

MONK SOHAM PARISH COUNCIL

(Draft) Minutes of a “Virtual” Meeting held on Tuesday 9th February 2021 via Zoom

The meeting commenced at 1900

02/21 – 01 Introduction

DE welcomed everyone and he thanked CJB for making the arrangements.

02/21 - 02 Present

- David Entwisle (DE - Chairman), Graham Wigley (GW – Vice Chairman), Julian Sayer (JS), Charles Bagnall (CRB), Cliff Arndt-Snelling (CAS), Julie Giles (JG) and Caroline Berkley (CJB).
- Geoff Robinson (GR), as Parish Clerk.
- Matthew Hicks (MSDC District & SCC Councillor) for Item 11/20 – 10 below)

02/21 - 03 Apologies for Absence

- None required.

02/21 - 04 Declaration of Members Interests.

- Councillors were reminded of the need to notify any changes to their circumstances which may affect their Declaration of Members Interests. None were declared.
- DE advised the meeting that although he intended to stay on as a councillor, he would be relinquishing the role of Chairman with effect from the May 2021 meeting. The councillors expressed disappointment at his decision and he was unanimously thanked for his excellent work and achievements during his time as Chairman.

02/21 - 05 Public Open Session

- There were no members of the public present.

02/21 - 06 Minutes of the Last Meeting (24th November 2020)

- JG queried two bullet points in Item 11/20 – 15 of the minutes, the first being that she felt that the views of the villagers in support of the Quiet Lanes initiative had been acknowledged but not been fully considered. The second point was that she could not recall complacency being actually suggested if the initiative had been implemented. After a brief discussion in respect of the first point, the councillors did not agree and expressed the view that everything had been considered before making the decision. In respect of the JG's second point, councillors recalled it had been said that as the Quiet Lanes initiative did not propose any changes to speed limits or have any enforcement mechanism, they had expressed the view that users may feel safer than they actually were. GR stressed that whilst the word “complacent” may not have been actually said, he used it to record what he regarded as an overall summary of the discussion.
- Accordingly, no amendments were to be made to the circulated draft minutes and would be signed in due course by DE as an accurate record.
- GR asked that in future could any queries be raised immediately after circulation of the proposed draft minutes as it would be then easier to address similar issues at that time rather than later.

02/21 - 07 Action Points from the Minutes

- JS stated that the seat had been made by the charity GENASIS and would be £515. GR to liaise with them to arrange payment and JS to collect. JS and Syd to consider where to place the seat and install it when the weather improves.

02/21 - 08 Police Report

- GR stated that the Suffolk Police crime website for the period October to December 2020 showed no recorded crime in Monk Soham or the surrounding villages. January 2021 figures are not yet available.

02/21 - 09 COVID-19 Emergency Group & Privacy Policy

- Natalie and Mark Harding continued to provide a COVID-19 response to four households on Saturdays in conjunction with the Bedfield Group and collect the odd prescription. Shopping had been provided to one resident, but he had now left the village. Accordingly, it was all proving very manageable vis a vis their teaching jobs. DE reflected the view of all present in thanking them for an excellent contribution again during the current COVID-19 Lockdown.

02/21 - 10 Report of District & County Councillor

Councillor Hicks attended and updated the meeting on two main items, viz:

- The Suffolk vaccination programme was working extremely well and on target. The number of new detections of the COVID-19 virus was falling significantly in the county and although hospital ICUs were busy, case numbers were reduced and they were coping. A drive through vaccination centre at Woolpit had been trialed and was working well, greatly increasing the throughput of injections possible. It was now to be scoped for implementation elsewhere. Lateral Flow Tests were to be introduced for some businesses, allowing testing twice a week and new sites were again being scoped. On behalf of everyone present, DE thanked Matthew for the excellent work that was being done by SCC on behalf of us all.
- SCC acknowledged that there was serious flooding problems in the county due to the extreme weather conditions and urged residents to report specific incidences using the online reporting tool. The current problem was that there were significantly more being reported than normal, stretching the resources available.
- DE asked when the improvements to the A140 at Eye would be completed. MH stated that it was several months behind schedule due to sickness. Updates can be found on the dedicated website.

02/21 - 11 Financial Update

- Payments since the last meeting have been £100.00 for Hungers Green grass cutting (Robert Girling), £17.00 for the Remembrance Day Wreath (Royal British Legion), £35.00 for the ICO GDPR registration and £60 for the new website registration subscription (Fred Clayson).
- Anticipated payment for the rest of the 2020/21 were £765.12 for the Clerk's Second half salary (including PAYE), expenses for the same period (£72.08) and 2020/21 agreed salary arrears £40.13 (including PAYE). These payments were approved and will be made during March 2021.
- There has been no income since the last meeting and none is anticipated before 31st March 2021.
- GR is still experiencing problems with HSBC online banking, but it is in hand.

02/21 - 12 Planning Applications

- DC/20/04980/81 (Woodcroft Hall - Listed Building – Repair, Conversion establishment of Wings for Office and Accommodation) – Granted by MSDC.
- DC/20/05797 (Oak Cottage - Extensions & Music Room) – no objection offered. With MSDC.

02/21 - 13 MSDC Proposed New Local Plan

- As instructed at the last meeting, GR has recorded an objection to the proposals on the grounds that there had been no consultation regarding the reclassification of the traveller site on Low Road as permanent. Secondly, that no feedback had been received to say that our request for Settlement Boundaries in the village had been considered. No response has been received so far.

02/21 - 14 Countryside Group

JG had circulated a written report.

- For a discussion regarding the Quiet Lanes initiative please see item 02/21 - 06 above.
- JG expressed disappointment on behalf of the Group that the impromptu swing had been removed and stated that children should be encouraged to “play in the wild”. DE pointed out that this had been fully discussed at a previous meeting and the decision taken that it must be removed because it left the Parish Council in an invidious position regarding Health & Safety and insurance purposes. This had been explained by DE in the village newsletter and parish magazine. The councillors then stated that they thought there must be other ways of encouraging children to “play in the wild”. GR queried the understanding of Hungers Green’s status, in that if it was regarded as an unspoilt natural habitat, was it appropriate to put a swing there? A general discussion then took place and overall the general view was that it was generally regarded as an unspoilt habitat and that the provision of swing could lead to a wealth of additional requirements, such as a risk assessment, safeguarding requirements and insurance problems. It was also pointed out that more than adequate play facilities existed in nearby Bedfield. DE expressed the view that we must exercise extreme caution. GR will contact our insurers to discuss further and JG to similarly consult Suffolk Wildlife Trust for their views on the installation of a rustic style old fashioned swing from a tree.
- JG stated that the Group comprised of increasing elderly village members and encouraged some of the younger councillors to consider joining them.
- The tree planting initiative was discussed and GR stated that he had contacted SCC who simply said that we would be informed when a timetable had been agreed. JG will contact Sicon and forward any appropriate emails to GR for distribution.

02/21 - 15 Quiet Lanes Initiative

- GR stated that he had written to all the villagers whom had expressed an interest, explaining why the Parish Council had decided not to support the initiative and one had responded to say he agreed with the reasons behind the decision.
- See also Item 02/21 - 06 above.

02/21 - 16 Other Correspondence and Any Other Business

- GR thanked the Councillors for their positive feedback regarding his recent work in connection with the destruction of verges and mud on the road following beet harvesting by a tenant farmer. In addition, this also encompassed serious concerns over the same farmer’s treatment of some footpaths and footpath FP18 in particular. The farmer in question had not so far responded to our latest email. It was agreed to defer any further action until the weather significantly improves. thus allowing the farmer to consider our request for improvements and in particular, the reinstatement of FP18. GR wished to acknowledge the help of Debbie Adams of the SCC Rights of Way Team in his efforts. Conversely, he said that SCC Highways team had been far from helpful regarding the verge and mud on the road situation and felt their response fell far short of what we should expect.
- GR stated that he had recently reported two separate incidents of fly tipping in the ditch next to the small wood on Spring Road and was pleased to report that MSDC had removed them almost immediately.

02/21 - 17 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was fixed for 1900 Tuesday 4th May 2021 by Zoom, followed by the Annual Village Meeting at 2000.

The meeting closed at 2020.

Signed.....(Chairman)