

**Minutes of the South Hinksey Parish Council
at South Hinksey Village Hall**

Tuesday 6th March 2012

Present: Sarah Balaam (Vice-Chair), Sandra Bingham, Sheridan Edward (Clerk), Liz LeFevre, Maggie Rawcliffe (Chair)

Jeffrey Bryant

1. Apologies

Tom Barron, Cllr Arash Fatemian (OxonCC), Cllr Ron Mansfield (VoWHDC).

2. Declarations of interest

MR – Village Hall.

3. Parishioners' comments

Bridge over railway. MR read a report from Peter Rawcliffe. The Council had been made aware of plans to replace the footbridge over the railway, possibly as early as the end of 2012, however there were no plans to include a ramp on the new bridge, despite previous efforts. Nicola Blackwood MP had carried out a site visit with Peter and Peter had written in detail to her explaining the background. Nicola is yet to respond.

4. Minutes of February 2012 meeting

Read and agreed.

5. Matters arising

JAG Timber. SE had discussed the invoice with James from JAG Timber who stated that the scale of the work was not entirely known and that he believed that it was agreed from discussions with Clive Briffett that the work was to proceed until completed. SE reported that he believe in this instance JAG were acting in good faith but asked them that in future we receive accurate quotes, and be informed should these change. SE also asked the Council to ensure that all quotes for work were forwarded to him for monitoring.

General Elliot. MR and SBa reported that they had met with Mrs Yun who was still interested in taking on the pub, and include a gallery and some rooms. They were also to meet with the brewery to discuss. MR and SBa recommended that Mrs Yun seek pre-application advice from the Planning Department.

District Councillor review. MR and LLF attended the briefing regarding the review by the LGBCE of the number of district councilors, with the aim that each councillor will have roughly the same number of constituents. The review would be taking place in 2013 following consultations.

Devil's Backbone ditch clearing. There had been no news from Tracy Morton. **Action: SE to chase.**

6. Finance – payments and receipts

Payments

Oxford Green Belt Network	2012/13 subscription	£15.00
Sheridan Edward	Jan-Mar wages	£458.05
Sheridan Edward	Jan-Mar expenses	£30.00
HMRC	Nov-Mar tax and NICs	£349.67
Maggie Rawcliffe	February expenses	£25.42

Receipts

S&R Childs	Burial fee	£300.00
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7. Planning applications

Bagley Croft Lodge, 12/00034/FUL, erection of a double garage

The Council received notification that the application had been permitted.

Land adjacent to 4 St Lawrence Road, conversion of existing barn

Jeffrey Bryant attended the meeting to voice concerns regarding the design, particularly potential overlooking / loss of privacy. Concerns were raised by Sarah Ba and MR about overdevelopment of the property, the design and size of the windows on the Manor Road side, which will adversely affect the street scene. We object to the position, the height and size of the workroom /garage, for these reasons, it is not in keeping with the rural/ agricultural nature of this field. It will obstruct light from no. 4 and impinge on the view from upstairs windows at no.10.

Action: SE to draft a reply and circulate to councillors, and request an extension to the deadline.

8. Correspondence

Planning Service update. VoWHDC reported that they will be holding briefing sessions regarding the Localism Act and Neighbourhood planning once the regulations are published, probably in April. The also reported that they were considering feedback from the public consultation on the Interim Housing Supply Policy on 16th March.

Draft Rail Strategy consultation. The Council had been asked to participate in a consultation regarding the future rail strategy for the region. It was felt that the two biggest potential effects to the parish were the electrification of the line, and any possible impact on accessing the village via the bridge over the railway, and the hub at Redbridge for the potential Oxford Eastern Arc rapid transport system. The consultation deadline is 16th March. **Action: SE to circulate details to councillors.**

9. County Councillor's Report

None.

10. District Councillor's Report

None.

11. Project updates

A34 Issues. MR and SBa met with Nicola Blackwood MP and two members of the Botley Traffic Advisory Committee to discuss a review of the speed limit from the Hinksey Hill interchange to Botley and the installation of a central reservation crash barrier. Nicola's office had drafted a letter to Mike Penning MP at the Department for Transport. The Council felt that although the letter was comprehensive regarding the crash barrier, there should be more focus on the reasoning behind the request for the speed limit change. **Action: MR to send request for amendments to Nicola.**

Manor Road ditch. It had been noted that following the flooding incident caused by the burst water main, silt had built up again in the pipes at the end of the ditch as well as causing more slumping of the bank. **Action: SBa to carry out a site visit to confirm the details and send information to SE to contact Thames Water.**

Hinksey Hill traffic issues. LLF had nothing to report, but had felt that the measures taken so far had had an effect on the speed along the road, although SBI felt that there was still speeding towards the bottom of the hill. SE reported that they were still awaiting a decision on the area stewardship applications for the Speed Indicator Device and the pruning of the hedgerows by the path alongside Hinksey Hill.

Village Hall ownership. SE reported that he had asked for another progress report from Philip Marsh at Darbys who assured him that he would receive the documents back from the Land Registry by Wednesday 7th March at the latest. **Action: SE to contact Land Registry to confirm the details and progress of the application.**

12. Woodland management and Clive Briffett memorial bench

MR and SE had met with Riki Therivel and Hilary Briffett to carry out a site visit of the woodland and discuss setting up a management plan for the next five to ten years. During the site visit it had been noted that many saplings had blown over and needed attention. MR has arranged for a working party from the parish to meet on Sunday 11th March at 11am. Riki Therivel had agreed to put together a plan for the future maintenance of the woodland. It was felt that it was essential to put in place external project management to relieve pressure on councillors, and it was also agreed that for impartiality, the project management should not be undertaken by any contractors that would then be carrying out the work. It was agreed that it should be discussed further once the management plan was in place. It was decided that plans for the memorial bench be discussed at the next meeting. **Action: SE to follow up with Riki re management plan and add to agenda for regular updates.**

13. Flooding incident

On 17th February, a water main burst causing extensive flooding in the village, with five households still unable to return to their properties. There was considerable disruption to water supplies and damage to roads and pavements. However, Thames Water had acted quickly to stop the leak, restore services and carry out remedial work to the road. It was noted that the footpath by the ditch at the top of Manor Road was still in need of remedial work. **Action: SE to contact Thames Water.**

14. Finance Report

SE reported that the Council continued to be in a strong financial position, with underspends in many areas, and greater than anticipated income, resulting in a surplus of approx. £2.5k for the year. SE reported that in addition, the Council had been able to reduce the amount held in restricted funds so that c.£12k was now held in unrestricted funds and the Community Woodland fund was still very healthy with annual income of c.£280 and a balance of £3.5k.

15. Burial Ground fee review

SE reported that the burial ground fees were reviewed annually by the Council and were largely unchanged from 2006. He stated that with a few years of more detailed financial recording, it was now possible to analyze how much the current fees covered the cost of the maintenance of the burial ground and stated that based on averages over three years, there was an annual shortfall of c.£1,400 which was being covered by the Council's general funds.

SE also stated that fees elsewhere in the area were much higher, and used the Oxford City Council cemetery fees as a guide. SE noted that the burial ground was a valued community amenity as well and asked the Council to decide how far the burial ground should be subsidized by public funds.

SE proposed that in light of the maintenance costs, the fees for burials should be doubled, which would bring them more in line with burial fees elsewhere, as well as pay for c.90% of the upkeep of the burial ground. The Council agreed with the proposed changes, but agreed to scrap the fee for additional inscriptions on headstones as these had no impact on the maintenance costs incurred.

Action: SE to send round notification on SHInfo and inform undertakers and stonemasons.

16. 2012/13 ground maintenance contract

SE had obtained revised quotes from the three shortlisted candidates and presented them to the Council. It was noted that one quote was substantially cheaper. The candidate had carried out a site visit and had also submitted two very good references and SE recommended that the Council appoint them for the coming year, on completion of a final site visit with SE, MR, LLF and Peter Rawcliffe and finalized schedule. The Council agreed to appoint the ground maintenance contract to BGG Garden and Tree Care. **Action: SE to finalized contract and carry out a site visit with BGG.**

17. Litter pick date

The litter pick date was confirmed as Saturday 31st March, 10am to 12noon, with meeting points in the village and on Hinksey Hill. **Action: MR to confirm numbers and date with Biffa.**

18. Any other business

Footpaths. MR, following complaints from parishioners, noted that the footpath from the end of Barleycott Lane to Kennington, and from John Piers Lane to the Devil's Backbone have deteriorated, partially due to horses. MR had contacted Mark Sumner who was responsible for footpaths in OxonCC. **Action: MR to carry out site visit and investigate possible remedial action.**

19. Parishioners' feedback

None.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 3rd April 2012

NB: Council meetings now take place on the first Tuesday of each month