

**MINUTES OF A FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF SMANNELL PARISH
COUNCIL HELD ON 5 JANUARY 2015 AT THE SMANNELL & ENHAM
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL, SMANNELL**

Cllrs. Present: Cllr. Tim Bilborough, Cllr. Rod Bowker (Chairman), Cllr. Richard Budge, Cllr. Cyril Loveridge

In attendance: County Cllr. Tim Rolt
Borough Cllr. Phil North (from 20.17 hours)

564. APOLOGIES

Cllr. Simon Jackson
Cllr. Nick Kinloch
Cllr. Dini Thorne
Borough Cllr. Janet Whiteley

565. PUBLIC QUESTIONS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None recorded.

566. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None recorded.

567. TO READ AND APPROVE MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING – 3 NOVEMBER 2014

The Chairman sought updates from the various action points arising from the previous Minutes, which had all been sanctioned and carried out. There were no outstanding points to pursue or matters arising from the action points of the last meeting.

The Minutes were Proposed by Cllr. Rod Bowker, Seconded by Cllr. Richard Budge and unanimously agreed. Motion Carried. The Chairman signed the Minutes as being a true and correct record.

568. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

The correspondence list previously circulated was considered and noted by members.

569. TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE CHEQUE PAYMENTS FOR SMANNELL PARISH COUNCIL

The finance schedule detailing the expenditure of the Parish Council was circulated and considered by Members. The schedule amounted to a total of £365.00. This was made up of the Parish Clerk's salary for November of £120.00 and that of December for £120.00. A refund due to the Parish Clerk for HMRC PAYE paid personally amounting to £90.00 plus £35.00 to Enham for grass cutting. It was Proposed by Cllr. Richard Budge, Seconded by Cllr. Cyril Loveridge and unanimously agreed to approve the cheque payment finance schedule as prescribed. Motion Carried.

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570. TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE A BUDGET FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2015/2016

The Parish Clerk advised Members of the financial position of the Parish Council. The Government has made significant changes to the way in which Council Tax is to be treated and significant cuts in the Council Tax settlement figure are being made, which changes the taxbase therefore impacting Parish and Town Councils. By way of explanation, the taxbase is the most single important settlement figure as this dictates the 'real' Council Tax on average Band D Council Taxpayers for the parish.

This is the figure that calculates the actual Council Tax for the parishioner. Whilst a budget may show an increase in percentage terms standing alone from Council Tax terms, this will be very different once Test Valley Borough Council has applied the taxbase and that is the most important figure not the increase in precept but the increase on the Council Tax burden for the parishioner. This is the most important differential.

The taxbase for Smannell Parish Council for 2015/2016 is 945 and this has gone up from 836 the year before. This is to take into consideration and reflect further additional housing in Augusta Park. There will be no grant from Test Valley Borough Council to help cushion the effects of the decrease in the Central Government Settlement Grant. However, this was a one-off grant and by that very nature, there will be no repeat funding.

As stated, the Parish Council taxbase is 945 and this has increased 109 or up 13.04%. To calculate the Council Tax average Band D, divide the precept requirement by the taxbase and you will then obtain the Average Band D Council Tax.

The 2014/2015 Council Tax for Smannell Parish Council is £18.32 on a precept of £15,319. To deliver a frozen Council Tax for parishioners (£18.32) you can increase the precept revenue to £17,316 and still deliver a zero increase in Council Tax for 2015/2016. For example, $17,316/945 = £18.32$. This has been calculated by adding 13.04% to the 2014/2015 Council Tax figure of 15,319 making £17,316.

To maintain the same precept revenue of £15,319 against the revised taxbase of 836, would result in a decrease of £2.11 (-11.52%) in average Band D Council Tax to £16.21. Looking at the budgetary performance for 2014/2015, the overall differential is around 1.25%-1.5% and this spread is comfortably within audit prescribed tolerance levels.

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The Parish Council has the statutory right to reclaim VAT and it is expected that the reclaim figure as at 31 March 2015 to be around £750 for the year. The reserves are healthy and within audit guidelines. Changes to the 2015/2016 budget include a major uplift in election charges to £4,000 as previously advised by Test Valley Borough Council, increases in playground safety fees, affiliation fees and an uplift in the Parish Clerk salary (the first for many years) of 2.2% (as recommended by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services and the Society for Local Council Clerks).

The sums of money set aside for grants and donations are related to events during the course of the year, which result in income generation for the Parish Council (Fireworks and Christmas Lights).

It should be remembered that the Parish Council has the lawful right to set a sum of money aside labelled capital projects, which can be used for any lawful project the Parish Council may so decide.

It is to the benefit of the Parish Council to take advantage of the taxbase increase to 945 and claim the maximum precept revenue without any impact on the taxpayer. The budget is therefore based on claiming £17,316 against 945 = £18.32 in Average Band D Council Tax, which is the same level as in the past three years.

The calculation being: 17,316 (Precept) divided by 945 (Taxbase) = 18.32 (Council Tax Average Band D). This will result in a budget allocation for 2015/2016 of £1,910 to reserves and a zero increase for parishioners.

It was Proposed by Cllr. Rod Bowker, Seconded by Cllr. Tim Bilborough and unanimously agreed to set the budget for the Parish Council for 2015/2016 at a precept of £17,316 resulting in a zero increase in Average Band D Council Tax for parishioners. Motion Carried.

571. TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE TO SMANNELL ROAD PEDESTRIAN ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

The Chairman explained the recent constructive on-site meeting with engineering officers, Gary Hedges and Steve Raw in connection with improving the Smannell Road for pedestrians and the plans prepared for review by members.

Members reviewed the suggestions in some depth and unanimously agreed that it is suitable to be pursued further. Members acknowledged that if the plans submitted to the Parish Council were to be adopted agreement would have to be reached with Hampshire County Council Highways that they keep soakaways and the drainage from the road to ditches and to soak-aways.

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Members agreed that the only part of the road which should have a kerb was the first section between the footpath at end of Augusta Park to the first of the two houses on the left after the first bend. It was felt that the landowner needs to be approached in connection with the ditches at the village end of the road. He may be amenable to have the position of the access to his field changed to allow a better soakaway by Ashley Copse.

A soakaway was also thought necessary at the low point of the road where members believe a kerb by the road is needed. The Chairman advised members that during the meeting with the officers, a discussion took place to consider doing away with the centre line as the road is too narrow for one and that this would have the tendency to reduce traffic speeds.

Members agreed that the Chairman advises Steve Raw of these comments and enquires what the next steps are as regards costs and any potential public consultation necessary to process.

ACTION

The Chairman to contact Steve Raw (Engineering and Transport Manager) at Test Valley Borough Council to convey the decision of the Parish Council as stated above and to enquire what the next steps are to progress matters.

572. TO CONSIDER THE MATTER OF DEFIBRILLATORS

The Parish Clerk explained to members the principles concerning defibrillators and outlined the concepts of the process involved. He stated that he has received formal training in deploying a defibrillator and explained that it is a step-by-step process.

Members considered suitable places in Smannell for defibrillator placement. For the immediate future, members felt that the pub, community centre and possibly the phone booth at Little London were the best places for citing a defibrillator. The Parish Clerk outlined the approximate scale of costs involved.

Members requested that the Parish Clerk obtain 3 quotes for obtaining a defibrillator and defer this until the March Full Council meeting.

ACTION

The Parish Clerk to obtain three quotes for defibrillator placement at the suggested locations and to report back at the March Full Council meeting.

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573. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE LLPF COMMITTEE AND ACTIVITIES

There was no significant report given at this meeting. The invoice for the grass cutting carried out by the Enham Trust was agreed for payment. Members noted that there is a pile of woodcuttings that require removal in the play area and weeds require removal under the climbing frame.

574. TO DETERMINE PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Parish Clerk advised that he was in receipt of three planning applications for determination.

14/02956/FULLN – Glass enclosed wintergarden extension – Retrospective – The Mill, Little London, Andover. No Objection but members wished to record their disappointment that the applicant did apply in the formal manner.

14/02958/FULLN – Change of use of agricultural land to garden – Retrospective – Land to the Rear of the Mill, Little London, Andover. No Objection but members wished to record their disappointment that the applicant did not apply in the formal manner.

12/02497/OUTN – Outline application for 350 dwellings with access, parking, open space and landscaping including allotments – Surplus Secondary School Site East Anton, Smannell Road, Andover. No Objection subject to the caveat that there are off-site highway infrastructure improvements, specifically, arrangements will be made for the provision and future management of on-site allotments and provision and future management of on-site informal recreation areas, the provision of a signalised crossing in the vicinity of the Smannell Road roundabout and Newbury Road and (ii) signalised junction improvements at the junction of North Way and Walworth Road (via the Finkley Arch). Provision of 40% (140no.) affordable housing of mixed tenure and size. Provision and future management of on-site allotments and provision and future management of on-site informal recreation areas.

575. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE SMANNELL & ENHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

None received.

576. FOOTPATHS AND ROADS UPDATE

It was noted that the trenches outside Camber House need clearing and that the re-laid road Little London/Newbury Road, the sides have not been filled in properly. County Cllr. Tim Rolt stated he would investigate this matter.

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ACTION

County Cllr. Tim Rolt to investigate trench clearance outside Camber House and the reasons as to why the sides of the new re-laid road have not been filled in properly.

It was reported that water is running through the village to Ashley Copse and is not being taken away from the source. Additionally, no road sweeping is being undertaken on the Little London/Newbury Road. These were noted.

577. BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS

County Cllr. Tim Rolt reported on the latest news as regards Hampshire County Council and the next phase in broadband provision. The next phase contracts have been signed but it has been noted that the Little London/Smannell trial take up for hi-speed broadband provision has been very low as regards uptake. This is disappointing to note. Members reported that the broadband offer is too expensive and County Cllr. Tim Rolt stated he would feedback to the broadband team at Hampshire County Council on this point.

Borough Cllr. Phil North advised that he had just come from a briefing meeting at Augusta Park on the outline application for 350 dwellings and provided a summary background detail on the application to members.

He congratulated the Parish Council on freezing the precept for the financial year 2015/2016

578. COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS

It was reported that there is litter along the Finkley Road, which is unsightly and Borough Cllr. Phil North offered to chase its removal.

ACTION

Borough Cllr. Phil North to investigate litter removal along the Finkley Road.

Members noted that the Little London sign needs refurbishment.

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman closed the meeting at 21.26 hours.