

South Moreton Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting

held at South Moreton School on Wednesday 21 May 2014

Present: Cllrs Lyn Deeley (Chair), H Ball, C Smith, & B Woollen, Dr R Templeman (Clerk) (SMPC), Mr D Clack, Mr P Wilson, Cllr P Greene (OCC), Ms N Griffiths, K Dickson (NR)

Apologies: Cllr Leo Docherty, Mr C Brading (NR)

14/42 LD opened the meeting at 1930 with a change to the order of items on the agenda agreed, taking 14/45 first

14/43 **To elect a Chairman of the Council**

LD was proposed by HB and seconded by CS and elected unanimously as Chairman.

14/44 **To elect a Vice-Chairman of the council (optional)**

CS was proposed by LD, seconded by BW and elected as Vice-Chairman.

14/45 **To receive update on Fulscot Bridge Road progress**

In an initial discussion on the flooding of Anchor Lane and Hithertoft Road which with the simultaneous closure of the Fulscot Bridge Road seriously impacted traffic flows and bus services in the parish, PW described the historical significance of the hydrological event causing the flood and DC described the remedial actions which were being undertaken to reduce the effects of any future similar event.

Kirsty Dickson was introduced as the Network Rail's Communications & Stakeholder Engagement Officer, Great Western Electrification Programme specifically charged with dealing with projects within Oxfordshire. She said:

- NR will send a progress update to the Parish Council Clerk every two weeks;
- Further information on project progress in Oxfordshire can be found at www.networkrail.co.uk/great-western-electrification/oxfordshire

NG reported on the current situation as follows:

Overall, good progress is being made on the off-bridge works for reinstating Fulscot Road to its new profile with the completion date revised from March to September 2014. Specifically the works in hand at the moment include:

- Steel sheet piling on both the north and south side approaches (to support the raised road alignment) is substantially complete and placing the embankment fill material to build up the new road profile on the south side is beginning;
- Once piling is complete, the next steps will be casting the concrete capping beams on top of the pile walls. These will carry the new vehicle incursion barriers;
- Good progress is also being made on installing the anchors and piles to support the south side bridge abutment;
- Regrading and reinforcement of the embankment slopes on the approaches to the bridge has commenced;
- Progressing with casting the new third span (north side, carrying Fulscot Road over the road access track into Moreton Cutting alongside the railway);
- The design for the modified parapets and approach embankments has been submitted to the planning department at SODC and the Highways Department of Oxfordshire County Council, as part of an overall submission, and their responses are awaited.

RT asked if the carriageway widths of the bridge and approach roads would be reduced when the bridge parapets and vehicle incursion barriers were installed with consequences for road safety, particularly for pedestrians.

NR confirmed that there was no reduction in the carriageway width of 4838mm across the bridge, but there will be a reduction in the width of the horizontal surface of the kerb upstand on either side of the carriageway from 225mm to 150mm. Information was not to hand for the approach roads.

BW suggested that provision for railway photographers was needed on the bridge as well as for people using it as a walking route from South Moreton to the shops on Hadden Hill.

NG said she would investigate.

RT asked why no diversion route for pedestrians had been implemented. NR replied this was not in their remit and diversion routes had been agreed with OCC Highways.

RT mentioned local concerns regarding visibility of vehicles on the bridge from the southern approach road as a result of the raised parapets. DC confirmed that OCC's highways team would consider this as part of their technical approval process.

HB complained about vehicles mounting pavements and damaging verges at the Fulscot Bridge Road/Sands Road junction. NR confirmed that this would be raised immediately with their contractor in respect of vehicle movement, particularly of large plant such as piling rigs, and would liaise with OCC regarding any necessary repairs. Access is required on both sides of the bridge while the new third span is being constructed. RT agreed to send photographs showing the damage to DC.

ACTION: RT

NG said Sands Road would have to be closed at some time to raise the parapet height. RT wondered if this was correct as the 2009/10 bridge replacement was designed to cater for both larger gauge wagons and electrification. *{subsequently NR said no works were in fact planned}*.

The discussion then turned to road closures to facilitate carriageway maintenance works. PG confirmed that Sands Road, Dunsomer Hill and North Moreton High Street will be closed for 5 days from 23 June, and Long Wittenham Road for 10 days from 30 June. Diversions would be in place for vehicles via Cholsey for the first closure, and via Wallingford Road for the second. RT asked that the needs of pedestrians going between North and South Moreton be taken into account, and substitute bus services from South Moreton to Didcot and Blewbury be organised. South Moreton residents do not want closures of vehicle routes to Didcot until Fulscot Bridge Road is reopened.

BW asked that further closures be avoided at harvest time when movements of combines between farmland would be required. He also questioned the cost-effectiveness of patching maintenance when complete resurfacing was needed, pointing to the disintegration of patching done on Anchor Lane in March. PG intimated that NR's contribution to this maintenance had been increased above the original offer of £50k. DC said OCC would plan works to spend wisely. Concern was expressed about the state of South Moreton High Street, planing of which had been expected last year but postponed.

14/46 **To receive councillors' declarations of interests and review register forms**

RT reminded councillors of their responsibilities to keep their Registers of Interests up to date, including any change of address. **ACTION: LD**

14/47 **To record apologies from PC Councillors**

Cllr Vacher had sent apologies for absence.

14/48 **To receive comments from the public, and District and County Councillors**

PG had previously sent his OCC annual report and asked if this could be displayed on the SMPC notice board. **ACTION: RT**

Cllr Leo Docherty had circulated a SODC report before the meeting. It included information on SODC efficiency savings, the community grant fund, Local Plan 2031 and planning consultation, recycling and the boundary review.

14/49 **To approve the minutes of the 19 March 2014 meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed by LD

14/50 **To consider matters arising from the minutes of the 19 March 2014 meeting not taken elsewhere**

14/51 **To receive reports from clerk and councillors**

It was noted that the cracked boundary wall of The Paddock, High Street had been repaired
HB said she had attended a meeting with OCC Field Officer Mark Sumner and other Wallingford area Parish Path Wardens on 22 March 2014, and that only very limited funds were available for footpath maintenance.

RT has the key to the noticeboard in the school carpark. A new header board is required.

HB reported she had arranged a street cleaning day which had gone well but she would have appreciated more help from parishioners.

14/52 **To consider Recreation Ground matters**

It was noted that the Rec had not been rolled as planned.

Azalea Landscapes have completed the first 7 cuts of the 2014 season. There had been complaints about the length of grass and cuttings left after mowing from parishioners and councillors. Azalea's comments that the Rec has meadow grass unlike other local grounds was accepted. It was decided that Azalea should be asked to cost alternative mowing strategies. **ACTION: RT**

The gate into the Rec from Clements Green needs minor repair

14/53 **To consider Millennium Garden matters**

14/54 **To consider allotment matters**

It was noted that most of the allotment area is overgrown.

14/55 **To consider public footpaths and highways matters**

There is ongoing concern about the state of the village roads and the safety of pedestrians on them. Hithercroft Road was closed on 17 March for 5 days for emergency repairs which reportedly went well.

A Temporary Road Closure notice had been issued for Dunsomer Hill and North Moreton High Street for 3-5 April, and a replacement shuttle bus service organised by OCC between North Moreton and Didcot with the normal bus from Didcot to the Moretons via Blewbury terminating at the Fulscot Road junction. In the event the closure of the road never happened, but with lack of communications between OCC and Thames Travel's drivers the bus service was at times duplicated, at others non-existent.

It is understood that repairs are planned to the Sustrans Hanson Way cycle track, but no details are to hand. Taking materials along the track will be difficult because of its narrow width.

ACTION: OCC?

14/56 **To consider public transport matters**

- See 14/55. No progress had been made with requests for the 1700 bus from South Moreton to call into Tesco and Orchard Centre. The bus service will be reviewed in 2015.
- 14/57 **To consider traffic problems within South Moreton**
RT has been in contact with OCC to request a further survey of traffic speeds on Dunsomer Hill as the results of the previous survey revealed the equipment was not working correctly and for a new pedestrian safety assessment to be made. It was also obvious that the data averaging algorithm used masked some of the higher speeds recorded, including some in the 56 to 61mph range. Mean speeds were around 32mph and the 85percentile value around 40mph.
- 14/58 **To consider organisation of village summer event**
A low cost barbeque could be organised if help to organise it was forthcoming – a decision will be made later.
- 14/59 **To consider financial matters.**
i) *The current financial summary*
The balance in the Lloyds Bank current account was £4039.91 on 30 April 2014 having received the first instalment of the precept (£3077.00) and the Council Tax Reduction scheme grant (£346.00) from SODC. Since then a cheque for £300 (grant to SM PCC for churchyard maintenance) had been issued and delivered to Sandra Monk, and a cheque for £200 received from Network Rail for compensation for damage to the Millennium Garden in 2010.
About £900 VAT can be reclaimed from HMRC when needed.
There is £4698.02 in the NS&I account.
ii) *Approval of payments*
£62.80 to SODC for dog bin emptying Jan-March 2014 by cheque #546 signed by BW/HB
iii) *Approval and signing of external audit Sections 1 and 2*
RT said he had had a meeting with SMPC's internal auditor, Cllr William Hanks, who had examined the audit documents and pointed out an error in transcribing the paper accounts to the Excel spreadsheet. This had been corrected. WH was then happy with the financial records and the Council's risk management strategy. RT said he had previously circulated the documents (accounts, bank reconciliation, asset register, explanation of significant variances) for councillors to comment for the 2013/4 external audit. Sections 1 (Accounting Statements) and 2 (Governance Statement) of the annual were discussed and approved by SMPC, and duly signed and dated by Chair and Clerk.
iv) *Bank mandate*
Following the change of councillors the Lloyds bank mandate should be updated. RT had obtained the form to do this and councillors would be asked to complete the necessary sections to add CS and remove NA. **ACTION: RT/Councillors/CS**
- 14/60 **To consider planning matters**
i) *Determined applications*
None
ii) *New applications*
A revision to P14/S0433/HH dated 8 May 2014 had been received. For the original application for extensions with detached garage at 15 Sands Road, SMPC had decided to recommend Approval. SMPC decided to stay with 'recommend approval'.
P14/S1143/HH for rear extension and loft conversion at 'Extonia', Anchor Lane. There were concerns about the scale of the proposal, generation of extra traffic but on balance that OCC should be left to determine the proposal.
P14/S1101/P11 from Network Rail had also been registered on the www.southoxon.gov.uk website on 8 April regarding the jacking of Fulscot Bridge in December. Apparently just placed there to reinforce the rights of Network Rail to undertake such works on their land without consulting. This application has been updated on 12 May with plans for the approach roads and bridge parapets.
- 14/61 **To assess risk and its management**
RT to ensure the Annual Return and supporting documentation is returned to the external auditor, BDO by the audit date of 28 May 2014. **ACTION: RT**
This is also the date from which interested parties and local electors may exercise their rights to comment on the accounts. A notice showing when the rights may be exercised and when accounts will be available for inspection was displayed from 14 April to 8 May, with the records available between 28 April and 27 May 2014. One parishioner had requested a copy.
A quote for renewal of insurance had been received from AON. RT to contact other companies. **ACTION: RT**
- 14/62 **To consider Parish Boundary revision proposals**
RT had prepared a note to be sent to SODC requesting the proposed move of the North Moreton / South Moreton boundary be abandoned.
- 14/62 **To respond to correspondence and discuss matters arising from Item 6 (14/48)**
- 14/63 **To take AOB at Chairman's discretion**
i) *South Moreton Website*
CS described the website he was developing for South Moreton and provided a password for accessing it during the development.

ii) PC email addresses

CS reported he had set up a southmoreton.org.uk domain with associated email addresses for councillors, having decided against a .gov.uk domain which would involve higher costs.

South Moreton News

The proposal to produce a quarterly newsletter was discussed, and it was decided this would be unnecessary with the availability of the website.

14/64 **To schedule the next meeting**

A Wednesday in July to be decided.

With no other business, LD declared meeting closed at

Minutes approved by30 July 2014

Cllr Lyn Deeley, Chairman