

WESTON ON THE GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES - DRAFT

For the meeting of Parish Council, held in Village Hall on Wednesday 2nd April 2025

Meeting Number 25.421

Note for information: Cherwell District Council – CDC, Oxfordshire County Council - OCC

Public Participation

There was nothing to note.

25.421.1 To Receive: Apologies for non-attendance

Councillors Bohm (DB), Davies (SD), Rowan (TR), Miller (JM) and Aldridge (MA) were in attendance.

Councillor Simpson (Oxfordshire County Council) was in attendance for the whole meeting. Councillor Coton (Cherwell District Council) was not in attendance.

No members of the public were in attendance.

25.421.2 To Receive: Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations to note for this meeting.

25.421.3 To Receive & Approve: Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th March 2025 (DB)

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th March 2025 were discussed with no changes required.

The resolution to approve the minutes for the Parish Council meeting held on 5th March 2025 was proposed by DB and seconded by TR.

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

25.421.4 For Information: Chair report (DB)

DB confirmed to the Council that the work on the original oak tree footpath has been completed. 35 tonnes of concrete was removed, the roots were treated, nutrients added to special soil and a final layer of topsoil added and seeded.

This is a huge achievement by the team and we can all feel a great relief. Special thank you to Councillor Simpson and Roger Evans for all their support, advice and work on the scheme. Thanks also go to Mick East and Mark Johnson for fixing the broken North Lane road sign.

DB highlighted that there had been further vandalism in the village. Several youths entered the field opposite Milestone Lane and smashed up a trailer which was used as an office. They then turned on the car nearby and repeatedly hit the windshield and jumped on the roof and hood making huge dents. Interestingly enough, they returned to the field the next evening and the police were quietly waiting for them and took them off for interviews. We don't know the outcome of this yet but are hoping to get some info from the Neighbourhood Police.

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DB has also filed a Police incident report on the vandalism in the playground. Further nonsense was noted in the form of writing and carving on the playground equipment. DB has spoken quietly with parents and chatted with young people at the playground. Some of the graffiti has since been removed.

The Chair's group met early last week and there is clearly some tension regarding housing allocation (at times seen as not-appropriate), the high refusal rate for appeals in Cherwell, the continuing saga of trying to get paid s106 money from OCC and the lack of communication from the person in charge. The Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Plan Executive group has also met and similar concerns regarding housing in the area were expressed. A number of parishes are quickly writing a Neighbourhood Plan in the hope of managing "the right houses in the right place".

DB has undertaken a trial run of knocking on new residents doors, greeting people. The reception has been very friendly and five new emails have been obtained. She appreciates the support of the Councillors to reach more people when lists have been compiled.

Finally the Council said goodbye to Councillor Nigel Simpson, due to boundary changes he will be standing for an alternative area in the May elections. DB highlighted how fabulous he has been with all the support, advice and wisdom he has provided on many projects. DB thanked him very much and wished him lots of luck.

25.421.5 For Information: Clerk report (Clerk)

The clerks report to the Council was noted which confirmed payments from the Parish Council bank account including payments relating to the monthly clerk salary. Bank interest (£141.93) had also been received on 3rd March 2025.

The clerk thanked all the supporters of the annual village litter pick and those who regularly collect litter, a good collection of rubbish was removed.

The audit timescales for 2024-25 were provided and the clerk will provide the required documentation in a timely manner.

CDC have confirmed that a new road sign for Church Close has been ordered.

The clerk dropped off Parish Council archive documents e.g. meeting minutes, receipt books, village issue correspondence to the Oxfordshire History Centre on 27th March 2025. These will be reviewed and items not able to be stored by the centre will be returned to the Parish Council (via clerk collection).

CDC provided a vacancy notice on 10th March 2025 following notification of the resignation of Councillor Lanham. CDC have confirmed that no election has been called and the vacancy can be filled by co-option.

25.421.6 To Note: Playing field and playground inspection report (Clerk)

The playground inspection report undertaken by the clerk was noted, no new major defects to the equipment were identified. Unfortunately, graffiti was found on the new swing equipment posts.

DB has passed the information on the playground fence panel removal to the community police.

The clerk has continued to flatten the mole hills on the field and fill in rabbit holes.

A quote to help clear brambles smothering part of the hedge edging the car park/Church Lane will be provided in the autumn so if desired work can be carried out after bird nesting season.

The clerk is still waiting to hear back on quotes for the playground clean.

Action: Clerk to obtain quotes for playground clean.

25.421.7 For Discussion: Discuss recommendations from the Planning Group on planning applications (SD)

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

Building Applications

Decisions Received - Permitted

25/00142/CLUE - North View, North Lane

Permission relates only to the ability to park on the verge, and not to the previously refused application 24/01101/F, which still stands.

25/00361/AGN - Land North of Filling Station adjacent to the track south of The Chequers Inn, Northampton Road

Prior approval application for erection of a Grain and Crop Store.

Decisions Received – Refused

None

Withdrawn

None

Awaiting Decision

24/02685/F– Southview, Northampton Road

Infill extension to existing bungalow and addition of first floor. Erection of garage and store with room in loft, including demolition of existing pole barn.

Commented

24/03356/PIP - Land North East Of Knowle Farm, Knowle Lane

Planning Permission in Principle is sought for the provision of 2-4 dwellings.

Commented

It was noted that points raised by OCC Highways (regarding access) and CDC Conservation (not meeting grey belt land criteria) need to be addressed before it can be determined.

25/00139/F - Part of OS Parcel 0006 Adjacent and North of Normandy, North Lane

Demolition of existing buildings and the erection of five detached single and two-storey dwellings together with access, parking and garaging, amenity space, landscaping and drainage works.

Commented

25/00449/REM - Reynards Lodge, North Lane

Reserved Matters application to 24/00804/OUT - Access (with Construction Traffic Management Plan), Layout (with part drainage), Scale, Appearance, Landscaping and Biodiversity (with Construction Environment Management Plan).

Commented

25/00356/DISC - Kelberg Ltd, Northampton Road

Discharge of Conditions 3 (construction management strategy), 4 (Arboricultural Method Statement), 5 (surface water drainage), 6 (biodiversity method statement) and 8 (lighting details) of 24/00893/F.

New Applications

25/00582/F and 25/00583/LB - Williams Cottage, North Lane

Demolition of existing outbuilding and erection of replacement single-storey outbuilding, garden shed and associated landscaping. Comments due by 17/04/25.

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25/00418/F and 25/00486/LB – The Manor Hotel, Northampton Road

Restoration and extension of Rupert's Cottage to provide additional guest accommodation and leisure facilities; re-instatement of the former outdoor swimming pool; construction of a new events pavilion; restaurant extension within the Manor's west courtyard; relocation of guest car parking away from the Manor's principal elevation; screening of the existing plant and biomass boiler area; restoration of wider landscape features including the historic moat and bridge. Comments due by 26/04/25

Concern was raised over the proposals regarding the closeness of The Manor to residential properties and the potential for increased light and noise disturbance from increased outside entertainment space and additional weddings. A balance between developing a business and its location in the middle of a village needs to be sought.

Tree Applications

25/00631/TCA - Strangers Drift, North Lane (Applicant from 21 Milestone Lane)

Horse Chestnut - crown reduce the overhang by 2m.

Action: SD/Clerk to send appropriate planning replies to Cherwell District Council.

25.421.8 For Discussion: Update on Milestone Lane development (DB)

It was noted that Milestone Lane had a problem with their sewers and were advised by Thames Water that they couldn't deal with it as the developments sewers had not been adopted yet. A private contractor was hired by residents to fix the issue.

25.421.9 For Discussion: Village flood defences and OCC Priority Action flood projects 2025/26 grant scheme (DB)

DB highlighted the OCC grant funding scheme for small scale projects that communities can run themselves to reduce flooding in their local areas. There are various areas of concern in Weston on the Green and this scheme could help those residents who are not able to work on ditches near their properties which are their responsibility and have not been cleared over the years. The whole system would require work to be undertaken for it to be effective.

Under the Riparian Rules, property owners are responsible for clearing adjacent watercourses. Sample letters providing information to villagers are available on the flood toolkit.

There is the opportunity to apply for up to £25k from the OCC Priority Action flood projects 2025/26 grant scheme. Expressions of interest are required to be submitted by 18th April 2025.

The Council agreed to take forward an application to apply for grant funding. JM and TR agreed to support with the application.

Action: Expression of interest form for OCC flood alleviation scheme to be submitted by 18th April 2025.

25.421.10 For Discussion: Update on village works (JM)

This topic had been discussed above. JM noted there were plastic tree guards in the playground and wondered if they were from the newly planted trees. The clerk confirmed these were from older trees planted years ago by the Duchy and will ask David Williams if they could be useful in the future.

Action: Clerk to enquire over the usefulness of the plastic tree guards with David Williams from the spinney and remove when damaged.

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25.421.11 For Information: Update from Traffic Calming Action Group (MA)

MA provided an update on the traffic groups latest developments. DB and MA had met a representative of Middleton Stoney Parish Council to help to understand the process and timelines they encountered for their recent speed reduction, although there's was technically different to ours as part of the 20mph scheme.

They provided a good insight into the challenges they faced and the equipment to look at. MA highlighted they were looking to purchase potentially three solar speed limit signs with a visual representation e.g. smiley face and potentially mobile. There is also the potential to add the functionality to them to do vehicle counts and record speeds but not the car identifier.

Speedwatch: there have been 12 sessions this month with around 5.5k cars passing on both roads. Of these 129 were caught speeding: Church Lane maximum at 45mph and B430 at 60mph.

MA indicated that additional calming measures are potentially not the way forward for the B430 especially due to existing difficulties when there are issues on the surrounding roads. The signage will require looking at and will need to ensure that the road markings are altered too.

It was also noted that B430 is not designated a relief road for A34 to M40 because it's a B road – therefore negative responses regarding the roads speed requirements are not valid anymore.

The traffic advisory group are to hold their next meeting on 7th April 2025.

25.421.12 Resolution: To Approve the following invoices for payment (TR)

TR requested approval of the invoices detailed in the table below.

| PC Ref | Payee | Purpose | Total (incl VAT) | Budget Line | Amount Remaining in 2024/25-26 Budget Line |
|--------|--|--|------------------|--|--|
| 489* | Bicester Tree Services | Parish treeworks (spinney, oak tree pond & stocks) | £2,136.00 | Village Works/Spinney Maintenance/Village Tree Works & Contingency | £2,810.47 |
| 490* | Community Heartbeat | Playing field defibrillator, cabinet and post | £3,234.00 | Village Initiatives/ Defibrillator Installation at Playing Field | £1,500.00 ^ |
| 491 | Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association | Annual subscription fee 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026 | £49.00 | Subscriptions/OPFA | £47.00 |
| 492 | Clerk (J Mullane) | Printer ink (Amazon) | £51.26 | Sundries/Administration & Printing Costs | £300.00 |

* invoice already been paid. ^ additional grant funding obtained to support purchase in full

It was confirmed that invoice 489 had already been paid as payment was due before this meeting approval, the work had been approved at a previous Council meeting. The cost is to be split between multiple budget lines: Village Works/Spinney Maintenance/Village Tree Works and Contingency. Invoice 490 had also been paid to enable the purchase of the defibrillator for the playing field. Additional grants and donations have been secured to help cover the purchase of the defibrillator, approved at 5th February 2025 meeting.

The resolution to approve the invoices detailed in the table was proposed by TR and seconded by SD. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

Action: Clerk to update invoice log with approvals.

Action: Clerk to initiative request for payments from Councillors and ensure payments authorised.

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25.421.13 For Information: Update on oak tree footpath (OCC/CDC Councillors)

This item was discussed above.

25.421.14 For Information: Oxfordshire County & Cherwell District Councillors updates (OCC/CDC Councillors)

Councillor Simpson provided updates on the following matters:

- Thames Valley Police: contacted over issue in the village and highlighted a similar incident at Kidlington village hall where youths broke in and vandalised the hall.
- Local Government reorganisation: various authorities put in submission to central Government, who will make the final decision. Three options proposed:
 - A single unitary council for Oxfordshire – being developed by Oxfordshire County Council.
 - A two-unitary option – comprising a council representing north Oxfordshire (created from the existing district councils of Cherwell, Oxford City and West Oxfordshire) and Ridgeway Council (created from the existing district councils of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse and the unitary council of West Berkshire) - being developed by the relevant district councils.
 - A three-unitary option – with a unitary city on expanded boundaries and northern and southern unitaries, potentially including West Berkshire – being developed by Oxford City Council.
- Local Plan: Cherwell have currently got a 2.3 year housing supply. 5,010 new houses are needed to make up the shortfall. There is concern therefore over CDC's ability to refuse applications as they are not able to support all appeals and impact on speculative development. A lack of urgency was reportedly noted at CDC Executive level.

Action: DB to email CDC to ensure the Cherwell Local Plan and housing supply issue is on the agenda for the next Cherwell parish liaison meeting.

25.421.15 Resolution: To Approve Parish Council Emergency Plan (DB)

The resolution to approve the updated Parish Council Emergency Plan was proposed by DB and seconded by TR. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

Action: Clerk to upload the updated PC Emergency Plan to the PC website and send across to the OCC Emergency Planning team.

25.421.16 Resolution: To Approve Councillor Vacancy Procedure and Councillor Co-option Application Form (DB)

The resolution to approve the Councillor Vacancy Procedure and Councillor Co-option Application Form was proposed by DB and seconded by MA. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

Action: Clerk to upload Councillor Vacancy Procedure and Councillor Co-option Application Form to the PC website.

25.421.17 Next Annual Parish Council and Parish Council Meeting Date: Wednesday 7th May 2025, 7.30pm (DB)

Meeting Closed: 21.17

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