



Southam Parish Council



MINUTES (subject to agreement at the next Council meeting) of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 10th December 2024 at 7.30pm

Councillors Present: Joyce Calam, Pam Sissons, Rob Torrington, Joseph Welsh, Steve Lennon (Jt Chair), Rebecca Prince (Jt Chair)

Also Present: Clerk/RFO, 4 members of the public, Barbara Pond and Frances Evans of GRCC

256. To receive apologies

Apologies were accepted from Cllr. Marilyn Harris

257. To receive declarations of interest/requests for dispensation

There were no declarations or requests

258. To receive and agree the minutes of the meetings held on 12 November 2024

The Minutes were agreed as a true record subject to insertion of the word “decision” under item 247

259. Tewkesbury Borough Council Housing Needs Survey – GRCC Rural Housing Enabler Frances Evans to make a presentation

A copy of the 2023 survey findings were circulated which concluded that 23 affordable homes were “desired” within Southam Parish, 5 respondents to the survey had a local connection. The survey draws conclusions from the affordability of property in the area based on house prices v average earnings and “needs” indicated by downsizers, upsizers, and those living with family or in rented accommodation responding to the survey. There were also 33 people on the Borough Council housing register who had indicated a preference to be housed in Southam. GRCC asked if the Parish Council would want to be involved in identifying suitable land as a rural exception site within the parish as part of further consultation. PC requested sight of the housing survey carried out approximately 5 years previously.

260. Receive reports from Parish Councillors/Speed Watch Team

Traffic Data – Community Speed Watch Team – traffic data circulated and would be posted to the website and into the newsletter

Staffing Committee – Cllr Prince, Lennon, Torrington – a confidential report of a meeting circulated

Village Hall – Cllr Prince reported that the village hall committee had a successful Autumn Fair and December film night and Christmas light switch on and was looking forward to hosting a film night and pub night in January. The village hall is going to set up their own website with a link to the parish council’s site.

Footpath Warden – Cllr Sissons reported that 3 footpaths in the parish were affected by fallen trees following Storm Daragh but these were being dealt with by the landowner or Cotswold wardens

Councillor Advocacy – Cllr Welsh reported that he had met with PCSO who was seeking remedies to the parking at the junction of School Lane/Old Road. The community bus had made a visit but was unfortunately not advertised.

Cleeve Common Trust – Cllr Torrington/Harris – no report

Clerk/Councillor Reports:

Community Engagement Event – Examples of a Volunteer Policy had been sourced by the clerk and it was suggested by Cllr Sissons that these were too onerous for the Council to put in place therefore a village walkabout would be arranged for general observations and suggestions of tasks to be delegated.

Website Working Group – progress with quotations – a further quotation had been obtained by the clerk for consideration. The clerk advised that time was running out to obtain funding for the gov.uk website. The Working Group to look at sample council websites provided by each company and make a preferred selection.

Meeting with MP re Greenbelt – Cllrs. Prince and Sissons and a resident had met with Cameron Thomas MP to discuss greenbelt issues. MP to take up with CEO of TBC and Cllr Stanley. Discussions would be ongoing.

Town & Parish Seminar at TBC – Cllrs. Lennon and Prince had attended (content as reported by Borough Councillor report) The change of name to North Gloucestershire Borough Council may be delayed as the Council considers a report on mayoral elections. Clerk networking – clerk had attended event in Highnam to discuss importance of gov.uk domains/cyber security and had made enquiries into microphone systems in village halls.

261. Receive and request reports from the County/Borough Councillors

- Coronation Community Orchard Scheme – trees requested for Noverton open spaces – no further news
- Update on noise issues – Cheltenham racecourse – response to questions at last meeting – no response. A resident had been in touch with Tewks. Bo. Cllrs direct regarding the siting of noise monitoring equipment

Borough Councillors Report

We both attended the Cleeve Councillors surgery in Cleeve Library at the end of the month. I have put this first as I had been trying to hold a meeting with local PCSO's. I do this regularly. It had been proving difficult this month as diaries were not aligning. So it was fortuitous to meet with them at our surgery. Surgeries are generally held on the last Saturday of most months and anyone is welcome to come along. Saying that there will not be a surgery in December as the Library will be closed for Christmas.

We attended our usual committees and working groups to include:

Climate Change and Ecology, during which we discussed the councils performance against Climate Change Targets

Place Program Seminar. This was a members briefing ahead of the Parish Seminar

Flood Risk Management Group

Newlands Homes briefing in Northway A chance to meet with a developer in Northway, to study plans and ask questions.

Licensing Sub Committee

Oversight and scrutiny

On 28th November we attended The Parish and Town Council Seminar held at the Borough Offices. Subjects discussed included:

Parish Precepts

Proposed reforms to the NPPF

Council Name Change

Council Plan Update

The place program

Community resilience

We do have copies of the notes given out on the night.

Nigel & Cheryl

262. Adjournment for public participation on items on the agenda (if about another subject residents should write to the clerk clerk@southamtoday.org.uk)

Query regarding roofing materials used on recent extension (Springbank)

263. Planning Consultations

24/00681/FUL Erection of a detached garage. The Fold New Road Southam – amended plans – **no objection**

24/00888/TPO 4 x large sycamore trees located at the end of the garden in no mans land Reduce and/or lift garden branches up to 8m back to appropriate pruning points to rebalance the tree. 23 Desert Orchid Road, Prestbury, Cheltenham – **no objection**

Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan – councillors to share views direct

264. Planning Decisions by Tewkesbury Borough Council

24/00777/FUL Extend existing dwelling to front, rear and side Larkrise Southam Lane – refused

24/00731/FUL Re-modelling of the existing dwelling to include the change from a pitched roof dormer bungalow to two storey flat roof design with a new flat roof single storey extension with a balcony to the front (western) elevation. Darrel Ley Lye Lane Cleeve Hill – refused

265. Finance & Governance

1. To approve payments in December – Payments were approved as follows:

Payments December	Total	Net	Vat
GAPTC -councillor training P Sissons	90	90	0
GAPTC - clerk networking - G Jennings	35	35	0
Administration	419.46	419.46	0
HMRC	131.2	131.2	0
Office Expenses	57.6	57.6	0
Refreshments Dec MTG	37.45	37.45	0
J Preece Grasscutting	456	380	76
H Torrington Grasscutting	150	150	0
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	1376.71	1300.71	76

2. To approve the November bank reconciliation and November budget report
Cllr Welsh confirmed the bank reconciliation was correct at £5486.78 and expenditure to date £11283.77 against budget £15400 was noted. Receipts stood at £14725
3. To consider CIL projects for costing and consultation and to agree expenditure from CIL in the current year for verge maintenance – the clerk circulated a breakdown of items and possible costings. The Council noted the requirement to spend the funds within 5 years and **agreed £717 of CIL receipts in the previous year would be put to verge maintenance costs in this financial year.**
4. Consider the projected reserves and draft budget for 25-26 pending notification of the tax base rate and fix the precept – Cllr Lennon ask councillors to consider the percentage increase in relation to further use of reserves – **decision deferred to January meeting**
5. Consider a Grant application by the Church – no application
6. To appoint an independent internal auditor for the 24-25 accounts and agree that the accounts are to be externally audited for this year – **the council agreed to appoint GAPTC at £250 and to submit the accounts for external auditing**
7. Consider Savings Account options for £10K investment **the council agreed that the clerk should apply to whichever proposed bank would accept local authority investments**
8. To consider appointing a planning consultant to prepare a written statement £2500 – **the Council agreed to appoint Ashtons Legal**

266. Date of Next Meeting

14th January 2025