

**MINUTES OF THE KINGSDON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
THURSDAY 13th DECEMBER 2018 IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30pm**

Parishioner comment time:

There were no questions concerning agenda items

Present:

Mr David Beswick (Chairman); Mr B. Paine (Vice-Chairman), Mr P.Waters, Mr G. Osborne, Mr W Elliott, Mrs S Mackay, Mr I Dibben (Parish Councillors); Mrs Kate Hatt (Parish Clerk) plus 17 parishioners.

1. Apologies:

Mrs Jacqui Land (RFO); Mr D Ruddle (County Councillor) and D.Norris (District Councillor).

2. Declarations of Interest:

P.Waters declared an interest in cheque clearance for verges.

3. Minutes:

The minutes of the monthly Parish Council meeting held on the 8th November 2018, which had been previously circulated, were proposed by G.Osborne and seconded by W.Elliott, and unanimously approved and signed.

4. Matters arising not covered by agenda items

None

5. Chairman's Report

To say that the last 6 months or so have been a testing time would be something of an understatement. I have this week received a letter from Greenslade Taylor Hunt which will hopefully help us to move forward. The bottom line is that they have sought the views of the Kingsdon Estate trustees and that the additional options offered at the 24 November consultation day have been rejected. They now plan to continue with their original proposal of 28 properties and have already completed a topographical survey of the sites.

They further state that if their subsequent development submission is not supported by the village, they may then decide to dispose of their various remaining land parcels, some of which have potential in their opinion and the village could then be vulnerable to a number of small scale planning applications being made for housing. They feel these would be unlikely to deliver the affordable housing and elderly persons housing that has been identified.

6. Correspondence

None

7.1 and 7.2 Finance- report and cheque signing.

Finance information has been circulated to councillors.

KPC Account	Opening balance as at 31.10.2018	£275.90
	Net Cheque /Standing Order Balance	£1,310.00
	Payments/Transfer In	£4,000.00
	Transfer Out	£0.00
	Closing Balance as at 30.11.2018	£2,965.90
	Uncleared Items (Ian Dibben £60.02 and Somerton Printery £75, Tim Taylor £18)	£153.02
	True Balance as at 30.11.2018	£2,812.88

Savings Account	Opening balance as at 31.10.18	£28,732.76
	Net Cheque Balance	£0.00
	Interest	£0.00
	Transfer In	£0.00
	Transfer Out	£4,000.00
	Closing Balance as at 30.11.2018	£24,732.76

Asset Savings Account	Opening balance as at 31.10.18	£10,509.99
	Transfer In	£0.00
	Interest	£0.00
	Transfer Out	£0.00
	Closing Balance as at 30.11.2018	£10,509.99

Clerk Services New Standing Order May 2018 - March 2019 N.B. Monthly payments of £90 x 11 payments	£990.00
K Hatt Clerk Services for Oct 2018 (standing order)	£90.00
Guy Osborne - Reimbursement for Course	£10.00
Phillip Waters - Verges around village field and triangle	£400.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE - October 2018	£500.00
Amount approval (less pre approved clerk)	£410.00

Somerton stationers have not cashed their cheque, no feedback from them as yet.
D.Beswick gave a summary of where we are currently, see below figures.

Cheque for cutting the verges, proposed by B.Paine, seconded by I.Dibben, all in favour.

Cheque for G.Osborne course, proposed by S.Mackay, seconded by I.Dibben, all in favour.

7.3 Budget

B.Paine has circulated drafts of the budget to councillors.

The tax base has increased due to more people living in the village.

There is a modest increase in the precept. A Band D will go up no more than 90p a year.

Loan repayment – was slightly wrong last year so needs to be tweaked up a bit.

G.Osborne/I.Dibben – footpaths budget has been cut. But we are trying to replace all the styles.

They were happy with the cut.

A provision has been put forward for elections next year.

If figures are below £25000 we don't need an external audit, which we try to avoid due to costs.

Accounting angels carry out our internal audit.

The budget will be officially approved in January and put on the website.

Grit salt will need to be paid for in the future.

7.4 RFO

We may now have a volunteer to take over the role. However, he needs to talk to Jacqui first to see what it involves before deciding.

8. Play Equipment

It has been suggested that the zip wire is taken out of action during the winter months and early spring, to give the ground chance to recover.

Is there a rubber mat underneath?

It is not wide enough.

We can't spend maintenance money on the existing equipment but we could buy 'new matting', extending the facility.

The decision was to try the new matting replacement first as this will repair the ground at the same time.

9. The referendum

D.Beswick - Now that we have the Estates decision on what they want to develop, we intend to hold a village referendum early in January. The vote will be conducted by the Community Council for Somerset who do a lot of these polls across the county. It will be conducted against the latest Electoral Roll with the addition of those people more recently arrived in the village who have registered with the parish clerk. It will be a postal vote by return of prepaid envelope and the completed voting slips will be anonymous. The result should be available at the end of January. The cost of the vote will be in the region of £1105 including VAT although the final amount will depend on the number of returns and we need to approve in principal today that expenditure. We need to pay half that quoted figure when we confirm the order to proceed. Can I have a sponsor please for the full amount please?

We did approach SSDC, who would charge about £2000 and would only do a parish poll on one evening. The CCS option offers us a much wider range for people to vote.

B.Paine proposed we use Community Council for Somerset for around £1105, seconded by P.Waters, all in favour.

Questions?

I.Dibben – how will the wording be decided?

Do we or do we not support the Kingsdon Estate proposal for development?

P.Waters – can we draft up a refresher of the proposal for people?

The minutes will show the response from GTH. The referendum will come with a letter stating the proposal.

10. The Village Hall

D.Beswick - The Village Hall Working Group have requested clarification of the July vote. I have prepared the following statement to make the parish councils position absolutely clear.

Some members of Village Hall Working Group are asking for clarification with the proposal that the village voted on last July. The proposal was “The Village Hall should eventually be disposed of and the financial assets used in the development of a new hall” and the final vote was 112 for and 17 against.

The points raised now are:

The use of the word “should” could be interpreted in either a mandatory or advisory capacity. The word “eventually” can be interpreted subjectively as “at a time in the future, yet to be determined.

The whole purpose of the vote was to unlock the option to build a new village hall should further investigation decide that that was preferable to refurbishing the existing hall, which requires a lot of work and is limited in the facilities it offered. There was little point in spending a great deal of time, effort and money on looking at a new hall option, if the village subsequently voted against the disposal of the existing hall. The overwhelming majority of those who voted allowed that process to start.

The specific questions from the Working Group are listed below with the councils answers, all of which will be published verbatim in the minutes of the meeting:

Does the parish council consider the vote of July 2018 to be:

a. Binding on the parish council and the village hall committee

No. If the decision is taken to dispose of the village hall and build a new one, a fully costed proposal will have to be presented to the Secretary of State for Education and the Charity Commission before action can be taken and at that stage the village will need to vote on that specific proposal in accordance with the Deed of Trust.

b. A mandatory requirement compelling it to dispose of the village hall.

No. It allows the parish council to pursue that option at the end of a full cost benefit analysis should it be the preferred way forward.

c. Precluding any options for a new village hall, including refurbishment of the existing hall, that does not involve the hall's disposal and liquidation of the asset currently held in trust?

No.

A parishioner query— reading declaration of trust, it should be the village hall committee who deal with voting procedure, not the parish council? This would suggest the vote taken in July is irrelevant.

D.Beswick – In July the village hall committee discussed this and requested that the Parish Council carry out the vote for them. There is also another vote happening at the end of the process and the village hall committee can do this if they wish.

The Parish Council are the Custodian trustees.

Another parishioner queried why the education of state had to be involved.

It was confirmed that the trust deed states this which has been confirmed by our solicitor. It is a listed asset.

11. Date of next meeting

Thursday 10th January 2019

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.05pm