

Minutes of the meeting of South Hinksey Parish Council held remotely via Zoom on Monday 1st March 2021

Present: Christine Chater, Michael Cochrane (Chairman), Linda Goodhead, Patricia Jones (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Bob Johnston (OxonCC), Cllr Emily Smith (VoWHDC),
Geoffrey Ferres (Clerk).

Other attendees: Richard Harding, Jo Emberson Wines and Penny Burt (Environment Agency – EA); Sean Rooney and Tim Shickle (OxonCC); and 28 parishioners.

Time commenced: 7.00pm

The Chairman opened the meeting by explaining the procedure he would be following and informing everyone that the meeting would be recorded to assist with minuting it, but the recording would be deleted once the minutes had been approved.

19/409. Apologies

Cllr Debby Hallett (VoWHDC).

19/410. Declarations of interest

All members declared an interest in relation to the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway and the A34 Improvement Project.

Procedural motion

The Chairman proposed that the following agenda items be taken in the order below:

- 19/411 Public questions, comments or representations not related to the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme
- 19/413 Minutes of the last meeting
- 19/415 Payments and receipts
- 19/416 County Councillor's Report
- 19/417 District Councillors' Report
- 19/426 Maintenance issues
- 19/422 Burial Ground
- 19/428 Annual Parish Meeting 2021
- 19/412 Flood Alleviation Scheme

and that all other agenda items be deferred to the next meeting.

19/411. Public questions, comments or representations

None other than those relating to the Flood Alleviation Scheme.

19/412. Flood Alleviation Scheme

Jo Emberson Wines, Richard Harding and Tim Shickle addressed the Council regarding the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme and the replacement of the bridge carrying the Ring Road over the railway.

Signed: Michael Cochrane

Date: Tuesday 22nd June 2021

The Chairman asked Tim Shickle for more information about when the work on the bridge might take place and he replied that the work might start early in 2023 and be completed before the end of 2025.

The Chairman said he had already asked that the EA provide the Council with another map showing all the properties affected by the location of the compound and the difference between its original proposal that the site be at least 45 metres from residents' boundaries and its new plan for the site to be at least 75 metres from every dwelling.

He said he had also asked for a numerical table so that the Council could judge by how much the residents of those properties had benefitted from the change.

Jo Emberson Wines said the EA was aware of the request and might offer additional information showing distances not merely between those houses and the piles of topsoil but between those houses and the compound.

The Chairman said he had also requested an explanation of a red line on the map which ran through certain of the properties.

The Vice-Chair made the following points:

- The importance to the village of the traffic management plan for the bridge closure
- The lack of any voice for the community on the sponsor group or consideration of the impact of decisions upon it
- The appearance from the plan provided that the farm track would be used for access to the site in contradiction to previous assurances
- The need for EA to investigate further whether part of Field 3 or a completely different field could be used in conjunction with Field 2 to avoid the impact current plans for use of Field 1 would have on the northern part of the village.

ES, Richard Harding, Jo Emberson Wines and Penny Burt responded:

- ES said she sits on the Sponsor Group as the representative of VoWHDC. She said the Sponsor Group has not discussed the detail of the compound; it had, however, accepted a report saying that there were no viable alternatives to the use of Fields 1 and 2
- Penny Burt gave additional information about the location of MG5 grassland in Field 3 and the protection afforded to it, which she compared to the situation of MG4 grassland elsewhere which would be destroyed because the destruction is completely unavoidable if a new flood channel is to be created
- Richard Harding gave assurances that the farm track in the village would not be used, notwithstanding the impression many people had formed from the plan he had made available.

The Chairman and the Vice-Chair then pressed the EA further about the different treatment of the MG5 grassland in Field 3 compared with the rarer MG4 grassland elsewhere.

Parishioners were then given the opportunity to ask questions and seven did so.

The first parishioner spoke about the different treatment of the MG5 and MG4 grassland, and asked who takes the decision to protect the MG5 grassland at the expense of those whose homes are near Field 1.

The second parishioner broke down when speaking about the impact the works will have on her home. Her husband spoke about the mound of soil four metres high planned almost at the bottom of their garden and the plan appearing to show that the farm track was going to be used for access. They believe the proposals would have a huge effect on their chance of selling their house and leaving the village

Signed: Paul Cochrane

Date: Tuesday 22nd June 2021

Jo Emberson Wines, Penny Burt, Richard Harding and ES responded:

- Jo Emberson Wines explained that the EA follows the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Act and the guidance on Environmental Impact Assessments but she said the decision on its planning application would be made by OxonCC
- Penny Burt explained that this is because the planning application is treated as a minerals application. She said that VoWHDC would be consulted and ES said VoWHDC's response would be put together by its Planning team
- Richard Harding explained that the topsoil from Fields 1 and 2 would be removed and stored close to the northern end of the village and would remain there until the work had been completed.

No one had any further questions for the OxonCC representatives, who then left the meeting.

The fourth parishioner spoke about the importance to their family of air quality due to a family member suffering from asthma; the impact on access to natural light; the impact on residents of noise; and the impact on the environment of the village.

The fifth parishioner shared an image showing how the proposed four-metre high pile of earth would compare with the existing hedge.

Penny Burt and Jo Emberson Wines responded:

- Penny Burt said that the EA's Environmental Impact Assessment covers air quality and noise. The assessment showed that the noise impact would be greater on the other side of the village where some piling works would take place. She said the Environmental Statement submitted with the EA's first planning application can still be viewed on the internet via the planning portal. The Chairman asked if she could send it to the Council.
- Jo Emberson Wines said the EA intends that the noisiest, dustiest and dirtiest activities be placed furthest away from the village and the quietest activities nearest to the village. She said that VoWHDC is responsible for monitoring air quality and monitoring has been taking place for a couple of years.

A sixth parishioner asked about impacts on houses at the bottom of the village and about use of the railway sidings. In reply, Richard Harding said he did not have access to the relevant plans and would respond to both questions outside of the meeting.

A seventh parishioner felt movement of all the spoil by road on the A34 would be impossible and it was therefore wrong to make a decision on the project in advance of an agreement on use of the rail sidings. He said there needs to be an up-to-date human impact assessment. In reply, Richard Harding said that a Traffic Management Plan would be developed and the EA is discussing temporary speed limits on the A34 in South Hinksey.

LG said she felt Field 1 should not be used at all.

The Chairman asked if the Vice-Chair could be given the opportunity to address the Sponsor Group.

CC asked if the Parish Council could be allowed a representative on the Sponsor Group.

ES said that she had taken that proposal to the Sponsor Group but been outvoted.

CC said she felt the Council should formally request a seat on the Sponsor Group.

ES said the Sponsor Group's reason for turning down the proposal regarding South Hinksey was that there were other communities such as Kennington that were also affected and the Sponsor Group would become too big if every one of those communities had a representative.

Signed: Paul Cohen

Date: Tuesday 22nd June 2021

The Chairman and Jo Emberson Wines agreed that outside the meeting they would draw up a list of further information which the Council had requested and which the EA would provide.

The Chairman asked whether use of Field 1 could be eliminated or drastically reduced. Jo Emberson Wines said the EA's contractor has made clear that if the space were reduced further, the work would take longer and safety would be decreased.

The Vice-Chair said she would like another public meeting to be held and she thought there would be a point at which the Council would have to make public its concerns.

19/413. Minutes of the last ordinary meeting

The Council **resolved unanimously** to agree the minutes of the February 2021 meeting. **Action: Clerk to collect signed minutes from Chairman and publish them on website**

19/414. Financial report

Deferred to the next meeting

19/415. Finance – payments and receipts

The Council **unanimously approved** a report presented by the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer:

- a) Ratifying the following payment made by the Chairman and CC on 17th February in line with the decision of the June 2020 Council meeting that these invoices can be paid without waiting to be put to a meeting for approval:

Reason	Amount	Payee	Power to act
Burial ground waste charges – January	£47.26	Oxford Direct Services Trading Ltd	s214 LGA 1972

- b) Approving the three payments below:

Reason	Amount	Payee	Power to act
Share of Clerk's annual subscription	£94.00	Society of Local Council Clerks	s143 LGA 1972
Clerk net pay February	£356.35	Geoffrey Ferres	s112 LGA 1972
PAYE Income Tax deducted Jan and Feb	£178.40	HMRC	s112 LGA 1972

- c) Waiving Financial Regulation 6.5 so that the Chairman and CC could sign the payments at another time.
- d) Authorising the March salary payment without waiting for the Council's next meeting in April
- e) Agreeing to sign a new direct debit instruction for the burial ground commercial waste charges

The Clerk reminded the Council that the annual payment to OxonCC in connection with the Hinksey Hill 30mph limit would be made this month by standing order and he informed the Council of a processing error whereby the Council's bank had misread a cheque for £784.25 as one for £704.25 – the Council is seeking the Internal Auditor's advice as to how to deal with this.

Signed: Phil Cochran

Date: Tuesday 22nd June 2021

Actions for Chairman, Clerk and CC: meet to sign payments and direct debit instruction

Actions for Clerk: send payment to SLCC; make payment to HMRC

19/416. County Councillor's report

BJ said he had established what the procedure would be for requests for 20mph limits: a parish council would need to send a map with commentary to OxonCC's Lee Turner and he understood that the legal costs for each order would be between £6,000 and £8,000, to be paid by the parish council concerned.

BJ also reported that he understood that OxonCC had been sued over the retendering of the parking enforcement contract and had settled out of court with the current holder of the contract at a cost of £1.6m.

19/417. District Councillors' report

ES introduced the written report from DH and herself, which had been circulated in advance. She drew attention to the start today of a vaccination outreach programme whereby Council officers will be visiting people at home in the top four priority groups who have not responded to their invitation to have a Covid-19 vaccination.

19/418. Planning applications

Deferred to the next meeting

19/419. Correspondence

Deferred to the next meeting

19/420. Banking

Deferred to the next meeting

19/421. Business Continuity

Deferred to the next meeting

19/422. Burial ground

The Clerk had sought the advice of Laura Harlock, who manages Oxford City Council's cemeteries. She had expressed the view that a Tier 2 Groundwater Risk Assessment at a cost of £2,750 (excluding VAT) was unnecessary but had recommended that the Council seek the opinion of the Environment Agency (EA), which the CDS Group had suggested might cost £550 (excluding VAT).

The Council **unanimously agreed** not to commission a Tier 2 Groundwater Risk Assessment and not to seek the opinion of the EA either as there was no requirement to do so and the risk of groundwater appeared low. **Action: Clerk to communicate the Council's decision to the CDS Group**

19/423. Community Woodland

Deferred to the next meeting

19/424. A34 improvement project

Deferred to the next meeting

Signed: 

Date: Tuesday 22nd June 2021

19/425. Oxford to Cambridge Expressway

Deferred to the next meeting

19/426. Maintenance issues

The Council **agreed unanimously** to award the 2021 maintenance contract to Oxford Direct Services Ltd. **Action: Clerk to inform Laura Harlock and arrange for the woodland to be mown as soon as possible**

19/427. Traffic issues

Deferred to the next meeting

19/428. Annual Parish Meeting 2021

The Chairman announced that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held remotely via Zoom on Monday 12th April.

19/429. Feedback from members of the public

None.

Time concluded: 9.35pm

MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Date of the next Parish Council meeting: Monday 12th April 2021 at 7.30pm, following the Annual Parish Meeting [subsequently cancelled due to the period of national mourning following the death of HRH Prince Philip]

Signed: Mark Cochran

Date: Tuesday 22nd June 2021