



MINUTES OF MEETING OF WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL
Virtually at 20:00 Thursday 12th November 2020

Members Present

| | |
|----------|--|
| Chairman | Jim Donahue |
| Members | Hanna Ferguson Katherine Higley Carrie Leadbeater-Hart Diana Smith Jon Steward |

Officers Present:

| | |
|-------|------------------|
| Clerk | Jane M. Yamamoto |
|-------|------------------|

Public and Press: Dave Bowen, John Bradon, Peter Dragonetti, Neil Huntington, Richard Wingfield

The meeting started at 20:00.

1 **Apologies for absence & Mission Statement** 20:00
Cllr Bulmer sent his apologies by email after the meeting.

2 **Minute of Silence**
The Parish Council observed a minute of silence to honour and to remember the young cyclist who tragically lost his life during the weekend in an accident on Whitchurch Hill.

3 **Declaration of Interests** by Councillors on any items on the Agenda
Cllr Smith declared an interest as a member of TAPAG. Cllr Leadbeater-Hart advised that she had a helpful discussion an SODC officer over a recent complaint. She declared that she did not have an interest and would continue to be non-biased and involved in TAPAG discussions. She will advise the council of the outcome and decision by SODC Monitoring Officer.

4 **Public Forum** - an opportunity for members of the public to express their point of view on any item on the agenda. No items were raised.

5 **Chairman's Announcements** 20:05
Regarding the tragic accident where a boy lost his life in a cycling accident on Whitchurch Hill, I have reached out both to OCC and to Goring Heath Parish Council members to see if they had suggestions on how to reduce this type of accident in the future. It is still early days, as we don't know the precise circumstances of the accident, but I will follow up and hope we can get some concrete recommendations to reduce the risk of anything like this happening again.

I also raised the issue of the faded white lines on the High Street to OCC, especially at the upper narrows that is used heavily by pedestrians and cyclists. Richard raised this on Fixmystreet for some time, and I escalated in August when the streets were closed due to gas works as we thought this would be a good time to get this done. OCC have agreed to set up a Teams virtual meeting with myself and Cllr Smith to discuss this and other matters.

Cllr Smith and I will be working together to address the pedestrian safety issues that we recently prioritised:

- Pavements in front of the Ferry Boat Inn
- Pedestrian crossing the High Street. This will also be discussed at the Teams meeting.

Pavement and drainage work by OCC is largely complete, but I am working with OCC, Richard and the Flood forum team to ensure all areas are followed up on. This includes:

- Completing draining clearing on the upper High Street, including a repair to the brick culvert drain as it runs past the Modern Art Gallery, to stop water entering the cellar during storms.
- Completion of drainage clearing on Hardwick Road and Swanston Field to the soakaways which are still not identified.
- Following up on getting the long-term solution for draining at the Greyhound next year.
- Longer term improvements to roadside soakaways on Whitchurch Hill to reduce run-off into the High Street.

Green Team update – full report is in Attachment 1:

Well done to Alexa and everyone who volunteers for all their work in the village. They have done amazingly well this year and have been creative in getting things done despite the lockdown.

A big thank you to all the volunteers who have helped with these tasks over the past month, this has included

- Work at the Village Green; clearing away plants, trimming things back and cutting hedges
- Working party at the maze, strimming, edging and tidying
- Village Litter Pick, many bags of litter were collected over the weekend
- Weeding and replanting at the entrance to Walliscote Drive
- Lots of other tidying, weeding, watering and litter picking
- Significant progress on the build of the base for the Polish Church memorial. Follow-on meeting planning for December 5th – tentatively, to plan locations for benches etc.

Cllr Leadbeater-Hart recommended that the Parish Council find a way to thank all the volunteers of the village. All suggested a letter which Cllr Donahue would draft and send out to the council.

- | | | |
|-----|--|-------|
| 6 | To approve minutes of the meeting of 8th October 2020. Cllrs Leadbeater-Hart and Steward abstained. Resolution: The minutes for October 8th were approved. | 20:20 |
| 7 | Planning Applications | 20:25 |
| 7.1 | P20/S3744/HH 23 Swanston Field, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7HP Erection of a part two storey, part single storey side extension with dormer windows to the front and rear elevations. Resolution: The Council voted to support this application. | |
| 7.2 | P20/S3735/HH Pavilion Cottage, Eastfield Lane, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7EJ | |

Removal of existing decking and replacement with new decking of similar proportions. Due to flood levels decking is approximately 1.2m high.

Resolution: The Council voted to support this application.

7.3

P20/S3838/LB

1 Swanston Cottages, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG9 7ES

Refurbish the roof which has a large number of broken tiles. Repaint the external walls, wood and window frames.

Resolution: The Council voted to support this application.

7.4

P20/S3387/HH

4 Bridge Cottages, High Street, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7DE

Proposed two storey side and rear extension (as amplified by Arboricultural Method Statement received 22 October 2020).

Extension refused on the grounds that PC had already agreed with the Tree Officer advice.

7.5

P20/S3813/HH

Thames Bank Cottage, High Street, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7DB

Part demolition of existing single storey rear extension. Erection of single storey rear extension. Part conversion of garage.

Resolution: The Council voted to support this application.

7.6

P20/S3730/HH

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

Extensions to existing dwelling.

Resolution: The Council voted to support this application.

8

To receive reports from the representatives of Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council.

8.1

SODC District Councillor Report (Attachment 2)

9

Finance:

20:30

9.1

Resolution: The following payments were approved for November:

| Payment | Amount |
|--|----------|
| Clerk salary (November 2020) | BACS |
| Overtime hours for Clerk for FOI | 13 hours |
| Expenses for Village Green Maintenance (topsoil)– Alistair Aitchison | £94.80 |
| Expenses for Village Green Maintenance- (additional seed) – Alistair Aitchison | £73.99 |
| Bugler for Remembrance Sunday | £30 |
| Remembrance wreath – Jane Yamamoto | £21.98 |
| Jim Donahue (Zoom) 1 month | £14.39 |
| Leslie Maynerd (plants for Bell Mouth) | £53.93 |
| SODC (Dog bin Q3, 2020) | £215.28 |
| Polish Church Memorial Garden | £3, 462 |
| National Allotment (annual rent) | £429.45 |
| Nova Press (Bulletin) | £415.00 |
| OALC training for FOI refresher (CL-H) The Chairman approved the addition of this payment and the change of Councillor attending this course. | £60 |

10 **New Pavilion Working Group – Experience and Lessons - John Bradon/Neil Huntington** 20:55

John Bradon and Neil Huntington provided a presentation – Attachment 4. It included brief details of the costings, design, TOR, funding, uses, business case, and its registration as a charity and for Gift Aid. They reported that the Working Group worked well together.

They noted that other cricket clubs also found it difficult to raise money. One of the key lessons learned was that organisations won't give money unless the club targeted minority and hard to reach groups such as young women and older people.

The WG had approval for the budget and its Terms of Reference from the Parish Council. The Cricket Club approved the plan, design and specification.

Another key lesson was that the Cricket Club needed to understand fully the commitment necessary for the refurbishment and to be involved completely in both specification and all parts of the process.

Cllr Steward expressed that the Parish Council needed to listen and to stick to one plan. He believed that there were lessons to be made in the Parish Council's decision-making process.

Cllr Leadbeater-Hart said that the council needed to hold themselves accountable. She said that nothing was obtained for the £6k spent. She believed that there was a breakdown in communication whether or not a design could be funded. She recommended that the difficult questions were asked early, that an outline plan be approved and there were improvements in communication.

John Bradon felt that it would not have costed £300k, but that figure may have put people off. There were also issues raised that the Cricket Club felt that if the Parish Council owned the pavilion, cricket may be taken away from the green. He agreed that harder questions should have been asked and better communication would have improved the process.

Cllr Steward recommended a feasibility study be done before money is spent.

Cllr Smith thanked Neil and John for all the effort that they had put in for the WG and for the presentation. Cllr Donahue also thanked both for their excellent work and professional presentation. He also said that at least the Working Group had done their due diligence which resulted in ending the project early before additional funds were spent.

11 **New Tea Hut replacement – Cllr Ferguson** 21:20

Cllr Ferguson thanked both Neil and John for their information that now could be used as a starting point.

She also thanked Jean Marc Grosfort for his work on his presentation for the potential Tea Hut replacement. The Cricket Club had provided a cost estimate of £30k. Jean Marc also recommended a feasibility study to find out who will be the key users in the village and if it could be used for others in the village.

Jean-Marc started looking at the costs. The options reviewed were pre-fabricated log cabins both smaller in size and larger space ones of 40 sq meters. The smaller option

with a kitchen, meeting space for 10-12 people and a disabled toilet would cost approximately £28-35k. The larger option would cost £38k+.

He was stuck around the costing until the capacity and the usages were decided.

Next steps would be with a community engagement survey to ascertain the need and usage. Cllr Ferguson would place a message on the village website and community FB page for people to get in touch with her to share ideas and views and to seek anyone interested in becoming part of the Working Group. She would then report back to the Parish Council and see what opinions matched with the estimates. Jean Marc suggested that the old Tea Hut be used for storage with the new Tea Hut in front. Cllr Steward confirmed that the old Tea Hut structure was stable enough for this use. Cllr Higley was concerned about less green space on the Village Green if the new structure was in front. Cllr Ferguson believed that after the presentation, a more informed community opinion was needed.

12 **Village Green** – Cllrs Ferguson and Steward 21:30

12.1 Village Green Sign – Attachment 3

Cllr Ferguson reported that council members were concerned about the initial height of the sign and went back to Kingdom signs for modification, when they could finalise the design and install it.

Action-168: Cllr Ferguson will also ask for a quotation for the entrance village sign with fence posts. The Clerk will forward this to the insurance company.

13 **TAPAG update** – Cllr Smith 2135

Cllr Smith updated that the last TAPAG Minutes had been circuited by the Clerk and no next meeting had been scheduled.

Cllr Donahue and Chairman of TAPAG will have a meeting next week to discuss the new priorities. Cllr Leadbeater-Hart objected to any decisions being made and that this meeting should be open to others. Cllr Steward volunteered to attend this meeting as well.

Cllrs Donahue and Smith will meet with OCC for a site meeting in December. They asked for suggestions about a solution to make the road in front of The Ferryboat and the crossing at the High Street and Eastfield Lane safer. It was difficult as the sight lines were poor. It could involve white lines being painted, bollards, signage and rumble strips.

Cllr Smith said that in November 2019, after a detailed update by the TAPAG Chairman, the Minutes showed that, "The Parish Council voted unanimously to support TAPAG progressing with the traffic flow improvement initiative."

TAPAG has now recommended to the Parish Council that sending the plan to formal consultation be slowed down to see what impact the Covid restrictions have on traffic in the village and also to gauge the possible progress to achieving residents parking. She asked the Council to consider that decisions affecting the highway, unlike for example the Village Green, have to be agreed by OCC, the highway authority.

Cllr Leadbeater-Hart objected that the TAPAG plan had been agreed by the Parish Council. She recommended that TAPAG needed to broaden out and have equal views.

Resolution: It was agreed that Cllr Steward will attend the meeting with Cllrs Donahue and Smith. It was also agreed that TAPAG would advertise new positions on the Working Group on the noticeboard and the village website. Furthermore, the candidates for the positions will be interviewed by a panel made up of both TAPAG members and Parish Councillors. The panel will also be made up of persons with varying opinions of the current proposals by TAPAG.

- | | | |
|----|--|-------|
| 14 | To review progress on any open actions from previous Parish Council meetings and agree any revision of actions on the action list. Deferred until next meeting. | 22:25 |
| 15 | To confirm the date and time of the next Meeting on 10th, December 2020 at 20:00. | |
| 16 | Meeting Close | 22:30 |

Attachment 1 – Green Team Update

Our Mission

The Green Team is a team of both core and ad hoc volunteers who help look after and maintain the green spaces in Whitchurch-on-Thames. Coming together in this way also encourages a sense of community and is a good way of getting to know people.

What's Happened Recently

A big thank you to all the volunteers who've helped with these tasks over the past month, this has included;

- Work at the Village Green; clearing away plants, trimming things back and cutting hedges
- Working party at the maze, strimming, edging and tidying
- Village Litter Pick, many bags of litter were collected over the weekend
- Weeding and replanting at the entrance to Wallingscote Drive
- Lots of other tidying, weeding, watering and litter picking
- The build of the memorial base for the Polish Church continues. More information about this project and it's plans can be found here;

<https://whitchurchonthames.com/groups/polishgarden.html> Please contact me if you'd like to get involved!

How you can help!

Sadly, due to the new Covid-19 restrictions coming into force on the 5th November our November working party schedule has had to be postponed. Future dates will be published when we know them.

In the meantime if you are happy to take on any small tasks around the village in a household group please drop me a line - there is plenty to do in the Autumn!

Let me know any questions - about working parties or any of the volunteer work we do in the village - and I look forward to seeing some of you soon!

Get involved!

We are still looking for people who live near or often enjoy a particular green space to become a maintainer or guardian of an area. These volunteers might do small Green Team tasks in the area themselves when they have time (e.g. weeding, cutting back, litter picking) but also work with me to plan what regular work is needed each year in the area and to help input to the working party schedule. The list of open spaces needing guardians is here, let me know if you are interested in an area!

<https://whitchurchonthames.com/groups/greenteam.html>

Find out more

Visit our page on the village website

<https://whitchurchonthames.com/groups/greenteam.html> or contact me on 07557 852600 or alexa@ontherunhealthandfitness.co.uk

Alexa and the rest of the Green Team

Attachment 2 – Cllr Dragonetti's Report

Report to Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council November 2020

Council Operations

The Planning Committee is, or was, back having site visits.

The taking over of Civil Parking Enforcement from the police is progressing, and should be in place in about a year's time, however it does need agreement from all the District Councils in Oxfordshire, and currently I understand that Cherwell is not concurring.

Local Plan 2035 (was 2034)

The consultation on the Main Modifications has now closed; I put in recommendations on aligning AONB policies in respect of extensions with the policy on the same matter with the Green belt policy, requesting again that the power lines on some of the Oxford green belt sites be put underground, and requesting the community facilities that have been granted ACV status are given greater protection.

We now expect the final plan, which the Council has to consider at full council meeting next month.

Corporate Plan

Attached is a copy of the Corporate Plan, which is not going to be printed this time, which is something of a pity but does save a lot of money. I have got the last one, and it is interesting to refer back to it, which is not so easy when it is just on line. But as this time, we have defined how success is going to be measured, perhaps only the most dedicated watchers will check up.

Car Park Charges

There is currently a consultation on changes to car park charges across the District. The provision of a free hour is going to be standardised to all car parks, and the basic hourly rate is going up by a modest amount. Free parking on Sunday is ending, partly at the request of local traders who noticed that the car parks in some places were often full with visitors to the river etc, which prevented shoppers from parking.

Planning

SODC have done a vigorous response to the Governments proposed planning changes, which I think will be on the web site very soon, or I can send out copies.

Peter Dragonetti

Attachment 3 – Village Green Sign – Cllr Ferguson

Hi all,

Kindly find attached the visual designs for the village green sign. We have two versions - one with a white background and one with a green background for comparison but I think the green looks better and is well suited to the village green environment so recommend going ahead with that. See attachments 1, 2 and 3.

I previously had a walk with Jon on the VG to think of locations, and today Keith and myself had another walk around the VG to think further about the locations for placing the signs. They need to be visible to everyone accessing the VG through the car park end or muddy lane end whilst not being an eyesore for the view. We are proposing the following locations: (I have attached some photoshopped images to illustrate how the signs may look in those locations. It's not great quality photoshopping but gives you the idea!)

- Muddy lane VG entry point, opposite of allotment society. Placing the sign on the VG entry point on muddy lane would mean it is visible to everyone who enters the VG through that route whilst not being on the actual field as an accidental target for football or cricket balls at that end of the field. The location would also be beneficial in that it would help secure that access point to VG deterring vehicles as it would make the entry point more narrow. Win win! (see attachment no 4).

- At the top car park end: attach the sign to the metal gate and replace the current small VG sign that is there. Placing the sign on the metal gate would mean that it would not be a distraction to the lovely view whilst still being visible to get the attention of those visiting the VG (see attachment no 5).

The Parish Council has already previously approved the cost and the quote received from Kingdom Signs, as well as the wording on the signs, and the general design. The cost will now actually be a little less than planned as posts are not needed for the second sign attached to the metal gate. I don't think further approvals at this stage are needed to proceed to place the order and put the signs in place, but if you have feedback on the design and/or locations, that is most welcome (or let me know if you think this is a decision point which requires further discussion and approval at the next PC meeting - happy to be guided on that).

Regards,

Hanna