

# Swallowcliffe Parish Council

## Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held at the Village Hall on 11th January 2024

### 11.1.01 Those present and apologies for absence

Present: Cllrs. S. Banas (Chairman), N. Osborne, N. Cooke, A. Brockway, Wiltshire Cllr. N. Najjar

In attendance: T. Culver-James (Clerk)

There were also four members of the public present.

Apologies: None

### 11.1.02 Declarations of Interest

None made.

### 11.1.03 Chairman's Introduction

The Chairman opened the meeting by confirming the resignation of Patrick Willis. There was a unanimous vote of thanks for all his contributions to the council and community including the phone box and footpath improvements. There is therefore a vacancy.

### 11.1.04 Resolution of minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were approved and signed into the record.

### 11.1.05 Report from Wiltshire Councillor

Cllr. Najjar explained about budget issues and that a consistent approach was being maintained. Wiltshire Council (WC) has had a positive financial review and is in a relatively strong position. A small increase is expected in council tax plus the social care levy set by central government. WC, unlike many other councils, can keep a reserve whilst also balancing this with putting finances to good use. For example, spending on roads, investing in communities and vulnerable children and young people. Local examples include funding for Fovant Youth Club, Ebbesbourne Wake playground and Broad Chalke playground. There have been many local road repairs where potholes have caused issues. He emphasised a vigorous campaign to tackle potholes and road surfaces was underway by the Council and their contractors. There is an ongoing metric study on the roads to streamline speeds. The 'Explore Wiltshire' app has been launched and download rates have been exceeded. This will be expanded to include the Nadder Valley. Wiltshire Council's Children's Services has been inspected by OFSTED and judged to be 'outstanding', the highest grade.

### 11.1.06 Planning matters requiring Consideration/Resolution

**PL/2023/07895** Poles Farm, Swallowcliffe, Wiltshire SP3 5NX. Demolition of existing barns and erection of new four bed residential home and detached car/port/garden store.

**PL/2023/07876** Poles Farm, Swallowcliffe, Wiltshire SP3 5NX. Proposed rear extension, replacement conservatory and conversion of attached outbuilding to an existing grade 2 listed farmhouse, with other internal and external alterations. Conversion of listed curtilage barn to ancillary

accommodation. Alterations to listed curtilage existing office, demolition of existing implement store and replacement with an attached WC and garage/car port. Alterations to the highway to add bollards.

**PL/2023/08256** Poles Farm, Swallowcliffe, Wiltshire SP3 5NX. Works to a Listed Building as detailed above.

Councillors resolved to object to the above three applications in the meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2023, comments submitted to Wiltshire Council 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2023.

In view of strong public opposition, Councillors requested that Cllr. Najjar call in the new build application PL/2023/07895 to Wiltshire Council's Planning Committee. There is no exact date at this stage, but it is likely to be before the end of March. The Planning Committee meeting will be open to the public. People may speak for and against the application but must be registered in advance. The PC will also have an opportunity to speak. The Planning Committee then decide to approve or reject the application. It is important to ensure that any points raised are relevant to planning law. If the application is rejected, the applicant has the right to appeal.

The Chairman expressed thanks to Cllr. Najjar for supporting the democratic process by calling in the application.

**PL/2023/05102** MIDDLEDEAN, SWALLOWCLIFFE, SALISBURY, SP3 5NY. Swimming pool, single storey extension to consented garage (20/11557/FUL) for pool house and the erection of a pool plant room.

The original planning application was supported with conditions which have now been met.

It was unanimously resolved that further time was needed for councillors to review the revised application and comments will be submitted via the clerk's delegated authority.

#### 11.1.07 Financial matters requiring Consideration/Resolution

- a. Report of expenditure and account balance was received from the chairman.
- b. Telephone Box Refurbishment expenses unanimously resolved, payable to Patrick Willis:

Rubber Stamp for Library Books	£36.28
Paints and materials	£213.91
Signage	<u>£202.32</u>
	<u>£452.51</u>

- c. A precept for 2024/2025 of £4,931 was unanimously resolved.

#### 11.1.08 Village Hall report

At the end of December 2023, the village hall had approximately £11,000 in its bank account. Insurance costs had risen by 10%. The committee have looked at higher interest deals. However, the highest available was 1.3% so decided not to pursue this.

Electricity had been on a good, fixed deal for the past 3 years. This has now ended, and a 1-year deal had been secured. However, costs have doubled. The coin machine is still used to charge for electric costs when the hall is hired out. There is a risk that this method may not cover costs. However, a SMART meter has been installed which will make it easier to monitor spending.

The generator is now fully installed with thanks to Cllr. Banas and Mr David Morrison. A practice run is scheduled for March 2024.

Mr Morrison has stood down from the Village Hall committee and Mr Steve Martel has joined.

#### 11.1.09 Footpaths/Rights of Way

Cllr. Brockway provided a detailed review of the footpaths and rights of way. She shared a working document which she has produced. This shows the name and location of each of the footpaths, a note on condition and a column for further notes/actions. She has made notes about where additional gates would be useful and where there are issues such as lack of signage. Any issues can be reported to her or online via the WC 'MyWilts' app or website for online reporting.

<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywilts-online-reporting>

She explained how WC have a very useful website for accessing the map which shows the names of the footpaths and rights of way such as SWAL1 etc and how these interlink with surrounding villages.

<https://wiltscouncil.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=43d5a86a545046b2b59fd7dd49d89d22>

A working party to be arranged in the Spring when re-growth will start to cause issues. Cllr. Brockway has been in contact with Carys Ford, the Wiltshire Council Countryside Access Officer, who has already addressed some of the issues raised,

#### 11.1.10 Village maintenance

Maintenance work has been carried out to village finger posts. Caps have been added to provide further protection. Some further renovation and painting is needed to be done on the fingerpost by the church.

It was felt that the two sets of white gates would benefit from a clean. This has been passed to the Parish Steward.

Any further maintenance issues to be reported to Cllr Cooke.

#### 11.1.11 Environmental initiatives

Mrs Boothman provided the following update:

- Successful litter pick held on 25<sup>th</sup> November. Very well attended. Next planned for March.
- Looking forward to seeing all the daffodils emerge planted by Mrs Boothman last year. 700 planted.
- Most of the wildflower seeds did not germinate but hopefully the ones which did will see the start of more wildflowers this year.
- Thanks expressed to Ms Sarah Taylor for donating some plants and to Mrs Boothman for leading this initiative.

#### 11.1.12 Highways matters

Cllr. Banas provided the following update:

- Undergrowth has been cut back at Bottom Rd/A30 junction.
- Trying to keep ahead of A30 flooding by bus stop by keeping gullies clear.
- Worn out give way lines at Common Lane junction by church reported to Wiltshire Council
- Interest expressed in traffic calming outside the Royal Oak and church corner.

- Traffic calming opportunities for Common Lane – there are unofficial laybys, they are essential for passing although very rutted.
- Common Lane at the far end of the village gets very muddy with the regular movement of sheep near Wilbury Barn so white lines are unlikely to help.
- Additional dedicated SID suggested for Swallowcliffe – Cllr Banas will explore options and PC to review level of support by residents at the April Parish Meeting.

#### 11.1.13 Emergency Planning/Resilience

The 'road closed' signs and sandbags at both ends of Higgins Lane need to be removed.

The remaining emergency kit for power outages has been purchased for the Village Hall.

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated there has been minor flooding on Bottom Lane. A build up of gravel in the culvert and ditch causes the back up of rainwater. There is also some minor flooding outside Mulbery Cottage and the Royal Oak when the drains can't cope with the rainwater. There is the danger of this freezing and becoming hazardous. There has been no ground water flooding of properties.

It was noted that maintenance from Wiltshire Council appears to be diminishing and we are getting more issues. For example, maintenance of the culvert and ditch would obviate flooding on Bottom Road.

#### 11.1.14 Matters arising and date of next meeting.

Next meeting agreed for 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024

#### 11.01.15 Private Session on Confidential HR matters

The Council unanimously resolved to go into private session to discuss confidential HR matters as recorded in confidential meeting notes.

The meeting concluded at 8.40pm.