

South Luffenham Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 14th July 2021 at 7.00pm, held at South Luffenham Village Hall

Present: Parish Councillors: Cllr. Jan Bradley (JB) (Chair), Cllr. John Hall (JH),
Cllr. Tracy Steward (TS), Cllr. Claudia Cockburn (CC),

County Cllr. Gale Waller (GW)

JB welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised everyone present that item SL7/28/21 i will be moved to the end of the meeting as this is a confidential item and the public will be excluded during the discussion

SL1/22/21 Open Forum	Action
Mr Frearson wanted to discuss the proposed introduction of a Grants Policy, which was raised at the previous meeting following a request from the Village Hall for financial support with the broadband. JB confirmed the Parish Council had decided to draw up a Grants Policy following a request for funds from the Citizens Advice Bureau as the Council is often approached for financial support such as this and wanted a more formal approach in their response. Mr Frearson asked if this was going to be in consultation with the village as he had previously been advised by the Clerk that members of the public could comment on this at this meeting. Mr Frearson was advised that the Policy had been placed on the Parish Council website and notification of this had been issued via Facebook prior to the meeting to enable villagers to attend the meeting and pass comment. Mr Frearson commented that no grants should be awarded as the Parish	

Council is a tax raising entity and not a club. The budget shows the Parish Council have an income of £15,000 but outgoings of £27,000 therefore there is nothing left to allocate to grants. He does not want his tax given out to any charity. He feels this is his decision and not the Parish Councils. JB agreed with Mrs Frearson's comments about the budget but commented that she had inherited this budget and feels it needs to be reviewed as a budget should reflect the expenditure. JB asked for patience until a full budget review has been carried out. Mr Frearson commented that he felt the precept of £15,000 is a large amount compared to other villages and believes it is out of line with other local villages. JB agreed that the precept is quite high, but this is due to a high level of amenities within the village that the Parish Council must maintain i.e., playground, Pond Close etc. and does not believe it is disproportionate. JB would like to review the budget for the next meeting. With regards to the Grants Policy, the Parish Council need a policy to refer to as they need a reason to be able to say no. Grants have been given in the past and the policy is useful to have. A lot of policies are being reviewed as they are outdated. JB agrees that the Parish Council is not currently in a position to award grants. GW commented that she felt JB is right that a policy is needed and there could be a time when the village wants to award a grant. An example could be when new houses are built the Parish Council is awarded S106 funds and this could be used for capital items within the village. The Grants Policy is something we should have as a Parish Council and Grants should remain a continuous item on the agenda to allow for transparency with the public. Action: VW to include on the agenda going forward. JB wants all documents for Parish Councils meetings to be transparent and wants these to be available prior to every meeting for scrutiny. Mr Frearson does not agree with the budget and stresses that this urgently needs to be reviewed and would like to see a revised budget published. JB stressed to Mr Frearson that this is on the agenda to discuss today and	VW
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will be revised prior to the next meeting. A second member of the public raised the traffic issue on Stamford Road. Calming measures have been installed on this road but they feel this is causing traffic to speed up to try and get through the junction before the oncoming traffic. The junction is now quite dangerous, and people do not give way. There has also been an increase in traffic on this road which only makes the situation worse. JB confirmed there was an item on the agenda for today to discuss this and the Parish Council also have a contact within the Police who they can contact to make them aware of this again. They have attended the site previously to carry out speed checks but with prior warning from other cars, vehicles had slowed down prior to the speed gun. The Parish Council will look to report this to the police again. Action: Make the local Police aware of the ongoing problem.	VW/JB
SL2/23/21 County Councillor Report	
The main activity that affects South Luffenham is the decision to seek County Council approval to continue with the Draft Local Plan. The plan was submitted to be inspected but due to the St Georges project issues, the outcome statement said it was only viable with the Government Grant Homes Infrastructure Plan, which was rejected solely on the basis that it is a high risk to RCC with no benefits. It would require the houses to be started by March 2024, but the latest estimate is that the site won't be vacated until 2025. The inspector therefore asked if the Council wanted to continue with the plan. A meeting had been due to take place on the 26th July but not all councillors could attend so it has been deferred and now won't take place until September but no date has been set. GW wants to draw everyone's attention to a current consultation taking place on mental health within the County. The Rutland Conversation has moved to the next stage and individuals who responded initially are now being contacted for further input and it is worth responding to this.	

JB attended the Parish Forum recently and there was a debate about the Local Plan, and it is still being considered if all building requirements will be satisfied by St Georges barracks. JB asked GW if the previous plan is debated and rejected, what would happen. GW commented that as she understands it, County Council must start again with negotiations. The Council had previously gifted some houses so these could be taken back which is half the amount of houses Rutland need. GW and KB believe the Council have underestimated the windfall as some years in Rutland half the number of houses in Rutland is through windfall. The Local plan is written under the National Policy Housing Framework, which states if a Council has a record of delivering houses on time, add on 5% for a buffer, if not add on 10%, RCC have added on 25% to simply accommodate the numbers at St Georges. GW stated that holding everything up because of St Georges makes the County Council vulnerable.	
SL3/24/21 Apologies for Absence	
Apologies were received from County Cllr. Ken Bool (KB) and Cllr Paul Elwis (PE).	
SL4/25/21 Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 19th May 2021	
The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate account.	
SL5/26/21 Matters Arising and Actions from the Previous Meeting held on 19th May 2021	
Grit bin. TS spoke with Vic Bacon who explained that previously the Parish Council moved the grit bin themselves and then informed Highways. We could approach Mike Lane to review a new location due to his knowledge of that area of the village. The grit bin needs to be moved to the opposite side of the road on the corner on Clay Lane. Action: TS to approach Mike Lane. Fix My Street Items. TS spoke with Vic Bacon, and he reported that everything was reported to Fix My Street. Defib Training. TS made contact with North Luffenham with regards to joint	TS

training and between the two villages there are 23 people interested in training. This will be put on hold until the autumn due to reservations about covid restrictions. Policies and Procedures Action Plan. To be discussed today. Grants Limit. Complete, a new Grants Policy has been drawn up. E-on electricity payment. This covers electricity for the defib. Internal Auditor Provision. To be discussed today. Insurance. To be discussed today. Biffa Liability Insurance. VW has obtained a copy of the certificate. Payroll. To be discussed today. Pending planning permission. This is ongoing. Action: GW to find out why two planning permissions have been pending for so long. Employing Handman. To be discussed tonight. Volunteer Insurance. Covered under the Parish Councils insurance. Environment Committee. Complete. Trees. JH spoke to Mike, and they plan to meet to locate the most suitable location for the trees. Citizens Advice Bureau. No funds will be awarded at this point and the decision will be deferred until the budget has been reviewed. Finance Transparency. To be discussed today. JB who I am letter. Complete and proposes to write something for every newsletter.	GW
SL6/27/21 Governance	
<i>a. Policies and Procedures Action Plan</i> This was distributed to all Councillors prior to the meeting. Some policies are already being worked on by the Finance Advisory Group. Once all committees etc are in place this will be updated with dates and responsibility and redistributed. All Councillors happy with the plan. Action: VW to redistribute.	VW
SL7/28/21 Finance	

<i>a. Bank Reconciliation and Cash Book Approval</i> These were distributed to JB and PE prior to the meeting but due to PE not being able to attend tonight's meeting this will be deferred until the next meeting. Action: To be reviewed at the next meeting. Action: VW to find out when grass cutting income should be received from RCC. <i>b. Grants Policy</i> This was distributed to all Councillors prior to the meeting. A Couple of typos have been identified but all agreed to adopt the policy. <i>c. New Payroll Provider</i> The payroll provider the Parish Council had been using has now retired. The Clerk consulted LRALC for suggestions on alternatives and the new provider being put forward is Central Business Services. All Councillors agreed to the Parish Council using this provider going forward. <i>d. Council's Internal Audit Provision</i> This was reviewed by the Finance Advisory Group who proposed the Parish Council continue to use Auditing Solutions Ltd. All Councillors agreed to this proposal. <i>e. Proposal to move to bank transfer payments</i> The Finance Advisory Group have reviewed how the Parish Council currently process payments and it was proposed that payments now be made through bank transfer. This is to allow for accurate checks prior to payments being made and additional transparency. All Councillors agreed with this proposal. Action: VW to set this up with the bank. <i>f. New Insurance Provider</i> The insurance provider the Parish Council had been using greatly increased their fees as the 3 year deal the Council had previously agreed to had come to an end. The Finance Advisory Group therefore sought an alternative provider and secured a deal with BHIB for a yearly premium of £622.54 instead of £1238.02.	JB/PE VW VW
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<i>g. Review the Budget</i> JB proposed that the Parish Council budget is reviewed due to the imbalance between the incoming and outgoing figures. All Councillors agreed to the review. Action: The Finance Advisory Group to review the 2021/22 budget as soon as possible. <i>h. Propose additional financial transparency</i> Following on from a request from Mr Frearson for additional Parish Council financial transparency, the Finance Advisory Group discussed this, and they all felt this was needed and would like to be as transparent as possible moving forward. This includes public access to the Cash Books and Bank Statements prior to each Parish Council meeting. <i>i. Review points raised by the Internal Auditor</i> This item is confidential and will therefore not be minuted here.	FAG
SL8/29/21 Planning Applications	
GW raised the issue of flooding on Barrowden Lane in relation to the retrospective planning application that is currently in situ. GW has written to the planning team and pointed out the difference in flooding scenarios since the minarge was in place. The planning officers are due to inspect the area on Friday. If passed, it will be with the condition of appropriate mitigation for the flooding. GW reported the retrospective planning permission had only been submitted because the Council were about to start legal proceedings. CC asked what RCC are actually going to ask them to do? GW is unsure until they visit the site. Drainage pipes were installed when building work was carried out previously, but pipes run down onto Barrowden Lane. JH commented that the majority of applications the Parish Council receive are fairly simple and they tend to fall into two categories trees and buildings. JH reviews the locations of both and always visits the locations. With regards to application relating to trees, he always requests a tree surgeon is consulted. GW commented that RCC do take notice of what Parish Councils planning	

input is. The Parish Council should always comment if there is a tree preservation order and if planning does not fit in to the village. GW offered to arrange for someone to visit the Parish Council from RCC planning to discuss planning at a future meeting. All felt this would be beneficial. CC asked about tree work applications and if the Parish Council receive details about what the tree work actually is. The planning application is distributed to all Councillors which contain full details upon receipt via email.	
SL9/30/21 Highways and Footpaths	
<i>a. Grass cutting Issues</i> Prior to the meeting the Clerk had issued a request to the village to submit comments and concerns in relation to the grass cutting/verges due to the ongoing issues the village is experiencing with Biffa. There were a few comments about the village looking generally unkept, some verges were not being cut and they should be, footpaths being missed but overall, there was not many complaints. The Parish Council have purchased and issued signs to those houses who signed up to the verge scheme and do not want their verge cutting to make it simpler for Biffa to identify where they should and should not be cutting. TS commented that a lot of areas looked unkept throughout the County which is due to the time of year and fast pass of growing. JB and VW are to meet with Darren Young from Biffa on Tuesday morning to walk around the village to detail where should and should not be cut and highlight any issues. A complimentary email was also received from a villager commenting on areas that had improved and looked nice. GW commented that she herself had experienced so many issues with Biffa across the County. CC pointed out that Tim who runs the newsletter is particularly good at pointing out pretty verges etc and would be good to ask him to highlight this in the newsletter.	

Vic Bacon has offered to support any Councillor who takes on the responsibility of the park as he holds a RoSPA certificate for having attended the certified course.	
SL11/32/21 Environment Committee	
<i>a. Recent Activity Report</i> Nothing to report as the committee is not officially set up. <i>b. Update on Committee Set-up</i> Propose a meeting for July 27th to ask for volunteers and form a committee. Three Councillors are required to be there, TS and JH have volunteered.	
SL12/33/21 Income Generating Activities	
A Parish Council is not permitted to fund raise so this item cannot be discussed.	
SL13/34/21 Councillor Vacancy	
The Parish Council have received several applications but due to unforeseen personal circumstances, only two applications remain. Therefore, as there are two vacancies, the two applicants will be appointed to the rolls. The two applicants in question are Adrian Tyler and Jane Potter. All Councillors agreed to co-opt Jane Potter and Adrian Tyler.	
SL14/35/21 Correspondence	
TS has received an update from North Luffenham Parish Council in relation to the benches. The cost for 4 benches is £1890, securing the benches in position is £2132, Total £4022. The Parish Council can reclaim the VAT, so the total is therefore £3218. Donations and pledges to date are £2400, so there is a shortfall of £818. North and South Luffenham will do a final push for donations. The reason this is costing a little more than expected is because licences are required to site benches and a professional grounds person must be used to install the benches. If the Parish Councils are not able to raise the final £800, they could potentially look to fund this	

themselves. GW confirmed this would be a valid reason for Community Infrastructure Levy. CC asked if there has been any litter bin discussion with each bench? TS confirmed there had not but would take this back to Tim at North Luffenham.	
SL15/36/21 Meetings	
JB attended the Parish Forum in relation to the St Georges Barracks which GW has already reported on.	
SL16/37/21 Date of Next Meeting	
The next meeting has been scheduled for the 15th of September. However, GW and KB have requested if we would be able to move our meetings from the third Wednesday of each month as Empingham have their meetings on the third Wednesday and both County Councillors would like to attend South Luffenham's meeting. All agreed to moving the meetings. It was proposed that South Luffenham move to monthly meetings to allow for adequate discussions and decision making on key areas. All Councillors agreed this would be better for the Parish Council. The meetings are therefore going to take place every fourth week of each month. The next meeting will now be the 22nd of September 2021. Action: VW to distribute a list of meeting dates.	VW

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.18pm.