

South Hinksey Parish Council

<https://southhinksey-pc.gov.uk>

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Minutes of the Meeting of South Hinksey Parish Council held at 7pm on Wednesday the 16th of October 2024 in the South Hinksey Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Goodhead, Jones (Chair) and Peacock.

In Attendance: L Morrison Allsopp Clerk/RFO. OCC Councillor Johnston.

24/082. Apologies for absence: Cllrs Denby, Maitland and Morrison. District Cllrs Smith and Hallet

24/083. Declarations of Interest:

All Councillors declared an interest in the -

Flood Alleviation Scheme

24/084. Approval of the draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 7th October 2024:

Minutes agreed as a correct record and initialled and signed by the Chair of the meeting.

24/085. Public Participation - questions, comments or representations: There were no Members of the Public in attendance.

24/086. Reports from County and District Councillors

Cllr Johnston, Oxfordshire County Council reported that after an email exchange with the Clerk, he had ascertained that at present, the County contact for the Flood Alleviation Scheme is a planning officer - Neil Richmond. No Highways Officer contact until the project is at the "shovels in the ground" stage.

Hinksey Hill project - Highways England asking for changes to the A34 signage which will cost an additional £100,000. Matter being deferred. Sharaz Arif is the Project Manager for Lodge Hill. Invite to attend a meeting, virtually if required. **Action Point**

Botley Road - money not the problem but everything else is.

Nine-million-pound shortfall in OCC Budget for 2025/2026 this is the norm at this point in the Budget cycle.

There was no representative from the District Council but the report from Councillors is in Dropbox.

24/087. Review of Actions from the Minutes: Report on progress of outstanding items which do not require further decision.

Minute Reference	Action	By Whom	Progress
24/014. b	Complete Clerk Annual Appraisal	Cllrs Jones & Goodhead	Ongoing
24/066.b	write to OCC officer bringing forward transport plan for flood alleviation. Invite to attend next meeting	Clerk	Ongoing

24/078.	Follow up on ODS Invoices	Clerk	Ongoing
24/048.c	Woodland Bollard – purchase & install	Clerk	Ongoing
24/063	Chair asked that Working Group Items be expedited	Working Groups	Ongoing
24/081.	Contact ground works firms and advise that the tenders are still open.	Cllr Morrison	Ongoing
23/151	Register interest with Land registry	Clerk	Ongoing
23/151	Ask Open Spaces to attend PC Meeting	Betty Lane Working Group	Ongoing
23/189.	National Highways re alternative cycle walking route prepare letter	Working Group	Ongoing
23/189.	New Cycle Route produce Action Plan	Working Group	Ongoing
24/034a	Cycle Route Write to National Highways this will complete their cycle route.	Working Group	Ongoing
24/034a	Consult with interested parties.	Working Group	Ongoing
24/034a	Go Forward with requesting quotes.	Working Group	Ongoing
24/034a	Fundraising for outside grants.	Working Group	Ongoing
24/048.c	Discuss Woodland proposals.	Cllr Maitland & Clerk	Ongoing
24/066.b	write to Environment Agency and ask for updated plan and spoil to be moved by rail and invite to next meeting.	Clerk Cllr Jones	Completed
24/068.c	Check new Finance Reg includes three quotes	Clerk	Completed
24/068. e	OALC Sub increase agreed inform	Clerk	Completed
24/069.	Check salt bins are full.	Councillors	Completed
24/072	Chase up third tender	Clerk	Completed
24/072	Research process for PWBL and costs.	Clerk	Completed
24/072	Research level of downpayment available	Clerk	Completed
23/168 c	Flood Alleviation Two Councillors as representative at OCC Planning Committee	Cllrs	Completed
24/025	To review Risk Assessment	Cllr Johnston of OCC	Completed
23/165	Clerk to produce Actions as a table with highest priorities at the top	Clerk	Permanent
23/150	Circulate Planning Applications on receipt	Clerk	Permanent
24/049.a	Finance statement be supplied to every meeting Expenditure against budget	Clerk	Permanent

24/049.a	Written reports to be provided for inclusion with the agenda. Necessary for finance decisions preferable for encouraging Parish involvement	Clerk, Councillors and Working Groups	Permanent
24/044	Standing item for Traffic to the agenda	Clerk	Permanent

Cllr Jones commented on the list getting longer. Clerk explained that Items marked completed were for Council information and removed for the following meeting. Cllr Jones asked Cllr Goodhead if the cycle path working group is still active. She responded the group has been paused over the summer but it will meet before the next Parish Council meeting and report back on progress. Clerk will follow up on ODS invoices after this meeting. Her time has been taken up completing a month's work in two weeks and the work re emails and website as a result of two new councillors.

24/088. Clerk's Report

New Councillors

It is nice to welcome two new councillors. Their email addresses have been set up and provided. The website has been rewritten to remove the Councillor Recruitment Information and the posters removed from the noticeboards. They have both been provided with copies of the good councillor's guide and copies of Standing Orders and the Financial Regulations.

Burial Ground

There is a burial at the end of the month, a transfer of EROB and various emails with stone masons. I need to find time to review the instructions to funeral directors on the website. Yet again I had various emails with documents but not a completed interment form, this I had to chase.

At the last meeting the Chair referred to a burial ground policy that purchase of an EROB by a non-resident required Council approval. I can find no reference to such a burial policy. A policy was recommended by the Clerk before last in 2015. Through 2015 to 2017 the policy idea morphed into rules and regulations. These were re-adopted without amendment by South Hinksey Parish Council on Monday 9th May 2022. The Eligibility criteria are clearly stated but there is no mention of a Council decision on the burial. Since an EROB will only be granted after death has occurred such a rule is discriminatory since some religions require burial to take place within a short period of time. This matter requires discussion by Council at its next meeting.

Flood Alleviation Correspondence

The detailed letter to the Environment Agency resulted in this response.

"Thank you for your email.

The draft outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) is section 7.2 of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme Transport Assessment. This is ES Appendix M that we submitted in support of our planning application.

 [OFAS ES Appendix M Transport Assessment.pdf](#)

This document will be developed in detail by our contractor nearer the start on site, incorporating any relevant planning conditions agreed with the OCC planners. There has been no update since drafting.

Please let me know if you have any further questions."

None of the questions posed have been answered however what I find even more disturbing is that the email to OCC asking which officer will be responsible for bringing forward the plan on behalf of OCC resulted in exactly the same email from the same person in the Environment Agency. I copied Cllr

	Payee	Description	Method of Payment	Total Amount including VAT £	Budget Code	Budget Total £	Budget Balance £
		Paid - expenditure previously approved at Council Meeting or urgent /regular payments					
.	Lloyds Bank	MultiPay Card October	DD	3.00	2015	150.00	129.00
For Approval							

1.	South Hinksey Village Hall	Venue Hire	BT	28.00	2010	350.00	0.00
2.	Covered by LMA	Viking Stationary	BT	72.78	2012	250.00	109.96
3.	HMRC	Tax/NI	BT	315.80	2002	1400.00	768.40
		All attached invoices have been examined, verified and certified by the Clerk.					
Receipts							
5	HMRC	VAT Repayment		171.90	1006	1,500.00	1328.10
6	SSEN	Wayleave Payment		21.01	1005	21.00	0.01
7	CEC Ltd	Burial Remittance		2392.50	1004	3000.00	2687.00
Explanations							

Payments agreed by Council.

- c) To note Bank reconciliations checked Cllr Goodhead Deferred to next meeting.
Cllr Goodhead will seek support from Cllr Peacock to complete these before the next meeting and then resign from the role. When doing this previously as a bank signatory the previous Clerk visited her home each time and showed her what to do. Cllr Goodhead said the bank statements and the monthly lists of invoices matched but was having difficulty finding the individual invoices and knowing if they have been agreed. Cllr Jones explained this was unnecessary the System is that the Council agrees the payments which the Clerk has uploaded to the bank account. The bank signatories check the payments match and authorise them. Cllr Goodhead queried the agreement for the Direct Debits which happens at the Annual Meeting, but checking individual invoices is the duty of Council, it is not part of the bank reconciliation. However Cllr Goodhead was concerned because she was signing the Reconciliations.
- d) To note finance reports.
Noted
- e) To appoint a third bank signatory to allow two from three as per the Financial Regulations
Deferred to next meeting.
- f) Review of Clerks Salary in October is a requirement of the Financial Regulations, however there is no information yet on the salary increase for this year and the Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk have still to meet for the annual appraisal. Defer item to next meeting. Agree a date at the end of the meeting. **Action Point.**
- g) To consider Grant application and agree a response.
 - i). South and Vale CAB application for £300.
Grant last year was £100.
Proposal to grant £150 counterproposal to grant £200. Agreed amount £150.00. **Action Point**

24/091. Reports from Working Groups

- a) Cycle/Footpath
 - b) Flood Alleviation Scheme
 - c) Woodland
 - d) A34 Noise
- Agreed to defer all.

24/092. Burial Ground Development

Burial Ground Development Report

Background

South Hinksey Parish Council owns and operates a burial ground off Parker Road adjacent to St Laurence Church which has a closed Church Yard. About a quarter of the site was developed initially with the first Exclusive Right of Burial sold in April 1984. The double berth burial plots developed at that time have now all been sold. The Council is resolved to develop the rest of the Burial Ground, both as a resource for parishioners and as a means of raising money to supplement the precept and fund special projects to benefit the Parish.

Design Process

At the beginning of 2020 the Parish Council commissioned Cemetery Development Services Ltd to produce a design specification and tender pack to develop the remaining area of the Burial Ground. This was completed at the beginning of 2022. This allows for a further 165 double berth plots a copy of the layout plan is available [here](#) and the final tender specification [here](#). The work already undertaken has raised expectations in the Parish that they will continue to be able to buy burial plots.

Finance

Funds presently available

Earmarked		
Reserves	New Plots	25,500.00
	Council resolved	
Betty Lane	transfer	2455.00
Burial Ground Operations 23/24 costs		-4,276.44
Burials and Memorials 23/24 receipts		12,645.00
Bank Interest Payments 23/24		1,021.64
Traffic Calming	Council resolved	
24/25	transfer	3,000.00
CIL23/24		1,501.05
		41,846.25

Costs

The final Tender Specification gives a cost total of £68,845 however this cost is two years out of date.

Investigation suggests that an up-to-date cost will be £68,922.

There are various options open to Council.

1. To develop only part of the remaining area, however when such a tender was opened it elicited no response.
2. To develop the whole area as per the specification
3. Develop the whole area with a reduction in the specification, e.g. not planting the beech and yew hedge against the long stone wall shared with the Church and reduce the length of the hard standing. Both these together could reduce the costs by approximately £10,000.

My recommendation is to reduce the specification. Previous attempts at hedge planting have had various elements of success since the hedging requires watering over the summer period until it is established and the Parish Council does not have labour available to do this and it would result in higher annual maintenance costs. The hard standing has ecological implications and a shorter area will be better for the environment. This option has a cost of approximately £59,000.

Funds Available	41,846
Likely Costs	-59,000

Deficit

-17,154

Meeting the Deficit

In the year 23/24 the present plots made a profit of £8,368.56

In the year 22/23 the present plots made a profit of £2,200.92

In the year 21/22 the present plots made a profit of £1,482.47

In the year 20/21 the present plots made a deficit of **-£6,190.88**

In the year 20/21 the present plots made a deficit of **-£2336.42**

It should be noted that in 20/21 the Burial Ground Development incurred costs of £2,830 and in 21/22 costs of £985 which added to the deficit and the profit last year of £8368.56 is very unusual.

The deficit of £17,154 could be met over a period from the precept and the profit from the burial ground, however parishioners have an expectation that they can be buried within the parish and there are no longer burial plots available. Costs for initial works have already been incurred by the parish and the costs for completion continue to rise.

To meet the expectations of parishioners the burial ground development needs to be completed now. The most cost-effective solution is a loan from the Public Works Loan Board.

Public Works Loan

Parish councils may borrow from the PWLB and need a borrowing approval from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). HM Treasury is responsible for the lending policy and for setting interest rates for PWLB loans. The day-to-day lending activities including advancing new loans and collecting repayments are delegated to the DMO. By statutory provision, loans to local authorities are automatically secured on the revenues of the authority rather than by reference to specific revenues, assets or collateral.

The estimated repayment costs for a loan of 17,154 GBP are

Over a period of 8 years a 6 monthly repayment of **£1312.45 or £1498.40**

Over a period of 7 years a 6 monthly repayment of **£1466.28 or £1570.73**

Over a period of 6 years a 6 monthly repayment of **£1672.29 or £1,858.35**

The first number is for an annuity loan, the second for an Equal Instalments of Principal loan.

Possible Repayment Methods

- 1. The Parish Council has, on an annual basis, been budgeting the sum of £3000 to cover the costs of the Hinksey Hill Traffic Calming. These payments are now complete. Council could continue to budget the annual £3000 to pay the PWB loan with no effect on the Precept.**
- 2. A second option is to sell plots to non-residents and use the money raised to pay off the loan. The cost of an Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB) for a non-Parish resident is presently £3,410. One such sale each year would cover the annual loan costs. The problem is that this option carries no guarantees. Most families purchase an EROB when one partner dies. These purchases are not spread over the year but are concentrated in the autumn and winter months.**
- 3. A third option is an amalgamation of the previous two options. To pick a loan that fits the present £3000 in the budget. Use any annual profit from the burial ground partly to set against the precept for the following year and partly saving the annual cost of borrowing in an**

earmarked reserve for future maintenance costs and to cover an emergency where the Council is unable to meet the loan costs by the usual means.

a) To note and agree report by the Clerk.

1. Council resolves to obtain a Public Works Loan. Agreed
2. Council resolves to apply for borrowing approval from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Agreed
3. Council resolves to accept a suitable tender from a competent contractor. Agreed
4. The work is completed as soon as possible to ensure any parishioners passing away over the autumn or winter have the option to purchase a plot. Original estimate for the works was 4 weeks. Agreed
5. Option three, an amalgamation of the previous two options. To pick a loan that fits the present £3000 in the budget. Use any annual profit from the burial ground partly to set against the precept for the following year and partly saving the annual cost of borrowing in an earmarked reserve for future maintenance costs and to cover an emergency where the Council is unable to meet the loan costs by the usual means. Agreed
6. Council agreed 7yrs 6 months Equal Instalments of Principal loan. Clerk to return to next meeting with explanation on each type of loan. Action Point.
7. Council agreed the Clerk can sell up to four plots per year to residents outside the Parish.
8. Resolve to agree a tender at the next meeting.
9. Council agreed to share the plans with the local vicar when tender has been agreed.

24/093. Traffic - Highways Engagement to note the meeting with Highways and their response.

Dear Parish,

Thank you to Linda and Pat for meeting us on Monday, 2nd September and apologies for this late email.

We discussed the role our Engagement Team is doing since the Oxfordshire County Council Highways Service transformation last year, and how we have been tasked to engage with our stakeholders such as yourselves, and act as the conduit into the service.

Many officers you formally dealt with may have retired, or changed teams as the service reorganises itself in response to ever tighter budgets.

We also explained how the Parish can continue to undertake some things themselves as our service becomes leaner. For instance asking for new traffic changes.

Nominating Super Users to speed along defect repairs.

We have attached the Oxfordshire Together publication we referred to and some links to our website below to help you find these pages easier.

[Information for town and parish councils | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

[Ask for traffic changes | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

Please continue to use FixMyStreet with at least two good photos where possible and safe to do so to report defects for repair.

To recap the concerns you flagged up with actions as necessary:

- The condition of the footway on Manor Road was a cause for concern.

We have placed this on our data base record for assessment, but we are aware there is a large backlog of work to be assessed.

The Oxfordshire Together publication may help the Parish over how to address the weeds at this location in the meantime.

The District Council website will also have information to enable you to request a sweep of the road gutters via their street cleaning service.

- We have defected the two gullies outside 18 and 20 Manor Road for cleaning.

- The matter of the former sink hole repair outside 18 Manor Road causes ongoing concern.

Unfortunately until it meets at least a depression of 40mm or worse below the existing road level it does not meet our intervention level for investigation.

Please continue to monitor it and report on FixMyStreet when it gets to this stage with photographs.

- The condition of the footway on St Lawrence Road at the junction with Manor Road was a concern.

We have recorded this as for Manor Road above.

- Your concerns over some of the 20mph installation can be addressed with the 20mph team directly.

Contact details are on the web page at the link below.

[The 20mph transformation programme | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

- The condition of the road surface on Parker Road was noted and again we have placed this on our data base record for assessment.

- You had concerns over the Hinksey Hill, and Foxcombe Road VAS's not operating which we have forwarded to the Traffic Team to look into.

- Also on Hinksey Hill you asked about weight limit signs. As this may be a new request you can use the link above regarding asking for traffic changes.

- There is a lump of tarmac in the footway outside Hillside House which we have raised as a defect for repair as it is a potential trip hazard on the footway.

Notwithstanding it causes issues for cars on this property access.

- Finally, you did talk about the flood alleviation works and the Lodge Hill development. I think any concerns with these are best addressed with the planners or teams directly.

There will be website's and contact details for these. I would respectively suggest at this stage you contact them with any concerns.

Planning will be the District Council unless it falls in the City boundary and the Oxford flood alleviation scheme have a link in the web page below.

[A423 Kennington improvements programme | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

We trust this was all the points we discussed and that you found the visit helpful.

Please contact us if you have any other concerns using our generic email box as above

We look forward to meeting you again probably next year.

Noted.

Council agreed that the Clerk write to the 20mph team, asking for the 20mph sign to be reviewed and moved from the corner. Action Point

24/094. Website and email

- a) To note Cllrs Morrison and Denby have been issued with southhinksey-pc.gov.uk email addresses to be used for council business.

Noted

- b) To discuss and decide if the website should include photographs of and telephone numbers for councillors.

Council resolved not to have photographs and telephone numbers for Councillors on the website.

- c) To note the addition of the Policies page.

Noted

24/095. Items for information or next Agenda only –

any special item for next year's budget to be submitted to the clerk by the 21st October.

all items for the next agenda to be submitted to the Clerk by Friday 25th of October. Any items submitted after that date will not be considered.

Date of the next meeting 4th November 2024

There being no other business the meeting closed at 20.23.