

**Minutes of the meeting of South Hinksey Parish Council  
held at South Hinksey Village Hall on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

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**Present:** Christine Chater, Michael Cochrane (Chairman), Patricia Jones (Vice-Chair), Catherine Powell  
Cllr Bob Johnston (OxonCC), Geoffrey Ferres (Clerk).

**Other attendees:** None.

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**Time commenced: 7.30pm**

**19/145. Apologies**

Linda Goodhead, Christine Madsen, Cllr Debby Hallett (VoWHDC), Cllr Emily Smith (VoWHDC).

**19/146. Declarations of interest**

All members declared an interest in relation to the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme and the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway.

**19/147. Public questions, comments or representations**

None.

**19/148. Minutes of the last ordinary meeting**

The Council **resolved** to agree the minutes of the October 2019 meeting. The Chairman then signed each page.

**19/149. Finance – payments and receipts**

**Payments**

Payee	Reason	Amount	Power to act
Oxford Direct Services	Mowing for village fête	£290.40	s137 LGA 1972
VoWHDC	Uncontested election fees	£200.00	s36 RPA 1983
Ian Buckland	Removing grass cuttings	£100.00	s214 LGA 1972

The Council **resolved unanimously** to approve all three payments. The Chairman and CC signed the payments and initialled the supporting paperwork.


**Receipts**

None.

**19/150. County Councillor's report**

BJ reported on plans by OxonCC and Oxford City Council to try to encourage more people to use bus services, which may include a workplace parking levy. He expressed concern one result may be to slow down traffic on the Oxford Ring Road.

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**19/151. District Councillors' report**

DH and ES had kindly circulated a report in which they mentioned they will be in South Hinksey for a surgery at the Garden Centre Café on 18<sup>th</sup> November from 10am to 12 noon. **Action: Clerk to ask Linda Slater to circulate details via Shinfo**

In the unavoidable absence of DH and ES, BJ was asked if he was familiar with OxonCC's consultation on the Botley Road and West Way Proposed Traffic and Safety Improvements, for which the deadline is Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2019, shortly before the next meeting of the Council.

BJ said that as this was outside his division, he was unfortunately not familiar with the details. **Action: Clerk to circulate information about this consultation**

**19/152. Planning applications**

- a) **11 Manor Road: construction of attached two-bay carport and replacement of first-floor window to south elevation with smaller unit [P19/V2574/HH] [Consultation deadline: Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2019].**

The Council **agreed** to instruct the Clerk to inform VoWHDC it had no objection to this application. **Action: Clerk**

- b) **Peppercorn Cottage, 13 Manor Road: conversion of attached store/workshop to tv/games/music room; addition of porch [P19/V2633/HH] [Consultation deadline: Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2019].**

The Council **agreed** to instruct the Clerk to inform VoWHDC it had no objection to this application. **Action: Clerk**

- c) **Former pub car park**

The Council **agreed** a request for a meeting from James Willey of Smart Planning in connection with a proposal to make a second application to construct two homes on the site on behalf of Goldace Developments. CC remembered the developer attending a Council meeting in 2013.

**Action: Clerk to reply, requesting that Smart Planning provides details of the development proposed.**

- d) **Update**

- **19/104a) Bagley Croft Lodge, Hinksey Hill [P19/V2027/HH] – The Clerk reported that VoWHDC had approved this application.**

**19/153. Correspondence**

- a) **Christmas trees**

VoWHDC's Alexandra Pyle has written to the Clerk asking: "Would your parish be interested in providing an area for residents without a brown bin, to leave their trees and we will pick them up for composting? This could be a car park of a church, village hall or playing fields.

If you are interested please let me know by Friday 8 November with a location and I will send collection dates and posters to place around the parish."

The Council **agreed** that it would try to find a suitable place for a collection point.

**Action: Clerk to ring Nick Frearson to enquire whether the Village Hall car park might be used for this purpose**

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**19/154. Finance report**

The Council **approved** the proposals from the Clerk for preparing the 2020-21 budget. The Chairman and the Vice-Chair **agreed** to meet with the Clerk on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November at 6.30pm. **Action: Chairman, Vice-Chair and Clerk**

**19/155. Dates of meetings for 2020**

The Council **approved** the proposals from the Clerk for the dates of Council meetings in 2020. The Vice-Chair proposed that Council meetings should start in future at 7pm, rather than 7.30pm. The Council **agreed** the change. **Action: Clerk**

**19/156. Council priorities**

The Council briefly considered the Action List and the latest analysis of the time monitoring started by the Clerk on 1<sup>st</sup> July.

Since the last meeting, CM had sent a recommended order of preference for the three companies (or parts of companies) she had contacted that specialise in creating websites for parish or other councils. She reported that all three of the companies use WordPress templates.

The Clerk had then asked CM whether the current parish website could be made compliant and she had explained that it could.

The Clerk had also carried out a basic accessibility check on the current parish website, using a guide produced by the Government, and found that one of the major barriers to accessibility now and in the future is that he does not style headings properly because he has never been trained how to do this in Microsoft Word.

**Action: Clerk to arrange relevant Microsoft Word training**

The Clerk proposed that ordering a noticeboard for the burial ground before the next meeting should be treated as a high priority item. The Council **agreed** the proposal.

**19/157. Recording of Council meetings**

The Clerk had circulated Oxford City Council's protocol and notice, as requested by the Vice-Chair. The Council **voted not** to adopt the protocol, and instead **agreed** that the Chair will read out a statement at the start of each meeting and review the situation in one year's time.

**19/158. Hinksey Hill speed limit**

After the last meeting, BJ had kindly contacted OxonCC's Lorna Baxter, Owen Jenkins and Lee Turner. His intervention had led rapidly to a message from Bill Evershed in OxonCC's Corporate Finance team explaining what had been happening:

"Following the departure of Katy Jurczynszyn, I have been asked to pursue those responsible for delivering this work. I emailed Chris Marks and Mark Francis, in our Communities team, yesterday, and today was told that Bouygues – out term contractor, who had to be offered first refusal on the works – have now said they cannot carry out the required overhead connections.

Clearly the delay in getting a clear answer on this has added to the overall time taken. Chris has now approached SSE to obtain permission for an overhead connection in the two locations required. This is now proceeding through SSE's systems, and Chris is expecting a response/quotation soon. He sent his apologies to

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the Parish for the long delay. Mark has also confirmed that he is ready to begin work once this permission is granted.

I am working with our Legal team so they can draw up a repayment agreement between OxonCC and the Parish, to collect the Parish's payment for the work, over what I'm told should be a five-year period."

CC said she spoke earlier today to OxonCC's Bill Evershed seeking an update.

BJ said he would discuss the scheme shortly with an OxonCC Deputy Director.

#### **19/159. Flood Alleviation Scheme**

The Vice-Chair reported that the Sponsorship Group has discussed whether to give the Council a place on the group and had decided against.

The Chairman and the Vice-Chair met Peter Rawcliffe and Adrian Porter on 18<sup>th</sup> October. The Oxford Flood Alliance's representative on the Sponsorship Group is not from South Hinksey but Simon Collings from Osney Island. Peter Rawcliffe had reported to the Vice-Chair that Simon Collings had been briefed on the Council's concerns and had raised them at the most recent meeting.

The Vice-Chair expressed frustration that Layla Moran MP did not appear to have acted yet on any of the commitments she made in July to:

- Ask for a place for the Council on the Sponsorship Group for the scheme
- Ask for clarity on the effects of replacing the Kennington bridge on the timing and duration of the scheme
- See all the correspondence between Network Rail and the Environment Agency (EA) and to determine first-hand the state of negotiations on the movement of spoil by rail
- Ask why the EA is not moving forward with the purchase of the "third field"
- See the modelling done on the full movement of traffic onto the A34.

BJ kindly offered to make enquiries with her office. **Action: Clerk to circulate details to BJ of Layla's commitments.**

The EA has agreed to meet the Chairman and the Vice-Chair on 19<sup>th</sup> December.

The Vice-Chair suggested that the Council submit three Freedom of Information requests: one to OxonCC; one to Highways England; one to the Environment Agency. The Clerk advised that Freedom of Information requests are meant to be answered in 20 working days. The Council **agreed** the proposal.

#### **19/160. Litter pick**

The Council agreed to discuss this matter again at its March meeting. **Action: Clerk**

#### **19/161. Woodland**

CC gave a report. The Clerk had arranged for a message to be circulated via Shinfo advertising the working party on 12<sup>th</sup> October. A quarterly site meeting took place on 17<sup>th</sup> October and the notes of the meeting had been tabled for information.

The Council **agreed** to discuss at its next meeting whether to renew the arrangement with Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust for another year.

The Clerk had contacted the Forestry Commission's Sam Gunn for reassurance about the risk of the Commission demanding repayment of all the grant it had paid to the Council due to the loss of trees likely to be caused by ash dieback and Sam Gunn had replied very quickly:

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"I appreciate the Council's concern about this... In terms of the risk of recovery of the entire grant paid to date, I hope you will accept my assurances that the Forestry Commission will not do that. We have similar cases dotted around the entire country and we are certainly not asking any of them for the entire grant to be repaid. Our main concern is the continuation of a viable woodland, provided that the landowner takes reasonable steps to deal with Ash Dieback (i.e. replace any dead Ash with new trees of a different species) then we have no reason or justification to ask for a reclaim.

Like I said, you're not alone in this predicament and we are doing everything we can to help landowners such as yourselves to deal with this constructively. I think that Andy [Gunn of BBOWT] is doing the right thing in planning to remove the Ash and replace them with different species. It is certainly more proactive than leaving them there to die.

I hope this has set your mind at ease but if you wish for assurances from someone more senior than I, please let me know and I can run this past my Field Manager."

#### **19/162. Oxford to Cambridge Expressway**

The Clerk reported that North Hinksey and Cumnor Parish Councils are jointly putting on a public information event about the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway at 7.30pm on Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> November in Seacourt Hall, Botley. The Vice-Chair said she would ask Linda Slater to circulate information about the meeting via Shinfo.

**Action: Vice-Chair**

#### **19/163. Burial ground**

##### **a) Waste**

The Clerk reported that Biffa had yet to remove VoWHDC's bins.

##### **b) Additional burial plots**

The Clerk reported that he has received a quotation from TGMS and has arranged a site meeting with Justin Smith, Managing Director of Cemetery Development Services, another of the three companies that had been suggested to him by Julie Dunk, Chief Executive of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management.

The Clerk said he has still not received a response from the third company but, unlike the other two, it is based a long way from Oxfordshire – in Flintshire.

##### **c) Hedge of native species**

Peter Rawcliffe had contacted the Clerk to suggest it would be the right time now to augment the hedge: "It's sadly lost all its beech, as you know – but now all the hazel too has disappeared, which is a surprise as it seemed to be doing OK. I don't really understand it but all that's left is a single row of hawthorn and there are gaps in that. I'll get bare-rooted whips and get them in, I have plenty of budget for this and I'll increase the variety with other suitable native hedging plants."

#### **19/164. Grass cutting**

Nothing to report regarding the new agreement with OxonCC.

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**19/165. Maintenance issues**

**a) Former pub car park**

The Council's contractors had finally gained access to the former General Elliott car park on 9<sup>th</sup> October thanks to Linda Bloch who reported that it was cut by their tractor, which left a one-metre perimeter still needing cutting down. She reported that there is also a mattress and other debris on this piece of land.

**b) Cycling sign**

The Clerk has not yet received responses from the other parties to the licence permitting the sign to say whether they would insist on the removal and replacement of the new sign with one that has white lettering on a blue background.

**19/166. Traffic issues**

Highways England's Gemma Luckhurst had written to the Clerk and several members of the Council following the event on 30<sup>th</sup> September to say that Highways England had taken residents' concerns onboard and held discussions with her senior management, Thames Valley Traffic Police and Traffic Management experts. Highways England claimed that safety must always be its focus and the existing arrangements were the safest option to manage the heavy volume of fast flowing traffic anticipated during the works. It therefore refused to provide access for South Hinksey residents only.

Gemma Luckhurst had also given dates for the five overnight A34 closures (to replace the bridge joints) that will follow on from the weekend closures: Monday 11 November – Friday 15 November (from 9pm to 6am).

**19/167. Feedback from members of the public**

None.

**Time concluded: 9.28pm**

MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Date of the next Parish Council meeting: Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019 at 7.30pm at  
South Hinksey Village Hall

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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