

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

Monday 4th September 2017

Present: Christine Chater, Michael Cochrane (arrived late - Chair from item 3), Matthew Frohn (Chair up to item 3), Liz Le Fevre, Maggie Rawcliffe
Cllr Bob Johnston (OxonCC), Cllr Emily Smith (VoWHDC), Geoffrey Ferres (Clerk)

Other attendees: Carol Colclough, Mariette Pringle, Graeme Taylor, Father James Wilkinson

Time commenced: 7.30pm

1. Apologies

Cllr Debby Hallett (VoWHDC).

2. Declarations of interest

None.

3. Public questions, comments or representations

Carol Colclough asked about reinstatement of the hedge at the burial ground next to the fence separating the burial ground from her field. The Clerk said the position is as it had been previously stated: the Council will engage contractors to plant a replacement hedge when conditions are suitable. The Council would need to try to obtain three quotations and already had two. BJ advised planting should not take place before late October and this time tree guards be used to protect the hedge from destruction.

Carol Colclough asked the Council's response to the idea of an additional stop for the no 35 bus nearer to the village to make bus travel easier. CC suggested she canvass the idea via Shinfo. Members generally welcomed the suggestion.

Mariette Pringle expressed concern about the lack of wildflowers at the woodland. She felt the grass is mown too often and kept unnecessarily short. She also expressed concern about the proposal to deposit large quantities of soil from the flood excavations on the City Council field next to the woodland. BJ advised the grass be cut no more than twice per year and the cuttings removed. CC invited Mariette Pringle to pursue this with her and MR.

4. Minutes of July 2017 meeting

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

5. Matters arising – July 2017 meeting

Wall in Manor Road. The Clerk had arranged for Linda Slater to publicise via Shinfo the start of work on the wall in Manor Road.

Transparency code for smaller authorities. The Clerk has emailed the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils to request a copy of the application form and guidance notes so he can apply for a grant for the purchase of a computer and software via. **Action carried forward: Clerk to apply for a grant for the purchase of a computer and software.**

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Date: 2 Oct 17

Electrification of the Didcot to Oxford railway. The Clerk asked BJ for advice as to the most appropriate letter to send to the new Minister and BJ said he should soon be clearer about the situation. **Action carried forward from a previous meeting: Clerk to draft a letter to the relevant Minister.**

50mph limit on A34. BJ and ES both assured the Council that new MP Layla Moran was well briefed regarding the A34 but ES added that copies of previous correspondence between Nicola Blackwood MP and the Minister would be helpful. **Action carried forward from the last meeting: Clerk to write to Layla Moran MP enclosing copies of any previous correspondence between the Minister and Nicola Blackwood MP that are held in the Council's records.**

Accounting Statements 2016-17. The Clerk reported that no one had taken up the opportunity for the Exercise of Public Rights.

Flood barrier. The Clerk has ordered 20 spare rods from Geodesign Barriers.

Giant Hogweed. MR said she did not know the outcome of the site visit by a member of OxonCC's Countryside Access Team which was due to have been made on 5th July. BJ offered to have a look since he was confident as a botany graduate that he would be able to recognise Giant Hogweed.

Pre-Planning application advice by the Environment Agency for the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme [P17/V1669/CM] and [P17/V1678/CM]. Action carried forward from the last meeting: Clerk to write to the Environment Agency and invite them to a meeting.

South Hinksey, Sunningwell, Wootton, Radley and Kennington parish councils: matters of mutual interest or concern. The Clerk wrote to the Clerk of Sunningwell Parish Council informing him that the Council welcomed the proposal.

VoWHDC's Parish Partners programme. The Clerk has registered MF for the session on 28th September.

6. Finance – payments and receipts

Payments

Payee	Reason	Amount	Power to act
BGG	Disposal of grass from wildflower meadow 2016	£192.00	s214 LGA 1972
Ian Buckland	Disposal of grass from wildflower meadow 2017	£100.00	s214 LGA 1972

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

Receipts

None.

7. County Councillor's report

BJ brought five matters to the Council's attention:

- "Pausing" of the electrification of the Oxford to Didcot line by the Government until 2040, which he regarded as effectively abandonment and as having possible implications for the replacement of the footbridge over the railway line
- OxonCC's decision to clear the rubbish at Redbridge Hollow and its conditional offer to build a children's play area if the residents co-operate
- Proposed reduction in the speed limit on the road from the by-pass to 40mph

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Date: 2 Oct 17

- His meeting with OxonCC in mid-September
- OxonCC's budget process for 2018-19, in connection with which he asked if he could have access to Shinfo.

8. District Councillors' report

DH and ES had kindly circulated a written report which ES introduced. She drew attention to the undertaking to conduct a review of the impact of the new Lodge Hill slip-roads and to the new consultation about access to the new West Way development.

LLF offered to ask Linda Slater to publicise via Shinfo the value of using FixMyStreet. **Action: LLF to contact Linda Slater.**

9. Planning applications

Wyevale Garden Centre: Non-illuminated totem sign and two banner signs [P17/V2233/A] [Deadline: 7th September 2017]. The Council closely examined the papers sent to the Clerk on 18th August. After discussion, the Council **agreed** to object to the height of the totem sign and to argue it should instead be similar to the two banner signs. **Action: Clerk to write to VoWHDC stating the Council's objection to the totem sign.**

Land adjacent to A34 Southern By Pass and Hinksey Hill Garden Centre: Three-year temporary permission for construction of a gravelled access track and hard standing to store 16 site cabins [P17/V1849/FUL] Members asked what had happened with this application, which the Council opposed and which ES had called in. ES said she had heard nothing recently.

MR said she had heard that work may have already taken place to clear the site in preparation for the storage of the cabins and MC said he would be happy to investigate with MR whether this was the case. **Action: MR and MC to investigate whether work at the site had already taken place.**

Pin Farm, Barleycott Lane: Replacement of existing roof covering to single-storey barn to allow installation of over-rafter insulation [P17/V1830/HH]. The Clerk had informed VoWHDC that the Council had no objections to this application which VoWHDC subsequently approved.

10. Correspondence

The Clerk had received a letter from Aon, the Council's new insurers, saying the company "has decided to cease its involvement in the Local Councils market" and has "made arrangements for you to be provided with a renewal invitation from BHIB Ltd".

The Clerk had received a letter from VoWHDC inviting the Council to send up to two representatives to a Local Plan Briefing Session on 19th September. No member of the Council was available and willing to attend.

11. Path across churchyard and burial ground

Father James Wilkinson addressed the Council. He informed the Council that the proposed path across the church yard has received outline approval from the Diocesan Advisory Committee but planning permission is required and the church has to engage an archaeologist.

Father James said he had submitted the planning application to VoWHDC this morning.

He said the church has received an offer of £2,000 from the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust. Father Ben Drury has attended a training event about applying for VoWHDC funding.

ES said not one application had been funded in our area this year in Round One so money is in principle available.

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Date: 2 Oct 17

12. Financial Report

The Council **approved** the bank reconciliation and management accounts up to the end of July 2017 presented by the Clerk in his capacity as Responsible Financial Officer.

The Council **unanimously agreed** to amend the 2017-18 budget to increase the figure for staff costs to £7,010.

13. Community Governance Review

The Clerk wrote again to the Clerks of Kennington and Sunningwell Parish Councils before the meeting of VoWHDC's Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee on 14th August to ask if their council was happy with the proposal to include in this parish the triangle of land at the top of Hinksey Hill that includes the Westwood Hotel. No reply was received from either council.

CC had attended the meeting on 14th August and spoken on the Council's behalf. She gave a report of that meeting at which to her surprise (and DH's) a letter was presented which Sunningwell Parish Council had sent in January asking to amend its own proposal regarding its own boundaries so, amongst other new proposals, as to take in 14 houses at the top of Hinksey Hill that are currently within South Hinksey.

CC said she had asked VoWHDC's Steven Corrigan why this letter had not been mentioned in the original agenda and he said it had lain unnoticed in his Inbox until a few days before the meeting.

The Council **agreed** to make a maladministration complaint to VoWHDC's Acting Chief Executive Mark Stone and demand a six-month delay before Sunningwell's new proposals are considered, allowing time for alternative proposals to be developed. **Action: Clerk to draft a maladministration complaint to be sent as soon as possible to Mark Stone demanding a six-month delay.**

ES said she will meet Steven Corrigan.

14. Heavy Goods Vehicles in South Hinksey village

Christine Madsen had written updating the Council regarding the latest incidents.

OxonCC's Lee Turner has informed MR that no money is available for the proposed "dividing island" at the entrance to the village.

MR asked about OxonCC locality funds and ES offered to send details of the application process to the Clerk.

15. Hinksey Hill speed limit

LLF said that she had a meeting with Police Community Support Officer Zack Earl at her home on Thursday 6th July, following her email to OxonCC's Chris Hulme about Community Speedwatch. She was advised it might be possible for the cost of the equipment required to be shared between several parish councils.

LLF had contacted OxonCC's Anthony Kirkwood who advised that "the fee for the legal/administrative work is £2,600, and while the signing costs would be relatively modest - perhaps around £2,000 - the costs of amending the existing carriageway roundels etc. and any other supporting measures could be quite significant, with the overall project costing (if approved) around £10,000 as a very indicative figure."

OxonCC has carried out a speed survey on Hinksey Hill and the adjoining section of Foxcombe Road, the results of which had been made available to the Council.

It was **agreed** no decision on spending would be taken tonight but the Council should discuss all the competing claims on its funds at the next meeting. **Action: LLF to ask OxonCC to confirm £10,000 would cover all the costs of a reduction in the speed limit on Hinksey Hill to 30mph.**

16. Burial ground

Headstone inspection. The Clerk finally received a report from Oxford City Council on the memorial inspections it says it carried out in May. In the report, 18 headstones had been identified as unsafe and requiring attention.

The Clerk has established that the City Council's advice about contacting the owners of the Exclusive Right of Burial is almost certainly correct: of the eight addresses in the parish recorded for owners of the Exclusive Right of Burial where the headstone is unsafe, there is not one where anyone of the same name lives there now.

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Date: 2 Oct 17

On the other hand, the Clerk has noticed that there are fresh flowers on nine of the 18 graves concerned indicating there may still be people interested in the condition of the grave.

It was **agreed** before any action is taken, such as laying flat the seven headstones recommended in the report, the Clerk should allow 90 days for people to contact him. It was suggested attempts to contact people be made via Shinfo, by means of notices at the burial ground and by seeking the help of the church warden, Pearl Livett.

The Clerk reported that the rose bush has still not been removed from plot 87 and that he had been contacted about the possible interment of a recently deceased parishioner.

Wildflower meadow. Volunteers had scythed most of the wildflower meadow on 10th August. The Clerk had asked the Council's maintenance contractor to quote for the removal of the grass from the wildflower meadow after the scything but their quote of £500 was more than three times what the Council had paid its previous contractor for the same work last year. MR had found someone who was prepared to collect the grass for £100 to be taken away and burnt.

A small area remains to be scythed or cut.

Purchase of Austrian scythe. The Clerk had amended the draft letter for Peter Rawcliffe to sign giving assurances about safe storage and use of the scythe.

Actions: Clerk to send the amended letter to Peter Rawcliffe.

Digging of graves. The Clerk has put in writing to the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils a request for advice from their new VAT expert regarding possible recharging of VAT in relation to digging of graves.

Burial ground forms. MF had met with the Clerk on 29th August to discuss five new forms which need to be drafted and has already produced three of them.

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

The Clerk said he understands Oxfordshears has cut the new path.

The Clerk has written to thank Sany Nahhas for mowing the rides and noticed that from 2012 to 2014 his predecessor had done this annually.

The Council **agreed** that before appointing a sub-committee, terms of reference for it should first be drafted and approved. It was **agreed** draft terms of reference should be considered at the Council's November meeting.

18. Allowances

No member of the Council wished to receive an allowance, while recognising future members of the Council may feel differently. It was **agreed** to return to the issue before the next elections, due in May 2019.

19. Housing development north of Abingdon

ES reported VoWHDC granted permission on 26th July for 950 new homes subject to restrictions that no more than 150 new homes may be built before funding is secured for the new A34 slip roads at Lodge Hill and no more than 400 new homes may be built before the new slip roads have actually been constructed.

20. Campaigns

Footbridge over the railway. MR reported there were indications of further progress. There had recently been a meeting involving the Leader of Oxford City Council and the two local MPs.

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Date: 2 Oct 17

21. Traffic issues

None.

22. Maintenance issues

Grass cutting. The Clerk has contacted Kennington's new clerk regarding a template for a maintenance contract. **Actions carried forward from last meeting: Clerk to discuss maintenance of these verges with his Kennington counterpart; Clerk to establish how the Council could obtain an up-to-date map of its boundaries.**

Devil's Backbone. The Clerk reported the condition of the footbridge over the Hinksey Stream via FixMyStreet and is unaware if the problem has been fixed.

23. Archives

MR, CC and the Clerk had met on 18th August to review the records held by MR. In the light of their discussion, CC had drafted a Records Management and Retention Policy which the Council **welcomed and approved in principle.**

MR passed to the Clerk the two files of Council Minutes in her possession.

Action: CC to produce a final draft of the policy to be put to the next Council Meeting for adoption.

24. Staff training

When the Clerk came to book a place on the Society of Local Council Clerks' Regional Roadshow in Winchester on Wednesday 1st November, he discovered it had been moved to the outskirts of Southampton and felt it would be better for him to attend the seminar in Bristol three weeks later. While the rail fare would probably be cheaper, a taxi might be needed to the venue from the station which might well mean the travel expenses would be greater than the £35.30 reported at the last meeting.

The Council **agreed** the Clerk could attend the Bristol event, even if his travel expenses may be greater.

25. Any other business

The Clerk asked if any member of the Council has contacted the North Hinksey Primary School parent who had sent a message via Shinfo saying OxonCC has refused transport to his child because the minibus is full. It was suggested the parent be put in contact with Polly Blay.


26. Feedback from members of the public

Mariette Pringle said she remained concerned about the threat of huge quantities of soil being deposited on the field near her house. It was explained that, even if this option were pursued, no planning application was likely until spring 2019. It was suggested she get in contact with Peter Rawcliffe of the Oxford Floor Alliance.

Time concluded: 10.34pm

MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Date of the next Parish Council meeting: Monday 2nd October 2017 at 7.30pm
in South Hinksey Village Hall

Signed:  _____

Date: 2 Oct 17