

MINUTES

For the meeting of Parish Council, held on Wednesday, 5th December 2018

Meeting Number 18.333

Public Participation Session

John Roper (JR) queried why the salt bin requested for Church Close/Church Lane was located on Monks Rise. The Clerk explained that OCC had made a mistake, they have been informed of their error and we will chase them until they rectify.

John Roper noted that the website needs updating, the clerk apologised and agreed to action.

Action: Clerk to update website

Louise Talbot (LT) thanked the Council for including the Environment Agency contact telephone number in Village News, she felt this would be useful for people who started to notice the smell/noise from the chicken farm and wanted to report it themselves.

18.333.1 Apologies for absence

Cllrs Kieran Evans (KE), Graeme Forbes (GF) and Henry Donne (HD) sent their apologies and were not present. Cllrs Stafford Allen (SA), Bohm (DB), Daenke (SD), Neil Mullane (NM) and Whitfield (RW) were present. There were 5 members of the public present along with Cllr David Hughes from Cherwell District Council.

18.333.2 Declarations of interest

The Chair asked for Declarations of Interest, NM noted his interest in Southfield Farm.

18.333.3 Approval of the minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting were discussed. The addition of Cllr Forbes was included in the attendees list on page 1. SA requested to clarify that the Village Hall Kitchen Floor was discussed in 18.332.11, not just the village hall floor. 18.332.15 was amended to reflect the Traffic report was delivered by DB, not NM. The minutes for the 7th November meeting were then moved by DB and seconded by NM.

Action: Clerk to update minutes as requested and present to Chair to sign

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18.333.4 Chairs report

The Chair's report was shared in hard copy to attendees as Cllr Bohm (DB) explained how the Parish Council is now working as an effective team conducting important and inter-connected strands in our work.

She explained that, at the same time, matters that affect our parish are coming down from district and national level. She highlighted how extremely important these were, and how it was a part of the Council's role to stay up to date on issues, trends and opportunities for our views to be heard.

Cllr Bohm updated the group that the Council have been invited to comment on the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) of the Oxfordshire Plan to 2050 with a deadline of January 11th. As we don't have another meeting Cllr Bohm sought permission to draft something from the Council and seek agreement on it after the holiday. All Councillors present agreed.

Action: DB to draft response to SCI and share with PC for comment

She went on to explain that herself and Cllr Daenke (SD) are leading the village meeting on 6th December with a two item agenda: the Neighbourhood Plan and the Expressway. Keeping the village informed of the progress of the Plan and raising its importance over the next few months is key to a successful referendum plus buy-in from the village for our budget and priorities for next year. The Neighbourhood Plan is an aspirational document and comes from the heart of the village.

Cllr Daenke shared copies of the Executive Summary of the Neighbourhood Plan to help the attendees refresh their knowledge of the Plan. DB confirmed that the full printed copies are available in key locations within the village, along with hard copies available to lend from the Chair's home.

18.332.5 Expressway Update

Cllr Bohm delivered the update on the PC's actions relating to the Expressway. This was supported by hard copies of the Expressway Report that were made available. It outlined the recent meeting of villages (10-12 villages attended) along the A34. There was a range of knowledge and understanding of the impact of the expressway on our area. The main action point was for Councillors to prioritise this topic at their next meeting and ponder some of the avenues open for objection to this project. This included considering how donations from Parish Councils could support action groups on this issue.

Action: Budget process for 2019/2020 to consider how to address Action Group donation, Clerk

The update also included information on the Highways "Local Intelligence Event" on November 23, 2018 which was attended by Roger Evans (RE) and Diane Bohm. Cllr Bohm explained that there was not a lot new but there were useful displays, maps and 'advisors' to engage in specific topics. It was noted from the meeting that Weston on the Green should look carefully at our area and see if there is anything to add regarding its historical context. A meeting was suggested with Highways to delve into the A34 village-specific issues.

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Cllr Bohm's recommendation was to send further letters to the Minister for Transport, Highways England and John Howell MP to re-express our strongly held objection. It would also be useful for a letter to go from the group of Parish Councils (and possibly put in the Oxford papers).

Action: DB to draft further letters to Government and John Howell MP as outlined above

An update on all actions to date will be given at the public meeting on December 6th, 2018 after the NP is discussed.

DB finally updated on the recent round of letters that had been sent to OCC, CDC and MP leaders after our last meeting. Barry Wood has invited the PC to a 1:1 meeting. A reply has also been received by John Howell, he has replied personally to DB, DB noted this recognition that he is listening to our concerns. Ian Hudspeth had also replied.

SD asked if any one attended the Expressway Demonstration in Oxford recently. DB explained that there was a demonstration outside the Highways England meeting she attended with RE. She explained that the No Expressway Alliance tried to talk to Parish Councillors en route into the meeting. SD advised that some protests were perceived poorly in the University and that we should be mindful of how we could be impacted by negative associations. The group concurred.

18.333.6 Financial Report

In the absence of RFO Cllr Forbes the Clerk outlined an update on the budgeting process. She explained that a draft budget had been developed. She agreed to circulate this to Councillors during this week. Comments were asked for before the Christmas break. Once a consolidated budget is developed we will look to assess our income streams and establish an appropriate Precept. This will be tabled for discussion and agreement at the 23 January 2018 PC meeting.

Cllr Mullane suggested that when reviewing and submitting their budget lines Councillors could consider what are high priority requirements, and lower priority. He advised that this might help with the reconsolidation of the budget, before assessing funding streams and setting the precept. The group concurred.

Action: Circulate draft budget to Councillors for comment, Clerk

The Clerk then outlined for confirmation the proposed depreciation policy which had been discussed at the August meeting. At the August meeting Mr Bohm presented the draft asset register and recommended that the asset values to be depreciated to 0. This was discussed and agreed by the PC but not formally adopted. In this meeting the issue was discussed and SA noted that one asset was not valueless, namely the mower shed. SD advised that good practice might be to reduce all assets purchased more than 2 years ago to a 0 value. The shed therefore would not meet this rule. This rule was proposed by RW and seconded by SD. The motion was agreed unanimously.

Action: Update the draft asset register with photos, Clerk

Action: Review the asset register with the above policy in place and confirm values, Clerk

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18.333.7 Financial Approvals

The invoices for approval were outlined by the Clerk. She apologised for the listing of the error in the payment due to Cllr Stafford Allen, which was a typo and is shown amended below. She also explained the nature of the Continental Landscapes invoice which surfaced recently as an outstanding invoice for grass cutting last year. All the payments were approved for payment.

Payee	Purpose	Total payable incl VAT
OACL	Financial Transparency Guidance Book	£5.20
Village Hall	Hire fees for December Public meeting	£15.00
Robin Stafford Allen	Playground maintenance costs	£274.01
123 Connect	Domain Name Cost (2 yearly)	£112.80
123 Connect	Email exchange server (annual)	£288.00
Continental Landscapes	Grass Cutting (2017 outstanding invoice)	£187.20
Playdale Ltd	Washers etc	£20.58

Action: Progress payments as appropriate Clerk

18.333.8 Neighbourhood Plan update

Cllr Bohm outlined an update on the Neighbourhood Plan, which was supported by a summary update document. The public meeting on the 6th December would remind villagers of the next steps associated with the plan. Cllr Bohm guided the group that whilst we had been advised that Referendum costs were usually born by the district council there was some ambiguity over this, and therefore it was prudent to make allowances for this in the next budget.

DB concluded her update reminding the group that it is important that the budget for 2019-20 reflects the implementation schedule of the NP. She noted that the PC has already begun the Traffic work and now starting the Transportation work. Footpaths and bicycle trails are the key areas to follow.

Action: Budget for NP referendum to be included in 2019/2020, Clerk

Action: Budget for 2019-20 to include NP implementation costs, Clerk

18.333.9 Assets of Community Value

Cllr Henry Donne (HD) was absent so in his place the Clerk outlined that, following recent discussions regarding listing the village pubs as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) consideration should be given to registering the School Field, Playing Field and North Lane Duck Pond. SA noted that the recent grant applications recently drafted wanted to see if areas such as the Playing Field were already noted as ACVs, showing how important it is to progress these applications.

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John Roper noted that in the past much of the below land was owned by Mr Parlour, records within the Parish Archive note the ownership and the wishes of the Parlour estate that lands such the oak tree pond be gifted to the Parish. DB recognised that this was worth reviewing.

Action: Review hard copy parish archive to assess viability of Parlour ownership requests, Clerk

The following resolution was tabled: to approve the registering of the School Field, following work undertaken by the Neighbourhood plan.

The motion was proposed by RW, seconded by NM, approved unanimously by the PC.

The following resolution was tabled; to approve the registering of the Playing Field and Spinney as a Community Asset

The motion was proposed by RW, seconded by SA, approved unanimously by the PC.

The following resolution was tabled; to approve the registering of the land encasing the North Lane Duck Pond as a Community Asset

The motion was proposed by RW, seconded by SD, approved unanimously by the PC.

Action: Progress registering of the above agreed community assets, HD

18.333.10 Planning report

Cllr Henry Donne was absent so the Clerk outlined the Planning report. The clerk explained that there was an updated Planning Report available, in light of a recent addition. This was circulated for reference.

In terms of concluded matters, the Clerk explained that **(18/01644/F) | Erection of building to form 1-bed dwelling, on the siting of the previously demolished barn, with courtyard garden and dedicated parking space | Sycamore House Shepherds Close PC has objected – CDC Rejected**

Secondly, **18/01423/F | Garage/store and vehicular access to Northampton Road | 2 Knowle Lane. PC has objected but CDC Approved**

Finally, **18/01218/ADV | 1 no non illuminated Fascia sign and 1 no non illuminated Hoarding sign | Fir Tree Farm Northampton Road. PC commented, made no objection – CDC Approved.**

There were two new items listed for approval;

The first, **18/343/TCA - Application for Removal of one clump of 5 Leyland Cyprus Trees, Second individual Layland Cyprus Tree and a third clump of three Leyland Cyprus Trees. This is due to maturity and trees need felling as becoming unstable.** The Mill House, Mill Lane. Recommendation from the Planning group was that there isn't an issue with these types of trees being removed. It was opened up for comment and all agreed there was no issue with this application.

Action: Revert on 18/343/TCA to confirm the PC have no concerns with this application, Clerk

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The second, **18/00350/TCA – Notice of intent T1 x By way of chain saw section fell to ground a tree located at rear of pump house building to allow others access to repair the roof of pump house. Location:** Sewage Pumping Station Church Lane Weston On The Green. Again the Planning Group saw no issues with this work. It was opened up for comment and the group agreed.

Action: Revert on 18/00350/TCA to confirm the PC has no concerns with this application, Clerk

The Planning report then touched on the issue of Southfield Farm. NM explained that he had received an invite to meet Clive Treadwell (CT) to discuss detail on the footpath. There was no further news on development to report. However, on the access point onto Northampton Road it was noted that NM had previously reported the expansion of this access point and the PC's concerns relating to it. The Enforcement team had previously advised that they were expecting an application on this. NM noted that this application has been received by CDC, but is not yet on the portal.

A member of the public asked about whether this access point will be used to justify phase 2. NM acknowledged the concern and he stated that CDC's expectation is that after the completion of Phase 1 this access point will be reinstated, back to its original state. NM noted that the Enforcement are aware and are key to making this happen.

DB recognised the hard work and diligence of the CDC Enforcement team. NM noted his concern about this approach by Southfield Farm to Cllr David Hughes (DH), namely that developers seem to be able to do what they want, then ask for a retrospective permission. DB warned that she was expecting an application for Phase 2 and 3 before the NP referendum, but that CDC had been supportive of a NP in its final stages.

DH highlighted the importance of a NP as it does help with protection of villages against unwanted developers. NM asked, with us being in the final stages will this be a material factor? DH advised to crack on with the NP to get maximum protection.

NM noted that he had cc:d DH into a number of emails relating to Southfield Farm. He agreed to send a summary of the fears of the Parish Council relating to this specific development and DH could consider how to help. DH explained he had a forthcoming Planning briefing and he could raise the issue there, if fully briefed.

Action: NM to summarise Southfield Farm issues and concerns and send to DH

A member of the public raised concerns that CDC Planning Officers were initially very supportive of the Southfield Farm Phase 1 proposals, and that it had been Cllrs who had helped to stop it. DH explained that now CDC only need to show a 3 year housing supply, rather than a 5 year supply as was the case at the time of the Southfield Farm application, it has reduced pressure on officers.

DH requested from the Chair the opportunity to speak to the Group. DB agreed and DH took the floor. He raised a number of issues he wanted to share. On the Expressway DH explained that he left a message to DB as a response to the letter from the PC. He explained that that Highways England will be engaging with Planning Authorities, as Chair of the Planning Committee he explained that he needs to hold a neutral position on the Expressway so that he can stay within discussions on the subject, If he states a clear position he will be conflicted out of discussions.

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He noted his support for the village and its rural agenda. DB wanted to ensure DH was able to fully understand the concerns of Weston on the Green, she explained that the Expressway project was an excuse for housing. She explained that the concern about this drive for housing is the inorganic nature of the housing growth proposed by the Expressway agenda. She explained that this type of housing growth wasn't suitable for the area. SA explained that the two main committees responsible for driving forward on the Expressway both report to the Treasury and this demonstrates that this project is driven by financials and growth, not people or needs. Reinforcing DB's point at that top down, financial driven inorganic growth did not sit well in small, rural villages such as Weston on the Green.

DH asked whether there could be a report on the setting of Weston on the Green, his exolained that to generate a report on the Village and its surrounding area, a mile or two out from the village, would help highlight the special nature of the village. SD explained that the NP includes a summary of the ecological corridor, but it doesn't include the historical aspects of the village including the Roman Road etc. The group concurred that the village has a number of special features that may put off road and house developers due to the potential additional cost associated with archaeological investigations etc.

Action: Create a setting report for Weston on the Green, DB to ask Tony Henman to own, at DH's suggestion

Louise Talbot (LT) asked DH whether he has meetings directly with Highways. DH explained he has attended briefings but not meetings directly with Highways England. LT raised concerns about the use of traffic lights at the M40 Junction 9 junction, rather than a continuous flow of traffic through continued access link. LT asked if DH has move clout with discussions with Highways, DH said he would happily take forward issues if there are specific concerns.

DH shared his concerns that M40 Junction 9 is currently at saturation point, and with the issues between Junctions 8-11 on the M40 with volume of traffic, if the Expressway came in this direction it would load further traffic into an already congested area. He suggested the route ease pressure on this junction rather than driving further traffic towards it.

DH guided the PC to look after the interests of Weston on the Green, and allow others to address other concerns elsewhere. DB thanked the Councillor for his words. Cllr Hughes excused himself from the meeting at this point.

18.333.11 Works Advisory Group

Cllr Stafford Allen (SA) presented the Works report on behalf of the Works team, Cllr Evans was absent. Cllr Stafford Allen delivered an update on the Oak Tree Pond work, the Council applauded his hard work to dig out the Pond before the weather turned. He noted thanks to Staplehurst Farm for allowing up to place the spoil on their land, this had significantly reduced the cost of the project.

Action: SA to write to Staplehurst to thank them, cc the Clerk

A group of volunteers are required to do some tidying around the Oak Tree Pond. SA agreed to issue a request for help.

Action: Issue request for volunteers, SA

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During the Oak Tree Pond work day Cllr Stafford Allen explained that he had also dug out a thin layer of silt from the North Lane Duck Pond. The bottom of the pond was identified as hard. Discussions were held as to whether a deeper area should be dug out for the fish. SD noted that the pond didn't use to dry out in previous years. SA explained that the ecologist advised to remove the reeds in the first instance. SA agreed to consider how best to address the issue of a deeper section of the pond, accounting for the hard bottom of the pond. SA suggested that this should be started next year.

Action: Consider next steps on the North Lane Duck Pond and plan and cost for next year, SA and KE

Cllr Stafford Allen then outlined the next steps on the Playing Field purchase. He explained that he had written a grant application to the Infrastructure Fund at CDC to support the purchase of the playing field and was seeking approval of the council to send this in.

Cllr Stafford Allen also explained that he had approached Viridor about a grant. This is a two stage process, the first being a decision as to whether the project falls within the scope of the grant and whether it is worth, therefore, making a formal application. He explained that he has started the Step 1 application as this has no commitment to following through the project, in other words if Viridor says it is a viable project for their scheme, then the Council makes the decision to go forward.

DB requested an overarching view on the costs of maintaining the Spinney going forward, before committing to the purchase of the Playing Field. The group concurred that this was important. SA expressed his concern that the Duchy might sell the land elsewhere, and that this is an opportunity the PC should take forward at this stage. NM warned against developers taking the opportunity to purchase this area. DB advised that she saw no imminent desire to sell from the Duchy and therefore there was no imminent threat.

SA explained that in terms of funding the purchase price was looking at about £30k, he was hoping for £15k from a CDC grant and £7k from Viridor. DB counselled against progressing the purchase when there were a number of other projects that were coming down the pipeline from the NP implementation, such as a pavement from the shop down to the playing field.

Cllr Whitfield explained that she felt comfortable about the playing field purchase if it was a fully grant funded purchase. She also explained that her rationale for supporting the purchase is that it would give the village a long term asset. This she saw to be in line with the remit of the Parish Council, to enhance and protect the assets of the village. DB acknowledged this point but highlighted her concern, that such an asset would be of limited value if it wasn't accessible by foot. The group noted this difficulty. A member of the public noted the opportunity to save the Playing Field rent by making the purchase. A further member of the public noted the opportunity to roll the pavement down Church Road to the Playing Field.

NM summarised the discussion, and indicated that he saw it the will of the PC to support the purchase in principle, the question is one of timing, underpinned by a greater detail on the financials. DB requested that a motion can be put forward to support the purchase when a fully costed proposal is ready.

Action: Progress grants for playing field purchase, SA

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Action: Progress fully costing of the Playing field purchase and running costs, SA

SA then moved onto the subject of the playing field hedge. He explained that the hedge laying quote has been shared with the Clerk and Chair, and was looking for a decision to be made to proceed at a cost of £10 per metre for 65 metres.

Cllr Stafford Allen outlined that we have need of laying this hedge as it is unruly and it is over 7 years (the usual recommended repeat) since the last laying. He outlined that he had located two people capable of the work, but one declined to quote due to ill health. Mr Moss is local and this falls in line with suggested preference to use local people and as he lays all the hedges for the Kirtlington Estate.

Clerk apologies for not listing a formal motion to support, which resulted in a financial support not being able to be given at this time. It was agreed that this should be included in January proposal. SA confirmed that he would check if this delay would be a problem and revert, if so, the PC agreed to call an extraordinary meeting to approve the cost.

Action: Check timings for hedge laying and revert if approval is required before 23rd January, Clerk

Action: Include hedge laying motion for approval at next PC meeting, Clerk

Finally SA confirmed that the picnic area has been rotovated and seeded thanks to Kieran, and the picnic tables we wish to purchase have been identified, but feel it is pointless purchasing them before the spring as they will just weather in the winter unused. The group noted that funds for the picnic tables were approved and funded via the Councillor’s Grant supported by Carmen Griffiths and therefore were able to be purchased when ready.

SA noted that the Delacour Maclaren team had been helpful in voting for the Aviva Community Fund, even though we had not been successful in securing the grant we had requested and wished to acknowledge this, the group agreed.

Action: SA to send Delacour Maclaren a thank you noted, cc to the Clerk

SA explained that he had been gifted a pole mounted waste bin, location to be determined by SA. LT noted that it would need to be added to the schedule with CDC if we wished it to be emptied, this was noted.

Action: SA to decide on location of bin

Action: SA to advise Clerk if CDC need to be informed of an additional bin to empty

18.333.12 Traffic Advisory Group

Cllr Mullane delivered the update from the Traffic Advisory Group, explaining that the focus of the group is on the Church Road/Lane traffic calming measures. He outlined that maps of the verge ownership are being reviewed to consider how to place a footpath down from the shop to the Playing Field. The main focus on traffic calming, NM noted is a footpath opposite village shop down to the end of the village. Considerations were also being given to pinch point entry at village gates from Bletchington, soft pinch point (white lines) next to the

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Pumping Station. NM explained that the action is with RE to size up by mid January, then bring back to Parish Council for discussion.

Action: Report on progress of Church Road/Lane footpath sizing at next PC meeting, NM

NM confirmed that this will include engagement / consultation around the village. NM advised that it is likely that the Group will look to conduct this work in phases, based on practicality and cost, looking to build up the measures over time.

NM then noted that a village police officer had raised concerns about the 20s Plenty signs in the shop. However, no official concern has been raised/received by the Chair, Clerk or NM as yet.

Cllr Mullane highlighted to the group that there are 2 20s Plenty signs currently unused. SA and SD noted the speed of cars and delivery vans on North lane, DB recalled concerns about the speed of vehicles on Westlands Avenue. SA suggested that he wasn't aware of speed issues along Knowle Lane, due to the density of housing and the narrowness of the lane.

NM therefore requested the use of the two spare 20s Plenty signs in North Lane and Westlands Avenue. It was agreed that these can be moved if there is a request for them to go up at Knowle Lane.

Action: Erect 20s Plenty Signs in North Lane and Westlands Avenue, NM

18.333.13 Transport Advisory Group

NM explained that Abi Stewart Smith is setting up and leading the Transport group. NM agreed to continue to liaise with her to share what they have learned so far. Cllr Bohm confirmed to the room that we were delighted to have such an enthusiastic new lead for the Transport Advisory Group.

18.333.14 Clerk's Report

The Clerk issued an updated report to the room, in light of recent changes since publication of the last one. She outlined the key aspects the report, as per the document. In particular she noted the forthcoming opportunity to review the Standing Orders by all Cllrs.

Action: Progress Standing Orders review Clerk

Action: Share Standing Orders with Councillors, Clerk

The Clerk also expressed thanks to all those who voted for our application to the Aviva Community Fund, and to Jane Mullane for her hard work in instigating the project. We had a great response across the village which resulted in 1500 votes cast for our project. Sadly, we were not successful in our application for the full grant, however we will receive £200 from Aviva in recognition of our efforts.

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Finally the Clerk outlined that The Parish Council will be pausing for a well earned Christmas break. The Council’s holiday runs from 17th December – 3rd January. Cllr Daenke noted her concern that this is a period where often consultations are shared, hoping that councils will have taken their eye off the ball, this was duly noted.

18.333.15 Any other business

DB explained that the PC is having a Christmas party for the first time in a long time! All are looking forward to it.

Cllr Bohm also noted to the floor that work continues on the financials, with a meeting of the financial sub committee, and finding an internal auditor for next year,

Action: Continue to look for an Internal auditor, Clerk

Action: Convene Financial Sub Committee to review budget and funding streams, Clerk

It was confirmed that the date of the next meeting is 23rd January.

The meeting closed at 21.26.

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