

BASSINGBOURN-CUM-KNEESWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 21st January 2020

Present : Cllrs Douglass; Dixon; Geraghty, Hallett, Hodge, Leith (for items 1 -6), Oakley and Sams. Cllr Hirtzel for items 6.1 onwards.

Also in attendance were Mrs V Tookey (Clerk) and Mrs B Isherwood, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

County Cllr S Van de Ven, District Cllr N Cathcart and 6 members of the public were also present.

During the public session guidance was given to a parishioner regarding planning permission procedures.

1	Apologies for absence : Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Freeman (annual leave) Cllrs White and Spenceley (personal) and Cllrs Catherall and Ridsdale (work).	
2	Declaration of Interests : None were recorded.	
3	Minutes of Meeting held on the 17th December having been previously circulated were signed as agreed on the proposition of Cllr Sams, seconded Cllr Leith.	
4	Vacancy for Councillor : Clerk confirmed that there had been no applications for the vacancy and notices would continue to be on display.	
5	<p>Pavilion</p> <p><u>5.1 Working Group to form charity:</u> The Working Group needs to meet to review the framework for setting up a charity which should assist in drawing down grant funding. Chairman, Cllr Dixon and RFO are to attend a funding workshop on the 19th February.</p> <p>Cllr Hirtzel arrived at this point at 7.50pm.</p>	
6	<p>The Limes</p> <p><u>6.1 Agreement to take a lease of the Limes from SCDC on a 99-year lease at a peppercorn rent – subject to an acceptable lease</u> Cllr Hodge had circulated a paper which is attached as appendix A. She reviewed the history of the building, its current use and explained the need for a village hall. The Village Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan survey has provided evidence of the need for a village hall. Concerns were raised regarding timescale of the request for a decision, together with concerns regarding the lack of a more detailed expenditure forecast which had previously been requested. The RFO explained that such a forecast had not proved possible. District Cllr Cathcart stated that it is very clear that should the Council not accept a lease then building will be sold by SCDC.</p> <p>Cllr Sams proposed that the Parish Council agrees to the transfer of The Limes from SCDC on a 99-year lease at a peppercorn rent, subject to an acceptable lease being drawn up. This was seconded by Cllr Dixon. The motion was carried with one abstention.</p>	VT

	<p>On proposition of Cllr Sams, seconded by Cllr Douglass it was further agreed to share the costs of the transfer up to a maximum of £9000.</p> <p>The Working Group would need to meet urgently. The RFO had already obtained a cost for a survey of the building. On the proposition of Cllr Sams, seconded by Cllr Hirtzel it was agreed to accept the quotation of £1350 for a structural survey.</p> <p><u>6.2 The Limes Working Group</u> – Council reviewed the terms of reference and agreed no amendments were required other than to add Cllr Catherall as a member.</p> <p>Cllr Leith left the meeting at this point at 8.30 p.m. 2 members of the public arrived at 8.30 pm.</p>	
7	<p>Planning</p> <p><u>7.1 Response to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan : Issues and Options</u> The Planning committee had drafted a response to this consultation. The response had been circulated for any further amendments. The response as drafted is to be submitted on the proposal of Cllr Sams, seconded by Cllr Oakley.</p> <p><u>7.2 Footpath from Robinson Gardens to Elbourn Way Play area</u> Cllr Hallett reported on a meeting with Cala Homes representative that he attended, together with District Cllr Cathcart and the Clerk. Agreement was reached that if Cala constructed the footpath on their land up to parish council land boundary, the parish council would do likewise on its land. On proposition of Cllr Douglass seconded by Cllr Dixon it was agreed that the Council establish a path on the Elbourn Way play area land to connect to that constructed by Cala Homes. Quotations to be obtained for this work. Clerk also to let the planning department have this information.</p>	<p>VT</p> <p>VT VT</p>
8	<p>Cambs County Council</p> <p><u>8.1 Climate and Environment Strategy consultation:</u> This had been circulated upon receipt, which was just before Christmas. The deadline is the 31st January. The meeting heard that the Conservation Group had submitted its response. Chairman confirmed that Council would be submitting its own response.</p> <p><u>8.2 County Cllr Report:</u> County Cllr Van de Ven highlighted some of the local issues. She was still trying to get Park Close road surface repaired as well as lots of potholes repaired. She was hosting a Bus User Group the following day at which they would be learning about the new routes starting in July. Building the new County Council premises at Alconbury had started with a completion date of Spring 2021 and Shire Hall will be leased as a hotel/business.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
9	<p>South Cambs District Council</p> <p><u>9.1 Letter from Leader of Council re Planning</u> Clerk had circulated letter from Cllr Bridget Smith which sought to clarify the District Councils system for applications to be referred to planning committee following a request from a parish council. Quote : "What I would like to stress to parish councils is that, in practice, the process for determining which applications go before planning committee would remain the same as they are now. At the moment the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Planning Committee meet with a planning manager every week and consider requests for referral to planning committee".</p>	<p>D Cllr Cathcart</p>

	<p>9.2. District Cllr Cathcart reminded Council that the <u>Local Plan</u> was now out for consultation and the District Council was keen to hear from the hard-to-reach groups.</p>	
10	<p>Working Groups update from any meetings held through month:-</p> <p><u>10.1 War memorial W.G.</u></p> <p><i>10.1.1 Terms of reference</i> for this new group had been circulated and were adopted on the proposition of Cllr Hallett and seconded by Cllr Oakley. (attached to these minutes)</p> <p><i>10.1.2 Report from Meeting</i></p> <p>Cllr Catherall had circulated a report from the first meeting of the group. The work to create the ambulant disabled viewing platform will start in Spring and the group will also progress the storyboard plinth installation.</p> <p><u>10.2 Traffic and Travel</u></p> <p><i>10.2.1. Mobile Speed signs</i> - Clerk reported that necessary permission had been granted and the RFO reported that the sign had been ordered. Volunteers will be required to erect them.</p> <p>The work to Guise Lane should still be completed before the end of the financial year.</p> <p>A further Local Highway Initiative application has been made regarding the A1198. Cllrs Leith and Spenceley were meeting a contractor the following day, together with the RFO.</p> <p><u>10.3 Conservation</u></p> <p><i>10.3.1 Conservation Group Meeting 13.1.20</i> – Cllrs Hallett and Hirtzel reported on the meeting held on the 13th January. The village tidy will take place on the 4th April. The creation of more wildflower areas in the village has been discussed and the possibility of planting the verges would await the county council guidance.</p> <p><i>10.3.2 Climate Emergency Event</i> – Members of the Conservation Group were present and Chairman asked them to elaborate on their ideas for an event. Although no detailed planning had yet taken place, the group was seeking the support of the parish council which it felt was crucial. County Cllr Van de Ven suggested involvement of the Practical Solutions Group and young people from the village college. The Conservation Group hoped that a focus/steering group would be formed to take the village forward. There was wholehearted general agreement that Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth should “start the conversation”.</p> <p>Chairman confirmed that Council would be working on declaring a Climate Emergency and this would support the process. It was agreed that the group be allocated the sum of £1000 for the event, on the proposition of Cllr Hodge, seconded Cllr Douglass.</p> <p><u>10.4 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group</u></p> <p>This Group was to meet the following day and would be talking to another planning consultant. Cllr Hallett advised that this consultant should be able to complete the necessary work within the current budget.</p> <p>District Cllr Cathcart, and County Cllr Van de Ven left the meeting at this point at 9.25 pm</p>	
11	<p>Financial matters:</p> <p><u>11.1 Authorisation of Payments</u></p>	

	<p>B Isherwood 3 ink cartridges for RFO printer (card) £49.97 Morelock Invoice for msid Vario radar speed sign £2657.00 Viking 3 Ink cartridges for Clerk printer £47.97 Eastern Tree surgery Tree Inspection and Report £1182.80 SCDC New liability rate invoice Pavilion 1/4/19- 31.3.20 £896.08 Buchans Landscaping Grounds maintenance less play inspections £1274.34 D& S Cleaning Clean Cemetery chapel and disposal of rubbish £280.00</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total £6388.16</p> <p><u>11.2 Receipts</u> <u>Unity Trust Bank</u> Allotment payments £225 Cemetery Lodge Income £813.36</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total £1038.36</p> <p><u>11.3 Cemetery Lodge – rent arrears update</u> Clerk reported on correspondence with the female tenant and actions taken.</p> <p><u>11.4 Precept for 20/21</u> – The budget had been previously circulated and Council took time to consider the various expenditure items. On the proposition of Cllr Hodge, seconded by Cllr Dixon it was unanimously agreed to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and to request a precept in the sum of £98,056. (Ninety eight thousand and fifty six pounds only)</p>			
12	<p>Items to note from: -</p> <p><u>12.1 Amenities Committee meeting held on 8th January</u> <i>12.1.1 Approval of headstone</i> – Clerk tabled request for headstone which was approved. On the proposition of Cllr Hodge, seconded by Cllr Hallett it was agreed that the Clerk is devolved authority to agree headstones/memorials which meet the Cemetery Regulations. <i>12.1.2 Replacement notice board on The Causeway</i> – The Clerk has sought three quotations for replacement. <i>12.1.3 New Cemetery sign</i> – Cllr Sams to work on this with the Clerk. <i>12.1.4 Youth Facilities consultation</i> – Cllr Dixon is working on this for the Annual Parish Meeting. Council agreed that local businesses be asked to showcase their work, in order to encourage attendance. <i>12.1.5 Tree Survey and works required</i> – Clerk reported that quotations for works from the survey had been received. Council had perused the quotations from three companies. One company's quote to be declined due to cost. Clerk to ascertain from the remaining two companies which one could meet Councils deadline for the work.</p> <p><u>12.2 Finance Committee meeting held on the 7th January</u> As previously reported Committee had concentrated on setting the budget and agreeing the precept.</p> <p><u>12.3 Planning Committee meeting held on the 7th January</u> Committee had drafted response to the Issues and Options consultation (see item 7.1) Committee had also agreed to object to the redevelopment of the garage site and requested that the application go to the full Planning Committee of SCDC.</p> <p>Cllr Geraghty left the meeting at this point at 9.45 pm.</p>			<p>BI</p> <p>VT</p> <p>BI</p> <p>VT</p> <p>VT</p> <p>SS</p> <p>SD</p> <p>VT</p> <p>VT</p>

13	<p>Governance</p> <p><u>13.1 Communication Policy</u> A draft Communication Policy had been circulated for councillors perusal. The policy was adopted following proposal by Cllr Douglass, seconded by Cllr Sams.</p> <p><u>13.2 Emergency Plan</u> Clerk sought help to find Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth's Emergency Plan. If one is not already in place then one will need to be drafted.</p>	ALL
14	<p>Annual Parish Meeting : Date set : 28th April</p> <p><u>14.1 Invitations</u> : Council perused list and discussed additions to include local businesses.</p> <p><u>14.2 Format</u> :Chairman said that all councillors would sit at the front of the hall, and the Working Groups would have their displays around the main hall. It was envisaged that local businesses could use the entrance hall.</p>	VT/ BI
	<p>There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.10 pm.</p> <p>Signed Chairman 18th February 2020</p>	

Dates of Meetings :-

Amenities Committee :2020 – 12th February; 11th March; 8th April; 13th May; 10th June; 8th July; 12th August; 9th September; 14th October; 11th November; 9th December.

Finance : Planning:- 2020 - 4th February; 3rd March; 7th April; 5th May; 2nd June; 7th July; 4th August; 1st September; 6th October; 3rd November; 1st December.

Main Council:- 2020 – 18th February; 17th March; 21st April; **28th April A.P.M.** ; 19th May (plus Annual Meeting) ; 16th June; 21st July; 18th August;15th September; 20th October; 17th November; 15th December

Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council

TERMS OF REFERENCE

WAR MEMORIAL WORKING GROUP

1	Purpose	To advise the Council on all matters relating to the maintenance of the War Memorial. To prepare the site for Remembrance Sunday during the current year.
2	Reports to	Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council
3	Status	Enduring but subject to annual re-appointment
4	Membership	May include councillors and non-councillors
5	Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make recommendations for any expenditure relevant to the good husbandry of the War Memorial• Continue with organisation and delivery of site improvements in a timely and safe manner
6	Delegation of Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No expenditure authority• Allocation of £1000 to be utilised following recommendation to full Council (purchase order would then be issued by RFO)

THE LIMES – THE FUTURE

BACKGROUND

The Limes was established as a school in 1877 for children from Bassingbourn, Kneesworth and the surrounding villages. It continued to educate the local children until 1990 when the last of the pupils were transferred to the Primary School in Brook Rd. Consequently, it contains many memories for a substantial number of local people and is part of Bassingbourn's heritage. On the closure of the school the Limes to become a facility linked to the sheltered housing behind the building and also became available for limited community use.

Bassingbourn is a Minor Rural Centre with an expanding population. The return of military personnel to Bassingbourn Barracks will put pressure on village facilities. For its size Bassingbourn is unusual in not having a dedicated village hall and is substantially disadvantaged by this as there is no focus and little accommodation for village activity. In the past the Village College provided this focus and facilities for the community, but as times changed and school structures altered this gradually ceased.

The Limes has to some extent filled this gap and provides a location for a limited range of activities including the Book Café which is a voluntary library connected to the Cambridgeshire Library service. Residents can also find information from various leaflets and ask the volunteers for help. The Book Café has developed important links with the Primary school so that children visit for various activities and from an early age learn to use a library, particularly important for a rural population. As well as having access to literature people can meet up with their friends and enjoy a drink and a snack together, thus contributing to health and wellbeing.

Other activities which currently take place at the Limes include providing somewhere for the Parish Council and other organisations to hold their meetings. A number of voluntary groups, including the over 60's and CAMTAD (a hearing loss group) have their activities there. It is the venue for the Village band's rehearsals and a small number of groups such as NCT (National Childbirth Trust) use it for their courses. Other facilities in the village are either too small, provide limited access or can be expensive so the Limes already acts as the village hall, albeit in a limited capacity. Given the need for a dedicated village hall it is of the utmost importance to secure the Limes for future community use.

There is longstanding support from the community to have its own village Hall which was demonstrated both in the 2008 Parish Plan and in the 2018 survey. In response to the question "Tell us how you would like to see the village evolve" the answer was overwhelmingly "a Village Hall".

FUTURE

The Parish Council has recently modernised its organisational structure and appointed two clerks on a job share basis, who currently work from home. Ideally, they should have centrally located office space in which to work and so become more accessible to the community. This would contribute to

the smoother running of the Council by allowing the public and others such as the PCSO and representatives of voluntary and statutory authorities to liaise more easily with the Parish Council. With the continuing reduction in public funding local communities will have to become increasingly self-sufficient and having a certain level of basic infrastructure is essential for this to be realised.

There is great potential for increasing the range and variety of uses for the Limes. Not only will the conventional uses of a village hall be catered for, including providing a venue for family gatherings, public meetings, talks and social events but a range of projects have already been suggested which would contribute to the aim of greater self-sufficiency for the village. There is a thriving allotment community and others who grow fruit and vegetables so local people could sell local produce and an artisans' market could be developed. Local artists are keen to display their works and other cultural activities such as a film club could be organised. Activities related to the environment, community support and recycling have been suggested.

Community involvement and an effective model of running the facility could be established by creating a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), a well recognised structure for running such projects. This also has the advantage of being able to apply for various grant monies.

PROPOSALS

South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) approached the Parish Council some time ago with a view to transferring the Limes to the Parish Council. Various discussions took place during the early part of 2019 with different options being put forward by SCDC including leasing or outright purchase of the building.

It was then decided that Councillors Hallett and Hodge should meet with Kate Swan from SCDC to discuss these proposals in greater detail, which took place on the 31st October with our SCDC Councillor Cathcart in attendance. On behalf of the Parish Council it was made clear that there was a strong preference for a long lease at a pepper corn rent and various arguments were put forward as to why this should be accepted. Kate Swan agreed to take this back and present our arguments to SCDC which were then discussed in the closed part of the December meeting of SCDC cabinet.

A meeting was then arranged for 9th January by Liz Watts, the new Chief Executive at SCDC, at which Councillors Hallett, Hodge, Douglass and Cathcart and the clerks were present. Liz Watts stated that if SCDC were to offer the Parish Council the Limes on a long lease at a pepper corn rent then there needed to be some reassurance that there was a clear vision, capability to deliver and that SCDC would have no future involvement. SCDC would also expect the Parish Council to contribute 50% of the costs of the transfer which, including the repainting of the outside, would amount to no more than £18K between the two authorities.

At the end of the meeting the Chief Executive said that she now felt confident, having met with us, that she was able to recommend to SCDC that this transfer should go ahead on the basis of these discussions. She also agreed to confirm this in writing.

Although the working group will produce a full business plan as soon as possible, in the interim, some assessment has been made about the initial costs, based on the financial information provided by SCDC, which are shown in the appendix. The non-staffing costs amounted to around £10K. Initially, apart from accommodating the clerks within the building the activities currently catered for will continue with no major changes envisaged other than to encourage greater use of the building.

The Carter Jonas Valuation Report done for SCDC stated that "the buildings appeared to be in a generally reasonable state of repair commensurate with their age and use". It also stated that

“subject to appropriate ongoing maintenance and repair the buildings can reasonably be expected to have a minimum economic lifespan of 25 years”. However, it seems prudent as part of the working groups remit for a structural survey to be obtained.

RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Parish Council agrees to the transfer of the Limes from SCDC on a 99 year lease at a peppercorn rent subject to an acceptable lease being drawn up.

APPENDIX

PROJECTION OF LIKELY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE LIMES

	2019-2020 SCDC BUDGET	2020- 2021 ¹ (9 months)	2021- 2022 ¹	2022- 2023 ¹	2023- 2024 ¹	2024- 2025 ¹
INCOME						
Limes residents ⁴	750 ⁴	560	1050 ³	1350 ³	1800 ³	2250 ³
PC and Book Café	1260					
Other existing hirers	790 ²	590	1100 ³	1420 ³	1900 ³	2370 ³
New hirers	0	0	0	1500 ⁵	3000 ⁵	4500 ⁵
TOTAL	2800	1150	2150	4270	6700	9120
EXPENDITURE						
Set-up:						
initial repairs		9000 ⁶				
Survey		2500				
Legal fees		1000				
Operating:						
Insurance	150	155	160	165	170	175
Repairs	3060	1000	3250	3340	3440	3550
Cleaning	2380	1840	2530	2600	2680	2760
Utilities	3880	3000	4120	4240	4370	4500
Fixtures	600	620	640	660	680	700
Other costs	510	400	540	560	575	590
TOTAL	10580	19515	11240	11565	11915	12275
Excess of income over expenditure ⁷	-7780	-18365	-9090	-7295	-5215	-3155
OFFSET BY SAVINGS						
Book Café grant		900	900	900	900	900
PC room hire		270	360	360	360	360
Work from home allowance		360	480	500	520	540
TOTAL OFFSET		1530	1740	1760	1780	1800
NET IMPACT		-16835	-7350	-5535	-3435	-1355

¹ Costs at 3% annual inflation

² Current hire charge is £5 per hour

³ Assuming transitional discount – hire charge £7/hr in 2021; £9/hr in 2022; £12/hr in 2023; £15/hr in 2024

⁴ Estimated as this is currently wrapped up in the service charge

⁵ Assumes a competitive hire rate of £15 per hour is charged - compare much smaller facilities at the URC (currently £10/hr) and church room (currently £8.50/hr)

⁶ Per SCDC proposal

⁷ Deficit to be met from precept

Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council

Protocol on Communications

1. Parish Council correspondence

- a) The point of contact for Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council is the Clerk and it is to the Clerk that all correspondence for the Council should be addressed.
- b) The Clerk should deal with all correspondence following a meeting.
- c) No individual councillor should be the sole custodian of any correspondence or information in the name of Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council, a committee, subcommittee or working party. In particular Councillors do not have a right to obtain confidential information/documentation unless they can demonstrate a “need to know”.
- d) All official correspondence should be sent by the Clerk in the name of Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council, using council letter headed paper.
- e) Where correspondence from the Clerk to a councillor is copied to another person the addressee should be made aware that a copy is being forwarded to that person.

2. Agenda items for Council, Committees, Sub committees and Working Groups

- a) Agenda should be clear and concise. They should contain sufficient information to enable councillors to make an informed decision, and for the public to understand what matters are being considered and what decisions are to be taken at a meeting.
- b) Items for information should be kept to a minimum on an agenda.
- c) Where the Clerk or a councillor wishes fellow councillors to receive matters “for information only”, this information will be circulated via the Clerk

3. Communications with the press and public

- a) The Clerk will clear all press reports, or comments to the media, with the Chairman of Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council or the Chairman of the relevant committee.
- b) Press reports from Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council, it’s committees or working groups should be from the Clerk or via the reporters own attendance at the meeting
- c) Unless a councillor has been authorised by the council to speak to the media on a particular issue, Councillors who are asked for comment by the press should make it clear that it is a personal view and ask that it be clearly reported as their personal view.
- d) Unless a councillor is absolutely certain that he/she is reporting the view of Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council, they must make it clear to members of the public that they are expressing a personal view.
- e) If councillors receive a complaint from a member of the public, this should be dealt with under Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council’s adopted complaints procedure, or via a council agenda item.

4. Councillor correspondence to external parties

- a) As the Clerk should be sending most of the council’s correspondence, should a councillor write to other bodies, it needs to be made clear that it is written in their official capacity and has been authorised by Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council.

- b) A copy of all outgoing correspondence relating to Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council or a councillors' role within it, should be sent to the Clerk, and it be noted on the correspondence e.g. "Copy to the Clerk" so the recipient is aware that the Clerk has been advised.

5. Communications with Parish Council staff

- a) Councillors must not give instructions to any member of staff unless authorised to do so (for example 3 or more councillors sitting as a committee or sub committee with appropriate delegated powers from the council).
- b) No individual councillor, regardless of whether or not they are the chairman of Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council, the chairman of a committee or other meeting, or are styled "leader" of the council, may give instructions to the Clerk or to any other employee which are inconsistent or conflict with council decision's or arrangements for delegated powers.
- c) Telephone calls should be appropriate to the work of Bassingbourn Parish Council.
- d) Emails:-
 - I. instant email replies should not be expected from the Clerk/RFO, reasons for urgency should be stated;
 - II. information to councillors should normally be directed via the Clerk;
 - III. emails from councillors to external parties should be copied to the Clerk;
 - IV. councillors should acknowledge their emails when requested to do so;
- e) meetings with the Clerk (or other officers):-
 - I. Wherever possible an appointment should be made;
 - II. meetings should be relevant to the work of that particular officer;
 - III. councillors should be clear that the matter is legitimate council business and not a matter driven by personal or political agendas

Adopted by Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council January 2020

Signed Chairman