

KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Kingston Seymour Parish Council held on
Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 19.30
At the Kingston Seymour Village Hall, Ham Lane, Kingston Seymour

Councillors Present:

Mike Sewell, Chairman
Fred Malton (FM)

Richard Barber (RB)

Paul Cox (PC)

In attendance:

Steve Dixon (SD) Clerk & RFO

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Councillors Andy Gillam, Susie Humphries and Zoe Bartlett and from District Councillor Wendy Griggs.

2. To record declarations of interest in items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest

3. Members of the public are invited to address the council

There were no members of the public present.

4. Briefing by representatives of the Village Hall re property maintenance

Just prior to the meeting, the Village Hall had received notice that a grant application they had made had been successful and that immediate funds were no longer required from the Parish Council.

Councillors praised the work that the Hall team had done to secure the grant.

5. Police and Neighbourhood Watch Reports

Unfortunately, operational issues prevented the Police representative from attending.

A concern was raised about aspects of the law and how it applied to cyclists as there were likely to become an increased number on the Parish lanes once the Pier to Pier Way was open.

Action: Clerk to contact the Police for clarification and to understand what measures they are planning to take once the P2P route opens.

6. To discuss and agree the Parish Council's position on the following application

Planning Application No 23/P/2513/FUL

Application to retain five culverts and two gateways. **Land East of Acorn Carp Fishery, Lampley Road, Kingston Seymour.**

Councillors are fully aware of the location and felt that the accesses gave much clearer line of sight than the original one to the south of the area which is near a difficult bend. Councillors fully supported the application but strongly suggest that the original (south) access is now blocked off.

Action: Clerk to advise NSC planners accordingly

7. To confirm the minutes of the following meeting

Regular Council Meeting – 22nd November 2023

The minutes were confirmed as a true record. Proposed by FM, seconded by RB and supported unanimously.

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8. Infrastructure. To receive updates and to agree the next actions.

8.1 Pier to Pier Way and Duck Lane Link

The clerk reported that the parish council had eventually received an update from the NSC Project Manager which indicated that work would continue until at least Easter depending upon weather conditions. No commitment to an opening date had yet been given. He noted that signposts were being erected in the Parish this week.

The clerk had received copies of the Road Safety Audits that had been undertaken in the autumn but had not had the opportunity to read them before the meeting. Councillors who had reviewed them quickly were encouraged that the reports covered many of the safety concerns that the parish Council had been raising.

Action: Clerk to write to NSC in light of these audits to understand how NSC will respond and what actions they will now be taking before the opening.

Separately, RB had attended the Strawberry Line working group and had been advised that the physical infrastructure necessary to allow cyclists to get as far as Lampley Road was targeted for completion by the end of March 2024.

8.2 Church Corner Railings

Unfortunately and as noted previously, the railings opposite the Village Hall had been struck by a vehicle and two posts had been damaged. The clerk had received a quote from the original contractor for the replacement of these but councillors felt this was too expensive.

Action: Clerk to decline offer from contractor. RB to consider other ways forward.

8.3 Roads

The clerk had approached the NSC Rights of Way officer but she felt unable to influence the Highways Department.

After discussion, it was decided that instead of contacting the "Place" Director at NSC (as had been considered at the last meeting), that we should approach our District Councillors first.

Action: Clerk to write to our district councillors to seek their support.

FM observed that the motorway bridge on Lampley Road was in a declining state of repair.

Action: Clerk to write to national Highways to request that it is scheduled for repainting.

8.4 Footpaths

Councillor Gillam had prepared a paper regarding footpath LA 11/1/10 and it was agreed that council would consider acting in the spring.

8.5 Village Maintenance

Councillors agreed that the specification for machine and hand cutting in 2024 covered the appropriate areas in the village and our contractors should be asked to quote for this year's work.

Action: Clerk to contact our two contractors for their quotes to be considered and agreed (or otherwise) at the March meeting.

9. Services, Resilience & Community

9.1 Climate Emergency & Sustainable Travel

The clerk noted that concerns had been raised by residents of Middle Lane about surface water flooding and the inadequacy of the local surface water drains. One resident had contacted Wessex Water and as a result they are to close Middle Lane for one day in February to investigate. The clerk will notify the village of this date nearer the time.

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9.2 Defibrillator Tokens

The clerk advised that he had been in touch with the ambulance service to confirm that our defibrillator was fully registered and to understand the process for when we change the code number to ensure that the new code is immediately visible. He has also been in touch with the supplier of the tokens who estimate a six week lead time after placing and paying for the order.

He expects that the key rings and tokens can be distributed in March with a small guide card.

Action: Clerk to continue with the steps necessary to successfully implement the project and to ensure that villagers have the new code as soon as it is implemented. .

10. Administration and Communication

10.1 To review the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy and agree any changes.

The clerk reported that there had been no recommended changes to the existing policy template so asked that Council readopt the current wording. Proposed by FM, seconded by PC and supported unanimously.

Action: Clerk to post the readopted version onto the website.

11. Finance.

11.1 To receive the current Financial Report

The clerk advised that the council will end the financial year (31 March 2024) with cash assets of £9.2k across all three accounts and that funds are being transferred as necessary from the Business reserve account to ensure that the current account remains in credit and doesn't incur charges..

Other than the clerk's monthly salary (now £432), cheques in excess of £100 had been issued for the grant to the village magazine (£400), to the village hall for the Christmas tree (£175) and the grant to the PCC for graveyard maintenance (£600).

11.2 To discuss the precept requirement and the draft budget for 2024/25.

The clerk stated that he was obliged to submit the Parish' request for precept within the next ten days and had prepared a draft budget for the council to consider. He also advised that Government "counsel" suggested that a 3% increase was the most that should be sought.

Councillors were conscious that all of the parish' costs had risen significantly over the last year but that the increase in the precept would be felt by all residents albeit that this contribution was a small element of what residents will be charged overall. After discussion it was agreed that the precept needed to increase by 3% which will show as a headline parish council tax of £66.06 for a Band D property.

Action: Clerk to notify NSC.

11.3 To agree any financial support to be offered to the village hall.

As noted above, the Village Hall do not need this support at this time.

12. External Meetings

RB reported that at the Strawberry Line Working Group, NSC stated that they had written to all of the landowners along the possible route from Kingston Bridge to Clevedon in order to commence a dialogue.

RB reported that activity in the PCAA was currently quiet but that there is a meeting at the end of January.

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13. Very recent correspondence

The clerk understood that some concerns had been raised by a resident with a councillor and in regard to the NSC Local Plan to 2039 and the possibility of development in the parish. After studying the latest version of the document, he could see no immediate development threats in the plan as the parish was still under an ongoing threat from flooding and therefore is not a target area for more housing. Due diligence will be maintained as the plan moves through further iterations.

14. To agree any items that are to be placed on the next regular meeting Agenda, scheduled for Wednesday 13th March 2024 in the Village Hall.

Updates on standing agenda items, review of the parish council's Social Media and Electronic Communications policy and updates on the Pier to Pier and Strawberry Line. The draft agenda will be circulated nearer the time for Councillors to consider and add any additional items before formal issue.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 20.50.

Steve Dixon

Steve Dixon,
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer,
12th January 2024