

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

Monday 6th March 2017

Present: Christine Chater, Michael Cochrane (Chair), Matthew Frohn, Liz LeFevre, Maggie Rawcliffe,
Geoffrey Ferres (Clerk)

Other attendees: Janet Cochrane, Carol Colclough

Time commenced: 7.30pm

1. Apologies

Cllr Bob Johnston (OxonCC), Cllr Debby Hallett (VoWHDC), Cllr Emily Smith (VoWHDC).

2. Declarations of interest

In relation to item 19, MR said she was involved in the charity music festival.

3. Public questions, comments or representations

CCo said she had come to the meeting to ask what had happened about the hedge of native species that was supposed to have replaced the row of Leyland cypresses cut down a year ago.

It was explained that the hedge had been planted by Ringrose Tree Services Ltd but then cut down by the Council's maintenance contractors and not yet reinstated as promised.

CCo said the hedge would need to be planted soon – there was only a brief window of opportunity. This was acknowledged but the Council wanted to come to a settlement with the contractors, who had admitted responsibility.

4. Minutes of February 2017 meeting

The Council **resolved** to agree the minutes of the February 2017 meeting. MC signed them.

5. Matters arising – February meeting

Transparency code for smaller authorities. As agreed at the last meeting, the Clerk had not applied in February to the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils for a grant for the purchase of a computer. **Action carried forward: Clerk to apply for a grant for the purchase of a computer and software.**

Community Resilience Presentations. The Clerk had not yet checked the Council's insurance. **Action carried forward from last meeting: Clerk to check the Council's insurance in respect of "Good Samaritan" activities.**

Electrification of the Didcot to Oxford railway. The Clerk said he had still not written to the relevant Minister. **Action carried forward: Clerk to draft a letter to Paul Maynard MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport.**

Asset register. The Clerk apologised that he had not yet contacted his predecessor to enquire if he could recall investigating the unspecified number of "Street lanterns" recorded in the Asset Register as belonging to the

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Council and being at various locations but as being insured by OxonCC. **Action carried forward: Clerk to make further enquiries regarding the Council's responsibilities for street lighting.**

50mph limit on A34. The Clerk apologised that he had not yet taken forward this issue. **Action carried forward: Clerk to write to Nicola Blackwood MP.**

6. Finance – payments and receipts

Payments

Payee	Reason	Amount	Power to act
Oxfordshears Ltd	Maintenance of community woodland	£900.00	s10 OSA 1906
Geoffrey Ferres	Balance of pay & expenses 2015-16 & 2016-17	£2,358.95	s112 LGA 1972
HMRC	PAYE Income Tax deducted	£220.00	s112 LGA 1972

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

Receipts

Payer	Reason	Amount
Rural Payments Agency	Forestry Commission grant 2015-16	£240.68
Dignity Funerals	Edens interment	£600.00
Rural Payments Agency	Forestry Commission grant 2016-17	£222.25

7. County Councillor's report

BJ had kindly sent a brief, written report.

BJ said Network Rail is now working on a new design for the footbridge over the railway which to the best of its ability will take into account the needs of the disabled but he has no timetable for any firm action.

BJ reported that OxonCC made a budget on 14th February. It was a tight run thing, as he had expected. Four members of the ruling Conservative/Independent Alliance were missing at the start of the meeting. In the end the ruling group's budget went through by one vote; this included all the cuts to adult day centres, etc. BJ said his group had tried and failed to get an extra £10m for highway repairs.

BJ also reported that a joint unitary bid would shortly be submitted to the Government on behalf of OxonCC, VoWHDC and South Oxfordshire District Council which, he believed, would save £22m per year within three years. Oxford City would be granted special status which would mean it could continue to run its parks, leisure and community centres and all its cultural activities.

8. District Councillors' report

DH and ES had kindly circulated a written report.

LLF had contacted Linda Slater who had publicised via Shinfo the information in DH and ES's previous written report regarding changes to bin lorries.

9. Planning applications

Dorking House Badger Lane: Construction of garaging for vehicles and associated workshop/store [P17/V0176/LDP] The Clerk had written to ask VoWHDC to impose a condition that the development could never be sold as a separate dwelling.

Thickets, Hinksey Hill: Tree Preservation Order [17V01] The Clerk had written to VoWHDC to express the Council's support for the order.

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Woodlands, Hinksey Hill: Proposed single-storey garage outbuilding to provide garage, gym, workshop and prayer room [P17/V0149/LDP] The Clerk had written to ask VoWHDC to impose a condition that the development could never be sold as a separate dwelling.

ES had also contacted VoWHDC's Kerry Street who had replied saying the development was either lawful or not; if it were lawful, no conditions could be imposed. Kerry Street had said in her opinion it was lawful and a lawful development certificate could be issued.

MF believed the Council had been encouraged to believe conditions could be imposed. CC thought this might have been said by VoWHDC's Brett Leahy when he addressed the Council in November 2015. MF said he would check his notes. **Action: MF to see if he could establish if the Council had been advised by VoWHDC that conditions can be imposed.**

10. Correspondence

OALC had written to the Clerk informing the Council that the s137 amount for 2017-18 would be £7.57 per elector, which will give the Council a maximum amount of over £2,200 assuming at least 300 electors.

11. Heavy Goods Vehicles in South Hinksey village.

MR had arranged a site meeting with OxonCC's Lee Turner on 15th February. MF and Angela Kinnings had also attended. MR had submitted a written report.

Lee Turner had recommended a dividing island at the mini-roundabout with "No HGVs" signs on the island and the verge at an approximate cost of £5,000 but had said OxonCC had no budget for this, unless the section 106 fund could be used.

Lee Turner had agreed to enquire about this and to arrange for the sign at the mini-roundabout to be amended to direct Oxford traffic away from the village. He had agreed that the sign on the A34 was misleading.

MR had then arranged a meeting with Nicola Blackwood MP on 3rd March. Christine Madsen had also attended. The MP had agreed to write to the Leaders of OxonCC and VoWHDC suggesting the three councils fund the work jointly, and to the Minister about the misleading sign on the A34.

MR said OxonCC's Lee Turner has now advised her that the cost of the dividing island is likely to be £6,000 and has told her he has ordered the new sign.

The Clerk advised the Council that he believed the Council had a statutory power under the Highways Act 1980 to contribute to the cost of the island and would not therefore need to use its Section 137 power.

The Council **agreed** to contribute, if asked, up to £1,000.

12. Community Governance Review

Nothing to report.

13. Finance

Internal controls. The Council **agreed** to appoint MR to carry out the check on the end of year bank reconciliation and statement of accounts in time for Section 2 of the Annual Return to be presented to the Council's Annual Meeting.

Bank mandate. The Clerk had delivered the mandate to the Council's bank on 8th February and been told all five members of the Council must present themselves at the branch with appropriate proof of their identity and their address before the mandate can take effect. CC said she had been to the branch earlier in the day: **Action: MC, LLF, MF and MR to take appropriate proof of identity and address to the branch.**

Corporate governance questionnaire. The Internal Auditor has sent the usual Corporate Governance Questionnaire for completion by the Chairman. MC and the Clerk have arranged to meet on Wednesday 8th March to go through it.

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Clerk's contract. The Clerk said he had redrafted the contract to address the Internal Auditor's criticisms but not in time to put it on the agenda for this meeting. **Action: Clerk to put the redrafted contract to the next meeting.**

14. Maintenance contract

The Clerk had sent both specifications to BGG, our existing contractors, and Oxford City Council. Only Oxford City Council had submitted a quotation. Members discussed whether it was unambiguously clear that the City Council's quotation covered the verges ^{and the grass triangle} on Hinksey Hill as well as those in the village. The Council **agreed** in view of the competitive price and the urgency of getting work started as soon as possible to accept the only quotation, City Council's, subject to reassurance that it did cover the whole specification, and in principle to retender in 2018. **Action: Clerk to obtain clarification from Oxford City Council.**

15. Burial ground

The Clerk reported he has been contacted by an undertaker about the interment of a non-parishioner in a plot of which the deceased was the owner and where their spouse was already interred. The Clerk had contacted the owner of plot 86 who told him she is making arrangements regarding levelling of the grave through the undertaker. The Clerk reported he has received no response from the owner of plot 87 and the rose bush has not been removed. MR said she had spoken to the owner of the plot.

Quotations. The Clerk had written a short article for Echo to publicise the forthcoming headstone inspections with the assistance of and at the suggestion of Oxford City Council's Trevor Jackson. The Clerk had also produced a notice to be displayed at the burial ground publicising the inspections which he needed to get laminated. **Action: Clerk to put up a notice at the burial ground.**

Rules and Regulations. MF introduced proposed rules and regulations and the Council **approved** them to come into force from 1st April 2017. **Action: Clerk to produce a copy for MC to sign; MF to meet Clerk to ensure relevant forms were ready in time.**

Hedge. The Council's 2016 maintenance contractors have not submitted a quotation for 2017 and have not replanted the hedge of native species they had completely cut down that had been planted in February 2016 with the help of a grant from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment. **Action: Clerk to establish whether the former contractors would forego payment for September and October 2016 in return for being released from responsibility for reinstating the hedge.**

16. Standing Orders

The Clerk had studied the model Standing Orders published by the National Association of Local Councils and had brought before the meeting revised Standing Orders, addressing discrepancies between the Council's existing Standing Orders and the NALC model. As well as pointing out two incorrect cross references in Standing Order 10.1, MF was concerned about duplication between the Standing Orders, particularly Standing Order 28, and the Financial Regulations: either the duplication should be eliminated or it should be made clear which had precedence. MC proposed, and it was **agreed**, that the Clerk should be charged with addressing MF's points and the Chairman would then sign the final version without it having to come back to the next meeting.

17. Financial Regulations

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Again, MF had found several mistakes in the draft tabled by the Clerk and MC proposed, and it was **agreed**, that the Clerk should be charged with addressing MF's points and the Chairman would then sign the final version without it having to come back to the next meeting.

18. Community Woodland

MR reported that even after the work by Oxfordshears and the BBOWT volunteers, there was still other work to be done. She felt it had become apparent how much was involved in maintaining the woodland and offered to take a lead on this. She would bring a plan to a future meeting. LLF said she and her husband would be willing to help.

Action: MR to bring proposals to a future meeting.

19. Charity music festival

A parishioner had contacted MR to inform her that she had applied for and been granted a Temporary Events Notice [TENX/533/V] to hold a charity music festival on 17th June 2017. She has said the licence is for up to 500 people, but that she is really aiming for about 300. Music will be from midday to 11pm.

ES had informed the Clerk that VoWHDC is under no obligation to inform the parish council but would usually do so. MC asked the Clerk to pursue this matter. **Action: Clerk to ask VoWHDC why the Council had not been informed of the licence.**

Members were concerned about parking but MR said it would be in the owner's paddock.

It was **agreed** any issues with the event were not the Council's responsibility but VoWHDC's as the licensing authority.

20. Housing development north of Abingdon

DH and ES had updated the Council in their written report taken as item 8.

21. Campaigns

Footbridge over the railway. BJ had updated the Council in his written report taken as item 7.

Flood barrier. MR reported that groundwork for the Flood Alleviation Scheme will start in 2018; there will be a drop-in session at the Village Hall on 28th March; there will be an article in the forthcoming edition of Echo; site controllers will be visiting the village; and there will be a practice deployment of the temporary barrier.

MC said it was essential that there be a full deployment. He would be visiting every garden shortly so that he could see the whole route of the temporary barrier.

22. Path across churchyard and burial ground

MC felt strongly the Council should apply to VoWHDC for a capital grant as early as possible in 2017-18. MC and CC were inclined to the view that the Council should construct the section of the proposed path across the burial ground in 2017-18 whether or not the Church was ready to proceed with the remainder of the path. **Action: Clerk to contact Father James Wilkinson to explain the Council wishes to apply for the grant in April 2017 and to ask if the Church would be ready to proceed at that point.**


23. Preservation of the Green Belt

CC asked why the paper put to the last meeting had not been approved. After discussion, she was invited to bring a position paper to the next meeting. **Action: CC to draft a position paper on the Green Belt.**

24. Traffic issues

LLF reported that the PCSOs would use a speed indicator device later this month following a survey of her own where she stood in front of the 40mph Vehicle Activated Sign on Hinksey Hill and counted the cars that set off the flashing sign. 80% of the cars set off the sign indicating that they were exceeding 40mph.

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LLF also volunteered to contact OxonCC about the problems regarding the Hinksey Hill Roundabout. **Action: LLF to contact OxonCC.**

25. Maintenance issues

Devil's Backbone. The Clerk apologised that he had not yet contacted action regarding the condition of the surface on the wooden bridge over Hinksey Stream on the Devil's Backbone. **Action carried forward: Clerk to contact OxonCC.**

MF said there was a fallen tree hanging dangerously low over the Devil's Backbone. **Action: MF to report the problem on FixMyStreet.**

Stile in John Piers Lane. MR said Nick Frearson, the farmer, will look at the condition of the stile.

Fly tipping on Hinksey Hill. CC said there was persistent leaving of refuse by the bus stop at the top of Hinksey Hill. CC said she will monitor the problem. MC and MF both advised her to take photographs.

26. Any other business

MC said he now had his parish council email address working, linked to the website. CC said she would like to have a similar email address created for her use. **Action: Clerk to contact David Rawcliffe.**

MC said he would be contacting members of the Council and the Clerk to invite them to his home in April.

27. Feedback from members of the public

None.

Time concluded: 10.13pm

MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Date of the next Parish Council meeting: Monday 3rd April 2017 at 7.30pm
in South Hinksey Village Hall

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