

MINUTES

For the virtual meeting of Parish Council, held on Wednesday, 2nd December 2020

Meeting Number 20.360

Public Participation

There was nothing to note from the public.

20.360.1 Apologies for Absence

Councillors Bohm (DB), Davis (SD), Donne (HD), Stafford Allen (RSA), Mullane (NM) and Whitfield (RW) were all present via Zoom call.

Councillor Carmen Griffiths was also in attendance for part of the meeting and there were three members of the public present via Zoom call.

20.360.2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from the Councillors relating to this meeting.

20.360.3 To Receive and Approve: Minutes of the Virtual Parish Council meeting on 4th November 2020

The minutes of the virtual Parish Council meeting on 4th November 2020 were discussed with no changes required.

The minutes for the virtual Parish Council meeting on 4th November 2020 were then moved by DB and seconded by HD. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

Action: Clerk to present minutes to Chair to sign, then file and upload to the web.

20.360.4 To Receive and Approve: Minutes of the Virtual Extraordinary Parish Council meeting held on 23rd November 2020

The minutes of the virtual Parish Council meeting on 23rd November 2020 were discussed with no changes required.

The minutes for the virtual Parish Council meeting on 23rd November 2020 were then moved by DB and seconded by RW. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

Action: Clerk to present minutes to Chair to sign, then file and upload to the web.

20.360.5 For Information: Chairs Comment (DB)

The Chair highlighted that this has been a rather complicated month with the Great Wolf Appeal demanding a lot of her time. DB has had a conversation with the Chair of Bletchingdon Parish Council and discussed the issue of vandalism and unsatisfactory behaviour in our villages. Various incidents in Weston on the Green have been reported to our local police contact, who has been incredibly helpful and supportive. Marked patrols have increased through the village with an emphasis on the period once lockdown ceases. All future incidents will be reported to the police and members of the village are asked to keep us informed.

DB went onto add that door to door salesmen are still an ongoing issue in the village and DB has asked for any printed information they gave out so we can complain to their employers. Patsy is working on the No Cold Calling Stickers and leaflet.

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There is quite a pleasant feel around the village with a number of things going on: the Village Hall raffle, the Advent Windows, Christmas trees, lots of lights and a festive sense. DB also wondered how we can reach those in the village who will be alone over Christmas and mentioned that if the Council were aware of any newcomers, old timers or just the rest of us who could use a phone call or some baking, to share the concern.

Finally as Chair, DB thanked every Council member and the clerk for the additional hard work that they have all undertaken during a difficult year.

20.360.6 For Information: Clerk report (Clerk)

The clerk highlighted the report provided to the Council which provided confirmation that we have received the signed External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/20 and therefore our financial audit has been completed for FY 2019/20. The clerk has placed the External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/20 (Section 3) and the Notice of Conclusion of Annual Audit 2019/20 on the Parish Council website.

The clerk also provided an update on the purchase of the playing field and spinney. The application form and supporting documentation requesting permission to borrow from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government has been sent off to Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils. There has been no further communication with the Parish Council solicitor since sending off our second letter, following its approval at the 7th October Parish Council meeting. It was also confirmed that the requested funds (£2,430.00) to cover the costs of the Duchy of Cornwall’s solicitor have been transferred to the Parish Council’s solicitor.

The clerk also confirmed that Oxfordshire County Council have programmed in drainage works at North Lane to help prevent flooding and drain cover repairs have also been programmed.

Councillor Griffiths mentioned that additional money may be made available for highway works later in the year.

20.360.7 For Information: Technology Advisory Group report (James Henderson/JH)

JH confirmed that according to the Openreach website the village is currently in the design phase for new fibre cables following his application, however he has not been able to get through to them and has received no quote from them for the work. This could be due to Covid and being inundated due to the extra rural funding scheme so it may still happen. JH was unsure about requesting a quote from a competitor and then potentially losing his place in the Openreach queue.

Councillor Griffiths mentioned that she would find out from the County Council if the village can get quotes from a competitor and asked JH to email with the information.

Action: JH to contact Councillor Griffiths for advice on rural broadband funding scheme.

20.360.8 For Information: Update on footpath from Southfield Farm development (NM)

NM outlined that he had chased Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and Cherwell District Council (CDC) for a follow up to the last meeting held in October/November.

Since the last Parish Council meeting the footpath work has started and the Council’s response was that the level of works undertaken were now financially prohibitive to reverse the current works.

NM thanked Councillor Griffiths for her responses and commented that no-one else responded to his emails except her. She has asked for costings and details to confirm why it would be prohibitive.

Since these discussions NM has also been made aware, via a resident, that the drainage from the development site is actually coming along the road via the ditches down to the pond on the opposite side B430.

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NM has been in contact to request clarification on the matter including confirmation of the drainage route and who is responsible for clearing ditches and ponds as the Parish Council do not own either of them. The application highlighted the need for a good drainage strategy so need to ensure this is what they have.

RW also highlighted concern over the drainage as current water levels are causing problems in nearby cellar. NM and RW agreed to discuss this further offline.

A local resident has measured the road and commented that the narrowing is by more than the stated amount and residents are also concerned about the effect of the footpath works on the oak tree and reportedly the OCC tree inspector is coming out to check.

20.360.9 For Information: Great Wolf Appeal update (DB)

The Parishes Against Wolf team is very grateful that WOTG acted quickly and donated £500 to the fighting fund. Also, the letter of objection held a robust argument and again this was appreciated.

The next task being undertaken is putting together a list of businesses in the area who will be contacted and asked to sign a business petition and to consider donating to the fighting fund. Fundraising is ongoing via raffle tickets, calendars and wreaths, although DB is conscious of not wanting to clash with WOTG projects.

What happens next:

1. The Statements of Case by all parties was due on Nov 27th.
2. Administrative meetings by lead groups in December.
3. Consultants prepare the Evidence Case due in January. This is the actual evidence which will be used to substantiate the Statement of Case submitted earlier.
4. Virtual Inquiry begins: February 7th, 2021. Public will be allowed to attend, 5-7 day inquiry expected.

DB confirmed that she is leading the stakeholder planning work involving parishes and will be contacting the 21 parishes on the list of objections asking for a donation. This is a huge commitment in terms of time and energy.

Councillor Griffiths queried if district councillors have objected. DB responded that she was not aware of individual letter writing.

20.360.10 For Information: Cherwell District Council November Parish Liaison meeting update (DB)

DB commented that the semi-annual Cherwell Parish Liaison meeting was held on November 11th 2020 and the seminars usually associated with it occurred via Zoom. Topics covered were all valuable for us including:

- Covid19 - how it is affecting our community and Cherwell’s response.
- Community Emergency Plans and Neighbourhood Support – Clerk confirmed that this was under consideration and a draft will be compiled and discussed at a Parish Council meeting in 2021.
- Census 2021 – we were encouraged to raise the profile of this in the new year. The data given will help with our planning for the next ten years. There was a plea for workers for the canvassing.
- Elections 2021- it was confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum is due to take place on 6th May 2021.

The Street Naming Seminar was also useful and this topic is covered within the Planning section minutes.

DB was also given permission to discuss the Great Wolf Appeal and asked for support from other parishes.

A link to the slides and webcast can be found on the Parish Council website and are available from Cherwell District Council at: <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/118/communities/350/parish-liaison-meetings>

with the webcast viewed via: <https://cherwell.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

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The next Cherwell Parish Liaison meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 16th June 2021.

Action: Clerk to draft Emergency Plan for village, distribute to Councillors for comment and add it to an agenda for discussion in 2021.

Action: Clerk to add information about Census 2021 on PC website and Village News when available.

20.360.11 For Discussion: Oxfordshire County Council Councillor Priority Grant - project funding options (DB)

DB mentioned that as in previous years the Parish Council have the opportunity to apply for a grant, £2,500, from the Oxfordshire Councillor Priority Fund. The purpose of the funds are for the betterment of the community. In the past we have fixed paths, contributed towards ramp building, undertaken pond works and paid towards a heating project in the village hall. She commented that perhaps we could consider a small project that would help bring some joy to the village.

RSA suggested some of the grant could go towards fencing for the playing field, HD agreed this was a good idea.

Action: Clerk/DB to complete Oxfordshire County Council Councillor Priority Grant when project list finalised.

20.360.12 Resolution: To Approve Donation of £563.00 to St Marys Church for a contribution for churchyard maintenance (tree felling & mower petrol) (RW)

RW highlighted the donations line of £2,000 in the budget for this financial year. This is to be used for charitable endeavours which benefit the village.

The Parish Council received an application from St Marys Church requesting a donation of £563.00 for help towards maintenance costs of the churchyard, relating to the felling of a tree and mower costs. The application had been circulated and approved by the Finance Advisory Group prior to this meeting.

RSA queried the terms of the donations policy. HD commented that the churchyard is enjoyed by all residents and the footpath is widely used to avoid traffic on Church Lane; this request satisfied the Council’s donation policy.

The resolution to approve the donation of £563.00 to St Marys Church for a contribution towards churchyard maintenance (tree felling and mower petrol) was proposed by RW and seconded by SD. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

The request is in line with the Weston on the Green Parish Council Donations Policy and the Council has used the powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act in order to grant this donation.

Action: Clerk to advise St Marys Church of successful application for a donation towards churchyard maintenance costs and obtain payment details.

Action: Clerk to request payment to St Marys Church of £563.00 be actioned by Councillors.

20.360.13 Resolution: To Approve Parish Council entering into a contract with Oxfordshire County Council to undertake annual cutting of grass verges, within the village gate boundaries, for the sum of £2,206.82 for FY 2021/22, excluding VAT (HD)

HD highlighted the report regarding the Parish Council taking on the village verge grass cutting contract from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). It was confirmed that the areas to be cut, twice a year, were located within the village white gates. OCC would pay the Parish Council £2,206.82 (exclusive of VAT) with the agreement beginning in April 2021. The rates are to be reviewed annually and the contract can be terminated by either party during the year.

Prior to the meeting the document had been circulated to the Finance Advisory Group for comment and approval.

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SD queried whether the grass cutting quote provided was manageable within the Council's budget for FY 2021-22. The clerk confirmed that the grass cutting by a contractor budget line for FY 2021-22 had been set slightly higher at £2,500, as a precaution to cover any eventualities in the first year of operation. This will be evaluated for the budget for the following year.

The resolution to approve the Parish Council entering into a contract with Oxfordshire County Council to undertake annual cutting of grass verges, within the village gate boundaries, for the sum of £2,206.82 for FY 2021/22, excluding VAT was proposed by HD and seconded by NM. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

Action: Clerk to confirm with Oxfordshire County Council that the Parish Council wish to take on the verge grass cutting contract.

Action: Clerk to inform the Council when the OCC verge grass cutting contract has been received by the PC.

20.360.14 Resolution: To Approve Parish Council budget for FY 2021/22 (HD)

HD presented the budget for FY 2021-22 and confirmed that there would be no increase in precept request from the Parish Council.

Prior to the meeting the document had been circulated to the Finance Advisory Group for comment and approval.

SD queried the increase in audit fees in the budget. The clerk confirmed this was due to the recent invoice received from the External Auditors for the work undertaken to complete the limited assurance review of the Parish Councils accounts for FY 2019-20, which had previously not been included as this was a new stage in the audit process due to our income exceeding £25,000.

The clerk confirmed that the Council is waiting for the notification of precept request and tax band information from Cherwell District Council and will then update the information on the budget and check the final figures.

The resolution to approve the Parish Council budget for FY 2021/22 was proposed by HD and seconded by RW. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

Action: Clerk to upload approved Budget FY 2021-22 to the PC website.

Action: Clerk to add Precept request to January 2021 agenda and provide update on estimated tax base when received.

20.360.15 Resolution: To Approve the following invoices for payment (HD)

HD requested approval of the following invoices detailed in the table below.

PC Ref	Payee	Purpose	Total payable incl VAT	Budget Line	Amount Remaining in 2020-21 Budget Line
164	Cherwell District Council	Excess waste garden bin hire x2 - North Lane pond works	£99.00	Works - Highways & General/North Lane pond maintenance	£500.00
165	Instant Print	Printing 25 copies of WotG Neighbourhood Plan	£200.00	Neighbourhood Plan/Printing-binding	£0.00 (NP Reserves)
166	Moore	Completion of External Auditors limited assurance review of PC accounts for FY 2019/20	£240.00	Insurance & Auditing/Audit fees	£115.00
167	Oxford Edens	Grass Cutting (27/11/20)	£144.00	Works/Playing Field & Highways Grass Cutting	-£152.00*

*Reflecting combined sum in budget for playground area grass cut, Ben Jonson/Stocks & verge cutting B430 & Bletchingdon Rd

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The resolution to approve the invoices was proposed by HD and seconded by RW. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

Action: Clerk to update invoice log with approvals.

Action: Clerk to initiative request for payments from Councillors.

Action: Councillors to process online payment requests.

20.360.16 For Discussion: to discuss and agree recommendations from the Planning Group (HD)

Key planning applications on the planning report were discussed by the Council.

Building Applications:

Decision Received – Approved

20/02508/LB – Rutland Cottage, Church Road - Conversion of garage to bedroom. Remove garage door and infill with rendered wall and window. Remove existing partition. Form new internal doorway. **Commented For**

Decision Received – Rejected

20/02180/F – Ben Jonson Inn – Erection of 4 Bed Chalet/Bungalow in garden with access off Westlands Avenue. **Commented Against**

20/02428/F – Gargash Manor Hotel – Timber Extension to rear of hotel & New Roof to Rupert’s Cottage (Re-submission of 20/01005/F)

This is a smaller orangery than previous app, out of sight from road, to be used for weddings with 152 covers - **Rejected – Orangery too large – Re-roofing – bad to replace original tiles. Also worry about Great Crested Newts – we are in a red zone it seems!**

Awaiting Decision (Still)

20/02426/F – Land North of Oak View – Erection of stone entrance walls in connection with Southfields Farm development. Issues are suburban look and illuminated sign! **Commented Against**

20/02555/F – Manor Farm, Northampton Road - General purpose farm barn for the storage of winter bedding, fodder and machinery, **Commented Against**

New Applications

20/03118/F – Stonehouse, Northampton Road - Erection of 1.5 storey extension to include dormer windows in south elevation of roof slope and rooflights in the north facing roof slope; and replace flat roof over bay with pitched roof.

HD highlighted that from the street the alterations would provide only a minor change. Neighbours may be more affected. DB, as one neighbour thought it was well designed and would support any changes required to improve the House. HD will check with the other neighbour before providing a response.

Action: HD to check with Stonehouse neighbour before providing PC response to new application.

Tree Works:

Approved / Completed

20/02881/TCA - Corner House Mill Lane - T1x Silver Birch-Reduce by 6 metres T2 x Red Maple- Reduce by 3 metres T3 x White Birch-Reduce by 3 metres.

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20/02893/TCA – Walnut Cottage, Westlands Avenue - T1 x Mature Walnut - Crown raise. G1 x Field Maple hedge line; previously maintained at 6.0m - Reduce to near previous points, removing approximately 4.0m in height and 2.0m in lateral spread. T2 x Field Maple - Crown raise to provide a 2.0m clearance. T3 x Liquidamber - Annual trimming with the use of a hedge trimmer. T4 x Weeping Willow - Crown raise.

20/02772/TCA – Old Vicarage, Mill Lane - T1 x Gleditzia - Will be felled to permit replanting.

20/02997/TCA – Old Vicarage Mill Lane - T1 x Ash - Fell the main stem of a storm damaged tree.

New Application / Awaiting Decision

20/03403/TCA - Rutland Cottage Church Road – Remove the two Cypress Trees in front yard to right hand side as you see it from Road. One is very overgrown and is in the power / telephone lines. Third Tree is in garden.

20/03394/TCA – Hebe Cottage, North Lane – T1 x Crab Apple – Reduction and reshape removing up to 2m of growth leaving a final height of up to 4.0m as overgrown and dominating the garden. T2 x Bay – Up to 3.0m reduction due to excessive shading and excessive size for the location and position of the tree, leaving a final height of 2-3m. **Seems sensible Tree Maintenance**

HD highlighted that the Parish Council will liaise further with enforcement regarding the advertising sign on A34 which has re-appeared.

Action: HD/Clerk to continue to liaise further with enforcement regarding the advertising sign on A34.

HD also confirmed that the Parish Council’s suggested street names for the new Southfield development have been sent to Cherwell District Council as requested.

20.360.17 For Information: Works update (RSA)

RSA highlighted that he had submitted a works and playground report to the Council.

He also mentioned that Ardley Football Club had contacted him to ask for the pitch to be mowed and whilst the conditions are very damp and muddy it has been done and the pitch remarked.

20.360.18 Next Virtual Parish Council Meeting: 6th January 2021, 7.30pm via Zoom

Meeting closed at 21.08

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