

SKILLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Grantham, Lincolnshire

Chairman: Graham Page Vice-Chairman: Richard Wrigley

Councillors: Neville Clark, Francis Disney, Stuart Millington, Anita Sheehan.

Parish Clerk: Vicky Page (Mrs), The Old School, Colsterworth Road, Skillington, Lincs. NG33 5HF

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Notes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at Skillington Village Hall on Monday 3rd April 2017 at 7.00pm: Please note that these Minutes are published in draft form and are subject to ratification at the next meeting.

Present: Cllrs G. Page, N. Clark (after 7.25pm), F. Disney, S. Millington, A. Sheehan and R. Wrigley ; V Page (Parish Clerk); Cllr Bob Adams (LCC & SKDC); Cllr Andrea Webster (SKDC); Parishioners: R. Allinson, A. Bunce, J. Bunce, G. Robinson, D. Scott, W. Scott and M. Sheehan.

The Meeting was chaired by Graham Page, Chairman of Skillington Parish Council.

1. **Apologies for absence:** received from G. Claxton and M. Claxton.
2. **Notes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 4th April 2016:** were agreed and signed by Cllr Page who had chaired the meeting.
3. **Report on the Parish Council:** The Chairman addressed the meeting and reported:
 - 3.1 **What is the Parish Council?** the lowest tier of local government with various Duties and Powers. What the PC cannot do is: refuse or grant planning applications, but it is informed of all applications and can make comments; it cannot mend holes in the road although the Clerk will report and follow up issues with Highways, however it helps if residents report any potholes themselves too.
 - 3.2 **Councillors:** the Council has seven councillors: the Chairman; Richard Wrigley, Vice-Chairman; and Cllrs Neville Clark, Francis Disney, Anita Sheehan and Stuart Millington. There is currently a vacancy for a councillor following the resignation of Dave Featherstone in October. The Chairman thanked the councillors who have served in the past year. The next election will be in May 2018.
 - 3.3 **Mowing:** the Council undertakes the mowing for the whole village including areas cut on behalf of LCC and SKDC (excluding a small area in Stonepit Lane cut by SKDC) using local contractor BDG Mowing who have provided a good service. During the past year reimbursements for this work have been received from LCC and SKDC, however from April 2017 LCC will cut this funding to 20%.
 - 3.4 **Bus Shelter:** during 2016 the Bus Shelter was decorated and repaired externally and the murals and graffiti inside were painted over with anti-graffiti paint.
 - 3.5 **The Cemetery:** significant ground maintenance has been carried out on the western side of the Cemetery; the eastern side is scheduled to be improved during 2017/18. The asbestos roof on the shed has been removed and safely disposed of and a replacement roof is due to be fitted soon. A recent survey of headstones revealed several unstable memorials and the families affected have been contacted and asked to make these safe. The Clerk has been unable to contact the family of John Bradley.
 - 3.6 **Viking Way:** this continues to be in a very poor state. The PC has recently reported fly tipping which has been promptly dealt with by SKDC, a dumped vehicle took longer to remove as it was in an inaccessible place. Cllr Adams reported that LCC will prosecute if evidence is produced. It was noted that this section of the Viking Way remains open to vehicles and enforcement of any restrictions would be extremely difficult.
 - 3.7 **The Blue Horse PH:** CAMRA applied for an Asset of Community Value which was granted. Permission for conversion to a private residence was refused and the pub has now closed. It is understood that a further application is being considered.
 - 3.8 **Conservation Area:** SKDC has reviewed the Skillington Conservation Area.
4. **Neighbourhood Plan:**
 - 4.1. A Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in order to support the protection from possible unwelcome development given by the Conservation Area and the current Local Plan. Skillington is presently classified as a Non-Sustainable Community.
 - 4.2. The draft Plan was subject to a Consultation in September 2016, comments were collated and responses circulated.

Signed: Chairman

Date

- 4.3.** The draft Plan is now with SKDC and a further Consultation period will end on 14th April 2017; an external examiner will then be appointed.
- 4.4.** Grants of £9,596 have been received; expenditure was £6,965 and the balance of £2,632 was refunded.
- 4.5.** Following any amendments recommended by the external examiner the Plan will go to local referendum and if supported will be adopted by SKDC.
- 4.6.** Once adopted, the Neighbourhood Plan must to be taken into account when planning applications are considered.
- 4.7.** The Chairman thanked those who have served on the Working Party: Richard Wrigley (Chairman), Guy Robinson, Clare Winter and also Dave Featherstone. Cllr Wrigley also thanked Cllr Page.
- 5. Planning Committee:** The Planning Committee usually consists of the Chairman and three Councillors, currently the Chairman, Cllr Page, Vice-Chairman, Cllr Wrigley, together with Cllrs Disney and Sheehan. SKDC and LCC inform the Parish Council of any applications from within the Parish or in the case of large developments, in the vicinity of the Parish. The Committee confer and prepare comments they think appropriate on all planning applications relating to buildings and trees in Skillington, bearing in mind the need to protect the identity and character of the village. Any comments must, however, have regard to 'material planning considerations'. Comments are collated and returned by the Parish Clerk but, as noted above, the Parish Council is not the development authority. Any significant development is referred to full Council for consideration. The following aspects are of particular concern to the Committee: size and nature of the proposal; feasibility; impact on the environment; integration into village structure. During the period 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017 the following applications were received: change of use for The Blue Horse which was refused; an agricultural storage lagoon for liquid organic waste; an agricultural application for a lean-to extension to an existing barn; and alterations to a listed house. In addition, the Parish Council was informed by Lincolnshire County Council of a consultation with regard to a Scoping Opinion/Environmental Statement for a proposed new quarry: a joint meeting was held with Colsterworth PC and the applicants and a report sent to LCC.
- 6. Parish Council Finances:**
- 6.1.** Income is mostly from the Precept, £4,600 in 2017/18, which is £33.05 of a Band D property Council Tax. The Council budgets to break-even each financial year.
- 6.2.** Additional income, bringing the total to about £8,000, is from Cemetery charges and various grants and reimbursement of costs for services provided on behalf of LCC and SKDC such as maintenance of the Closed Churchyard of St James's Church, grass cutting and litter collection. Income from the Cemetery was lower than usual during 2016/17.
- 6.3.** Expenditure during the year, c £10,300, includes employment of the Clerk, carrying out mowing, street cleaning and care of the churchyard and cemetery, etc. Also one-offs which last year included maintenance work on the bus shelter and cemetery. Expenditure was unusually high in 2016/17 due to these one-off expenses.
- 6.4.** The excess expenditure of £2,407 was covered by a £525 provision made in 2015/16, the £740 operating surplus from 2015/16 and the balance from reserves.
- 6.5. Outlook for 2017/18:** A small increase in the Precept of £100 to £4,700, which will help to absorb the costs of LCC mowing funding, reduced to 20% for one year and then to be withdrawn altogether. Further ground maintenance at the Cemetery is planned for the Eastern side.
- 6.6. Thanks:** The Chairman expressed his thanks to the volunteers who have helped throughout the year, to all the Parish Councillors; to Cllr Adams for his continued support throughout the year, attending almost all the PC's meetings; and to the Parish Clerk for the many extra hours worked.
- 7. Vacancies on the Parish Council:** there is currently a Casual Vacancy for a councillor to sit on the Parish Council. Also, the Parish Clerk will be retiring at the end of June and a replacement is being sought for this, paid, part-time position (£4.5 hours/week).
- 8. Thanks:** The Chairman thanked those in attendance for coming to the meeting. He also thanked the Parish Councillors and Cllrs Bob Adams and Andrea Webster for their continued support.
- 9. Matters Raised from the Floor:**
- 9.1.** How much will the increase in the Precept work out per property?: the total increase is £100 to be divided between 152 properties.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

The next Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Monday, 9th April 2018 at 7.00pm at Skillington Village Hall

Signed: Chairman

Date