

North Cerney Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING on 14th December 2023 at 7.30 pm at The Memorial Hall, North Cerney

Present: Councillors Mark Tufnell, Adam Stoten, Cathy Martin Neil Brown, Barry Koch as RFO and members of the public

Presiding: Councillor Mark Tufnell

Clerk: V Hancock

Apologies: Councillor Clare Cannock and PCSO Susan Fellows

1. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 7th September 2023

The Council **resolved** that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7th September 2023 at The Memorial Hall, North Cerney be approved and signed after some minor corrections had been made.

2. Matters Arising:

2.1 **Registration of the village green:** The Chairman and Clerk had met with someone who had not been a representative of the Land registry, but a retired solicitor offering to help with registration for a fee. It was decided his services were not needed, and the Clerk would deal with the application for registration.

2.2 **Robinson Road:** It was confirmed that the name plate had been repaired

2.3 **Corner Cottage Woodmancote:** The property did not yet appear to be on the market and nothing had been done to clear the growth from the garden. A member of the public had been in touch with CDC as it is a Grade II listed building, and had been referred to the planning officer. An inspection was being carried out and a report was awaited. Councillor Hodgkinson said he would pursue the matter when the report was available.

3. District and County Issues: Councillor Hodgkinson reported regarding the following:

3.1 **Reporting potholes, drainage issues etc:** The County Council now had a new reporting system to be used by the public (www.fixmystreet.com). Under the new system, feedback on progress would be provided

3.2 **The Whiteway:** Part of this had now been resurfaced and the remaining section between Rendcomb Airfield and Chedworth would be dealt with in early January

3.3 **The A417 "Missing Link":** Construction had now started. Much of the work that involved closing the road would be carried out overnight to minimise disruption. This might create more traffic on the A435

3.4 **Council Budgets:** Neither the County nor District Councils were at risk of bankruptcy, but difficult decisions were having to be made. There would be an increase in some charges, and some services would be cut back. The County Council budget consultation was ongoing.

3.5 **Rendcomb Airfield:** This was now awaiting advice from the planning officer before it went to the planning committee for a decision. A member of the public mentioned that the stationing of US Air Force drones at Fairford was likely to cause increased air traffic over the parish.

4. Woodmancote Defibrillator: The Council had received £1,000 from funds raised in Woodmancote, and a grant of £625 from Cotswold District Council. This left a balance of £1,268 to be paid (as previously agreed) from the CIL funds received.

The Clerk reported that, as the future of the barn in Hayes Lane, where the defibrillator would be installed, was uncertain, the owner had asked for a letter from the Council confirming that it would be removed if required. It was agreed that this was acceptable to the Council. The Clerk had sent a draft letter to the owner, which provided for two months notice if it was required to be removed, a Woodmancote resident confirmed this period could be reduced if necessary. When the wording was agreed the Clerk would provide a letter for signature by the Chairman.

5. Woodmancote Playground and New Lease:

5.1 Proposals for the future: A member of the public said there had been a recent meeting in Woodmancote of a number of residents who were keen to see more use made of the playground, and to see it improved and used as a community hub in the village. As well as a children's playground, they envisaged it being used as a space for community activities and events. Completion of the new lease would provide an opportunity to seek funding. There was an active group able to generate funding. They felt it important to have a Councillor involved, and asked for the support of the Council for their proposals. The Council confirmed that in principle it would support the proposals.

5.2 New Lease: The Clerk reported that the land owner was offering a new 99 year (subsequently corrected to 999 year) lease, with the use restricted to a children's playground and community space. The owner's legal costs were likely to be about £1,200. The Council **resolved** to proceed with the new lease, and would not instruct a solicitor at this stage.

5.2 Maintenance: It was agreed to accept Tom Macdonald's quotation for spraying and strimming the playground weeds. Ross Collins' final invoice was accepted.

6. Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Prevention:

PCSO Fellows had sent a report, showing there had been only one reported crime (a house burglary) in the past three months. The Chairman said there had been very little rural crime in recent months.

7. Highway Issues:

7.1 Extension of the A435 40 mph speed limit: The police had carried out a recent survey of the speeds of vehicles at Churnbridge. It was thought that the result might support the request for the speed limit reduction. Councillor Hodgkinson said he had sent the report on to GCC Highways. The Clerk was asked to write to the police and Highways, and he would pursue the matter.

7.2 Water at Bankside: Councillor Hodgkinson had received a complaint about the water running down the road past Bankside and creating a sheet of ice in winter conditions. He had asked Highways to look into it. The Clerk said it had been investigated some years ago, and Highways concluded it was a spring under the road, not a leaking drain. The problem was made worse by the fact that the water ran past, rather than down, the highway drain.

7.3 Winter snow: Councillor Tufnell asked Councillor Hodgkinson if he could arrange for the County Council's snow plough engineer to carry out necessary modifications to the Parish's snow plough.

7.4 Wall at Bankside: Councillor Martin asked when the damaged wall at Bankside would be repaired. The Clerk said it was scheduled by County Highways to be repaired by early January

8. Financial Matters

8.1 Reconciliation statement and authorisation of expenditure: The reconciliation statement was presented by the RFO and it was **resolved** that it be approved. The balance of the precept for this year had been received, together with a further £2,046.06 in CIL payments. £1,000 had been received from Woodmancote residents, in respect of funds raised for the defibrillator. The following expenditure was approved:

V Hancock	Salary September to November	441.00
	Balance of defibrillator cost	1268.00
Ross Collins	Playground mowing	1150.00
Roy Savory	Mowing village green	200.00
Citizens Advice	Donation	250.00

8.2 Requests for funds:

8.2.1 Village Hall: An email had been received by Councillors giving details of the works being carried out, and requesting a donation from the Parish Council. Councillor Martin said the committee was running out of funds, apart from a contingency fund that needed to be maintained. The committee would be asked to provide more information about its financial position, and the amount they were seeking

8.2.2 Churn News: The editor had explained that, because of a substantial increase in printing costs, there were no longer sufficient funds to produce this, and had asked if the Council could contribute £1,500 a year. It was agreed that this was not possible, but that it was important that this publication, which did also serve other parishes, continue. After discussion it was decided there were options that needed to be investigated to see if it could continue on a self-funding basis. Councillor Martin would try to meet with the editor, to consider the options.

8.3 Budget and precept for 2022-23: The RFO expected there would be a balance of some £4,800 at the end of the financial year. It was **resolved** to keep the precept at its present figure of £6,000.

9. Planning applications and Tree Preservation Orders:

9.1 Applications: The following had been notified to the Council:

- Calmsden Manor – erection of orangery and associated landscaping
- 3 Hillview North Cerney – loft conversion etc – now withdrawn

9.2 Consents:

- Site of the Meeting Room Woodmancote – approval of amended plans and conditions
- Burcham, Burcombe Lane – replacement of conservatory with front extension

10. Co-option of Councillors: It was unanimously **resolved** to co-opt David Barrell and Jonathan Dryland to fill the vacancies on the Council

11. Biodiversity Policy: It was acknowledged that the Council had a statutory duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Further consideration would be given to a policy.

12. Correspondence: The following had been received by the Clerk:

- 12.1 Press releases from Cotswold District Council on (inter alia)
 - Creation of a plan for the future of car parking in the district

Budget consultation

Advancement towards net zero with solar energy investments

Looking to improve access to Cirencester town centre

Welcoming a halt to the Cotswold National Park plan

A trial reduction in call centre opening hours

Risk to waste collectors from lithium-ion batteries and needles

Clamping down on crimes such as fly-tipping, littering and graffiti

12.2 From an organisation appointed by the OPCC conducting a survey to gather residents' opinions about their perceptions of crime in their local area

12.3 From GAPTC with guidance about litter and waste legislation and the responsibilities and powers of local councils

12.4 From Gloucestershire County Council requesting views on the proposed budget

12.5 From Cotswold District Council regarding proposed "Planning Roadshows" for parish councils

13 Any Other Business:

The Clerk proposed that Councillor Martin should be thanked for her work in dealing with seven feral cats in North Cerney

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Signed:

Date:

The next meeting will be on Thursday 14 March 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Memorial Hall.