

# Sunningdale Parish Council

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 13th January 2009

At the Pavilion, Broomhall Lane

Members of the public from the pre-school attended the meeting. They were invited to speak later for the agenda item on the Pre-school.

**Present:** Christine Gadd (Chairman), Jon Read, Viki Chapman, Rose Adams, Nick Dawson, Jamie McCaul, Kate Webb

01/09 Apologies: Rodney Stubblefield (on holiday)

02/09 There were no declarations of interest.

03/09 The Minutes of the Council Meeting on 16th December 2008 were signed as a true record of the meeting.

04/09 **Finance report.** Council noted points 1-3 of the report.

**Council agreed** to amend Financial Regulations to read:

5.3 Cheques or BACS payments drawn on the bank account shall be signed by two Councillors up to £1000 and **three** Councillors to sign cheques for sums over £2000, as set out in the bank mandate. The bank mandate will be amended accordingly.

AM

**Cemetery path.** AJW Tarmacadam' letter explaining the extra costs was presented. Discussion focused on whether he could have anticipated the problem of the stream in quoting for the job and Council's views on its fixed price contract for the job. It was agreed that a very good job had been done. RS's opinion submitted in writing were read out. **Council agreed** to offer to pay half the extra cost - £1175, taking the total to £10050 (Council had budgeted £10,000 for the path). Council may reconsider if he makes further representations.

AM

Council considered that we learn from this experience to draw up a formal contract for major works, including provision for things going wrong. RS to be asked to look at any agreement to ensure we are legally correct.

**Council approved** the receipts and payments for December 2008. In future these pages will be sent out to Councillors before the meeting.

AM

05/09 Reports and representatives

a) **Chairman's report.** CG proposed the co-option of a new Councillor, Robin Booth, interviewed by herself and RS. Council were pleased to approve him as a councillor.

CG sketched out the year ahead: the need to make progress on the village hall and the pavilion project; to work on the public open space at Charters, with possible use of this space as an orchard (suggested by RS) or allotments; and a next newsletter, plus the wide range of routine activities.

- b) **Christmas celebration.** It was agreed to form a working group. JR would not be able to offer any more of his time. CG was reluctant to be involved. The clerk was asked to draw up a paper for practical proposals for the nature of the event for consideration at next Council, with a time framework to ensure this was realised in good time. AM
- c) **Planning.** It was noted that the station kiosk was approved by the Planning Inspectorate. We could appeal though there is not a good track record of succeeding against the decision of the Inspectors.
- d) **Recreation.** ND would work with Anne on cricket nets in time to bring a proposal to the next meeting. Council approved the expenditure of £675 for the chemical cleaning of the tennis courts. We should try to establish how long this treatment is likely to last. AM/ND
- e) **Village Hall.** JMcC noted that this was on the agenda below. There is cautious endorsement of the future structures as they emerge.
- f) **Allotments.** It is proposed that the rent for a standard plot to rise by £.50 from £10.50 to £11.00. This modest increase was preferred to a steep rise, and Sunningdale rates were low compared to many other allotments. This was **approved** AM
- g) **Clerk's report.** The several points raised in the report were noted. 1d Green Belt analysis – VC agreed to take this on and respond. VC  
2b Logo competition. ND agreed to follow up with Sunningdale school to get their involvement. ND

06/09 **Pavilion Project**

Paper for item 6 was circulated on the 12<sup>th</sup> January. Not everyone had seen this. JMcC recapped from the PP meeting that the plans had become clearer. The priority recommended is to rebuild the pavilion front and refurbish the office and meeting room (including outline plans for side extension) and to plan for a roof extension for the flat. To this end Chris Arden would be asked to draw up plans and we would then seek out builders and get quotations. Work on the extension (2<sup>nd</sup> meeting room) and refurbishment of the toilets would be done later when money becomes available.

It has also become clearer that to achieve this goal we are likely to require more than the £55k for which Council had made provision, and Council should plan for fund-raising or approaches to the Borough to secure a fund of some £80k.

Council **agreed** to these proposals.

It was agreed that the Clerk should pursue prices to replace the toilet doors and proceed to get the cavity wall insulation done to the estimate received of £250.

AM

07/09 **Village Hall Future structure**

1. Pre-school proposal

Standing orders were suspended to allow the representative from the Pre-school, Aileen Boaler, to present. A revised paper with solution A and B was circulated.

The financial viability of the Pre-school is seriously challenged by the changes imposed by Government and maintaining the status quo is not an option. A strong Pre-school committee was actively looking at all different options. Breakfast and afternoon clubs could enable them to raise money but they could not remain financially viable without changes.

Their preferred solution is for a full repairing 5 year lease for the small hall, allowing the preschool the right to use the hall 24 hours, 365 days a year. This would allow them to extend hours from 7am to 6pm 5 days a week. They would undertake £2500 of maintenance and offered to help with marketing the village hall as a whole. They require a commitment from their landlord, the Parish Council, in order to access grant funding. A lease would give them greater security than a rental agreement. Alternatively, they would look for support to build a pre-school at the Pavilion.

Discussion focused on whether a hire agreement would give them security of tenure. JMcC asked whether security of tenure has to mean lease or hire agreement. Aileen believes that funding from central government for EYFS depends on their having a lease. Other sources of funding may not necessarily require that but it was not clear. Aileen asked why council will not give them a lease.

*Standing orders were resumed.*

The chairman presented the reasons why it was thought that a lease was not advisable as set out in paper 7b. It was felt that the validity of these reasons was open to challenge and a more balanced response should be made. CG agreed to carefully look at this again. Solution B – the building of a school at the Pavilion was dismissed as the PC does not have powers to enable it to spend money on education. She presented option C - a long term hire agreement, that would not have a “full repairing” clause, for a period to be agreed and would have to be at a realistic rate. This was subject to answers to questions stated. JMC indicated the need for more information and clarity on Preschool projections of usage and associated financial forecasts. This would help to clarify the effect of any level of rent proposed and its impact on pre-school finances.

*Standing orders were suspended .*

Without the benefit of seeing what was proposed in the hire agreement or the information that was required (see paper 7b), Aileen was not in a position to give a definite answer. The Pre-school had to consider what rent they could pay – though not knowing what rent was being suggested. They did need extended hours to run after-school clubs. She pressed for a seat on the Trustees group so that the interests of the pre-school were part of the core management decision making. They would come back to Council with answers to the information required.

*Standing orders were resumed.*

Council further discussed the long term hire agreement versus a lease. VC pressed for the needs of the pre-school to be made paramount. Their commitment and enthusiasm should be capitalised on. Unless better reasons were given for not giving them a lease, then they should be given a lease. They should be brought in to the core decision making on the VH future. JMcC sought assurance on what truly represents security of tenure for the pre-school. There was also a need to see what difference the changes to pre-school hours would make on the finances of the Village Hall. The question of extended hours had to be compared with income generated by other users. There remained questions on whether a hire agreement gave them sufficient security of tenure; on the full implications of a hire agreement and on the financial considerations of this option. With these caveats, **Council agreed** to write back to the pre-school offering to negotiate the terms of a long-term hire agreement (Option C in paper 7b) subject to provision of the information required, including an additional question as to their views on security of tenure. Viki recorded her disagreement with this decision.

CG

**b. Village Hall future structure**

Papers 7ci, ii, iii, iv had been circulated. JMcC reminded Council that the reason for advancing the amended management plan with the Parochial Church Council for Sunningdale (PCCS – also called Holy Trinity, and also referred to as the CMI) is to create a more effective management and provide long-term security for the operations of the Village Hall at a time when the current VH management were struggling to continue with the commitment in the long term. The Village Hall is a charity and the aims remain the same.

There remains a need for set of figures on possible increase in rent and costs, including staff costs and some detailed financial projections. Some amendments to the papers were proposed, notably that the chair of the new trustees group should be one of the nominated Parish councillors with a casting vote so as to ensure the secular aims of the VH are safeguarded; and use of the hall by the PCCS or PC will be charged at the current rates. A question was raised on protecting the interests of the pre-school and it was agreed that all structures must ensure that the voice of the pre-school is heard.

**Council resolved to endorse the proposals in principal** subject to:

- i. one Parish Councillor being nominated to be chairman of Trustees.
- ii. Receiving an updated set of figures to show forecast growth in income and from what source, and increase in costs, particularly staff costs.
- iii. PC or PCCS use of the VH would be charged at the normal hire rates.
- iv. Points 1& 3 to be incorporated into the heads of agreement.

08/09 **Date of the Annual Parish meeting: 30th April**