

## Minutes of General Meeting

Held by virtual means on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021, 18:00.

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Councillors present      Cllrs Chapman (Chair), Thomas, Classen, Randles and Papadakis.  
In attendance:            6 members of the public

Lower Slaughter Parish Council conducted this meeting by virtual means in accordance with NALC guidelines. Members of the public were invited to attend the meeting and contact the Parish Clerk for login and password details.

**210315/1      Chairman's Opening Remarks:**

Cllr Chapman welcomed everyone to the meeting and commented that he hoped meetings would be returning to normal conduct very soon. Cllr Chapman reported on the passing of Janet Barber who contributed significantly to Village life and conveyed his thanks to Cllrs Randles and Classen for representing the Council by attending at Church to pay their respects. A touching tribute was made to Janet, with a 92-bell ring in her honour. Cllr Chapman then asked Cllr Randles to communicate the details of a new addition to the Village and she welcomed the safe arrival of Clementine Grace Hayman-Joyce to the proud parents, Lizzie and Simon.

**210315/2      Declarations of Interest: None.**

**210315/3      Apologies: None**

**210315/4      Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021:** These minutes were approved by all and signed virtually by Chair, Cllr Chapman.

**210315/5      Matters Arising from the previous meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021:**

**5.1 Flood Management**

Cllr Chapman acknowledged that there were several factors contributing to flooding challenges in the Village recently but highlighted that the most significant contribution appeared to be the issues associated with Thames Water due to the inundation, and operational management of their waste-water infrastructure. After this, it is the opinion of LSPC that the management of river levels both in terms of water flow entering the river and the ability of the river to accommodate increased volumes of water to flow out of the Village need to be addressed.

Cllr Papadakis was asked to provide an update in respect of ongoing actions/discussions with Thames Water and Cllrs Randles and Thomas on short-term and long-term river flood prevention measures respectively.

Thames Water update: Following the meeting in January, Cllr Papadakis advised that Council were still chasing TW about issues where unsatisfactory responses had been given. A site visit to look at drains in LS has been conducted by an Operations Manager from TW and during this meeting it was identified that during recent flooding events, the Pumping Station may not have been working at full capacity and that tankering at the Country Inn was insufficient. TW are continuing with the planned lining works in commencing in May, but in summary, LSPC still require a lot more information.

Short-term mitigation: A small group of Councillors and volunteers have removed detritus from Kingswell Lane and in places exposed approximately 60cm of road tarmac. Gullies and pipes have been cleared and revealed blockages. Cllr Randles has reported these to GCC Highways. Cllr Randles asked the Clerk to minute particular thanks to landowners who have allowed gullies to divert run-off water into their carp ponds and thanks to Cllrs Classen, Papadakis and Steve Randles for their help and assistance.

Cllr Randles reported that a similar clean up was required down Copsehill Road and that she was investigating the possibility of diverting water into a ditch along the cricket field boundary. This eventually joins the River Dikler. Landowners had been contacted and approval given for GCC Highways to be contacted regarding this matter. Cllr Randles had also established likely riparian owners from Eyford Lakes to LS, but this would require verification.

**Medium/long-term mitigation:** Cllr Thomas re-iterated that inadequate TW drainage was the primary cause of flooding problems in the Village. In respect of proposed river works, following discussions with Laurence King, it was recommended that focus should be placed on Scare Lane bridge plus a controllable mechanism on the Weir. However, this might be cost prohibitive for LSPC (£12-15k) in combination with Scare Lane bridge works and other improvements that would be required to reduce flood risk to the village and Cllr Thomas recommended that joint funding should be considered between the Council, GCC, CDC and the Slaughters Inn. Possible EOI funding was also being sought by Cllr Papadakis.

Cllr Thomas recommended that Council should write to TW to advise and summarise the conversation held with David Edge in view of the poor responses received from TW to LSPC enquiries. It was also recommended that in the long-term there was a need to slow river water entering the village at times of high and/ or persistent rainfall by creating leaky dams and balancing lakes between Eyford Lakes and LS. However, this would take time to develop in agreement with landowners and Upper Slaughter Village and would also depend on the availability of funding.

Cllr Chapman thanked Council for their updates and hoped these ongoing actions assured residents that LSPC were continuing to devote a considerable amount of time to this issue. Updates will be provided via Council meetings, the Website, or mailshots.

#### **5.2 To discuss 20 is plenty signage/speed initiative**

Cllr Chapman confirmed that three speed signs had been received, but that LSPC were expecting eight in total. These will be sited at strategic locations around the Village, and it is hoped they will influence the behaviour of a small minority of drivers who continue to exceed mandatory speed limits. The Council agreed to erect 20 is plenty signage and retain Covid signage so that the two initiatives ran in parallel.

**210315/6**

#### **Planning Applications Update:**

##### **6.1 20/0068/CWMAJW Gravel Pitts/Gilders Scrap Yard, Fosseway, Lower Slaughter GL54 2EY.**

**Importation of inert material to infill the existing ponds to enable the applicant to relocate his metal recycling facility.** *Awaiting decision by GCC. LSPC are objecting to this application.*

LSPC have requested an extension to the deadline for comments and are currently awaiting important historical information from GCC to assist Council with the development of their submission. Residents of Lower Slaughter are urged to access GCC Planning Portal to make individual comments if they have strong opinions in support or against this planned development.

<https://planning.gloucestershire.gov.uk/publicaccess>

**6.2 20/03730/FUL East Allotment Cottage Copse Hill Road Lower Slaughter, GL54 2HY** Proposed single storey extension. *Permitted by CDC. LSPC have considered and have no comments.*

**6.3 20/04131/COMPLY the Old Mill, Mill Lane, Lower Slaughter GL54 2HX.** Compliance with conditions 3 (internal stairs), 4 (internal doors), 5 (new internal doors), 7 (new windows doors), 8 (boundary treatments), 12(shelter shed doors), and 13 (pump house door) of listed building consent 19/01989/LBC; and Conditions 7 (new windows and doors) and 8 (boundary treatments) of permission 19/01988/FUL; Conversion of cafe to dwelling, conversion of retail area to dwelling, re-configuration of cafe/retail area, refurbishment of outbuildings. *LSPC have considered and have no comments.*

**210315/7**

#### **Allotments:**

##### **7.1 West allotment clean-up**

Thanks were given to Rich Godwin for the excellent work undertaken to date regarding the removal of the unsafe garage structure and improvements to the west allotment paddock area. It was noted that following a request from an allotment holder to reduce the height of the hedge surrounding the paddock area, an instruction was issued to carry out this work, but that unfortunately, it could not be carried out in time. LSPC will now study the impact this hedge has on adjacent allotment plots and will instruct any necessary works once bird nesting season has passed. Approval for the payment for these

works and skip hire was sought under Finance. Cllr Chapman recommended that the Village Project Fund be used for this expense and estimated that the cost of a second skip for remaining waste, plus an additional skip for the removal of scrap metal would be approximately £500.00. Council approved the additional works.

### **7.2 Creation of a community orchard**

Cllr Thomas updated Council that a suitable site has been identified (plot 18) which is in the SE corner near the Church. He also advised that preliminary ideas had been discussed but felt it would be preferable to involve allotment volunteers in the final design. After Cllr Chapman's suggestion that LSPC produced an outline brief, it was agreed that Laura Evans and Jennifer Lanham be contacted to develop the brief further.

### **7.3 Formation of an allotment committee**

Cllr Chapman confirmed that Council were committed to the formation of an allotment committee but due to the amount of effort that LSPC have been expending on major planning matters and flood management issues, unfortunately little progress has been made on this matter. It was acknowledged that this situation is causing some frustration amongst allotment holders who are supportive of this initiative and LSPC need to consider an alternative approach to make further progress on this matter. It was suggested that allotment holders build on the success of their Allotment WhatsApp Group and establish this informal committee for themselves. This committee would be invited to report into the PC meetings, and must be able to demonstrate an inclusive and consultative approach for all users of the Allotment. Council agreed in principle to this concept, but felt further discussions were required.

### **7.4 Disposal of woodchipper**

After debate, it was agreed that the woodchipper would be assessed to see if it could be disposed of as scrap metal or with work, sold.

### **7.5 Asbestos removal**

Cllr Chapman outlined the request for a temporary siting of a mobile decontamination unit on the Allotments to support the removal of asbestos from an outbuilding in the rear garden of 3 Church Furlong. It was acknowledged that this is a contentious issue. After summarising Councils understanding of the proposed procedure, Cllr Chapman thanked the Owners of the property, for the way in which they have engaged with the Parish Council and the due diligence shown. Whilst there has been a significant level of correspondence between Council and the homeowners on this matter, the following salient points have arisen:

- a) The removal of the asbestos must not be delayed as it is understood the material is breaking down into a powder form and becoming increasingly prone to dispersal and therefore becoming increasingly more hazardous.
- b) The Parish Council has received reassurances that the appointed Contractor is following legislation regarding asbestos removal and has the appropriate registrations and certifications.
- c) The Council's concerns in respect of the disposal of wastewater from the decontamination unit have been addressed.
- d) Confirmation has been received that these works will be notified to the HSE, who will have the right to inspect the works at any point to ensure compliance with all the relevant standards.
- e) The DCU should be located as close as possible to the pressurised work area at the rear of the property and therefore, it is not possible to relocate the DCU at the front.

Members of the Public were invited to pose comments, views and questions to Council before Council voted.

Council voted unanimously to support this request and it was agreed that dates on which the work takes place, and any additional instructions will be communicated to those concerned.

## **210315/8**

### **Finance:**

**8.1** Cllr Chapman reported on the current financial status and full itemised details can be found in Appendix 1.

**8.2 and 8.3** Cllr Chapman reported on receipts since the last meeting/retrospective payments and secured approval from the meeting for payments due. These are also detailed in Appendix 1. All were APPROVED.

**8.4** Cllr Chapman informed Council that the Financial Accounts of LSPC for the Financial Period 2020/2021 have been audited by the Government-appointed External Auditors, and they have

identified a couple of issues which are noted as qualifications to the Accounts. It would appear that the dates published for the statutory viewing of the Accounts were incorrectly calculated, and the decision to write down the asset value of the woodchipper should have resulted in a restatement of our Opening Asset value in the Balance Sheet. Although these observations are not really an issue, it does mean that we will not be able to exempt ourselves from a limited assurance review next year. In addition, Cllr Chapman recommended that LSPC re-considers the appointment of our Internal Auditor such that issues such as this do not arise in the future.

**210315/9**

### **Reports from Wardens**

**9.1 River** As per earlier discussions and thanks to the Church for use of their green bins to deposit vegetation removed from the beds and banks. Cllr Chapman reported that the Monthly river maintenance programme had commenced. Cllr Chapman also advised that the Village Flood Warden, David Barnes was stepping down due to his hip surgery and thanks were given to David for his efforts over the years.

**9.2 Rights of Way** Warden Steve Randles reported on PROW in LS. Landowners are thanked for the hedge work on HSL1 and HSL2. Contact needs to be made to the new PROW Officer at GCC to follow up regarding on conversations regarding Mill Dam path (HSL3) and Scare Lane (HSL7 and HSL10). It was also reported that Robin Cochrane was stepping down as our Cotwolds Warden and the PC would like to extend further thanks to Robin for all his work and commitment.

**9.3 Trees** Cllr Thomas reported that trees in the LS were generally in good condition. Fortunately, during the extremely high winds in recent times the trees were not yet in leaf.

**9.4 Snow** Cllr Papadakis confirmed that grit bins were full.

**210315/10**

### **Correspondence: To review relevant correspondence received since the previous meeting; consider actions/responses:**

**10.1 Flood mitigation correspondence received from an ex-Councillor regarding historic finance information for the Weir.** LSPC thanked S. Randles for the useful information. It was noted that this correspondence confirmed monies received by the PC in 2009 which included £10k from CDC, £3.5k from a one-off addition to the Precept, £500 from Fete, and an additional £3.2k received from CDC/GCC. Whilst Mr Randles was not aware of any monies being spent, it was suggested that the PC at the time, may have spent £10k for culvert work. Mr Randles advocated alteration to the spillway to produce a by-pass channel with a control mechanism but cautioned against further reduction in the height of the spillway in order to preserve river levels during drought conditions. Cllr Thomas said that all options would be considered, but that the PC needed to find the most cost-effective solution and to decide what the priorities are so that monies were spent wisely and effectively.

**10.2 Various communication regarding removal of shed and asbestos near the allotments, hedges, trees, and the removal of Ray's old shed.** LSPC confirmed that the shed was unsafe and have acted as required.

**10.3 Correspondence from residents regarding fly-tipping in Lower Slaughter and the disposal of household waste.** After local intervention, LSPC now hope this issue has been resolved and residents understand that it is an offense to put household waste in public waste bins around the village. Thanks were given to David Thornton who bagged and disposed of the fly-tipping contents up Kingswell Lane.

**10.4 Enquiry through LS website regarding fishing rights in the River Eye by the Old Mill.** Council confirmed fishing is not allowed in the Village and requested that the Parish Clerk posts appropriate signage on the noticeboard.

**10.5 Enquiry through LS website from Visit Britain wanting to use an image of properties along the River Eye.** Parish Clerk to contact home owners.

**10.6 Request from Village Hall committee for PC to review and condense filing.** Stage one has been completed but further work is required, and the spare cabinet will need to be recycled/destroyed.

**10.7 Support for the banning of metaldehyde slug pellets.** LSPC wish to pre-empt the law and support the ban. Council will write to allotment holders asking them to consider using an alternative method of slug control with immediate effect.

**10.8 Removal of tree stump by riparian owners.** LSPC are pleased to advise that the Riparian Owners

have informed Council of their intention to remove this near Scare Lane. They have identified and discussed the removal with a contractor who is waiting for ground conditions to improve before this work can commence. Cllr Chapman, on behalf of the residents of the Village, wished to minute Council gratitude for these actions, which will provide significant improvement in water flow downstream of the Village and also protection of the river bank adjacent to the obstruction.

**210315/11**

**Date of Next Meeting:** Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 6pm via Zoom.

Meeting ended at 20. 05

**Signed:**

**Date:**



## Village Projects Reserve

Created in September 2019 following a contribution of £40,000.00 from Box Hill Films for the Production of EMMA in Q1 and Q2 2019.

| Date      | Transaction                                | Amount     | Balance    |
|-----------|--|------------|------------|
| 15-Sep-19 | Creation of Reserve                        | £40,000.00 | £40,000.00 |
| 5-Oct-19  | Purchase of Liquidamber Tree               | £61.99     | £39,938.01 |
| 5-Oct-19  | Planting of Liquidamber Tree               | £70.00     | £39,868.01 |
| 2-Feb-20  | Printing of Village Booklet (A Wheeler)    | £175.00    | £39,693.01 |
| 15-Mar-20 | Purchase of Snowdrops for village          | £102.99    | £39,590.02 |
| 18-Sep-20 | Contribution to LSVN                       | £350.00    | £39,240.02 |
| 15-Jan-21 | Transfer to General Reserves (210118/10.4) | £2,000.00  | £37,240.02 |
| 14-Feb-21 | Flood Prevention Water Pumps etc.          | £556.15    | £36,683.87 |