

MINUTES OF THE KINGSDON BI-MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 6th MARCH 2014 IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.00pm

Present: Mr. A Masters (Chairman); Mrs. A Saunders (Vice-Chairman); D. Morris, P. Waters, M. Clode (Parish Councillors); Mr D. Ruddle (County Councillor); Mrs. K Hatt (Parish Clerk) plus 28 parishioners.

1. Apologies: Mr. J. Calvert (District Councillor)

A new councillor has come forward – Philip Waters.
He was officially voted in by the Parish council, all were in favour.
The appropriate forms to be signed would follow shortly.

2. Declarations of Interest: T. Masters declared an interest in item 4, the former primary sport field.

3. Minutes: The minutes having been previously circulated were approved and agreed.

4. Former Primary School sports field - sited at the (north west) junction of MowBarton Road and Lower Road , and diagonally opposite the Village Hall.

4.1 D.Morris updated us on the progress so far and the current situation. This took place outside of the Parish Council Meeting to allow for longer discussion and comment from parishioners (see separate notes attached below.)

4.2 Official vote-

- 1) To ratify that the Parish Council, on behalf of the village, is authorised to Proceed towards purchase of the land known as the Kingsdon Primary School sports/playing field sited on the north western junction of Mowbarton Road and Lower Road, Kingsdon, diagonally opposite from the Village Hall to be used as a green open space and for recreational purposes.
- 2) To ratify the Parish Council is authorised to apply for grants and loans or can nominate persons or individuals to assist with this element of the task.
- 3) To engage suitably qualified professional(s) to advise and obtain necessary information to enable the purchase to be achieved.

These were all proposed by A.Saunders, seconded by D.Morris, all were in favour (T.Masters did not cast a vote due to declaration of interest.)

5. Somerset Levels relief fund

T.Masters explained the relief fund and read the letter from John Osman. This is flood relief for the victims, not flood defences. A. Saunders pointed out that there is a lot of money out there that they don't know what to do with yet, a warehouse is full of donations already.

D.Morris stated should we be making some support donation, support where the best need is.

D.Ruddle explained which other councils had given a donation as it was a neighbourly thing to do.

It was proposed to make a token gesture of £100 by M.Clode, seconded by D.Morris, all were in favour.

6. Highways –

M.Clode updated us on some information. There is water running down Lotment Hill. The ditches alongside the allotments are filling up again. M.Clode needs to talk to Mervyn and meet with John Nicholson about the matter and who has responsibility. M.Clode is finding it hard to make contact with John Nicholson.

D.Ruddle explained that half the office have been dealing with the floods but they are nearly back now so the meeting should be able to be arranged now. D.Ruddle agreed to email John Nicholson.

A.Saunders explained that the SCC have identified major potholes through the village, these have been filled already.

The man-hole cover has also been put back in.

7. Children's Play Area/Equipment

Mike Brown gave an update.

A decision on what to have and where needs to be made.

There are timescales to meet with the grants, want it up and ready for spring/summer.

The playground is needed for several reasons including there has been several new families arrive and more to come. It could benefit the shop/community café as well.

There are many element that should be included in a play area e.g. social play, rotation. The funding we have is £29,450. With no cost to parish council up front.

Mike considered would it be better on the Former Primary Sport field – but the timings do not work out, we don't have the field yet. The funding has a timescale. They were applied for a specific location. We could lose everything if we try to change things now. There is 19 years left on lease on field in front of the pub (Parish Field.)

On the Parish field there are possible areas to have it. It makes sense to put it near what we already have but need to take into account traffic issues. Mike has talked to neighboring houses and looked out their windows. Wherever we chose will not suit everyone. The people nearby did not want tree screening.

There are 5 potential areas that are flat, in the area and avoid the main trees.

Final design ideas – infant swings/baskets are a definite, then also a multiplay centre in consultation with village. All equipment will have grass matting not the black matting. Sizes are very similar to what we currently have. Height also very similar. It will be wooden and blend in colours. We need to decide where the large piece will go, swings will come afterwards. Design idea has elements for younger and older children.

We then looked at various pictures to show what it would look like and where it could go.

All will comply with safety elements. Guaranteed for 15 yrs. SDC do an annual check for £80.

This all comes under budget.

Parishioner comments –

When checks have been done in the past, if there is a safety issue there will need to be funds to repair things?

Maintenance costs is minimal for grass matting. There will be no maintenance costs for 15 yrs. We have had permission from the owners of the land.

Do we need a large construction in a rural community?

Large swings have to be separate from the infant swings for safety reasons.

We could use less of the money but we would have to hand it back.

Councillors Comments-

It was pointed out that we had the exact same discussion with the previous equipment.

It does look large, can see benefits of this. Up on corner would not work, further down would be better.

Maintenance costs concern me. Could we shrink it by a percentage and use some funding for maintenance costs?

There is only small grant that could be used for maintenance – only by £1000.

Could we look practically on the field as to where to put it?

If we could commit to an area tonight, we could then look at specifics when they arrive.

A great job, could height of the towers be decreased?

The roof could be taken off to down size it, by half a meter.

It was proposed by A.Saunders to accept the principle of design, subject to a site meeting, On Saturday 8th March at 10am. Seconded by M.Clode. All were in favour.

8. Victim support letter.

A.Saunders read out a victim support letter requesting a donation to their charity.

Discussion was held whether to support it or not. Comments included we are being asked for a lot of donations at the moment. A councilor and parishioner had both been offered support from them when burgled.

It was proposed to donate £25, by D. Morris, seconded by A.Saunders. All were in favour

9. Future parish council meeting day

M.Clode explained that A.Colton would become a councilor again if meetings were on an alternate day. The only available day would be a Friday.

This would affect D.Ruddle and J.calvert as well.

Several councilors were keen if it meant gaining another councilor.

D.Ruddle stated that it would be unusual to change meeting night but we have been struggling to find councillors for 18 months. We were 3 councillors short, now 2 short with P.Waters joining us.

Parishioners think a Friday would mean less parishioners.

D.Morris said if the view of the village is not to change it, perhaps we should sit on it for a while.

10. Cheque signing and financial report

10.1 Financial report by A.Saunders

Balances General £1407.86 Savings a/c £9430.74 Children's fund £3102.44

There are a number of cheques that have yet to be presented for payment and the balances available reflect those outstanding

Good news- after much time spent trying to give them the information that is required, but well worth the effort as I have received, direct into the Parish Council's account from HMRC the VAT refund of £1139.77 The claim was initially submitted in November 2012

Now I know the procedure I will be ready to make our claim for 2013-2014.

Notification from Village Hall Committee of increase in their charges from April 2014 £10 per session and electricity 18p per unit.

Current charges are £8 per session and 15p per unit.

Should we book children's playground safety check? It was agreed to do this.

10.2 Cheque signing

Cheques - paid out of Council

Kingsdon Village Hall—hire charge Sept-Dec 2013 - £31.50.

ArborTech re Ben Carlisle storm damage to tree Dec 2013 £225

Kate Hatt £100 ex gratia

Cheques for signing

Kate Hatt, Clerk March payment £50

Kingsdon Chronicle - £100 donation for printing Parish Council business

Reimbursement to D.Morris photocopying expenses re Schools sports field

All Saints Church, Kingsdon £500 towards Churchyard maintenance for Parish Council's financial year 2014-2015

G.T.H. rent of Parish field £215 - due Lady Day, historically paid after receipt of precept in April.

Victim Support - £25

Flood Relief - £100

A parishioner stated that the parish council had agreed to consider to raising the maintenance of churchyard support from £400 to £500.

Check the minutes to see what was discussed and decided.

However after further discussion-

It was proposed by D.Morris to raise the church maintenance costs to £500, seconded by P.Waters, all were in favour.

A.Saunders raised the email recently received about joining rural England? They provide support with planning – agreed to take this forward to next meeting.

Parishioner – requested a seat at bus stop – carry forward to next agenda.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15 pm.