essential if we are not to be disadvantaged when compared with other villages.

09/19 - 14 Countryside Group

JG had prepared a brief report which included:

- Most of Hungers Green had been cut and raked in mid-July but there are still too many thistles. Robert Girling will be asked to cut the whole green this month and JG will take advice from SWT regarding the control of thistles. Growth had also been cleared around the buckthorn, which looks healthy.
- Geoff Clark has been thanked for strimming around the Jubilee Oaks. They no longer need watering.
- Footpaths continued to be a problem with FP110 blocked by a rape seed crop. GR stated that he had spent all summer taking up issues with farmers, some being more successful than others. However, with the harvest now largely complete, new issues will arise when ploughing and planting starts in the near future.
- SWT has advised that horse chestnuts are inappropriate for planting on Hungers Green as they are not a native species.

09/19 - 15 Other Correspondence and Any Other Business

- The Coffee Caravan had attended near the church in July and was attended by fourteen people, including two who did not regularly attend the village coffee mornings. The visit was judged to have been very successful and will probably be repeated next year. GR to liaise with Gay Clarke.
- A request from Worlingworth PC to join Speedwatch was discussed but not deemed appropriate to Monk Soham, although the village does have some speeding problems. GR mentioned the salient points of a meeting he had had with the Chairman of Kenton Village Committee regarding the operation of the speed monitoring device in their village. (GR to advise Worlingworth PC accordingly).
- CAS stated that the Community bus now had a website on combus.org.uk which listed details and prices etc. Three new drivers had been recruited, which had eased the pressure, but the purchase of a new bus was on hold due to current discussions on the Community Bus status with the Traffic Commissioners.

09/19 - 16 Date of Next Meeting

- The date of the next meeting was fixed for 1900 on Tuesday 19th November 2019, to be held at the Bedfield sports pavilion.

The meeting closed at 2010.

Chairman.....