

MINUTES

For the meeting of Parish Council, held in Village Hall on Wednesday 5th July 2023

Meeting Number 23.398

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

23.398.1 To Receive: Apologies for non-attendance

Councillors Bohm (DB), Davis (SD), Rowan (TR), Lanham (BL) and Miller (JMi) were all present.

Councillor Maxton sent his apologies which were accepted and Councillor Rosser's long term absence was approved at 1st February 2023 Parish Council meeting.

Councillors Nedelcu and Coton (Cherwell District Council) were in attendance with Councillor Nigel Simpson (Oxfordshire County Council) joining part way through the meeting.

One member of the public was in attendance, alongside James Henderson and Roger Evans as advisors to the Council.

23.398.2 To Receive: Declarations of Interest

SD declared an interest in relation to planning application 23/01351/LB (Westfield Farm Cottage, North Lane).

To note TR and JMi declared interests in upcoming planning applications which have been submitted but are not on the portal yet and would therefore not be discussed.

23.398.3 To Receive & Approve: Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th June 2023 (DB)

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th June 2023 were discussed with no changes required. It was noted by SD that having advised the planning officer to withdraw application 23/01351/LB, CDC did not withdraw it in the end which was why it was not declared by SD as an interest or discussed at the June meeting.

The resolution to approve the minutes for the Parish Council meeting held on 7th June 2023 was then proposed by DB and seconded by BL. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

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

23.398.4 For Information: Chairs Comment (DB)

DB confirmed that the latest foodbank collection had been delivered to the Bicester Foodbank. The need is so great and the thank you from the team at the foodbank was overwhelming.

DB went on to highlight that there are several large issues on the agenda tonight which involve development. It is key that all of us understand how our response to these issues needs to comply with planning codes at all levels. Our responsibility to is to make sure that our Neighbourhood Plan forms a solid platform on which planning applications for our parish can be assessed by CDC. These issues have been discussed at the Executive level of the Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Plans Alliance, they have decided to provide online training for all councillors but specifically for new councillors.

DB has attended both OCC and CDC reporting sessions this month with reports having been circulated to Councillors. Communication between both OCC/CDC with the parishes were highlighted as issues.

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The effectiveness of the Parish Council is enhanced by the advisors here tonight and the Council are thankful for their help and support. The Council are also looking for a bio diversity champion.

23.398.5 For Information: Clerk report (Clerk)

The clerks report to the Council was noted which confirmed payments received into the Parish Council bank account relating to the Coronation event, HMRC VAT 2022-23 reclaim (£1,650.26) and interest on Barclays bank accounts (£81.74).

The clerk confirmed that the AGAR Form 3 and additional required documentation had been submitted to the External Auditors (Moore UK) and placed on the Parish Council website within the required timeframe.

The independent financial checks on the financial accounts for FY Q1 2023-24 had also been completed by Robin Stafford Allen.

Unfortunately Cherwell District Council have rejected the application to register the Ben Jonson Inn as an asset of community value.

CDC has confirmed that the 14 day notice period to demand a by-election to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Councillor Stafford-Allen has expired and that no by-election has been demanded. The Council is now free to fill the vacancy by Co-option.

23.398.6 For Information: Oxfordshire County & Cherwell District Councillor updates (Councillor Simpson /Councillors Coton & Nedelcu)

Cherwell District Council: Councillor Coton highlighted the following items in CDC’s monthly update:

- Local plan – current timeframe is for the draft to go before the Overview & Scrutiny committee in August and to the Executive in September with the aim of it going to public consultation by the end of September. Councillor Coton advised that the local plan identifies development opportunities around junction 9 of M40, including Chesterton and the parish should comment strongly on the effect as a whole all these developments have on the parish.
- Boundary review confirmed by the Government: parish of Weston on the Green is to come under the Bicester & Woodstock county constituency
- CDC holiday clubs are back for summer: 31st July – 1 September 2023
- CDC Grant – home upgrade grant funding available for energy inefficient properties.

23.398.7 For Information: Update on oak tree footpath (Roger Evans)

RE commented that a pre-commencement meeting was held on site on 10th May 2023 attended by OCC arborist, the County Highways contractor who will undertake the demolitions and the Parish Council’s arborist. In the absence of detailed construction drawings, the village has supplied a photographic record of the construction to assist demolition.

CDC requested a detailed TPO application the following day which has meant that the contractor has had to undertake additional work in order to make the application, following which an eight week consultation period may be expected. We have asked if this exercise can be accelerated to enable removal of the closed path and remediation work to the tree to be undertaken as soon as possible.

Councillor Coton offered to provide any support via CDC.

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23.398.8 For Information: Update on Gigaclear project (James Henderson)

JH summarised the latest information received from discussions with Rezia Khan, Gigaclear's Community Engagement Executive:

- All infrastructure is in place:
 - Cabinet is connected to the Gigaclear network and has 15% spare capacity
 - 1 fibre/premise laid to `pots` located within ~100yds of every home/premise
- Those that showed interest by filling in the online form will now receive emails.
- Village will now be connected (pot to premise) in sections. The first section will also receive emails/fliers imminently.
 - Cannot go too fast as each connection needs to be made and verified.
 - Timing and sequence not specified.
- Council to decide on location for the community hub (free business level connection).

Current Gigaclear 18-month broadband offer prices: <https://gigaclear.com/lockinlive>

Free standard installation, no connection fee:

- £17 for 200mbps with new Linksys router
- £20 for 500mbps with 2 Linksys routers (2nd for WIFI boost). 60 day offer only
- £26 for 600mbps with 2 Linksys routers (2nd for WIFI boost)
- £49 for 900mbps with 2 Linksys routers (2nd for WIFI boost)

Most households would only need the 200mbps package - enough for a family of 4/5 to all stream HD simultaneously.

JH highlighted as a reminder that this is the connection to the premise and you will still require good WIFI (or LAN) within the premise.

Rezia's advice is to take the 6 month free option as useful to trial Gigaclear and for people who still have months left on their current contract. User can stop after 6 months with no financial obligation and continue with current provider.

JH confirmed that information will be drafted for circulation to the village.

A member of the public highlighted the inconvenience caused by Gigaclear works obstructing their access gate on B430 for several days. Visibility onto B430 is now also an issue as commented they were hindered by SSE sub-station in one direction and Gigaclear box in the other. JH/DB will contact Gigaclear to highlight the concern over safety.

Action: JH/DB to contact Gigaclear to highlight the concern over safety and visibility accessing B430 from a residents property.

23.398.9 For Information: Playing field and playground update (BL)

BL highlighted that he has undertaken a visual inspection of the playground and commented there was no obvious deterioration. A meeting with Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association is to be booked.

BL has met Robin Stafford-Allen to go through responsibilities and gain an understanding of managing the field and playground and indicated a new bin would be beneficial at the picnic area.

He has also met JMi to go through fencing options for the 'vegetable patch' area and both are in agreement that it needs to be done properly with most appropriate materials to prevent wildlife and give the project the best chance of success.

BL is arranging to meet Sovereign Play equipment in September to discuss products (primarily starting with a swing) and is also in contact with Playdale. The swing option is likely to be a mid-term project (maybe for 2024) as they have an 8 week lead time.

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Ardley FC have a couple of fixtures at the playing field over the summer. They are storing some top soil in the car park to fill rabbit holes pre game. Timings to re-seed the goal mouths to be investigated.

There has been a complaint relating to a resident being harassed by a child using racist terms by the playing field. DB and BL will discuss this further offline.

23.398.10 For Information: Works update (JMi)

JMi confirmed that examples of fencing types for the allotment area have been shown to DB.

JMi provided an estimate of c£2,780 as the potential total cost of materials (excluding labour) to fence off a 12x12m area and provide water from the stream via a pipe and pump to the allotment area.

It was agreed to arrange an offline meeting at the playing field to discuss the project further.

23.398.11 For Information: Oxfordshire County Councillor update (Councillor Simpson)

Councillor Simpson – Oxfordshire County Council: Councillor Simpson highlighted key topics within Oxfordshire County Council including:

- Bus fare cap - continuing until 31st October 2023. Councillor Simpson will enquire again on shelter/safety markings for B430.
- Potholes – Council are trialling different technologies to fix potholes. The trial will allow comparisons of the type of repair, equipment, material, and labour used, and the time taken. This would include an understanding of the potential results, longevity of repairs, waste generated, carbon impact, use of recycled content and productivity that may be achievable.
- Street lighting LEDs – all of Oxfordshire’s streetlights are scheduled to be converted to energy efficient LED units in the next 12 months, 86% of county completed already.
- OCC will ask the government to allow it to introduce a lane rental scheme (LRS) which allows organisations working on the county’s busiest roads at the busiest times to face extra charges.
- Special educational needs – Ofsted inspection will be carried out this month of local services for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A full county education review is also underway.
- CDC – the council had come in on budget for 2022/23 (a £0.001m underspend) and maintained essential resident services. Planning is already underway for next year which is likely to prove challenging as the business rates review by the Government could hit CDC hard.
- Councillor Simpson has also attended a seminar on how to deliver quality cycle infrastructure countywide.

A report from Councillor Simpson will be circulated to the Council.

Action: Clerk to circulate OCC July report from Councillor Simpson to Councillors and place on PC website.

23.398.12 For Discussion: Discuss and agree recommendations from the Planning Group on planning applications (SD/DB)

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

Building Applications

Decisions Received – Permitted

23/00533/F – Westfield Court House, North Lane

23/00736/F – Williams Cottage, North Lane. Window detail tbc.

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23/01120/LB – Hazel Cottage, Northampton Road

23/01041/F – Gallos Brook House, Church Lane

Decisions Received – Refused

None

Awaiting Decision

23/00994/F – Family Farm, A34 South

Installation of a new Outdoor Swimming Pool (10m x 3m), Associated hard soft landscaping and conversion of existing outbuilding into a swimming pool plant building **Commented**

23/00270/DISC – Manor Hotel, B340

Discharge of Conditions 4 (flooring method statement), 5 (service routes method statement), 7 (radiators & flues), 8 (internal joinery), 9 (rooflight details) and 10 (insulation) of 22/01553/LB. Issues relating to Condition 4 (underfloor heating and finish). **Commented**

23/00725/F – Kemsley Barn

Construction of double garage with home office in roof space above. **Commented**

23/01455/DISC – Kemsley Farm

Discharge of condition – drainage scheme

22/03709/F - Starbucks A34

Addition of a drive-through facility and parking changes.

The proposal is for the addition of a small serving window with flat roof overhead on the north-west face of the existing building and rerouting traffic in and out of the site. Highways wish to delay decision pending further assessment of traffic safety impact. Submitted Good Neighbour Guide – includes community volunteer day for employees (?litter picking on A34?) **Commented**

Action: Clerk to contact Starbucks to investigate if Starbucks on A34 have a planned community volunteer day.

New Applications

23/01351/LB – Westfield Farm Cottage, North Lane

Replacing floor substructure Kitchen and bathroom. Material change to insulation layer of permeable slab.

Appeals - None

Tree Works

Pending:

22/02993/TCA – Barnacre, Northampton Road

Management of trees in grounds adjacent to Old Byre and Struchfield.

A significant number of trees to be felled/reduced in height. Site is set back from the B430. There will be a visual impact from the road but there are trees left untouched and remaining trees will recover their structure over next growing year. **Commented**

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22/03631/TCA – Manor Cottage

Removal of ash on the front boundary and oak on north boundary. Images show significant damage to front stone wall from ash seedlings and possibly ivy. The wall will need repair.

Permitted:

23/00609/TCA – Old Byre, Fir Tree Farm

New Tree Applications:

None

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

23.398.13 For Discussion: Developments with Schoolfield and Stoneyfield (North Lane) proposal (SD/DB)

SD presented a report on the Schoolfield to the Council outlining background information on the site and its links within the Neighbourhood Plan and detail in the Conservation Area Appraisal 2009.

The Schoolfield is currently owned by Lagan Homes. Lagan Homes are now interested in selling the property back to the village, either as small parcels of grazing land or potentially as a single piece of land. A number of villagers have registered an interest.

The Parish Council proposes to register an interest with Lagan Homes in acquiring the Schoolfield as a single purchase of the whole land available. The purpose would be to make the field available to villagers and visitors as a passive recreation space for the appreciation of the rural space. The intention would be to progressively revitalise the area to enrich the biodiversity and contribute to a biodiversity corridor.

The initial registration of interest would be on a no-commitment basis to initiate a discussion with the owners to establish an acceptable price. Opportunities for funding the purchase would be explored. Full due diligence would be undertaken and approval of the Parish Council would be sought at every milestone decision point.

The Council discussed the proposal along with Roger Evans, a member of the Schoolfield group (whose aim is to save the Schoolfield) and agreed it was a good idea for the Parish Council to approach Lagan Homes on behalf of the village.

The resolution to approve an approach by the Parish Council to Lagan Homes by letter, indicating an interest in acquiring the Schoolfield on behalf of the village was proposed by DB and seconded by JMi. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

The potential Stoneyfield development off North Lane was not discussed at this meeting.

A time extension to the meeting was requested by the chair and agreed by the Councillors.

23.398.14 Resolution: To Approve the following invoices for payment (DB/SD)

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

PC Ref	Payee	Purpose	Total (incl VAT)	Budget Line	Amount Remaining in 2023-24 Budget
355	Clerk (J Mullane)	Planter plants & soil (Bunkers Hill, Tesco & Bicester Avenue Garden Centre)	£61.99	Village Works/General Village Maintenance	£804.00
356	Clerk (J Mullane)	Village supply of dog litter bags x8,000 (EcoHound)	£102.00	Village Works/General Village Maintenance	£742.01
357	Clerk (J Mullane)	Printer ink, envelopes & paper (Amazon)	£35.49	Sundries/Administration & Printing Costs	£314.19

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358*	Oxford Edens	Grass cutting 14/06/23 (playground, stocks/Ben Jonson)	£250.80	Village Works/Village Contractor Grass Cutting	£2,924.80
359	Clerk (J Mullane)	Microsoft 365 renewal subscription 2022-23	£59.99	IT/Equipment renewal	£135.01
360	OALC	Training - Finance for Councillors (7/9/23)	£30.00	Staff Costs/Clerk & Councillors Training	£400.00
361	Clerk (J Mullane)	Litter picking bag hoops x3 (Keep Britain Tidy)	£14.97	Village Works/General Village Maintenance	£640.01

It was noted that invoice ref 358 to Oxford Edens had already been paid to avoid late payment fees.

The resolution to approve the invoices detailed in the table was proposed by DB 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.

23.398.15 For Discussion: Save Our Shop update, including request for letter from Parish Council to support the project as one helping the community (DB)

DB/SD have met with Sam Sharp, chair of the Save Our Shop committee who presented the results of the survey. The committee are proposing operating Community Ownership model for the shop.

The Council agreed to help advertise village meetings via the Council's mailing list and website. Where it is able to the Parish Council will help support the community project to become a community asset. Once the business books and future business plan have been assessed the Council will discuss the option of providing a letter of support for the project. DB advised Sam that unfortunately the Parish Council do not have the budget capacity to help with funding. In terms of fundraising it was noted that Councillors can join individually but not as a body.

Public Participation

The part owner of Manor Farm (Northampton Road), which includes camping and caravanning, raised a query whether The Chequers pub in the village was permitted to have caravans stay in their car park overnight, given the restrictions enforced on their camping site. This is a District Council planning issue and the resident has asked CDC for clarification on the issue, DB requested that the information received is shared with the Council.

23.398.16 For Discussion: Siemens Healthineers development - funding request from parish (SD/DB)

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

23.398.17 For Information: Updates on Sainthill Copse, Southfield development and Thames Valley Police (DB)

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

23.398.18 For Information: Feedback on June Cherwell Parish Liaison meeting and Oxfordshire County Council training day (DB)

Reports on both meetings have been circulated to Councillors and placed on the Parish Council website.

23.398.19 For Information: Neighbourhood Watch programme update (Report from Bob Hessian)

A report received from the lead of the Neighbourhood Watch group, Bob Hessian, has been circulated to Councillors.

23.398.20 Next Parish Council Meeting Date: 2nd August 2023, 7.30pm (DB)

Meeting Closed: 21.46

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