

**COTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2011 AT 7 PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllrs: R Darling (Chairman), D Cairns, B Smart, S Godward, A Storkey, D Wilson and D McLoughlin.

In attendance: Cllr Fiona Whelan (County Councillor), Cllr Francis Burkitt (District Councillor), Ms Carolin Gohler (Cambridge Past Present and Future), Mrs Suzan Griffiths (Chairman, Friends of Comberton Area Library), 4 members of the public and Mrs A Griffiths (Minutes Secretary, LGS Services).

Cllr Cairns was welcomed as a new Parish Councillor, having signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office prior to the meeting. The Declaration of Members' Interests and Dispensation application forms are to be completed and returned within 28 days.

Comments and observations from members of the public and reports from County & District Cllrs

A resident, Mr Mark Abbott, expanded on his plans to replace fencing at the Old Rectory. A slightly higher concrete post and chain fence is proposed for the Corsey Lane footpath side of the property, avoiding loss of light on to the footpath. Mr Abbott is in discussion with SCDC and the Church regarding a possible post and rail fence on the Churchyard side. This may eventually be softened with a beech hedge, involving as little encroachment as possible into the churchyard. It is also intended to clear the brook in due course, and any future plans for the house will be brought to show the Parish Council. Mr Abbott was thanked for attending.

Mrs Suzan Griffiths, Chairman of FOCAL (Friends of Comberton Area Library), outlined the background to the group, which has been recently formed to support the library and maintain it as a resource for the community, as its future is under review in the light of proposed CCC cuts. A decision by CCC is due on 27 September. A number of volunteers have already come forward to support the work of the library, carry out fundraising, and put on community events. Residents are urged to support their local library and volunteer to help keep it open. The next meeting will be on 24 October at 7.30 pm at Comberton Village College library and all are welcome. Mrs Griffiths asked whether the Parish Council would be prepared to make a donation from its budget and was requested to provide an update prior to the January meeting. Cllr Godward agreed to publicise the group on the village website.

Ms Carolin Gohler of Cambridge Past Present and Future spoke on the group's petition regarding the National Planning Policy Framework and invited residents to sign it online.

Cllr Whelan reported on:

- The opening of the sixth form at Comberton Village College.
- The withdrawal of the application for a mobile classroom at Hardwick.
- The opening of the Guided Busway.
- The draft consultation on the local bus service.
- A rights of way surgery will be held on 27 September.
- Proposed cuts to the Fire Service and the pressure arising when multiple incidents occur.

Cllr Whelan was thanked for her report and left the meeting.

Ms Cathy Shaw, Treasurer of the Coton Village Hall fund, reported on the shortfall of £9-10,000 in funding for the work on the Village Hall. Whilst an offer of an interest free loan for half of the shortfall has been received, Mrs Shaw asked whether the Parish Council would be able to provide

assistance by way either of a grant or a loan, to enable the work to be completed.

1. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

Apologies were received from Cllrs Diplock and Sadler (both out of parish).

Cllr Darling declared a personal interest in Item 6.2 as her husband is a member of the Bowls Club.

Cllr Cairns declared a personal interest in Item 6.4 allotments water supply, as a member of Cambridge Past Present and Future.

2. To approve the minutes of the last meeting on 12 July 2011 and the extraordinary meeting on 28 July 2011

The minutes of the previous meeting on 12 July were unanimously approved as a true record ^(Prop DM, 2nd SG) and signed by the Chairman.

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting on 26 July were unanimously approved as a true record ^(Prop DW, 2nd DM) and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters arising from the last meeting

3.1 (6.3) Draft Parish Charter

The Parish Council had no comment on the draft document. It was agreed that it was necessary to put in place a strengthened Parish Plan to take into account the Localism Bill and the National Planning Policy Framework and establish a firm land use strategy. It was agreed to place Parish Plan as an item on the next agenda and obtain an example of an effective Parish Plan from another village for comparison purposes. It was agreed ^(Prop SG, 2nd DM) to form a working group consisting of Cllrs Cairns, Godward, Storkey, Darling and McLoughlin, with Ms Carolin Gohler as a co-opted member. A meeting will be convened prior to the next Parish Council meeting to examine the existing Plan and establish the way forward.

3.2 (6.4) CPALC Standing Orders revised version

It was unanimously agreed ^(Prop DW, 2nd AS) to incorporate the minor amendment into the Standing Orders and that any special motion to add to, vary or revoke any Standing Order should be signed by at least three councillors.

3.3 (3.2) Parking at The Footpath

Carried forward.

3.4 (3.5) Water main renewal and Pavilion water pipe

It was agreed ^(Prop DM, 2nd DW) to arrange for the earthing to be checked in accordance with the recommendation of the water board. Cllr Darling indicated her willingness to meet with contractors on site if necessary.

4. To consider planning and tree works applications received since the last meeting

4.1 Planning applications

4.1.1 S/1635/11 – Rose Cottage, 66 High Street – Removal of bargeboard

It was unanimously agreed ^(Prop DC, 2nd SG) to recommend approval as being in keeping with the area.

4.2 SCDC Decision notices to note

None.

On a proposition by the Chairman, it was agreed to vary the order of business to take Item 6.4, Allotments next.

6.4 Allotments including annual review of rules agreement and rent

Cllr Wilson reported on discussions with Cambridge Past Present and Future and representatives of the allotment holders regarding the proposed water supply to the allotments. A letter of support from CPPF has been received. One quotation has been received for the installation of a supply, consideration of which was carried forward to the next meeting to allow two more quotations to be received. Dr Gohler explained that CPPF had no serious objections to the project and would be happy to support grant applications and discussions with their Funding committee in early 2012. It was noted that no decision had yet been taken to proceed with the project.

The allotment rents were reviewed and consideration was given to the question of increasing the rents to take account of the potential water supply. The meeting was briefly suspended by the Chairman to allow Mr Jim Lewis to speak as an allotment holder. He outlined his calculations for the annual cost of water use for allotment holders and expressed the view that they would be willing to pay for the water they used, but not the costs of installation. Concerns were expressed as to the source of funding for the installation and how the costs of water use could be recovered. The meeting was then reopened. A proposition by Cllr Wilson, that the allotment holders be informed of a need to increase the rent in September 2012 by an additional £3.50 to cover the cost of the standing charge and water use, was not seconded. A proposition by Cllr Storkey, to maintain the rents at the current level for 2012 but inform the allotment holders that rents would be increased in 2013 to cover water costs, was not seconded. The Parish Council favoured Dr Gohler's suggestion that future bills be itemised to show allotment rents and water usage as separate items, and should only charge for water used if and when the water supply is installed. She suggested that the Parish Council drew up a business plan setting out the costs for running the allotments. Dr Gohler then left the meeting.

It was agreed that no change should be made to the allotment rents for the year commencing September 2012. The Parish Council also agreed that no change should be made to the allotment rules at this time, but consideration should be given at a future meeting to including a clause regarding the mechanism for charging for water supply if provided. Carried forward.

5. Finance, procedure and risk assessment

5.1. To receive the financial report and approve the payment of bills

The finance report and the bank statements and invoices were checked by the Chairman before the cheques and bank reconciliations were signed. Payments as listed below were unanimously approved ^(Prop SG, 2nd DC), plus Carter Jonas £360.00 (allotments), CGM Cambridge £344.59. Credits received since the last meeting were noted.

RPM (Play equipment repairs)	£456.00
SCDC (Uncontested election costs)	£135.00
CGM (Grass cutting)	£169.04
EON (Electricity bill)	£96.25
LGS Services (Admin support)	£567.29
LGS Services (Admin support)	£506.42
LG Stoehr (Salary)	£292.44

A transfer of £5000 from Deposit to Current Account was noted.

Cllr Burkitt arrived during this item.

5.2 Financial Regulations review

It was unanimously agreed ^(Prop DM, 2nd DW) to update the document to reflect the existing practice of checking invoices and bank statements against the financial report and the Council's internal controls policy.

5.3 Standards Committee grant of dispensations

The grant of dispensations in respect of the Recreation Ground was noted. Cllr Cairns is to complete the application for a dispensation.

Cllr Storkey's proposal that the Parish Council loan the village Hall Committee £10,000 was carried forward to the next meeting when this will be an agenda item and the reserves can be reviewed.

Cllr Burkitt was invited to report. His report covered:

- The lack of funds available for SCDC initiatives and the pressure to avoid Council Tax increases
- The proposed abolition of the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy system and the implications for the District Council of the proposals for implementing self-financing for council housing.
- Government planning reform and the call for sites which could result in increased development in the Green Belt

Cllr Burkitt was thanked for his report and left the meeting.

6. To consider correspondence/communications received including

6.1 Cambridgeshire ACRE Queen Elizabeth II Challenge 2012

It was agreed to seek an extension to the deadline and Cllr Cairns undertook to look into this further. Carried forward.

6.2 Coton Bowls Club re pavilion structure and quote from Roger Driver Partnership

It was agreed ^(Prop DM, 2nd AS) to contact the insurance company and ask them to arrange for a surveyor to come and inspect the building as soon as possible, due to the potential safety issue.

6.3 SCDC Grounds Maintenance

The Parish Council did not wish to take over grounds maintenance work currently carried out by SCDC.

7. Members' Reports and items

7.1 To receive play equipment inspection reports

Cllr McLoughlin reported.

Skate ramp – another hole has appeared and there are small holes down the sides. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting due to the expense of continued repairs.

Recreation Ground – Litter bins are full and the recycling bin by the Pavilion has not been emptied. A letter is to be sent to SCDC asking them to empty the bins.

Bennys Way – the motorbike and clover leaf still need replacing. Screws are regularly tightened. There is no litter.

The books were signed by the Chairman.

Dog fouling and signs are to be an agenda item for the next agenda.

7.2 Footpaths report

Cllr Smart reported on work recently completed to bridleway no 5, footpath no 5 and bridge repairs at footpath no 9. Work has been requested to stiles on footpath no 3, and hedge cutting adjacent to the cycle track next to the bridleway.

7.3 Traffic including Speedwatch

Clr Godward reported. The views of residents on a 20 mph limit in the main part of the village have been requested, and if enough are in support of this it will be costed.

The request from CCC for a payment of £1 per elector to pay for direction signs to the Country Park was being queried as it is thought that the signs were requested by CPPF, not the Parish Council and are in place.

7.4 Allotments

Taken earlier.

7.5 Trees

Nothing to report.

8. Closure of Meeting

There was no further business and the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.53 pm.

Signed _____ (Chairman) _____ (Date)
