**Swerford Parish Council**

**Parish Council Committee Meeting**

**Thursday 13 February 2020 at 19:30 hrs**

**Swerford Village Hall**

**Draft Minutes**

**Present:** Mr J Chaplin (Chairman), Mrs J Abbott (Deputy Chair and Councillor), Mr J Drinkwater (Councillor), Mr W Haddon (Parish Clerk), Mr G Strachan (Councillor and RFO), Mr L Tustian (Councillor) (JC, JA, JD, Clerk, GS, LT respectively hereafter.)

Also present: Mr C Ford Mr N Davies, Mr C Dixon. (CF, ND, CD respectively.)

**DRAFT MINUTES**

1. **Declarations of Interest**. None given.
2. **Apologies for absence.** None received.
3. **Reminder: Code of Conduct.** Noted.
4. **Approval of minutes** of meeting on 14th November 2019. Proposed by JD and seconded by GS, the Minutes were approved.
5. Matters arising:
   1. **Swerford Charity.** CF advised that accounts have been submitted to the Charity Commission and that some distributions have been made.
   2. **CPR training** targeted for JUL20. CF confirmed on schedule.
   3. **Salt Refills**. Two points arose. OCC had delivered a new bag as requested but have yet to distribute to our bins as promised. JC will contact them. As to the location of a new bin at Chapel End, despite some responses from residents to the Chairman’s enquiries, where best to put the bin came under heavy scrutiny and no decision reached. (Action - JC will consider further.)
   4. Where to locate a new **Chapel End tree** is no further forward. (Action - CF.)
   5. How best to install and thereafter maintain ‘dog friendly’ access to all **stiles** was not discussed. Progress on writing to all involved landowners has yet to occur as while stiles have been identified, with the names of owners of the relevant land, the Clerk had been waiting for further detail so as to progress the letter agreed. The Clerk will meet with CF to gather addresses. It was noted that a simple notice in the Village News was insufficient. (Action: WH/CF then JC.)
6. **Playing Fields:** JA advised that the weather had not helped the condition of the play area. Some of the equipment needs a good clean and a working party will be put together. Some Council funds are available if needed. (Action: JA/JC.)

LT noted that time was pressing for any hedge cutting and this was discussed in some detail. (Action: JC to review.)

1. **Financial Governance**:
   1. A statement of year-to-date Receipts and Payments, actual versus forecast, together with Summary of Balances held was given/noted. No Loans or Investments exist.
   2. Approval of the Annual budget/forecast together with the final Precept Demand (£3,162.94) was proposed by JD, seconded by LT and approved.
2. **Planning Applications** received since last meeting:
   1. Application 19/03542/HHD re **Lansdowne Cottage** was noted as approved and WODC’s terms noted. Considerable angst was expressed that the Parish Council objections to construction materials had not been forcibly implemented although WODC still has room to manoeuvre as this progresses.
   2. The latest Application 20/00181/S73 relating to the proposed storage building at Church End, Swerford (referred to by the Council as ‘**Backside**’) was discussed in very great detail. Neighbours and the Council are most upset with what appears to be a flagrant breach of the original Planning Approval T18/00249/FUL and an inability to stop construction, and indeed progress demolishment, of those parts not in accord with the approved plan. ND and CD, while not formally representing the neighbours at Church End, reiterated the absolute discontent of many with the situation: they, and a significant number of other village members, have forcefully objected throughout the whole process.

A proposed, extreme, objection, was read out in detail by the Chairman for discussion: this will be considered further so that it is with the Clerk for submission to WODC by the 18th February deadline (it was agreed by the 16th say).

1. **General Governance**:
   * 1. The **Financial Timetable**: matters noted in the Council’s Annual Financial Timetable were noted. This included reference to the Precept, Financial Report and Swerford Charity; the Review of the Registers of Title Deeds and Assets (the Clerk confirmed no change had occurred); and that Year-End Accounts and the Chairman’s Report are due at the forthcoming Annual Parish Council Meeting;
     2. **Council Insurance** expires 31MAY20 and will be reviewed accordingly. (Action WH/JC.)
2. Any Other Business
   1. **Planning.** Prior minutes were briefly referred to in terms of what action might be taken with regard to Planning generally (see minutes of 14NOV19). As there is a public meeting on 27FEB20 looking at the strengths and weaknesses of the services being provided by WODC Planning, it was decided that any further action will be held in abeyance, pending the outcome. (Action: JC/JD will attend to present view.)
   2. **Village Hall Insurance**. JC confirmed that a complaint has been lodged with Aviva relating to the action of the Loss Adjusters. The situation is otherwise fluid.
   3. **Village Website.** Great progress has been made and it is hoped that a new Website will be launched sometime in the Spring. Roll-out will be a gradual process. Matters of note: there will be a £599 one-off set-up fee and costs of £300 annually thereafter; items published remain the property of the Parish; the system is based on Wordpress and content may be moved easily if needed; the law does not require historical items to be brought over to the new system. (Action - JC to continue.)
   4. **VE Day - 75th Anniversary celebrations**: the Village Hall will in fact have a Coffee Morning - Plant Sale on the 8th of May instead of a party previously considered. Details to be circulated in due course.
   5. **Road sign on the A361**, in disrepair. Ongoing. (Action - JC.)
   6. **Community Resilience** – the Message in a Bottle Scheme had been implemented.
   7. **R Courts MP** - accessibility details were noted and have been posted on the Parish Council Board. JC asked for details so that the Village News might note. (Action WH-JC.)
   8. **Bus Services.** JA raised the point that in view of recent government initiatives to improve national services, how to get Swerford ‘on the map’? GS noted that there is a village hall meeting on the 21st of March at which this will be raised. Ongoing.
   9. JD noted that there used to be a **‘Welcome Pack’** for new village residents and what happened to this? It would appear that this has not been in use for some eight or nine years (in fact not a pack but if as given to the Haddons on their arrival, a two-sided A4 sheet outlining useful services (surgeries, shops, how to get a paper delivered and so on). A good idea but in need of further consideration. (Action-All. Key matter - perhaps a volunteer to take it on?)
   10. CF asked what was happening in relation to getting previously discussed **warning signs on Chapel Hill.** (Action – JC.)
   11. ND asked about **Council Notices** (Agendas, Minutes) and perhaps that they might find their way on to the Church End general noticeboard. This used to happen. It was noted that as on the website, and posted on the dedicated Parish Council Notice Board outside the school, and that as there is little or no room on the other general village boards (they can be quite long notices), it had been decided that the single board approach was acceptable.
   12. ND asked what could be done about a large **pot hole at the corner with Cow Lane**. He was referred to a website to register his concern. (WH next morning went to WODC ‘FixMyStreet’ and registered the problem. Item to be taken forward by Parish Council as to what help can be given to village residents on major potholes reported. How effective is FixMyStreet and are there alternatives? Is it a Council issue?)

**There being no further business the Meeting closed at 19:30 hrs. The next Village Meeting is the Annual Parish Assembly at 19:30 on Friday 24th April 2020.**