



MINUTES OF MEETING OF WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL
At the Village Hall at 20:00 Thursday, June 9, 2022

Members Present

Chair Jim Donahue

Vice-Chair Diana Smith

Members Nick Brazil
Katherine Higley
Carrie Leadbeater-Hart
Paul O'Grady
Frances Parkes

Officers Present:

Clerk, RFO Jane Yamamoto

Public and Press: Cllr Dragonetti, 2 residents

The meeting started at 20:00.

- 1 **Apologies for absence & Mission Statement** 20:00
Cllr Brazil provided his apologies for being late to the meeting.
- 2 **Declaration of Interests** 20:05
There were no declarations.
- 3 **Public Forum** - an opportunity for members of the public to express their point of view on any item on the agenda.
- 3.1 A resident spoke of the over 10-year period battling against Eastfield House planning proposals. They reported that the new amendment would increase the site to 2001 sq meters against the wishes of the community. The previous land owners secured the current approval over 10 years ago. Now, the new owners sought to add additional space to the existing consent. The applicant was using Section 73 for the development of land without complying with conditions subject to which a previous planning permission was granted. The resident advised that this use of the Planning Act was questionable and said they were going to challenge it with SODC. The amendments included a large concrete and brick double storey plant room close to their property, which may produce fumes and noise. Also, there was little information on any of the amendments, but importantly, little detail concerning the additional traffic that will be generated, further exacerbating the current problem within the village. There was concern that there will be a cumulative effect with additional buildings. The resident advised that the original application was rejected on the basis that the windows were overlooking and the building was too close to their property. The latest amendments have included both of these initially rejected plans.
- 4 **Chairman's Announcements** 20:10
Jubilee and Beacon Lighting
It was so great to see everyone from the community come together for the Jubilee tea on Sunday. Getting everyone together again for the first time after the pandemic was the main objective from my perspective.



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Jubilee and Beacon Lighting
It was so great to see everyone from the community come together for the Jubilee tea on Sunday. Getting everyone together again for the first time after the pandemic was the main objective from my perspective.

- I'd just like to thank a few key people who were instrumental in making this happen, especially our Clerk Jane Yamamoto who organised the event overall, which included securing the marquees from Hempen at Hardwick Estate along with James Norman.
- And thanks to Cllrs Smith and Parkes for helping with the tea.
- It was also great to have village newcomer Nicola Armstrong to coordinate the pre-school contributions.
- Also thanks to Cormac Neeson for giving us access to power at the pavilion.
- We had additional help from Leslie Prater as a back-up power source.
- Rev James Leach and the church also encouraged parishioners to join.
- And finally, I thought that the Roy Bailey Big Band did an excellent job and helped make it a very festive and memorable event!

I'd also like to thank those involved in to making the Beacon Lighting on Thursday such a magical evening.

- This includes Sandra Parkinson who hosted the beacon on her property and helped build it along with Charles Cotgreave and other members of the Green Team including Sally, Peter, and Lorna Woolhouse, Gill Goodson, Geoff Weir and John Bradon.
- And of course a big thanks to Alistair Dunstan who made such a memorable performance on the bagpipes!

5 To approve minutes of the meeting of May 12th and the Annual Assembly May 26, 2022.
Resolution: The Council voted to approve both sets of minutes.

6 Planning Applications – to discuss and agree Council's response to the following: 20:20

6.1 P22/S1942/HH

4 Swanston Field, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7HP

Single storey rear/side extension and new dormer at first floor and replacement of rotten cedar cladding with composite timber cladding.

Resolution: The Council voted to support the application.

6.2 P22/S1689/FUL

Eastfield House, Eastfield Lane, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7EJ

Application under S73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for Variation of condition 14 (Approved Plans) on application P11/S0126 granted by appeal decision APP/Q3115/A/13/219268 (Partial demolition of existing care home. Construction of extensions and associated works and change of use of land at the rear of the home from C3 to C2 to provide additional external amenity space) to allow changes to internal layout; formation of dormers at second floor; additional plant room; part retention of existing outbuilding; and erection of summer house within rear garden.

Resolution: The Council voted to object to the application as it believes the changes proposed are too great to be considered as a minor amendment to Condition 14. The Appeal Decision No. 39 in 2013 was that the development should be carried out in accordance with the approved plan.

It is believed that the changes to the approved plan are not minor amendments as there is increased massing to provide a single storey detached building in the rear garden and a plant room. There is concern about the cumulative effect of additional areas on top of an already large building in which was an already confined space. There are also additional dormer windows overlooking neighbouring properties which again cannot be seen as a minor amendment. It is noted that there is no information about the size and intended use of the retained outhouse.

In 2013 the Inspector specified that the separation between Eastfield House and Eastfield Cottage should be retained. The new plant room reduces the separation.

Finally, there remains a great concern about the size of the development in the Conservation Area and the under provision of parking spaces which is highly likely to cause parking and congestion on this narrow lane.

- 7 To receive reports from the representatives of Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council 20:30
- 7.1 SODC District Councillor Report – Cllr Dragonetti (Attachment 1)
- 7.2 OCC County Councillor Report - Cllr Bulmer (Attachment 2)

- 8 **Finance:** 20:35
- 8.1 To approve the payment schedule for June:

Payment	Amount
Clerk salary (June 2022)	TBA
Scofell (June invoice)	£720.24
Country Metal Crafts (bin liner)	£540 BACS
James Clarke (curve marquee)	£175 BACS
Lovejam Limited (rectangular marquee)	£200 BACS
Gallagher (Annual Insurance)	£754.43 BACS
Cllr Donahue (Land registry)	£33.46
Cllr Donahue (Beer for Jubilee)	£67.50
Cllr Donahue (Food and Drink for APA)	£35.05
The Roy Bailey Big Band	£250
Cricket Club (nets grant)	£250
Claire Connell (Internal Audit)	£280
Emergency leaflet for residents	£95
Neil Huntington (expenses for paint for the cut rail)	£28

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the above payments.

- 8.2 Motion to approve the Year End Financial Reports (Attachment 3,4). Clerk seconded by Cllr Donahue

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the Motion.

- 8.3 Motion to approve the Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Statements, Internal Auditor report for 2021/2022 AGAR for submission to the External Auditor (Attachment 5,6,7). Clerk seconded by Cllr Donahue

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the Motion.

- 8.4 Motion to approve the Notice to the Public to include the first 10 days of July 2022 (Attachment 8). Clerk seconded by Cllr Donahue

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the Motion.

- 9.0 Motion to approve the grant of £1000 to the Village Hall. Clerk seconded by Cllr Donahue 20:35

Resolution: The council voted to approve the Motion.

- 10 Motion to approve Herald Graphics as the new printing company for the Whitchurch Bulletin. Cllr Donahue seconded by Cllr Smith

- 10.1 Cllr Donahue updated the Council concerning the reduced quote for printing the Bulletin from Herald Graphics for:

- £408 for 360 copies, with A5 full colour cover with 24 pages of articles.
- £457 for 360 copies, with A5 full colour cover with 24 pages of article

- The price would reduce by increments of approximately £50 for issues where there was less content of only 20 or 16 pages so could be as low as £310.
- Advertising would only come later when we could show samples to the prospective advertisers.
 - o We discussed indicative prices for advertising compared to Herald's printing with other villages, but it was subject to market demand.
 - o The biggest revenue would come from full page colour advertisements of which there could be up to 3.
 - o As discussed, Harald Graphics would retain 60% of revenue to incentivise them to initiate and manage advertising. We would get 40% of revenues that would offset some of the printing costs.
- Herald Graphics was not interested in a formal long-term contract, but agreed to support these costs and review them on an annual basis. This was a significant commitment given the ongoing monthly increase in the price of paper.
- They were happy with BACS payment within 30 days of delivery, which was better than the current payment terms.
- We were proposing to start with the July issue.

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the Motion.

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|------|---|-------|
| 11 | Deep Cleanse table of works for August 9-11, 2022 (Attachment 9) - Clerk | 20:40 |
| 11.1 | It was agreed that the road and pavement from the Toll Bridge up to the narrows required a deep cleanse. The Clerk would submit the table to SODC. | |
| 12 | Cricket Club Pavilion – Cllr Donahue (Attachment 10) | 20:50 |
| 12.1 | Cllr Donahue went through the 4 options, which could be linked or combined. The Cricket Club owned all three buildings: Pavilion, Tea Hut and Maintenance Shed and the responsibility of its insurance, safety and utilities/council tax were with them. It was discussed how many events per year the community would use it.
For each option, he assessed the benefits to the community and likely ongoing maintenance costs. He has not listed the PC contribution at this point, but the Council had £5,000 budgeted for this fiscal year. | |
| 12.2 | Cllr Donahue shared the options with the Cricket Club:
-They did not like option 1 - No contribution – and it would make it very difficult for us to do anything regarding the Pavilion, including powering the defibrillator
-They were focussed on Option 2 – this would support our basic requirements but the Council would need to see details of how many power plugs, how water was accessed, and the capacity of toilets, etc.
-Options 3 – Demolition of the tea Hut and adding hardstanding areas would not be considered by them until Option 2 is completed
-Option 4 – Small kitchen to replace showers - was also not being focussed on by CC, but would encourage them to design and cost this out as it would have benefits to both the CC for Cricket match tea breaks and to the PC for community events. The costs would not be excessive and could be funded by local private contributions and grants. | |
| 12.3 | Issues/next steps:
-CC still had not provided detailed cost estimates or drawings of proposed solutions
-CC did not appear to have anyone with fundraising or grant application experience
- It was suggested they ask Jean-Marc Grosfort for help as his Village Hall experience was directly relevant | |

- It was recommended that the Council review its legal agreement and details clarified with the Cricket Club. This was because the Council was a public body and needed a clear design, objective and financial projections prior to any financial support.

It was also discussed that open and proactive communication from the Council would go a long way to help relations.

- 13 Weekly/monthly Log of Risk Assessments for Open Spaces – Clerk (Attachment 11,12) 21:30
- 13.1 Cllr Brazil advised that he felt that costs for £70k just for the replacement of the hard surface in the Playground was not a good use of public funds. He also warned that any changes to this area may not be possible as the land was acquired by bequest. He recommended that the Councillors leading the refurbishment of the Playground speak to a resident, formerly a Chair of the PC because they had both experience and knowledge of playgrounds.
- He also visited the Playground in our village as well as two other local ones. He was not in favour of the major changes described. This was because the village's playground was unique: it was not just a playground but part of the village's integral landscape. He expressed his opposition to any major changes.
- 13.2 The Clerk advised that the Internal Auditor raised the issue of documented weekly risk assessments done at the Playground and monthly checks of other areas in the village. This had also been raised by the annual inspection and the insurance company. She had sent round the costs and training schedule from RoSPA Playsafety Limited, the company that carried out the annual inspections, to qualify a resident to carry out these monthly checks. The Internal Auditor raised this issue because they had experienced the difficulty of other Parish Councils with insurance claims.
- 14 SODC Waste Team – Litter Bug Detectives Trail – Cllr Higley (Attachment 13)
- 14.1 Cllr Higley advised that SODC Waste Management suggested that the Council map out a trail of litter picking for children. Cllr Higley, Sally Woolhouse and Charles Cotgreave had mapped out a trail for SODC to review. Once they had visited the trail, SODC would be sending posters.
- 15 To review progress on any open actions from previous Parish Council meetings and agree any revision of actions on the action list. 21:55
- 15.1 Action 185 – Cllr Smith will contact OCC to request that 20 mph roundels be painted on the roads upon entrance to the village.
- 15.1 Action 186 – Cllrs Leadbeater-Hart and Smith will review options in the Lower Narrows with planters for pedestrian safety.
- 16 To confirm the date and time of the next meeting on Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 20:00.
- 17 Confidential discussion for thank you notes from the Parish Council.
- Thank you notes will be sent to: Sue Matthews, Bryan Howes, The Woolhouses, Meryl Weir, Tim Hardwick, Alastair Dunstan, Charles Cotgreave, Sandra Parkinson, Gill Goodwin, John Bradon and family, James Norman and family, Gill Williamson, Nicola Armstrong, Dima Gloskov, Jean Marc Grosfort, Kate Preston, Cormac Neeson, Leslie Maynerd, Patrick Gillet, Leslie Prater, The Leach Family
- 18 Meeting closed. 22:00

Attachment 1

Financial Support for Fuel Costs

The £150 payment to homes in council tax bands A-D is now largely complete, and the focus is now on working out a basis for discretionary grants to households in homes Bands E and above.

There was quite a lot of pressure on the phones for the council in handling this matter, with many thousands of homes it takes just a very small proportion with questions and difficulties to keep the phones lines very busy.

Councillor Grant Scheme

This has now reopened with a new round of funding, with the deadline for applications being midday on 2 September. I did not distribute all my allocation in the last round, but I would very much like to do so. I know that the Whitchurch application for Muddy Lane was ruled ineligible as it was a highway matter, so I would urge that advice is sought from grants@southandvale.gov.uk as early as possible. Information of course is also on the council website at www.southoxon.gov.uk/grants

New Local Plan

Initial consultation for the Joint Local plan 2041 is under way, and I strongly urge that everyone has a go; its easier and more friendly than any previous consultation, and our comms team are very proud of it

Here is the link

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/54bfeae245242d9b3b7cd1e6b049388>

I am on a steering group for this plan, and we have recently considered how our Local Plan will work alongside the OxPlan2050, also being prepared. I am particularly keen that the current buzzwords of **Nature Recovery** and **Green Infrastructure** translate into making a real difference, so trying to get these matters embedded into the thinking of the plan at this stage, rather than being after thoughts.

Planning Enforcement

I was pleased to see that the Planning Inspectorate refused an appeal against the enforcement action that SODC had taken against development in Rotherfield Greys, where an "Artists Studio" was developed that went far beyond the approved plans, plans which had been applied for over several years. No doubt this will be reported in the Henley Standard

Peter Dragonetti

Attachment 2

GENERAL OCC REPORT

CONSERVATIVES CALL FOR GREATER FOCUS ON TOWNS & VILLAGES

The Conservative Opposition remains concerned that the LibDem/Green/Labour ruling administration is being heavily distracted by matters over which it has little control, or are beyond its remit. It remains to be seen if the millions being spent on climate change will bear any fruit, while the imposition of a vegan diet at council meetings continues to generate a lot of debate, wasting councillors' and officers' time. Costs are still awaited for the transgender measures. Additionally, much of the council's effort is focused on the city of Oxford, where anti-car measures are generating much concern and some civic unrest. As previously reported, mundane matters – which are nevertheless of vital importance to residents – such as roads and drains in towns and villages, do not feature in the administration's list of priorities.

UNAUTHORISED VEGAN MEALS BEING SERVED

The original, highly controversial, plan to serve only vegan meals at all council-catered events was scaled back in the report approved by OCC Cabinet in March, and it was agreed that the vegan diet was only to be imposed on councillors at Full Council meetings six or seven times a year and on the general public at civic events, with officers entirely exempt. However, complaints have been received that exclusively vegan meals are being served at other council meetings. The matter is currently being investigated.

NEW CHAIRMAN TO PRIORITISE VISITING TRAVELLER SITES

Labour councillor Susanna Pressel, who represents the Jericho and Osney division of Oxford city at OCC, has been elected as the new Chair of OCC. She has lived in Oxford for most of her life since being a student. She was Lord Mayor of Oxford between 2008 and 2009. She is to visit Traveller sites as one of her first acts in her new role as she believes they are the most underrepresented communities in our society. She is also to visit farmers where she may experience a frosty reception in view of the council's anti meat & dairy (vegan) policy. Press report here: <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/20160536.traveller-sites-top-priority-new-no-nonsense-council-chair/>

RESIDENT FURY OVER ANTI-CAR MEASURES IN OXFORD

Roadblocks that were set up by OCC as part of a new low traffic neighbourhood (LTN) scheme in East Oxford have been smashed down as fury against the measures continues. Residents are concerned that LTNs benefit one area at the expense of another, simply shifting traffic and pollution, rather than reducing it. There have been widespread reports of huge traffic delays and incidents of road rage. Royal Mail has been forced to close some postboxes. Reports here: <https://www.thisisoxfordshire.co.uk/news/20158184.east-oxford-ltn-smashed/>
<https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/20158812.oxfordshires-ltns-may-increasing-pollution-nearby-roads/>
The public consultation is now open seeking residents' views on the measures. Anyone can provide feedback on the proposals before 30 November 2022. Details here: letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/east-oxford-ltns-2022

PLANS TO ATTEMPT TO DRIVE DOWN CARBON EMISSIONS APPROVED

OCC's Cabinet has approved plans which they hope will see OCC corporate carbon emissions cut over the next three years. The OCC Capital & Revenue budgets for this period feature over £15m on climate change measures – only time will tell if this is money well spent.

£10.4 MILLION AWARDED FOR ACTIVE TRAVEL IMPROVEMENTS

OCC has been awarded funding from the third phase of the government's active travel fund. The grant will support infrastructure investment including the delivery of improvements to:

- Bicester, A41/London Road
- Bicester, Middleton Stoney Road and Shakespeare Drive
- Witney High Street
- Oxford, Garsington Road
- Oxford, School Streets programme

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PLANS

OCC has an annual budget of £212 million for adult social care which represents 40 per cent of its overall budget. It is responsible for funding care for more than 6,200 adults – made up of older people, people with learning, physical and mental health disabilities. Despite a swingeing 5% Council Tax increase, including an adult social care supplement, the council is calling on central government for additional funding.

PROPOSALS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

Detailed plans are being developed by OCC and its partners in line with the following objectives:

- Improving outcomes for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Developing a continuum of local provision to meet the requirements of these children and young people.
- Good physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Improving post-16 education, learning, employment and training opportunities.
- Facilitating a positive move into adulthood for young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

WHITCHURCH ON THAMES 20mph

Had the pleasure of recently attending the Parish Council formal opening of the new 20mph zone on the main high street.

CONTACT DETAILS

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Email/Tel: kevin.bulmer@oxfordshire.gov.uk 07803005680

Twitter: Kevin Bulmer @bulmer_kevin



South Oxfordshire District Council - Deep Cleanse Service

PRIORITY High/Med/Low	AREA	LITTER PICK	SWEEP	WEEDS	MOSS
3/6/22	a) Pavement on Eastern side in WOT b) Road, on under tree approaching Toll bridge tree approaching Toll Booth	✓ ✓	✓ ✓		✓ ✓

	Option 1 - Make no contribution	Option 2 - Access to basic utilities	Option 3 - Support Tea Hut Demolition and hardstanding/ picnic table area	Option 4 - Support small kitchen
WCC Upgrade costs	£20,000 tbc - No access to Pavilion or Tea Hut - Renting generator and parts-loos required for community events. - Access to water would need to be negotiated - CC proposing PC pay half of the water bill.	£20,000? Access to power point, water tap in pavilion, and use of toilets (limited to approx. x users)	Additional £4,000? Access to standing area for tables and chairs for community events.	Additional £10-15,000? WCC to confirm costs
Benefits to Community	CC would want PC to find alternative source of electricity for the defib (CC has offered to let it be sited on the hut. But not fund its charging).	- PC to contribute half of electricity standing charge (currently £300 of which £250 is standing charge for £150 contribution).		
Ongoing Maintenance costs			No additional ongoing costs	TBC
Insurance	NA	PC insurance confirms that people accessing pavilion would be covered	NA - covered under PC insurance	PC insurance confirms that people accessing pavilions would be covered
PC Contribution	£0/TBC	£0/TBC	TBC	TBC
Comments			WCC view is that this option would only be considered if the PC supported the pavilion refurbishment first under Option 2.	Assume this is not part of the initial pavilion refurbishment. Could be added if community fundraising organised.

HARDWICK ROAD

SWANSTON FIELD

VILLAGE GREEN

HIGH STREET

THE CUT

Muddy Lane

EAST FIELD LAKE

WHITCHURCH ON FARM
PRIMARY

M

