

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

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

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**Present:** Christine Chater, Michael Cochrane, Liz LeFevre, Maggie Rawcliffe  
Cllr Bob Johnston (OxonCC), Cllr Debby Hallett (VoWHDC), Geoffrey Ferres (Clerk)

**Other attendees:** Janet Cochrane, Peter Rawcliffe

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**Time commenced: 7.30pm**

**1. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2016-17**

There were no nominations.  
MR was elected as chairman for this meeting.

**2. Apologies**

Matthew Frohn, Cllr Emily Smith (VoWHDC).

**3. Declarations of interest**

None.

**4. Public questions, comments or representations**

PR attended the meeting to discuss item 17.

**5. Minutes of November 2016 meeting**

The Council **resolved** to agree the minutes of the November 2016 meeting subject to the deletion of the word "it" in item 10 on page 3. MR signed them.

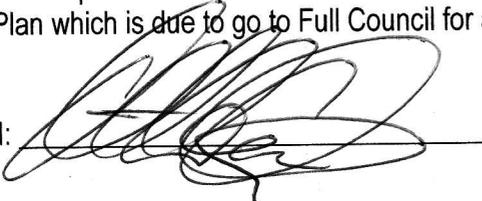
**6. Matters arising**

**Standing Orders.** The Clerk said he had not been able to access the model Standing Orders (or Financial Regulations) published by the National Association of Local Councils because the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils had only today, after a reminder, sent the Council a password to access the members' area of its website.

**Transparency code for smaller authorities.** The Clerk said he had not yet applied to the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils for a grant for the purchase of a computer but aims to do so before the end of the month.

**Chilswell Copse.** CC had contacted a firm of solicitors but they had not been interested in creating a lease for someone to keep bees there. It was **agreed** not to pursue this issue any further for the time being.

**Recent planning changes in the Vale of White Horse.** VoWHDC's Emily Hamerton wanted the Council to be aware the Inspector's letter has now been received, therefore significant weight can now be given to the emerging Local Plan which is due to go to Full Council for adoption on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

Signed: 

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**Village phone box.** The Clerk reported that Linda Slater has circulated via Shinfo a request for any resident who objects to the removal of the BT phone box to contact the Council.

**Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks.** The Clerk had contacted Scottish and Southern Electricity Services to request copies of the SSE leaflet but said he is still waiting to receive them.

**Contamination of green recycling bins.** The Clerk reported that Linda Slater has publicised via Shinfo VoWHDC's new policy regarding the contents of green bins.

## 7. Finance – payments and receipts

### Payment

Payee	Reason	Amount	Power to act
South Hinksey Village Hall	Venue hire 2016/17	£250.00	s133 LGA 1972

The Council **resolved** to approve the payment.

### Receipts

None.

## 8. County Councillor's report

BJ reported that OxonCC will submit a proposal to the Government for a county-wide, unitary authority before Christmas.

BJ said the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Statement had included money for the restoration of passenger services between Bicester and Milton Keynes but no money for the remodelling of Oxford station and no money nationally for adult social care. BJ said it appeared Oxfordshire would miss out on funding for infrastructure because it had not agreed to make the sort of local government changes the Government wanted. CC asked about Lodge Hill. BJ said it appeared the money for the proposed lorry park had not been forthcoming from the Government but new slip-roads would be built facing south.

## 9. District Councillors' report

DH and ES had kindly circulated a written report. DH said a new Brookes University Master Plan was expected which might propose development on Harcourt Hill. The new sites required to provide additional housing to make up for Oxford City Council's inability to find the additional housing expected of it would probably not be allowed in the Green Belt, which was good news for some villages but not others.

DH reported positive experiences of Mace and the firm it had employed to carry out the Westway development. Work would begin at the eastern end of the site and alternative premises had been identified for the Library, the dry cleaners and the Seacourt Hall.

LLF was interested in the information DH and ES had provided about what to do when bad weather disrupts waste collections and felt it deserved a wider audience. **Action: LLF to contact Linda Slater about circulating information via Shinfo.**

## 10. Planning applications

None.

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## 11. Correspondence

**Community Resilience Presentation.** The Clerk informed the Council that South Oxfordshire District Council and VoWHDC Emergency Planning have organised two Community Resilience Presentations, on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016 and Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017, to help town and parish councils know what to do before, during and after an emergency and how the districts can assist. MR said she and MF would like to attend the presentation on 8<sup>th</sup> December. MC said he would like to attend the one on 23<sup>rd</sup> January. **Action: Clerk to book places.**

**Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils.** The Clerk reported he had received a 23-page monthly newsletter for circulation to members and a separate message advertising OALC's 2017 training programme. Members **asked** the Clerk to forward the newsletter so they could make up their own minds whether they wished to receive it every month.

**Electrification of the Didcot to Oxford railway.** The Clerk informed the Council he had received a copy of a letter sent by Radley Parish Council to the Government regarding the decision announced last month to shelve the electrification of the line between Didcot and Oxford. Radley Parish Council had asked the other four parish councils along the line to write in similar vein. The Council agreed to write to the Government. **Action: Clerk to draft a letter to Paul Maynard MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport.**

## 12. Community Governance Review

The Clerk reported that VoWHDC's Steve Corrigan has sent the Council the draft terms of reference for a number of Community Governance Reviews, including the one requested by this Council. The final terms of reference are due to be published on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016 and a consultation on these will run until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017. CC asked whether the Council should encourage responses. DH doubted this would be necessary if parishioners already understood the issues. She confirmed the Council could co-opt a person from the "other" ward if there were a vacancy and no one from the right ward came forward.

## 13. Finance

**2017-18 budget.** MF and MR had met with the Clerk on 25<sup>th</sup> November to prepare a draft 2017-18 budget. In the process they had examined the Council's Asset Register and concluded there was no item that required repair, maintenance, replacement or disposal. They had also discussed the Council's Risk Assessment and an amended version was presented to the Council for consideration. MF and MR had reviewed the Clerk's pay and conditions, as required by Standing Order 14. The Clerk had circulated a paper showing how an increase in the parish's Council Tax base might make possible a further reduction in the amounts added to Council Tax bills to fund the Council's work.

MC felt it would be helpful in future if the figures for the reserves were presented on the same sheet as the figures for receipts and payments. **Action: Clerk to incorporate figures for the Council's reserves onto the sheet currently used to present the Council's budget.**

The Council **approved** the amended Risk Assessment and **confirmed** the Clerk's current grade and hours. The Council **agreed** to review the Clerk's hours again in June 2017.

The Council **agreed** the Clerk should not investigate the Council Tax bandings of the dwellings in the parish.

**Bank mandate.** The Council **agreed** that all councillors should in future be able to sign cheques and a new Bank Mandate should be completed at the next meeting.

**Direct debit.** MF, MR and the Clerk had recommended that in appropriate circumstances the Council should in future use direct debit, rather than cheques, to pay bills such as the annual data protection registration over the amount of which the Council had no control. The Council **agreed**.

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#### 14. Heavy Goods Vehicles in South Hinksey village

The Clerk has written one letter to Highways England covering both the sign on the A34 and the issue regarding the lay-by, and is waiting for a reply.

MR said she understood that since the last meeting an HGV had been stopped by a parishioner in Parker Road before it could become stuck in the village.

#### 15. Housing development north of Abingdon

Nothing to report.

#### 16. Campaigns

**Footbridge over the railway.** MR said there was nothing to report.

**Flood barrier.** MR reported the work is almost complete.

#### 17. Burial ground

The Clerk had contacted Trevor Jackson, Oxford City Council's Cemeteries Manager, who had offered to meet councillors at the burial ground on 14<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> December. But CC who had been the Council's contact with Trevor Jackson could not be present on either date. It was agreed new dates should be sought in January. **Action: Clerk to contact Trevor Jackson.**

The Clerk has written to the owner of plot 86 to invite them to level the grave.

**Hedge.** The Council's maintenance contractors have not yet replaced the hedge of native species they had completely cut down that had been planted in February with the help of a grant from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment. The Clerk has written to ask when this will be done. The Council **agreed** that the Clerk should inform the contractors that their final payment for 2016 is being held back until the hedge has been replanted.

**Austrian scythe.** The Clerk had written to PR inviting him to apply for a grant from the Council through a charity, voluntary or community organisation to purchase an Austrian scythe for use in the wildflower meadow. PR had written back immediately, disagreeing with the Council's decision and asking the Council to reconsider it.

PR said he could not understand the reasons for the Council's decision and asked for it to be explained to him.

CC said the decision had already been made and there had not been any change.

MR reminded the Council that it owns the grit sand /salt spreader kept by Tom Barron.

BJ said most parish councils had a "six-month rule" in their standing orders that prevented moves to overturn a decision within six months of it being taken.

MR pointed out that there had been no agreement not to purchase a scythe.

LLF checked the Council's October minutes which she had with her and which recorded the Council's decision in relation to PR's proposal that the Council purchase an Austrian scythe.

The Clerk consulted the Council's Standing Orders and confirmed BJ was correct. There was such a provision in Standing Order 36. Accordingly, the matter could not be debated again before spring 2017.

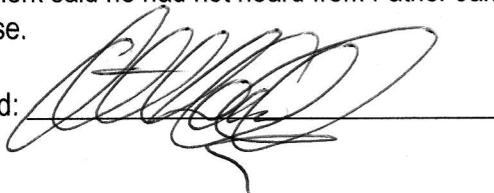
LLF offered to contact Andy Gunn of the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust to find out if BBOWT might be interested in applying for a grant to purchase a scythe for use in the burial ground. **Action: LLF to contact Andy Gunn.**

**Rose bush.** It was noted that a rose bush had been planted in plot 87. This is against the burial ground regulations. LLF suggested the owner of the plot be offered the opportunity to plant something in memory of the deceased at the community woodland. **Action: Clerk to contact the owner of plot 87.**

#### 18. Path across churchyard and burial ground

The Clerk said he had not heard from Father James Wilkinson whether he had yet obtained a faculty from the diocese.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 19. Traffic issues

The Clerk has written one letter to Highways England covering the issues regarding the lay-by and the sign on the A34, and is waiting for a reply.

**Surveys.** The Clerk had input manually three paper responses to the Hinksey Hill survey which LLF had brought to the last meeting, bringing the total number of responses to that survey to 27, of which he reported 20 supported the implementation of a 30mph speed limit and seven were against. The Clerk said there had been no online responses to the survey since mid-October.

The Clerk reported that there had been 34 online responses to the village survey, of which 25 supported the implementation of a 20mph speed limit and eight were against. The Clerk said there had been no online responses to the survey since 17<sup>th</sup> October.

LLF wanted to see a 30mph limit introduced that included Boars Hill but CC and MC argued the Council should pursue the issue even if it had to make a start on its own. It was acknowledged a campaign might take years, not months, and it might be a good idea to establish a sub-committee to work on it. MC argued the Council should try to work with other parish councils. LLF said she would look back at how the campaign for the current limit was won. **Action: Clerk to put the item on the agenda of the next meeting.**

**50mph limit on A34.** The Clerk had conducted further research in the Council's paper files and had drafted a letter to the Minister of State for Transport, who has responsibility for Highways England. One amendment was agreed to the Clerk's draft letter. **Action: Clerk to send the amended letter to the Minister of State.**

## 20. Staff training

The Clerk had circulated a paper requesting that the Council pay the £99 cost of him undertaking the online Introduction to Local Council Administration course organised by the Society of Local Council Clerks. The Council **agreed** to pay the £99 (plus VAT).

Since circulating that paper, the Clerk had received and circulated the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils' 2017 training programme which included a £35 course on 18<sup>th</sup> January at Didcot Civic Hall on Preparing for Audit and End of Year Procedures. The Council **agreed** the Clerk should undertake the course and agreed to pay £35 (plus VAT).

## 21. Maintenance issues

**Ditch along John Piers Lane.** Oxford City Council's Steve Smith had informed the Clerk on 14<sup>th</sup> October that the ditch would be cleared "in the next couple of weeks" but regrettably it had still not been cleared by the end of November. The Clerk has therefore written again to Mr Smith and been assured the work is still scheduled for the near future.

**Betty Lane stile.** After the Council resolved to erect a metal Woodstock pedestrian kissing gate, LLF had received a message from a Betty Lane resident arguing that provision should be made for bicycles. The Council agreed to seek OxonCC's advice. **Action: LLF to contact OxonCC.**

**Stile.** The Clerk reported that he believed the stile that needed repair has been repaired.

**Vegetation obstructing pavements around Hinksey Hill.** The Clerk has written to Linda Slater to ask her to circulate a message via Shinfo asking residents to take care that pavements outside their houses are not obstructed.

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## 22. Any other business

MC said he would appreciate a tour of the parish as part of his induction. **Action: MC and MR to liaise and to arrange a tour.** The Clerk said he had yet to go round the part of the parish west of the A34 and would like to take that part of the tour, if possible.

MC said he would also like someone to take him through the parish's Community Emergency Plan.

MC said he was unfortunately unable to attend the OALC training session for new councillors.

## 23. Feedback from members of the public

None.

**Time concluded: 10.03pm**

MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Date of the next Parish Council meeting: Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 7.30pm  
in South Hinksey Village Hall

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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