**SHILLINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT**

**7.30PM ON THURSDAY 4th JANUARY 2018 IN THE CHURCH CENTRE, SHILLINGSTONE**

**PRESENT:** Councillors M Webberley, T Kennard, R McNamara, P Aaron, C Oakley; ROW Officer G Rains; NDDC Cllr S Jesperson and the clerk M Wilson. In addition there were 11 members of the public.

**196. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Received from Cllrs Ridout and Watts. In the continued absence without apology of Cllr Turnbull, the Chairman suggested the clerk write to seek his resignation so an active replacement could be co-opted.

**197. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None

**198. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2017 were approved.

**199. MATTERS ARISING:** These are covered in the agenda items.

**200. PUBLIC SESSION TO RAISE ISSUES:** Lesley Gasson reported that the new Chairman of the Trailway is Scott Norman and our main point of contact for funding matters is Lynn Marshalsea; she requested that the lengthsman be asked to clean the pavements etc – clerk will request visit from sweeper and operatives; she expressed her regret that the clerk was leaving.

The School Governors explained the problems facing the school because of funding cuts by DCC. They hope the parish council will write to the appropriate decision makers at DCC to seek changes in funding proposals for the coming financial year and beyond. The school has just been rated as “good” by Ofsted and it was particularly commended for its inclusivity policy for those with special educational needs (SEN). SEN pupils attend from many outlying communities. DCC has changed the distribution of funds and schools with a high number of SEN pupils have, allegedly, been unfairly disadvantaged. The school will now have a deficit of £50k for 2018/19 rising to £108k in 2019/20. Unless DCC can be persuaded to make changes then it is inevitable that the school will have to cut an already overstretched staff, which will have an adverse impact on educational quality. The Chairman pointed the Governors towards the Department for Education web-site that had a lot of information on individual schools, including Shillingstone, and gave comparator figures against national averages etc. The figures here would seem to indicate the school was actually well funded with highly paid staff. NDDC Cllr Jesperson said that DCC would be aware of the impact of funding cuts and would not have made the cuts lightly. She felt that to get DCC to change policy would require the school to provide DCC with new information to which it had not been privy in its original decision. Explaining the adverse impact of the cuts on Shillingstone and saying “it’s not fair” will not be enough to make DCC change its policy. The Governors agreed to prepare a paper with analysis, figures, comparators etc etc to make a well argued and evidenced case for a review by DCC. The parish council will then consider whether it can support this at the next parish council meeting. If the parish council does write then recipients should include the Head of Education and the Cabinet member for Education, DCC Cllr Croney.

**201. COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT:** The monthly report had been circulated and was noted. The Chairman will go to the next A350/C13 meeting in February.

**202. FOOTPATHS: i)** **Footpaths officer report:** Councilors had been invited to the formal opening of the improved Little Lane path, Cllr Kennard might be able to attend. An improved crossing over the A 357 remains a difficulty. All paths are muddy. New stock fencing has been erected between Holloway Farm and the Trailway.

**ii) Station and Trailway:** Project volunteers had painted the railings on Lambs House bridge without permission – the Rangers have written and asked them to desist from such work until a formal lease etc has been agreed.

**203. PLANNING:**

**i) To report on outstanding applications:** The owners of the Ox have negotiated a variation regarding the permissive footpath through the site. This will now run along to opposite side of the site and be surfaced with woodchip. It won’t be open until building work is complete.

**ii) To consider any new applications received before the meeting:** None received

**iii) To consider applications to carry out works to trees in the conservation area received before the meeting:** None received.

**204. RESIGNATION OF PARISH CLERK – TO NOTE, AND CONSIDER ARRANGEMENTS FOR RECRUITING A REPLACEMENT:** The clerk had given the required one month notice in a letter to the Chairman dated 28th December 2017. He has said he will be prepared to delay his departure for a reasonable amount of time to allow for a replacement to be recruited and a proper handover made. It was agreed to advertise the vacancy in the Blackmore Vale magazine and on the DAPTC web site. It will also be mentioned in the next parish magazine although the closing date for applications will be 31st January. The full job description will be available on the parish web site. The ideal candidate will have had previous experience but an alternative might be a person with the required generic skills and the ability to pick up the technical aspects quite quickly. Given the Neighbourhood Plan and pavilion refurbishment are complete it was thought appropriate to alter the contract to 11 hours per week. Salary will be based on National Pay Scales depending on experience and qualifications.

**205. FINANCES:**

**i) Cheques for payment as per list below:**  The following payments were approved:

SO – SCC – grass cut - £333.00

2127 – SSE - pavilion electricity - £159.32

2128 – Water2business – pavilion water - £6.00

2129 – I K Services – litterpick - £48.75

**206. THE CROSS – update:** A slightly amended design is still awaited from Cliveden Conservation

**207. PLAY AREAS, RECREATION GROUND AND PROPERTY CHECK:**

**i) To appoint Councillor to inspect play areas, recreation ground and property January:** Cllr Ridout

**ii) To note Councillors reports and decide any action:**. Nothing to report

**iii) Trees and hedges:** Nothing to report

**iv) Pavilion:** Nothing to report

**208. SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE PARISH COUNCIL:** The clerk will arrange to meet with Cllr MacNamara

**209. CORRESPONDENCE:** Simon Hoare MP is holding another parish council’s forum on Friday 2nd February2018 at 3pm in the Badger Sett, Crown Hotel, Blandford. The Chairman will attend if possible.

**210. TO AGREE ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA:** Standard items, plus school finances

**211. NEXT MEETING:** This will be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 1st February 2018 at the Church Centre.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.00 pm.