

**MINUTES OF THE KINGSDON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 10th November 2016
IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30pm**

Parishioner comment time:

The Chairman proposed, and Councillors agreed, that Agenda item 9.1 Poplar trees in Mow Barton Road be taken as the first item, it being the issue which parishioners in attendance wished to express an opinion. (See below for minute)

Present:

Mr. D.Beswick (chairman), Mr B. Paine (vice-chairman), Mr. Wally Elliott, Mr. I. Dibben, Mr G. Osborne and Mr. P. Waters, Mrs S. Mackay (Parish Councillors); Cllr David Norris SSDC, and seven parishioners.

1. Apologies: Cllr Dean Ruddle SCC, Mrs Kate Hatt (Clerk) and Mrs L Moore (RFO).

2. Declarations of Interest:

As previously declared, no changes.

3. Minutes:

The minutes of the monthly parish council meeting held on the 13th October 2016, which had been previously circulated and were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment to item 7.1&7.2 to read, budgeted donations to the Church and Village Hall to be actioned (Lynn Moore).

4. Matters arising not covered by agenda items

- Three quotations obtained for a new notice board to be sited in the village field. Chairman/Ian Dibben to liaise on applying for a community grant from community grant.
- The external audit report on the KPC finances had been displayed on the village notice board and could be viewed on the website.
- Action had been taken to reduce the overhang of a tree in Manor road.

5. Chairman's Report

I attended the AGM of the Jubilee Fund mainly with a view to see if I could recover some of the money we put up for the hire of the marquee in view of the profits of the fete and the resultant bank balance. Bit of a chancer really as the money was not made as a lone but worth a try. I was however defeated by a clever change to the fund's charter which now requires them to retain £5,000 as a float against future events. From the fund's point of view this is a very sensible decision and they will not now need to come to the parish for financial support in the future.

The fund has also offered to take on board the idea of a Bonfire Night event for which I confirmed that we would, in conjunction with Paul, cover the cost of the fireworks as previously agreed.

Future events will however have to be organised under the auspices of the parish council in order to be covered by our insurance.

6. Correspondence

Our response to the 2017/2018 Local Government Finance Settlement-Technical Consultation Paper had been sent to the Dept of Communities and Local Government.

7.1 and 7.2 Finance- report, cheque signing and Village Shop Grant

Following our discussions at the last meeting, we now have a business plan from the shop covering further refurbishment and development, which Councillors had been circulated. It was proposed that the £550 we set aside in the budget to support the village shop be given as a grant towards the total cost of £749.99.

a) Cheques for Approval

Clerk Services - October	£75.00
Church	£550.00
Village Hall	£550.00
Village Shop	£550.00
TOTAL CHEQUE AMOUNT - November 2016	£1725

These payments were proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Cllr W.Elliott, all in favour.

8. Former Primary School sports field - sited diagonally opposite the Village Hall.

The contract to purchase the field was agreed in late August and the documentation seeking the necessary Section77 approval was jointly submitted by KPC and SCC to the D of E in early September; we still await a response.

Quotations are being sought for a new vehicle/pedestrian gate and improved access. Quotations will also be sought for the cutting of the grass and hedge around the field and combined with this the cutting of the hedge around the allotments.

9. Trees

9.1 Three Poplar trees in Mowbarton Road

Summary of the position as described at the October meeting

We have talked to the Arboriculturalist from County Council, Mr Scriven, about the Poplars on Mowbarton Road; he visited and has written a report.

The trees are Hybrid Poplars and appear to be in good condition for their age.

They are fast growing trees and reach a large height in a short space of time.

The fast growth rate forms brittle timber that leads to shedding of twigs in winds. Therefore they would not normally be planted close to residential properties.

The possibility of pruning to maintain them was discussed but the pruning would need to be substantial and lead to an undignified appearance. There would be rapid re-growth from the cut surfaces and these new branches are prone to falling. This would need to be repeated every few years.

The trees are not dead, dying or dangerous and as very little money is available no work is planned by SCC.

An available option would be to remove the Poplars and replant trees of a more suitable species. We would need planning permission but Mr Scriven considered this would not be a problem.

The Chairman explained that the basic question is do we as KPC take responsibility for removing the trees and replanting with something more suitable. If so, we will have to fund it from our budget.

We have had one quote to remove the trees to date as follows: (%precept increase in brackets) but will be seeking a number of alternatives.

1 tree	£1,000	(7%)
2 trees	£1,900	(13%)
3 trees	£2,700	(19%)

Parishioner comments –

These figures were thought to be expensive and a sum of £600 had been mentioned in conversation with a specialist.

There may not be a danger of the tree itself falling but the report does recognise that debris of branches is a fact and this represents a safety hazard with children playing in the vicinity.

The trees are also damaging the road representing a tripping hazard

If we do nothing and just let the trees go they will continue to grow and the problems will get worse. There needs to be more appropriate trees for the long term.

The adjacent residents are keen to plant new trees, we are not anti-trees.

This could work very well with taking over the field and possible orchard creation.

The three residents living in closest proximity to the trees in question offered to make a contribution to the project cost.

The Chairman explained that the road distortion was not viewed as a high priority by SCC, indeed both the trees and the road are their responsibility.

The best solution is to remove the trees but this needs careful consideration.

B.Paine commented that there was a need to carefully consider and recognise that KPC will be setting a precedent by funding action which is clearly an SCC responsibility. Would we be prepared to contribute funds towards children's travel to school if SCC decided they could no longer fund the provision, or likewise the 77 bus route if that came under threat. He further stated that the removal of the trees and replanting needed to be seen as a comprehensive project and not as two separate exercises so costings, timetables, new species and a budget all agreed prior to any action being initiated.

After further comment from Parishioners and discussion the Councillors unanimously agreed the following:

“That KPC accept, in principle, the removal of three trees in Mow Barton Road and their replacement with three or more trees, of a suitable species, in the interest of the safety of parishioners”

9.2

P. Waters explained that the tree planting plan is still a work in progress.

The woodland trust maybe able to support us and in that respect he was liaising with James Lockart to explore possibilities.

The Chairman observed that we need a written plan which then feeds into a revised village plan, with suitable provisions in future budgets.

Action – P.Waters to look at funding, types of trees and produce a written plan.

10. Footpaths

Ian Dibben advised that two new gates had been installed, but more volunteers were needed to clear footpaths.

At the next meeting he would give a demonstration of some software that could assist with the detailed mapping of the village and its features and may be useful for the revision of the village plan.

11. Date of next meeting

Thursday 8th December 2016 at 7.30pm.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.25pm