

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

Monday 2nd October 2017

Present: Michael Cochrane (Chairman), Matthew Frohn, Liz Le Fevre, Maggie Rawcliffe
Geoffrey Ferres (Clerk)

Other attendees: None.

Time commenced: 7.30pm

1. Apologies

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

2. Declarations of interest

MC said all members had an interest in relation to the Sunningwell proposal under item 13 but LLF was the only councillor affected as a resident of one of the 14 houses most affected.

3. Public questions, comments or representations

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 September 2017 meeting

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

5. Matters arising – September 2017 meeting

Transparency code for smaller authorities. The Clerk has not yet completed and returned the application form he received from the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils for a grant for the purchase of a computer and software. **Action carried forward from a previous meeting: Clerk to apply for a grant for the purchase of a computer and software.**

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 voter had sent questions to the External Auditor.

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Flood barrier. The Council has not yet received spare rods for the Geodesign EUR 101 Steel Barriers.

Giant Hogweed. BJ visited and was confident the plants were not Giant Hogweed.

Pre-Planning application advice by the Environment Agency for the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme [P17/V1669/CM] and [P17/V1678/CM]. Peter Rawcliffe has been in touch with Mariette Pringle about her concerns regarding possible disposal of soil on the field near her home. MR says she understands that the Environment Agency project team has visited every resident on Chilswell Path. MC asked MR to convey the Council's thanks to Peter Rawcliffe for his help with this matter. MR MC

North Hinksey Parish Council has invited members of the Council to attend an Environment Agency presentation at its next meeting on Thursday 19th October. MR said she would like to attend. **Action: Clerk to thank North Hinksey Parish Council for its invitation and inform them MR would like to attend.**

VoWHDC's Parish Partners programme. MF was unable to attend the session on 28th September and no one had been able to take his place.

FixMyStreet. LLF had asked Linda Slater to publicise via Shinfo the value of using FixMyStreet and she had kindly done so.

Staff training. The Clerk has booked a place on the Society of Local Council Clerks' Regional Roadshow in Bristol on 22nd November.

6. Finance – payments and receipts

Payments

Payee	Reason	Amount	Power to act
BDO	2016-17 external audit	£120.00	s7 LAAA 2014
Geoffrey Ferres	Clerk pay and expenses	£653.70	s112 LGA 1972
HMRC	PAYE Income Tax deducted	£351.39	s112 LGA 1972
Oxfordshears Ltd	Strimming of new woodland path	£100.00	s10 OSA 1906
Ian Buckland	Disposal of grass from wildflower meadow 2017	£100.00	s214 LGA 1972

The Clerk asked the Council to approve the payment to BDO notwithstanding it was his view that the external audit had not yet been completed satisfactorily as BDO had sent a report which claimed to find an error in the Accounting Statements: "The figures inserted in box 7 and box 8 do not agree by £1. The accounts were prepared on a receipts and payments basis and therefore box 7 and 8 should agree."

But the Clerk said it was plain for anyone to see that the figures in boxes 7 and 8 are exactly the same. There is no £1 difference.

The Clerk reported that one of these payments related to work in the wildflower meadow which he had not asked to be done and at a price twice that originally quoted. He said that when he had asked the contractor to inform him who had instructed him to undertake the work and who had agreed the price, the contractor had replied: Peter Rawcliffe. MR said this was not the case; she had instructed the contractor to undertake the work. The Clerk advised that as the contractor had acted in good faith, the Council should pay the invoice.

MC said there was a clear need for written terms of delegation to be agreed whenever the Council delegated responsibility to an individual parishioner, such as for the wildflower meadow or, perhaps in the future, for the woodland.

The Council **resolved unanimously** to approve all five payments.

The Clerk reported he has received the annual renewal notice from the Information Commissioner's Office for the Council's registration under the Data Protection Act. As the Council is obliged to register and has no means of

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contesting the amount of the fee, this was exactly the situation for which the Council had amended its Financial regulations to allow direct debits and he asked the Council to approve the completion of a direct debit instruction. The Council **resolved unanimously** to approve the signing of a direct debit instruction.

Receipts

Payer	Reason	Amount
VoWHDC	Precept – 2 nd instalment	£4,250.00
Tony James Memorials	Burial ground – Gustafson memorial	£125.00
SSE Services plc	Wayleaves	£21.01

7. County Councillor's report

BJ had kindly circulated a written report.

8. District Councillors' report

DH and ES had kindly circulated a written report.

9. Planning applications

St Laurence Church Yard and Parish Council Burial Ground: upgrade existing footpath, create footpath to boundary with cemetery and create footpath to road [P17/V2459/FUL] [Deadline: 10th October 2017]. The Council instructed the Clerk to write to VoWHDC in support of the application. **Action: Clerk to write to VoWHDC.**

Wyevale Garden Centre: Non-illuminated totem sign and two banner signs [P17/V2233/A]. The Clerk wrote to VoWHDC stating the Council's objection to the totem sign but VoWHDC approved it.

Land adjacent to A34 Southern Bypass 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] VoWHDC refused this application.

10. Correspondence

The Clerk reported that VoWHDC has informed the Council that its Autumn Town and Parish Forum will take place from 6pm to 9pm on Wednesday 8th November at The Beacon in Wantage. MR said she is not sure if she is free to go or not, but will confirm as soon as she knows.


The Clerk reported that OxonCC has invited the Council to send representatives to one of a series of Resilience Workshops for Communities. The one particularly aimed at VoWHDC's area is from 6pm to 8pm on Monday 20th November at Milton Park. MF said he was interested in attending that workshop.

11. Financial Report

The Council **approved** the income and expenditure report presented by the Clerk in his capacity as Responsible Financial Officer.

The Council **unanimously agreed** to amend the 2017-18 budget as recommended by the Clerk in his capacity as Responsible Financial Officer to:

- Increase the figure for training from £20 to £400
- Increase the figure for the defibrillator from £100 to £160
- Reduce the figure for Miscellaneous Grants from £2,000 to £1,000.

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12. Prioritisation of projects

The Council **noted** that the path across the churchyard and the burial ground will not be constructed in 2017-18. If Father James Wilkinson's application for a grant from VoWHDC were successful, the path could be built either in 2018-19 or 2019-20.

Accordingly, the Council's first priority would be either the dividing island at the entrance to the village or the reduction in the Hinksey Hill speed limit from 40mph to 30mph. The Council **unanimously agreed** that the dividing island should be its first priority.

The Clerk advised the Council that at the beginning of the financial year its unrestricted reserves stood at £17,337.

The Council went on to **instruct** the Clerk to apply to OxonCC's Communities Fund for half the cost, the balance to be paid by the Council. **Action: Clerk to apply to OxonCC's Communities Fund.**

The Council **agreed** that the reduction in the Hinksey Hill speed limit from 40mph to 30mph should be its second priority.

13. Community Governance Review

The Chairman had sent a maladministration complaint to VoWHDC's Acting Chief Executive Mark Stone and had demanded a six-month delay before Sunningwell's new proposals are considered, allowing time for alternative proposals to be developed.

ES had met VoWHDC's Steven Corrigan and had attended a meeting of Sunningwell Parish Council.

Peter Rawcliffe had written to councillors.

After lengthy discussion, the Council **agreed** that it would inform residents of the two consultations: the one on warding this parish and increasing the number of councillors from five to six; the other on Sunningwell's proposal to take 14 houses from this parish.

The Council **further agreed** it would encourage residents to send their views on Sunningwell's proposal either to the Council or to VoWHDC and ask residents for their views as to how the Council should respond to Sunningwell's proposal, based on what seemed to be the three main options:

- Let Sunningwell have the 14 houses
- Defend our parish's existing boundaries
- Put forward an alternative.

It was **agreed** the Council should emphasize to residents the process for considering the Sunningwell proposal was not of its choosing, nor would the final decision lie with the Council.

It was **agreed** the Council would send responses to both consultations:

- Supporting the proposal to divide the parish into two wards separated by the A34
- Repeating its criticisms of the process being used to consider Sunningwell's proposal and not expressing a view on its faults or merits.

The date of the VoWHDC Committee meeting that would take the final decision on Sunningwell's proposals has not yet been set. It was agreed the Council would bring forward its next meeting to Monday 30th October if that were necessary to prepare for the Committee meeting.

Actions: Clerk to ask Linda Slater to publicise the two consultations via Shinfo; Clerk to respond to both consultations.

Due to time, subsequent items were taken very quickly.

14. Heavy Goods Vehicles in South Hinksey village

ES has sent MR and the Clerk a link to information about OxonCC's Communities Fund.

15. Hinksey Hill speed limit

LLF had asked OxonCC's Anthony Kirkwood to confirm £10,000 would cover all the costs of a reduction in the speed limit on Hinksey Hill to 30mph who had replied "I suspect the costs could be quite a bit higher due to the need for traffic calming measures in addition to amending the speed limit signs (including the carriageway

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roundels)." He had referred LLF to OxonCC's Lee Turner, who has now agreed to meet her next Monday 9th October.

The Clerk has received legal advice from the Society of Local Council Clerks after asking for assurance that the Council had the legal power to fund the cost of a Traffic Regulation Order.

16. Burial ground

Headstone inspection. With MR's kind assistance, the Clerk had contacted the church warden, Pearl Livett, and agreed to meet her on 16th September. After examining together all the headstones deemed unsafe, there was only one where the headstone appeared safe and the Clerk has asked the City Council to re-check it. Pearl Livett had many helpful suggestions for contacting relatives of the people buried in the graves concerned. On her advice, the Clerk has put up a notice not only at the gate to the burial ground but by the tap where she believed it was more likely to be seen. To date, no one has contacted the Clerk about any of the headstones.

The Clerk reported that the rose bush has still not been removed from plot 87 and that Pearl Livett had drawn his attention to the fact that there is also a rose bush on another plot.

Wildflower meadow. The rest of the area has been scythed and the grass taken away to be burnt. The Clerk has asked the Council's contractors to mow the area when they next come to mow around the graves.

Purchase of Austrian scythe. The Clerk has sent the amended letter to Peter Rawcliffe.

17. Community Woodland

The Clerk was asked to meet Emma Turner from the Rural Payments Agency for an inspection of the woodland on 12th September at less than 24 hours' notice. No report of the inspection has yet been received nor has the Council's annual payment been received but there was no indication of any major concerns. It was, however, suggested that the Council might be required to undertake some replanting in a year's time.

The Council had been asked to agree requests for access across the woodland: firstly, in connection with rescuing a digger that had ended up in a ditch on Chilswell Path; secondly, in connection with the archaeological dig in the field beyond the woodland.

18. Housing development north of Abingdon

Nothing to report.

19. Campaigns

Footbridge over the railway. Following the last meeting it was announced in the Oxford Mail that a new footbridge with ramps would definitely be built.

20. Traffic issues

None.

21. Maintenance issues

None.

22. Council records

In CC's absence, it was agreed to take this item at the next meeting.

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23. Any other business

The Clerk asked if any member of the Council had put 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 in contact with Polly Blay. MF said he would follow up the matter. **Action: MF to ensure the parent has been put in contact with Polly Blay.**

It was noted that various items had been dumped on the Village side of the bridge over the A34. MR said she would telephone the following day to get the items removed. **Action: MR to arrange to get the items removed.**


24. Feedback from members of the public

None.

Time concluded: 10.07pm

MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Date of the next Parish Council meeting: Monday 6th November 2017 at 7.30pm
in South Hinksey Village Hall

Signed: _____ 

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