

SWANTON MORLEY PARISH COUNCIL

An extraordinary meeting of Swanton Morley Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 4th December 2007. The meeting commenced at 7.30pm.

Present: Mr R. Atterwill (Chair), Mr C. Perry, Mr G Northall, Mrs M Thomas and Mrs J Walden.
Also in attendance were four members of the public and Mrs F. LeBon (clerk)

The following items were raised under Public Participation

- Representatives from the Bowling Club were in attendance to enquire about the availability of funds from the sale of the old village hall land. Mr Atterwill responded that an enquiry had already been registered from the Bowling Club and they shall be contacted as soon as the funds become available.

1. Apologies for absence

None

2. Declarations of Interest

Mr Atterwill declared a prejudicial interest in items relating to the financing of the village hall. He also declared a potential prejudicial interest in the awarding of the grass cutting contract as one of his relatives had been approached to submit a tender.

Mrs Walden declared a personal interest in items relating to the sale of the old village hall land

Mr Perry declared a prejudicial interest in items relating to the financing of the village hall.

3. Resolution to Exclude the Public from Section 4 of this Meeting as Publicity would be Prejudicial to the Public Interest by Reason of the Confidential Nature of Business to be Transacted and also Section 5 as the Discussion Relates to Terms of Service of an Employee

Mr Atterwill proposed that the public be excluded from item four due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed and item 5 as the subject matter relates to the terms of service of an employee. Mr Northall seconded, all in favour.

The Public Left The Room

4. To Agree Contract for Sale of Old Village Hall Land

The clerk reported that the purchaser name for the sale is Norwich Drylining Ltd as Beechwood Developments is the subsidiary of this company. There were no objections to this purchaser. A copy of the contract had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting.

Mr Northall proposed that the Chairman and Vice Chairman be empowered to sign the contract document for sale of the old village hall land. Mrs Thomas seconded, all in favour. The contract was duly signed by Mr Atterwill and Mr Perry.

The Clerk Left The Room

Mr Northall gave a vote of thanks to the clerk and the chairman for their work in preparing the draft budget.

5. Staff Costs

a) To agree council profile for which clerk's salary is to be based

A discussion occurred as to the council profile that the clerk's salary should be based upon. It was agreed that an independent person from NCAPTC should be invited to analyse the work of the council and submit a profile to which the council will be bound.

b) To agree clerk's salary for 2008/2009

Mr Atterwill proposed that the amount submitted in the draft budget document should be placed in the 2008/2009 budget but the clerk's salary would only be agreed after profiling advice from NCAPTC. Mr Perry seconded, all in favour.

The Clerk and Public Re-Entered the Room

Mr Atterwill Left The Room

6. Grass Cutting Contract 2008/2009

a) To open sealed tenders for 2008/2009 contract

Mr Perry opened the sealed tenders for the grass cutting contract 2008/2009. It was established that no relation of Mr Atterwill had submitted a tender.

Mr Atterwill Re-Entered the Room

b) To award grass cutting contract for 2008/2009

After analysis of all the prices and discussions about the work involved, the contract was awarded to Mr J Pillar. The clerk is to arrange for the contract to be sent out to Mr Pillar and the unsuccessful parties advised.

7. To Consider Financial Assistance for the Running of the Village Hall in 2008/2009

Mr Atterwill reported that the Village Hall Management Committee had met on 3rd December. They had discussed their financial requirements and it had been agreed to request £5000 from the Parish Council for running costs of the hall in 2008/2009. This would be allocated for heating and lighting of the hall. The difference to Parishioners between the £5000 requested and the £1772 already being paid for insurance was £3228 which amounted to approximately £4.86 per Band D household.

Mr Perry advised that 15% had been added to the fees of all hirers to assist with the costs associated with running the hall. Billing and accounting practices have been reviewed and improved. There is a strong will within the new management committee to address all issues in relation to repair, maintenance and running of the hall and to allow the hall to run independently.

Mrs Walden raised concerns about not knowing the financial situation of the Social Club prior to committing to funding the hall. Mr Perry responded that there was a high level of distrust between the previous management committee and the social club. This was being addressed.

Mrs Walden suggested applying to Breckland District Council to waive the business rates which were approximately £1000.

Mr Perry and Mr Atterwill Left the Room

Mrs Thomas acknowledged that the Parish Council risked criticism by funding the hall, but stressed it was the only local building available for community use and the public needed this building.

Mrs Walden showed concern that it wouldn't be known that the building is solvent until April, and £5000 paid in two amounts (£2500 in April and £2500 in October) would possibly still not secure financial viability for the hall.

Mr Northall proposed that the £5000 be placed in the budget but only be given to the village hall on the proviso that the Social Club is operating as a correct user of the hall, including providing accounts to the village hall management committee, by 1st April 2008. Seconded by Mrs Walden, all in favour.

Mr Perry and Mr Atterwill Re-Entered the Room

8. To Agree Parish Council Budget for 2008/2009

Discussions were had as to the 2008/2009 budget. The following were voted upon:

Mr Atterwill proposed that £250 remain in the budget for the opening ceremony for Gooseberry Hill.

Seconded by Mrs Thomas. There were four in favour with Mrs Walden against

Mr Atterwill proposed that £100 be placed in the budget for Councillors' expenses providing a receipt can be supplied. Seconded by Mr Perry. There were three in favour with Mr Northall and Mrs Walden against.

Mr Perry proposed that the £5000 contingency remain in the budget, and it be made clear that the £1800 in the Burial Ground sub committee budget is for partial removal and repairs of the wall. There were four in favour with Mrs Walden voting against.

Mr Atterwill proposed that the Parish Council budget for 2008/2009 be £54,422.73. Seconded by Mrs Thomas, all in favour.

9. To Agree Precept for 2008/2009

Mr Atterwill proposed that the precept should be set at £31,552.22, seconded by Mrs Thomas. All in favour.

Public Participation Summary

Mrs Northall raised the following points:

- That the street light in Bedingfield Road is still not working. The clerk is to follow up with TT Jones.

- That advice should be sought from NCAPTC about what proportion of the budget should be left in the bank at the end of the financial year.
- What had happened to the second box collected from Mr Carrick that was not taken to County Hall for archive. There is information on the Common Lands in this box.
- That it is appalling that no terms of reference have apparently been issued to the Social Club.

The meeting closed at 10.15pm

_____ (Chairman) _____ Date