

# *Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council*

**MINUTES** of the Parish Council meeting held in ‘The Old Stables’, Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2018, commencing at 8.00pm.

## **PRESENT**

Vice-Chair	Rachel Hatcher
Councillors	Dave Bowen Keith Brooks Sarah Hanfrey
Clerk	Felipa House

Public:

Sally Woolhouse, Jean-Marc Grosfort.

## **1. Apologies for absence**

Cllr. Donahue, Cllrs. Bulmer & Simister.

## **2. Declarations of interest**

None were given.

**3. Public forum** Opportunity for members of the public to address the Council. With the permission of the Chairman, the public may also speak about specific items of business as they arise.

Sally explained that she had been asked to help with the redevelopment of the old Polish church site as part of her WoTHabs remit. She & Gill Goodwin had carried out an environmental survey of the site & mapped it out. Clearing of all sorts of rubbish had been done & trees removed. It is now much neater. A new fence has been erected on the west side & new small trees & wildflower meadow planted. As well as a picnic table, which the Clerk will order (**Action**), she felt that it would be nice to have a bench seat for extra seating. Her thoughts were that a memorial for the church is needed & maybe a cross & information board. The area should be more defined & organised. **Resolution:** The Council felt that this would be best taken to the open spaces working group of the village plan.

**Action:** Cllr. Hatcher will put Sally’s views to them & ask them to co-ordinate with her as well as Anna Szczeponek.

Sally also mentioned that there are some very tall conifers on one side of the site, which she feels require work by a tree surgeon on health & safety grounds. These are within Coombe Park. The Council asked the Clerk to liaise with the sellers of Coombe Park to discuss this matter (**Action**).

Jean-Marc provided the Council with details of a 3-year improvement plan ‘wishlist’ for the village hall, which sets out all the refurbishments required. If the maximum grant amounts are received then everything on the list could be done but, if not, then the essentials will be carried out first. He has been awaiting the results of the village plan survey to ensure that he is on the right track with the proposed improvements. He has met Tessa Hall from Community First Oxfordshire & she will support him with the grant applications. Costs to the Parish Council will probably remain at £1,000 annually. He has been working with Anna on the history of the hall & plans to gather photos & information to put on a board inside the hall. He will prepare an updated ‘wishlist’ for the next Council meeting which the Clerk will put on the agenda (**Action**).

## **4. Agree minutes of Parish Council meetings 8<sup>th</sup> May & 12<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

Following changes made May’s minutes were approved by the Council as a true record.

Cllr. Hanfrey wanted to amend section 10 (ii) ‘Village green pavilion project’ regarding the project responsibilities. Laura Lucas also wished the Council to clarify their remarks about her proposed

extension in section 7 (iii). These were agreed & the Clerk will amend the minutes accordingly & circulate them for approval at the next meeting (**Action**).

## **5. Receive district councillor's report**

Cllr. Simister was not present.

## **6. Receive county councillor's report**

Cllr. Bulmer was not present but had submitted his report before the meeting. This included information about a potential shared service agreement between OCC & Cherwell District Council, budget spending accuracy for 2017/18 (underspend of £1m, 0.2%, on £422m budget), a site consultation exercise for determining where minerals can be extracted & waste management facilities located, the launch of a new domestic abuse service for Oxfordshire, free NHS health checks for people aged between 40-74 (see [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/nhshealthcheck](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/nhshealthcheck)) & OCC's backing of Friends Against Scams, a national scheme run by the trading standards service (see <https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/>).

## **7. Review planning applications**

- (i) P18/S2051/DIS, 1 Duchess Close, High Street (amendment to planning application & listed building consent granted in June 2016). This was for information only & permission has already been granted.

## **8. Finance**

- (i) Approve payments & note receipts for the preceding month.

Monthly salary for the Clerk plus extra hours payment  
Expenses for the Clerk for postage (£15.32)  
Invoice from Bethan Osborne for Clerk job appraisal (£75.00).

A VAT refund of £455.11 had been received from HMRC for September 2017 - March 2018.  
Donations of £95.00 towards the new pavilion had been received during the Art Café event in June.

**Resolution:** The Council approved a spend of up to £400 for a new laptop for the Clerk, plus the purchase of appropriate software. **Action:** The Clerk will prepare a recommendation including pricing.

The vacancy for parish clerk has been sent to the Whitchurch, Goring Heath & Pangbourne websites, plus in the summer 'Bulletin', OALC's July newsletter & on their website. The Clerk has received a quote of £537.88 for 2 weeks' advertising in the 'Henley Standard'. **Resolution:** The Council decided not to pay for the Henley Standard advertisement due to its cost, preferring instead to see whether local applications are forthcoming by the closing date of 17<sup>th</sup> August before proceeding with this option.

- (ii) The current bank account reconciliation was noted & authorised.
- (iii) Cllr. Bowen had submitted a motion before the meeting requesting a small subsidy from the Council to assist Going Forward Buses. The route through Whitchurch has been running at a loss since its inception & is now becoming unfeasible. Goring Heath have increased their subsidy to the service. Cllr. Hanfrey requested usage data (**Action**), without which the Council was not willing to provide assistance on a long-term basis. **Resolution:** The Council agreed that a monthly grant of £100 would be paid for in July - September. During this time the village will be consulted as to further funding (**Action**).

## 9. Village green

- (i) Cllr. Hanfrey recommended that more frequent cuts of the village green be carried out during peak growing season to solve the issue of grass clippings being left on the field rather than paying the contractor to pick them up or to buy a special machine. **Resolution:** No action is required at this time, but when the contract is reviewed later in the year then the option of collecting clippings could be added if it was felt to be essential.
- (ii) The pre-school committee requested Friday 14<sup>th</sup> September as the date for the open-air cinema evening. **Resolution:** The Council were happy to agree the date of 14<sup>th</sup> September, provided that the green was available. **Action:** The Clerk will confirm to all parties.

## 10. Village green pavilion project

- (i) Cllr. Brooks had obtained 3 quotes from architects to finalise the planning application for the new pavilion. Cutler Architects in Wallingford quoted £880 + VAT, Paul Devine in Goring £750 + VAT & Owens Galliver of Pangbourne quoted £270 + VAT. Cllr. Brooks recommended the latter. **Resolution:** The Council were happy to approve the appointment of Owens Galliver of Pangbourne, based on a cap of 5 hours of their time (maximum of £450 based on fee of £90 per hour). Should this work prove successful then they could be considered for the next stage of the process. **Action:** The Clerk will inform Owens Galliver of the Council's decision.

## 11. Village environment/maintenance

- (i) Cllr. Hanfrey had submitted a motion before the meeting for a 'Twenty is plenty' campaign in the village, which would include wheelie bin stickers & signs for verges made by the school. This idea had been mentioned at the village plan open day & the parish assembly. The 'Twenty is plenty' website provides help & advice on the subject. Stickers would cost £200 for 200, for example. It would not be necessary for everyone to display them. Cllr. Hatcher felt that it would be better for stickers to be requested by residents, so as to gauge the support for the scheme, & purchases then made rather than the Council buying stickers in advance which then remained unused. **Resolution:** The Council agreed that purchases of stickers should wait until we can gauge how many people were interested in displaying them.
- (ii) A dog-fouling map had been mentioned a few months ago as a possible solution. The Council felt this was no longer an issue in the village & that it was also being investigated by the open spaces working group.

## 12. Village Plan

- (i) John Bradon is now the Chair of the village plan group, taking over from Cllr. Donahue. Survey results are being analysed & an article will appear in this month's 'Bulletin'.

## 13. Polish church site

- (i) As discussed in section 3 above, the future of this site will be given to the open spaces working group to investigate. **Action:** The Clerk will send Cllr. Hatcher previous Minutes in which the naming of the site had been discussed.

## 14. Parish Council owned/managed land

- (i) Cllr. Hanfrey had created a document examining the security of Parish Council land following the recent issues in Pangbourne with travellers. In general, she felt that sites in Whitchurch are not secure enough. **Action:** Jon Steward will be asked to put back the roller in front of the village green gate. Hardwick Estate are able to deliver some large logs which could be used to block vehicular access to the Maze & the village green from

the top of Muddy Lane. **Action:** Cllr. Brooks will discuss the logistics of moving logs to the entrance of the Maze and Village Green from Muddy Lane with Pete Woolhouse. Quotes for boxing in the bolts on gates are perhaps also needed.

**15. Updates from working groups**

- (i) (a) **Action:** Cllr. Hatcher will send the Council the full results from the traffic surveys that have already been completed. High-level indications are that the average speed recorded is currently too high for an automatic 20mph speed limit & that most traffic passes through the village at very specific times of the day from Monday - Friday. Measures such as speed bumps & chicanes need to be put in place to naturally enforce a lower speed limit. The whole village can be a 20mph zone or certain roads only, but speed data for all roads to be included in the lower limit must be gathered. Manor Road, Eastfield Lane & Hardwick Road therefore need to be monitored. This will cost £600 + VAT. **Resolution:** The Council approved this spend of £600 plus VAT for the additional monitoring. TAPAG will progress it.  
(b) Cllr. Hatcher provided the Council with a document detailing what has been discovered so far with possible solutions. It is a terms of reference to be given to traffic consultants in order to obtain quotes from them for assistance. Any planning permission in terms of Coombe Park would also have to be included. The councillors felt that they could not approve this as they hadn't been able to look through it properly. This will be discussed again more fully at the next Council meeting.  
Diana Smith has spoken to BP, which is currently carrying out traffic surveys on the bridge. They have said that they would supply one of their approved contractors to carry out work needed to alleviate traffic issues.  
(c) The Bridge Company has requested that residents raise safety-related incidents from the narrow approach road on the Pangbourne side of the bridge. This is required to provide them with evidence to support future planning applications for its widening. Cllr. Hatcher has drafted an article to encourage people to record any incidents at the bridge with the toll office.
- (ii) Cllr. Brooks mentioned that the replacement windows will cost an extra £150 as their specification has had to be changed.

**16. Other matters for Chairman & PC to consider** Items that arise that are not on this agenda but need discussion & to be proposed for a future agenda

Parish councillor vacancies have again been advertised, with a closing date of 15<sup>th</sup> August.

**Decision:** All councillors agreed to move the process meeting to September at the earliest when the new councillors will hopefully be in office.

**17. Date of next meeting**

This will be on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September at 8pm unless planning applications necessitate an August meeting.

*Meeting closed at 9.55pm.*

Signed.....  
Chairman

Date.....

## **‘Twenty is plenty’ motion from Cllr Hanfrey**

This motion is to

- Discuss promoting a 20mph speed limit in the village
- Agree to purchase some wheelie bin stickers promoting a 20mph speed limit and giving them to villagers for their wheelie bins
- Discuss asking the school to make signs for verges