

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

Monday 3rd April 2017

Present: Matthew Frohn (Chair), Liz LeFevre, Maggie Rawcliffe,
Cllr Debby Hallett (VoWHDC), Geoffrey Ferres (Clerk)

Other attendees: Carol Colclough, Pete Knevett

Time commenced: 7.30pm

1. Apologies

Christine Chater, Michael Cochrane, Cllr Bob Johnston (OxonCC), Cllr Emily Smith (VoWHDC).

2. Declarations of interest

None.

3. Public questions, comments or representations

Pete Knevett brought to the Council's attention OxonCC's proposal to end school transport for children from the village to North Hinksey, saying it had realised that there was a safe walking route along the A34. He said he had already written to Nicola Blackwood MP. The deadline for responding to the proposal is 27th April.

MF said he should declare an interest as his children would be affected by the proposal of which he was already aware. He had heard that a safe walking route could not include a highway that is not maintained by a local authority, such as the A34 which is maintained by Highways England.

There was a discussion about how to pursue the matter. DH recommended that the Council contact BJ and MF said he would do so. **Action: MF to contact BJ.**

Carol Colclough attended the meeting to inform the Council that a builder will be carrying out work in July on the wall that runs from the barn to 12 St Lawrence Road.

4. Minutes of March 2017 meeting

The Council **resolved** to agree the minutes of the March 2017 meeting subject to two corrections: under item 14, the words "and the grass triangle on Hinksey Hill" were added after "verges" in the second paragraph; and in item 17, "Again," was deleted at the start of the second paragraph. MF signed the amended minutes.

5. Matters arising – February meeting

Transparency code for smaller authorities. The Clerk contacted the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils for a grant for the purchase of a computer but was advised he had missed the March deadline and the arrangements for 2017-18 were not yet known at that time. **Action: Clerk to apply for a grant for the purchase of a computer and software.**

Community Resilience Presentations. The Clerk has 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.**

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Electrification of the Didcot to Oxford railway. The Clerk has 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 has contacted his predecessor about the "street lanterns" recorded in the Asset Register as belonging to the Council and being at various locations but as being insured by OxonCC. The Clerk has observed 13 street lights in the village attached to various tall posts.

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.**

Standing Orders. MF had assisted the Clerk to produce a clean version of the Standing Orders which MC had signed on 31st March and David Rawcliffe has put on the website.

Financial Regulations. MF had assisted the Clerk to produce a clean version of the Financial Regulations which MC had signed on 31st March and David Rawcliffe has put on the website.

Charity music festival. The Clerk has not yet contacted VoWHDC to ask why the Council had not been informed of the granting of the licence. **Action carried forward: Clerk to ask VoWHDC why the Council had not been informed of the granting of the licence.**

Preservation of the Green Belt. CC had drafted a position paper but in view of her absence had asked for it to be tabled at a later meeting.

Parish council email address. David Rawcliffe has created a parish council email address, linked to the website, for CC. LLF offered to produce notices for the noticeboards giving contact details for the Council. **Action: LLF to produce notices giving contact details for the Council.**

6. Finance – payments and receipts

Payments

Payee	Reason	Amount	Power to act
Maggie Stopard	Expenses	£26.92	s15 LGA 1972
Geoffrey Ferres	Balance of pay & expenses 2015-16 & 2016-17	£2,364.85	s112 LGA 1972

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

Receipts

Payer	Reason	Amount
Midcounties Co-op Ltd - Funerals	Interment fee – Coombes	£600.00

7. County Councillor's report

BJ had kindly sent a brief, written report.

He had updated the Council regarding the Better Oxfordshire proposals for a new county-wide unitary authority which had now been submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. He reported that the three Oxfordshire councils opposed to the proposals had submitted their own proposal for a combined authority with an elected mayor which he was sure would not succeed because it required unanimity.

He had also advised that the Council that there would probably be many new County Councillors after the elections on 4th May. OxonCC would therefore suffer a huge loss of experience and continuity in response to which officers would be arranging a stiff set of induction programmes.

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8. District Councillors' report

DH and ES had kindly circulated a written report which DH introduced.

DH drew particular attention to three matters: the proposal to safeguard land for a bus lane to be added to the A34 between Lodge Hill and Hinksey Hill – LLF welcomed this; the possible relocation of the proposed park and ride car park from Lodge Hill to the Marcham interchange; and measures VoWHDC is introducing to improve recycling of textiles and small electrical items.

9. Planning applications

Lawful development certificates. MF had offered at the last meeting to check his notes to see if a VoWHDC officer had advised the Council that conditions could be attached to the granting of certificates of lawful development. **Action carried forward: MF to see if he could establish if the Council had been advised by VoWHDC that conditions can be imposed.**

10. Correspondence

The Clerk reported that he had received a letter from the Forestry Commission offering a grant for 2017-18 for the community woodland of £264.56, an increase compared with recent years due to the change in the value of the £ against the €. The grant has to be claimed by 15th May 2017 and is likely to be paid in December 2017.

11. Heavy Goods Vehicles in South Hinksey village

Nicola Blackwood MP has written to MR saying she has written to the Leaders of OxonCC and VoWHDC suggesting the three councils jointly fund the proposed dividing island at the roundabout at the entrance to the village.

MR reported that the Village Hall Committee has agreed to offer a contribution to the cost.

MR said she has not heard back from OxonCC about the availability of Section 106 money. **Action: MR to chase OxonCC's Lee Turner.**

The Clerk said he contacted the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils and was advised that the Council does indeed have a statutory power under the Highways Act 1980 to contribute to the cost of the dividing island.

12. Community Governance Review

Nothing to report.

13. Finance

The Clerk reported that he and MR were arranging to meet later this week so MR can check the end of year bank reconciliation and statement of accounts.

Bank mandate. All councillors have taken proof of their identity and their address to the bank. MC had proposed that the Clerk be added to the list of signatories, if only to get around the problem of the bank refusing to speak to him about the account on the grounds he is not a signatory.

Corporate governance questionnaire. MC and the Clerk had met on 8th March to go through the Internal Auditor's Corporate Governance Questionnaire. The Clerk had agreed to compile a photographic record of all the Council's assets. MC signed the completed questionnaire on 31st March.

14. Annual Parish Meeting

The Clerk had drawn up a proposed agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting which the Council **agreed**.

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MF reported that he would miss the meeting but would ensure a written report was presented regarding flooding and the Community Emergency Plan. **Action: MF to arrange for a written report to be sent to the Clerk.**

15. Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

The Clerk had drawn up a proposed agenda for the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council designed to ensure that the Council annually reviewed various matters as the auditor would expect and dealt with ordinary business only if urgent, which the Council **agreed**. MF gave his apologies.

16. Burial ground

The Clerk met Oxford City Council's Trevor Jackson on 29th March to discuss practical arrangements for digging of graves by the City Council. A question was raised as to whether the Council needs to pass on VAT in relation to digging of graves. **Action: Clerk to seek advice regarding VAT in relation to the digging of graves.**

The Clerk had put up a laminated notice at the burial ground publicising the forthcoming headstone inspections. The Clerk reported that plot 86 appeared to have been levelled but he has still not received a response from the owner of plot 87 and the rose bush has not been removed.

The Clerk reported he has been contacted by a non-parishioner about the purchase of a plot for use at some time in the future. After discussion, the Council agreed that requests should only be referred to the Council if a case for an exception to the new rules and regulations had been made out. **Action: Clerk to write to the non-parishioner declining the request to purchase a plot.**

Rules and Regulations. MC had signed the new rules and regulations. **Action: MF to meet Clerk to ensure relevant forms were ready in time.**

Hedge. The Clerk had contacted the Council's 2016 maintenance contractors about settling the matter of the reinstatement of 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 2. The contractors had said it was only by oversight that they had not submitted a quotation for 2017. They had not, however, responded regarding reinstatement of the hedge.

MF recommended that the Clerk ask the former contractors to replace the hedge before the end of April and to make clear if this did not happen the Council will carry out the work in the autumn using the money withheld from the contractor in respect of September and October. **Action: Clerk to contact the Council's former contractors to ask them to reinstate the hedge by the end of April or accept that the Council would reinstate the hedge using the money withheld in respect of September and October.**

17. Community Woodland

MR had circulated a plan earlier in the day but members had not had the opportunity to read it. **Action: Clerk to put the plan on the agenda of a future meeting.**

18. Housing development north of Abingdon

DH said an outline application from CEG (Commercial Estates Group) for 950 homes was waiting to go to committee.

19. Campaigns

Footbridge over the railway. Nothing to report.

Flood barrier. MR reported that Oxford City Council had cleared the ditch in Barleycott Lane.

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20. Path across churchyard and burial ground

Father James Wilkinson had contacted the Clerk to inform him that the Diocesan Advisory Committee had on 13th March agreed the proposed path could go forward to a public consultation. The Committee had also imposed conditions about archaeology and planning permission.

The Clerk had then contacted VoWHDC and been advised the best course of action would be for the Church to apply for a grant for the path across the churchyard in Round 1 and for the Council to pay the whole cost of the section of the path across the burial ground. DH recommended that the Council contact ES. **Action: Clerk to contact ES about the capital grants scheme.**

21. Traffic issues

Draft Traffic Regulation Orders. The Council discussed draft Traffic Regulation Orders published by OxonCC on 30th March on which consultation was open until 28th April.

LLF said the Council found itself in a difficult position as it had sought co-operation with Sunningwell Parish Council on a joint application for a 30mph limit that would have included Hinksey Hill but Sunningwell appeared to have gone ahead on its own instead.

LLF had spoken to the Road Safety Team and been advised that a major consideration would be whether drivers would be confused by the speed limit being reduced from 40mph to 30mph and then increased again.

DH was puzzled how the Council had come to be taken by surprise by Sunningwell's action. She wondered if BJ had been aware of the situation. She offered to contact Sunningwell Parish Council.

The issue for the Council was whether it would be in a worse position as regards Hinksey Hill if Sunningwell obtained a reduction from 40mph to 30mph or if its application were refused.

MR believed if consistency were a crucial issue then the Council should object to the draft TRO for Sunningwell.

LLF offered to draft an objection for the Clerk to submit. MF recommended LLF speak to BJ first.

Actions: LLF to speak to BJ and draft an objection to the draft TRO for Sunningwell; Clerk to submit the objection drafted by LLF.

LLF reported that the PCSOs had not yet conducted a speed check on Hinksey Hill.

LLF had contacted OxonCC about the problems regarding the Hinksey Hill roundabout and been informed that records showed there had been no major accidents so OxonCC had seen no evidence that action needs to be taken.

22. Maintenance issues

The Clerk had obtained clarification that the City Council's quotation indeed covered the verges on Hinksey Hill as well as those in the village. The Clerk said he hoped LLF and MR would be able to take part in site visits with the City Council.

Devil's Backbone. The Clerk apologised that he had not yet taken 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 he had reported the fallen tree hanging dangerously low over the Devil's Backbone and OxonCC had dealt with it.

Stile in John Piers Lane. MR said Nick Frearson, the farmer, had looked at the condition of the stile and his first response was that he did not think it required further repair.

23. Training

The Council **agreed** to meet the £145 cost of the Clerk attending a Society of Local Council Clerks one-day course on Cemetery Legal Compliance in May and the £65 cost of the Chairman attending an Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils half-day course in July on Chairmanship.

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24. Any other business

MR proposed and the Council **agreed** that Sarah Balaam, who had resigned at the October meeting, be thanked for her years of service at the Annual Meeting.


25. Feedback from members of the public

None.

Time concluded: 9.44pm

MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Date of the next Parish Council meeting: Monday 8th May 2017 at 7.30pm
in South Hinksey Village Hall

Signed:  _____

Date: 8/5/17