

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

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

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**Present:** Christine Chater, Michael Cochrane (Chair), Matthew Frohn, Liz Le Fevre, Maggie Rawcliffe  
Cllr Bob Johnston (OxonCC), Geoffrey Ferres (Clerk)

**Other attendees:** Carol Colclough

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**Time commenced: 7.33pm**

**1. Apologies**

Cllr Debby Hallett (VoWHDC) and Cllr Emily Smith (VoWHDC).

**2. Declarations of interest**

MC said VoWHDC was still considering the planning application in respect of his home that was discussed in his absence at the last meeting.

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

Carol Colclough attended the meeting to inform the Council that work would start on the wall in Manor Road around 7<sup>th</sup> July. The job was expected to last six weeks. It might not be possible for pedestrians to use a section of the pavement during the work. The skip would not be placed on the road.

BJ advised her that her builders might need to contact the Highways Authority about the work.

MF asked that the Clerk publicise the work via Shinfo. **Action: Clerk to ask Linda Slater to publicise the work via Shinfo.**

There was discussion about the extent to which the pavement had already been narrowed by advancing earth. BJ said the process of reinstating the width of the path was known as edging out.

There was also discussion about the leaning telegraph pole, which it was agreed would probably be the responsibility of British Telecom. MF said he would have a look at the telegraph pole and call BT, if necessary.

**Action: MF to look at the telegraph pole and call BT, if necessary.**

The Council thanked her for coming to the meeting to discuss the work.

Carol Colclough also asked a question in relation to item 16 about the reinstatement of the hedge between her field and the burial ground and was informed this would now have to wait until the autumn when there would again be suitable conditions for planting a hedge.

**4. Minutes of May 2017 annual meeting**

The Council **resolved** to agree the minutes of the May 2017 annual meeting subject to the following corrections in item 20 on page 5: in the first sentence of the first paragraph replacing the words "catches five drivers over the speed limit each time it" with the word "regularly" and replacing the words "down the hill" with the words "towards Oxford from Boars Hill"; and in the second paragraph amending "Sunningwell's data" to "police data". MC then signed them.

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

Date: 3/7/17

## 5. Matters arising – May 2017 annual meeting

**Transparency code for smaller authorities.** The Clerk reported that he was unfortunately too busy in May to apply for a grant for the purchase of a computer and software via the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils.

**Action: Clerk to apply for a grant for the purchase of a computer and software.**

**Community Resilience Presentations.** The Clerk is confident that the Council's new insurance should cover Good Samaritan activities.

**Electrification of the Didcot to Oxford railway.** In light of the General Election, the Clerk has delayed writing to the relevant Minister. **Action carried forward: Clerk to draft a letter to the relevant Minister when appointed.**

**50mph limit on A34.** In light of the General Election, the Clerk has delayed writing to Nicola Blackwood MP.

**Action carried forward: Clerk to write to the local MP following the General Election.**

**Charity music festival.** The Clerk has contacted VoWHDC to ask why the Council had not been informed of the granting of the licence and is waiting for a reply.

**Parish council email address.** LLF had drafted notices for the noticeboards giving contact details for the Council and passed them round for comment.

**Training.** The Clerk has reserved a place for the Chairman on an Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils course on 19<sup>th</sup> July on Chairmanship.

**Planning.** LLF had contacted the residents of Stone End in relation to the Limekiln House planning application but had received no response.

## 6. Finance – payments and receipts

### Payments

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting MC and MF had signed a cheque for £299.77 to Aon Ltd for insurance for the year 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018 in line with the Council's powers under section 140 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Payee	Reason	Amount	Power to act
OALC	Chairmanship training course 19/7/2017	£78.00	s111 LGA 1972
Auditing Solutions Ltd	Internal audit 2016-17	£288.00	s7 LAAA 2014
Geoffrey Ferres	Adult defibrillator pad	£63.48	s234 PHA 1936

The Council **resolved** to approve the payments. In the light of the Clerk having to use his own credit card to pay for the adult defibrillator pad, the Council discussed whether it should seek to acquire some means of electronic payment. BJ advised that he knew of no other parish council that used a plastic card for payments.

### Receipts

Payer	Reason	Amount
Royds Withy King	Exclusive Right of Burial transfer and additional inscription	£50.00

## 7. County Councillor's report

BJ reported that a new Conservative and Independent Alliance had been formed to run OxonCC. He understood one Independent had been attracted by the offer of a Cabinet seat and another had been tempted by the chair of a committee and the promise of bridge over a level crossing.

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

Date: 3/7/17

BJ said he would continue to serve on a number of important OxonCC committees and he hoped to become Transport Shadow for the Liberal Democrat group. With the election over, he looked forward to the resumption of Environment and Economy briefings.

## 8. District Councillors' report

DH and ES had kindly circulated a written report. In their absence, BJ spoke about VoWHDC. He said that a Planning Inspector had now reported on VoWHDC's Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule. Care homes would now be exempt from the levy. MC asked whether the levy is in effect a tax on development and BJ accepted that was one way of describing it. BJ explained that hoped-for back office savings would be smaller and come later than originally planned.

CC asked about Lodge Hill. BJ said it remained probable that the proposed lorry park would be located elsewhere on the A34. BJ said the proposed Eynsham park and ride would proceed ahead of the proposed Lodge Hill park and ride because it is already funded.

## 9. Planning applications

None.

## 10. Correspondence

None.

## 11. Internal Audit Report

The Council **received** the Internal Auditor's Report for 2016-17 and **noted** the satisfactory overall conclusion. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for the work done to achieve this outcome. The Council **agreed** it would take action on all three recommendations made by the Internal Auditor.

## 12. Annual Governance Statement 2016-17

The Council went through the nine statements in the Annual Governance Statement for 2016-17 and **agreed** in seven cases that the answer was "Yes". The Council **agreed** that the answer to the ninth statement was "N/A" because the Council is not sole managing trustee of any charity.

The Council discussed the fourth statement and **agreed** that the answer was "No" because the Council had not provided opportunity for exercise of electors' rights in relation to the 2015-16 accounts for a period that included all ten of the first working days of July.

## 13. Accounting Statements 2016-17

The Council **approved** the Accounting Statements for 2016-17 put forward by the Clerk as Responsible Finance Officer, taking on board the Internal Auditor's recommendations for corrections. MC signed them.

## 14. Heavy Goods Vehicles in South Hinksey village

At the last meeting it had been decided, due to the requirements of purdah, not to chase OxonCC for a commitment to funding for the dividing island until after the General Election.

## 15. Community Governance Review

Nothing to report.

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

Date: 3/7/17

## 16. Burial ground

The Clerk has been advised by Oxford City Council's Laura Hurlock that the memorial inspections have been carried out and he will receive a report shortly.

The Clerk reported that the rose bush has not been removed from plot 87.

The Clerk has written back to the non-parishioner who asked to be allowed to purchase a plot for their eventual use.

**Purchase of Austrian scythe.** Six months having passed since the last discussion, the Council considered once again the proposal to purchase an Austrian scythe for use in the wildflower meadow. Each member gave their view in turn: MF was in favour; LLF was against; MR was strongly in favour; and CC was strongly against.

The Chairman said real concerns had been expressed about the storage and the proper use of the scythe but, provided these could be addressed, he was prepared to support the purchase.

A vote was taken on the basis that Peter Rawcliffe would be asked to sign a letter giving assurances about safe storage and use of the scythe. The proposal was **approved** by 3 votes to 2, with CC and LLF asking for it to be recorded that they had voted against.

**Digging of graves.** The Clerk had contacted the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils for advice regarding possible recharging of VAT in relation to digging of graves and been advised to put his enquiry in writing so that it could be referred to a new financial adviser engaged by OALC from 1<sup>st</sup> June. **Action carried forward: Clerk to put in writing his request to OALC for advice regarding VAT in relation to the digging of graves.**

**Burial ground forms.** The Clerk had not yet arranged to meet MF to look over new draft forms. **Action: MF and the Clerk to arrange another meeting to ensure relevant forms were ready in time.**

**Hedge.** The Clerk reported that he has not yet heard further from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment 2 about its request for evidence of the hedge's progress.

## 17. Community Woodland

MR had circulated a draft plan and at the meeting tabled a list of nine suggested actions of which the following three were **agreed**. **Actions: Clerk to draft letter thanking Sany Nahhas for mowing the rides; MR to obtain estimates for the cost of cutting a new path in line with the Council's Financial Regulations; MR to consult Nick Frearson regarding the risk of unwanted occupants.**

It was **agreed** to take no action regarding the section of the fence that has fallen over, on the basis the fence serves no useful function other than to mark the boundary.

It was **agreed** to discuss two of the proposed actions at a future meeting: clearing brambles; considering constructing a bridge and footway across the boggy area.

With regard to updating the 2012 risk assessments, MF suggested the Sylva Foundation and CC volunteered to contact them. **Action: CC to contact Sylva Foundation regarding risk assessments.**

With regard to signage, LLF said she would look out the information previously obtained from Woodstock. **Action: LLF to retrieve Woodstock signage information.**

There was a discussion about the proposal to appoint a volunteer warden. MC suggested the role of such a person, if appointed, should be to observe and report. CC felt that if a volunteer were to be sought, it should be advertised via Shinfo. It was **agreed** this matter should be resolved before the next volunteer session.

MC and LLF both suggested the Council consider at its September meeting whether to establish a Woodland Sub-Committee

## 18. Flood barrier

The Council **agreed** to purchase a bag of spare bolts from Geodesign Barriers to ensure the village did not go unprotected in a flood due to loss of the bolts which are supposed to be kept with each section of barrier. It was suggested these might be kept by MF or Peter Rawcliffe.

**Action: Clerk to order the bolts.**

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

Date: 3/7/17

## 19. Housing development north of Abingdon

Nothing to report.

## 20. Campaigns

**Footbridge over the railway.** Peter Rawcliffe had read a letter to the Annual Parish Meeting from Network Rail which gave a firm commitment to ramps for the replacement footbridge. The design would be funded in one five-year Control Period and the implementation in the next.

## 21. Path across churchyard and burial ground

Father James Wilkinson had informed the Clerk that the Church did not submit an application to VoWHDC for a grant in Round 1 and has confirmed the path will not now be constructed during the current financial year. Different views were expressed as to what the Council should do, given that the budget for the year had been drawn up on the basis that the path would be built this summer.

It was eventually **agreed** that Father James Wilkinson should be invited to the next meeting. **Action: Clerk to invite Father James Wilkinson to the next meeting.**

## 22. Preservation of the Green Belt

CC had drafted a position paper which was **approved** unanimously.

## 23. Traffic issues

**Hinksey Hill speed limit.** The PCSOs had conducted a half-hour speed check in each direction on Hinksey Hill on 8th May and reported that 11/175 cars travelling towards Oxford and 8/147 cars travelling towards Boars Hill were exceeding the existing 40mph speed limit. It was noted this was not a hidden test. LLF said she has emailed OxonCC's Chris Hulme because she has had no contact from Community Speedwatch.

## 24. Maintenance issues

**Grass cutting.** LLF had reported that a few areas of grass verge on Hinksey Hill have been missed. The Clerk had therefore visited the Hill and suggested that some of the areas he understood were of concern to LLF were either outside the parish or outside the maintenance specification.

Nevertheless, it appeared to him that there had only been one cut so far and even that cut might not have been complete so he had contacted Oxford City Council's Tina Mould.

In discussion, it became clear that the Clerk had misunderstood LLF and that the lay-by about whose condition LLF was complaining was the one on Foxcombe Road, not the one on Oxford Road that the Clerk had inspected. The Clerk said he was certain in that case that this area of verge was in the parish of Kennington and not therefore the Council's responsibility. He could not see how the Council could lawfully spend money maintaining a section of verge in another parish.

LLF said she was not happy with the Clerk's response because she was sure it had been cut for many years by previous contractors. She said she would report the problem via FixMyStreet – after she had reported a problem with vegetation on FixMyStreet, it had been cut back on 21<sup>st</sup> May.

The Clerk undertook to inspect the verges on Foxcombe Road before the next meeting and MC said he wished to accompany the Clerk, if possible. **Action: Clerk to liaise with MC and inspect the verges in Foxcombe Road before the next meeting.**

The Clerk had not yet contacted Kennington's new clerk regarding a template for a maintenance contract. **Action carried forward: Clerk to contact the Clerk of Kennington Parish Council.**

**Devil's Backbone.** The Clerk had not yet reported the condition of the footbridge over the Seacourt Stream via FixMyStreet. **Action carried forward: Clerk to report fault via FixMyStreet.**

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

Date: 3/7/17

**25. Archives**

In view of the time, it was **agreed** to take this item at a future meeting.

**26. Annual Parish Meeting**

The Council **agreed** to note the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting.

**27. Any other business**

MF reported that parents concerned about OxonCC's proposal to withdraw school transport for children from the village had submitted a response drafted by a ~~barrister in the village~~ *group of concerned parents*.  
MR reported that a parishioner has expressed concern that several Giant Hogweed may be growing alongside the Devil's Backbone.

**28. Feedback from members of the public**

None.

**29. Reserved business: staffing matters**

The Council **resolved** that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

**Time concluded: 10.15pm**

MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Date of the next Parish Council meeting: Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017 at 7.30pm  
in South Hinksey Village Hall

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *(Signature)*

Date: 3/7/17