

MINUTES

For the meeting of Parish Council, held on Thursday, 9th January 2020

Meeting Number 20.348

20.348.1 Apologies for Absence

Councillors Bohm (DB), Davis (SD), Whitfield (RW), Stafford Allen (RSA) and Mullane (NM) were all present. Councillor Donne sent his apologies due to illness, which were accepted.

There were 3 members of the public present.

Councillor David Hughes attended for the first part of the meeting.

20.348.2 Declarations of Interest

The Chair asked for Declarations of Interest, Cllr Mullane noted his ongoing interest in Southfield Farm.

Cllr Stafford-Allen noted his interest in Robins Folly, Mill Lane with regards to a tree works planning application.

Public Participation Session

Patsy Parsons updated the Council on Weston on the Green becoming a No Cold Caller Zone. She has contacted Trading Standards and there is a possibility of them helping us if there is a history of incidents (reported to the Police) in the village which supports Weston on the Green becoming a No Cold Calling Zone. She is waiting to hear back. Patsy will find out some further information and will provide an update to the Council on possible options in due course.

Action: Clerk to add No Cold Caller Zone item to a future Parish Council agenda to discuss process.

20.348.3 To Receive and Approve: Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2nd December 2019

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 2nd December 2019 were discussed with one noted change on page 3 with word 'noticeboard' to be added under item 19.347.10 (paragraph 4).

The minutes for the Parish Council meeting on 2nd December 2019 were then moved by DB and seconded by SD. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

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

20.348.4 For Information: Chairs Report

The Parish Council is currently engaged in a number of ongoing projects some of which have momentum, and some are progressing more slowly. Progress by the Council is always reliant on information and assistance from a wide range of external agencies along with vital volunteers from the village for which the Council is extremely grateful.

DB passed on her congratulations for HD for writing a comprehensive comment from the Parish Council on the Great Wolf application in Chesterton.

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DB thanked the Councillors for being a positive and proactive team and encouraged them not to hesitate in sharing ideas and asking for support in the coming months.

The Chair concluded her report by saying that this village is worth every bit of effort that we put into.

20.348.5 For Information: Parish Clerks Report

The clerk highlighted the key points from her report which included the appointment of the internal auditor (IAC), the submission of the Councillor Priority Fund 2019/20 application and the new noticeboard at the Weston Pantry, funded by a donation from the Parish Council.

DB requested a protocol document for emergency issues to be created e.g. receiving sandbags from Cherwell District Council in a flooding emergency.

Action: Clerk to research and develop an emergency protocol document.

20.348.6 For Information: Cherwell Parish Liaison meeting feedback (DB)

DB discussed some key issues resulting from the Cherwell Parish Liaison meeting held in November 2019.

- 1. **Operation London Bridge** – what the protocol is when a senior member of the royal family dies. All parishes are encouraged to think about their response to such an announcement, groups working together in a collaborative way. Things to consider include books of condolence, a cordoned area for flowers, tolling of bells, flags at half-mast. National Association of Civic Officers has a website www.naco.uk.com they will be issuing updates on Operation London Bridge. There will be a formal process for the official announcements, which will cascade down from the Lord Lieutenant.

NM highlighted that there is a deputy Lord Lieutenant in the village and will mention the project to him.

DB put forward a proposal to hold a meeting with the key organisations in the village including the Benefice, WI, Village Hall committee, Garden Club, Weston Society and bell ringers to help set out a plan as a whole village response. An action plan can then be created.

All Councillors were in agreement of this approach.

Action: Clerk to register for free on National Association of Civic Officers website to get updates on Operation London Bridge.

Action: DB/Clerk to arrange meeting of village groups to create an Operation London Bridge action plan.

Action: NM to speak to resident of the village who is a deputy Lord Lieutenant to discuss Operation London Bridge project.

- 2. **Good Neighbour Scheme** – caring for one another in a community. This is a more formalised way of building on the thoughtfulness shown in a village and there is funding available plus training and support.

Since the article placed in the last edition of the Village News someone has already expressed an interest to DB, however due to a current lack of capacity this project will be placed on hold for the time being until a team may come forward.

A resident who is associated with the Bicester Good Neighbour scheme, mentioned that once you have a list of vulnerable people in the village the Fire Service will carry out a safe and well visit to check things in the home e.g. smoke detectors.

Action: Clerk to upload information on Fire Service home safety checks onto Parish Council website.

- 3. **Planning Policy and Development Management Update** - key issue is the news that the housing development earmarked for Woodstock has been rejected by the Inspector and so accommodation for 410

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homes needs to be found within the other housing sites. The area south of the Parkway Park and Ride and train station is now considered a prospective development leaving a smaller than expected buffer between new housing and north Oxford.

Following the Ambrosden planning decision and the effect on appeals parishes are now being encouraged to highlight S106 monies potentially required in their area at the rebuttal stage (without prejudice), in case the application does get approved.

- 4. **Climate Change** – work is currently being undertaken by CDC and will be exhibited in 2020. DB confirmed that this is an area that needs to be looked at further by the Parish Council.

Action: Clerk to upload summary document from November Parish Liaison meeting onto Parish Council website.

Comments from Councillor David Hughes from Cherwell District Council:

Councillor Hughes provided some background to what Cherwell District Council (CDC) have been discussing:

- **Budget planning:** there have been meetings over current funding and how things going to change e.g. relating to the loss of the new homes bonus funding which will impact the budget considerably. Investments in industrial property and shopping centres will help but reportedly there could be a shortfall. Over the past year there has been a budget benefit from an increase in rates from new businesses but there will not be a percentage gain in the coming year.

As a Council they have always worked within budget, but the challenge is to keep up the level of services provided; hopefully CDC won't need to cut anything as they haven't done in the past. CDC are hoping there will be new initiatives which will come into effect to take the place of those which are changing now. He also reported there will be a small increase in domestic rates, but it is a reasonable amount compared to what other areas pay.

- **Parking:** the Council are often asked why car parks are not free and there has been a large amount of discussion. In reality there would be a substantial hole in the budget from lost revenue and a lack of turnover of cars in car parks would affect local businesses.
- **Great Wolf Resorts:** NM asked David Hughes his opinion on the Great Wolf resorts application in Chesterton highlighting that he is sure it would be a significant boost for CDC's budget but is that reflected in their planning decisions also? Councillor Hughes is unfortunately unable to provide a view at this point as he sits on the Planning Committee, otherwise he would have to excuse himself ahead of the hearing.

Action: Clerk to send Councillor David Hughes a copy of our objection letter regarding Great Wolf Resorts application.

20.348.7 For Information: Neighbourhood Plan update (DB/SD)

DB commented that SD had put together a Parish Council notice regarding the Neighbourhood Plan consultation for the two parts not accepted by Cherwell District Council (CDC). The consultation period ends on 10th January 2020.

Once the responses have been compiled a new examiner (to be chosen by the Parish Council) will be appointed to review these points. The examiners report will then go back to CDC for agreement.

A Freedom of Information request on the School Field has been submitted to Oxfordshire County Council and they have 20 working days to respond. If there are any associated costs with providing the information the Parish Council will be informed.

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20.348.8 For Information: Affordable Housing update (RW)

RW met with Frances Evans the Housing Strategy Lead at Cherwell District Council (CDC). She is offering to run a Parish Housing Needs Survey to gather a set of data that clearly reflects the current and future housing needs across the whole spectrum in the village.

It would survey all householders in the parish and reach out to employers who have employees with a need to live near their work. The output from the exercise is a publicly available document that articulates the housing needs of the village.

The costs of this survey would be met by CDC, with leg work e.g. delivering the survey and engaging the community being managed by the Parish. If the Council is content to proceed the intention would be to commence the survey planning immediately, run the survey in February with the aim of having it completed by Easter.

The main benefit of this activity is that it will enable us to clearly plan for meeting the housing needs of the village; however, what is critical to the usefulness of this data is a strong response rate from the village. Whatever the outcome the final report will be available to the public and could be used by anyone for future planning considerations.

The funding available for this survey needs to be committed in the next few weeks, and therefore Frances requires a clear signal from the Council now as to whether we wish to proceed at this point.

NM suggested an event in the village hall would aid understanding of what the survey was trying to achieve, could explain the options and provide practical help to fill the survey in. The response rate will depend on what personal information is required. A resident also commented on the practical problem of changing the mindset of residents who are inherently private in their lives and agreed a meeting could be beneficial.

SD raised her concerns over the impact of the survey and what it may be used for. She went on to highlight that part of the concern is the small sample size and the expectation of a 25% response rate, which in our village would equate to only 60 responses which could easily be manipulated by developers.

DB highlighted that the intention of the survey was to help people get on the housing list in order to be a priority for housing in our village.

NN queried whether the Council could get an example of a survey and a resident suggested an example of another village's report and experience of what it has been used. RW confirmed she would go back to Frances Evans in order to obtain a sample affordable housing survey and output report before the Council commits further to a survey.

Action: RW to contact Frances Evans in order to obtain a sample affordable housing survey and output report.

20.348.9 For Information: Great Wolf Resorts planning application update (HD)

In HD's absence DB confirmed that the Parish Council's objection letter has been submitted to Cherwell District Council (CDC).

DB went on to thank all the people in the village who have submitted objection letters, the clerk will ensure that all letters are included on the planning portal. It was also confirmed with CDC that letters can still be submitted up until the planning committee sits, which is estimated to be around mid-end March 2020.

Action: Clerk to cross check letters received via email with those on CDC Planning Portal in relation to Great Wolf Resorts application.

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20.348.10 For Discussion: Actions to alleviate flooding on footpath adjacent Ben Jonson pub (DB/HD)

DB highlighted that the Council has received 2/3 complaints about the footpath flooding alongside the Ben Jonson pub, subsequently making it difficult for residents to walk along there, especially in the dark.

RSA queried who owns the footpath and it was mentioned that it is a public footpath.

A resident went on to highlight that there is a drain in the village green in front of the Ben Jonson, which links underneath the road and it was therefore suggested to raise the issue with Highways at Oxfordshire County Council.

Action: Clerk to raise footpath flooding in front of Ben Jonson with Highways, OCC via Fix my street.

20.348.11 Resolution: To Approve Parish Council Precept for financial year 2020/21 (HD)

In HD's absence RW confirmed that the budget for financial year 2020/21 was approved at the December 2019 Parish Council meeting. The Council has since received the precept request form from Cherwell District Council (CDC) which is to be completed by the Parish Council.

RW informed the Council that the tax base information provided by CDC is currently in draft format and it could alter (therefore altering what each household would pay next year). It therefore cannot be guaranteed at this stage that there would not be an increase in council tax.

The 2020/21 precept to be requested by Weston on the Green Parish Council is £22,685.22. According to the draft figures provided by CDC there will be no increase in council tax paid by households during the next financial year 2020/21 with Tax band D properties paying £93.78, although this is still an estimated figure.

The resolution to approve the Parish Council Precept request of £22,685.22 for financial year 2020/21, based on the budget approved at the December 2019 Parish Council meeting, was proposed by RW and seconded by SD. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

Action: Clerk to submit the precept request for Weston on the Green Parish Council to Cherwell District Council by 17th January 2020.

Action: Clerk to confirm the council tax payable for Tax band D properties when the finalised figures are provided by CDC.

20.348.12 Resolution: To Approve quote of £624.00 for tree works at two locations in village (RSA)

RSA presented a quote received from Bicester Tree Services for works on the willow at rear of the North Lane duck pond and removing the leylandi located to the front of Oxford Court, Northampton Road (on one side only). The recommended course of action is to remove them completely as they have completely overgrown.

Applications for tree works at both sites have been submitted to Cherwell District Council (CDC). The Council has had confirmation that if we hear nothing further from CDC by 30th January 2020 then we are authorised to proceed with the planned tree works.

HD has spoken to a resident on one side of Oxford Court who was favourable to the works. RSA will talk to the other nearby Oxford Court residents to gain their views prior to any work being undertaken.

A resident highlighted that he suspects the trees maybe on Highways land and it would be advisable to check with Highways first. RSA agreed that he would check with Highways whether it is their responsibility and advise the Council.

SD requested that a willow bough which overhangs the pond on North Lane is retained. RSA confirmed that he would ensure this is retained and speak to the tree company prior to them commencing the works.

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The resolution to approve tree works at the two locations in the village, subject to confirming the situation with Highways and the approval of Oxford Court residents, was proposed by RSA and seconded by NM. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

Action: RSA to contact Highways to check whose responsibility the leylandii trees are which front Oxford Court.

Action: RSA to confirm residents in Oxford Court are in agreement with the removal of the leylandii trees which front Oxford Court on one side.

Action: RSA/Clerk to book Bicester Tree Services to undertake the work prior to the commencement of the nesting season in March.

20.348.13 Resolution: To Approve the following invoices for payment (DB)

Year date errors were noted in the table below and changed from 2020 to 2019 for ‘Clerks Pay – December 2019’ and ‘ATC Traffic Survey, B430 (25/09/19)’.

DB requested approval of the following invoices detailed in the table below. The resolution to approve the below invoices was proposed by DB and seconded by RSA. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

Payee	Purpose	Total payable incl VAT	Budget Line
Clerk (J Mullane)	Clerks Pay - December 2019	-*	Staff Costs/Clerks Salary
OCC	ATC Traffic Survey, B430 (25/09/19)	£240.00	Traffic/Application reduce speed limit
Ruth Whitfield	Noticeboard Planter grit & topsoil (AWBS)	£64.80	Contingency
Ruth Whitfield	Noticeboard Planter compost & topsoil (AWBS)	£43.94	Contingency
Ruth Whitfield	Noticeboard Planter plants (Bicester Avenue Garden Centre)	£98.56	Contingency
Clerk (J Mullane)	Great Wolf A1 Waterproof Posters (Instant Print)	£33.99	Sundries/Printing

*Pre-approved by the FG & HRG

Action: Clerk to update invoice log with approvals.

Action: Clerk to update Transparency log of invoices in excess of £100 and add to PC website.

Action: Clerk to initiative request for payments from Councillors.

Action: Councillors to process online payment requests.

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

DB highlighted the key items in the planning report from the December Parish Council meeting.

Building Works:

Decision Received

None

Awaiting Decision

None

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New Applications

19/02697/F - Weston Manor Hotel, The Manor Northampton Road | Variation of condition 1 of 16/02021/F - to allow the continued retention of the existing portacabin for an additional period of one year

At previous we asked for time limit

Tree Works:

Approved / Completed

19/02555/TCA | Tree works in Conservation area. | The Barn 5 Oxford Court - 1 x Silver Birch that is within influencing distance of the property to be removed before any damage is incurred to the property by the tree.

Allowed

New Application / Awaiting Decision

19/02905/TCA - Robins Folly, Mill Lane - T1, T2 x Leylandii - Fell. 2 overgrown trees,

Seems sensible arboricultural work - CDC Iain Osenton

19/02950/TCA – 10 Lelylandi – Fell – On B430 outside Oxford Court. Planted for sound break by residents but due to lack of maintenance now of excessive size.

Application by Parish Council – CDC Iain Osenton

19/02953/TCA – Coppice Willow at back of Pond on North Lane.

Application by Parish Council – CDC Iain Osenton

19/02895/TCA – Monks Walk, Church Lane – Extensive Tree works in Garden and around Tennis Court, maintenance. **Newly on the portal, awaiting documents**

CDC Iain Osenton

Action: Councillors to inform HD directly of any comments on schemes listed above.

Ongoing Planning issues

Southfield Farm / Land north of Oak View Phase 2

Recent appeal REF 19/00038/REF - Rejected

DB advised Council to read planning decision as some interesting comments within the report.

Great Wolf Resorts Water Park – Chesterton

PC is involved with Chesterton PC due to traffic issues.

Clare Whitehead is Officer – **Have commented Against**

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Bicester Sports Association app, Green Lane Chesterton

19/00934/F | Change of Use of Agricultural land and extension of the existing Bicester Sports Association. CDC Officer is James Kirkham - Bicester Town looking at buying back town centre land

Objection Sent in re Traffic- **Awaiting CDC – James Kirkham**

20.348.15 For Information: to receive an update on the Works Group (RSA)

RSA presented his report on the playground, highlighting that generally the condition was acceptable, although there are minor works required on the equipment. The significant general problem is the safety surfacing as this is shrinking away from the wooden edging to the surfacing and this still needs repair. The south gate of the playground does not close under its own steam, the post for this needs a little realigning.

Over the other side of the field, the picnic area tables are fine having survived the flood without problem. The Mud Kitchen and equipment has just been added to this area to give some good play value thanks to the efforts of Ruth.

The gate from the footpath at the back of the spinney onto the road could do with a spring return as this has not got a working latch and is frequently left open. This has been added to the list of jobs to be done.

20.348.16 For Information: to receive an update on the Transport Advisory Group (DB)

DB informed the Council on the latest position of the transport advisory group. The transport survey is about to go live, and a flyer has been ordered which will be delivered to each household. It will provide details on how best to fill the survey in either online, with telephone help or paper copies to be obtained from the Weston Pantry.

Four posters have also been ordered for the planter noticeboards.

20.348.17 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 5th February 2020

The meeting ended at 21.21

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