

# WHITCHURCH ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish meeting of Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council on Monday 4th March 2013 at the Village Hall.

## **Present:**

Cllr. Harry Butterworth Chairman, Cllr. Lindsay Austin, Cllr. Keith Brooks Vice Chairman, Cllr. Jim Donahue, Jenny Welham Parish Clerk.

In Attendance – Richard Wingfield, Stephen Trinder, Harvey Ainley.

## **1. Apologies for absence**

Cllr. Vincent Aldridge, Cllr. N. Grove. District Cllr. P. Slater

## **2. Declarations of interest.**

Councillors are asked to declare any personal interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

None.

## **3. Public Forum** – Opportunity for members of the public to address the Parish Council.

None.

## **4. Agree Minutes of Annual PC Meeting 7<sup>th</sup> January 2012.**

Approved.

## **5. Bridge Closure – update on meeting with Keith Stenning SODC.**

The Chairman and Vice Chairman and Peter Hawley had attended a meeting with Keith Stenning from SODC re the traffic issues when the Bridge closes on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Also present Cllr Rodney Rose OCC, Lee Turner OCC, Chris Hulme Thames Valley Police.

Lee Turner produced maps showing the proposed siting of diversion signs in both South Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. They appeared to cover a wide area comprehensively. A suggestion that the area covered might be extended as far as Chieveley was considered to be un-necessary because the signs would be in place in time to give plenty of warning in advance of actual closure date.

After further general discussion Keith Stenning and Councillor Rose left and the remainder of the group visited Eastfield Lane. We were joined for some of the time by a local resident who had very clear thoughts about what the problems might really be. This turned out to be very helpful.

The picture which eventually emerged was:

We need to be sure that our residents who have no on-site parking are able to leave their vehicles as they do now. We need to be sure that all residents can manoeuvre in and out of their premises safely and that all our roadways have a clear way through at all times.

The school runs must continue to function as they do now.

We need to have clear turning space at the north end of the bridge. This is needed to allow busses to turn round. There will be cars trying to find parking spaces beyond the Ferryboat re to turn so they can look somewhere else. For a similar reason it looks as if any parking between the FerryBoat and the bridge will have to be banned.

Possibilities.

Policeman Chris Hulme was quite clear that a "Thames Avenue" type of residents-only regulation for Eastfield lane was not acceptable. It appears that the rules for such things in Oxfordshire and in West.Berks are different.

Single yellow lines could be used along Eastfield Lane to help the school run, but that would need poles with signs on every hundred metres or so displaying the time at which parking is permitted.

Nobody likes yellow lines of any sort and the proliferation of signs makes it worse. In any case it is far from clear how the system could be made to work.

We checked the exact position of double yellow lines with policeman Chris Hulme. You can stop on a double yellow line so someone can get into or out of the vehicle. But you can't get the kids out, walk the kids to the school gate and return to your vehicle.

Double yellow lines would be the real last resort, particularly in Eastfield Lane.

One thing that was noted was that of the vehicles belonging to people without on site parking, many leave Whitchurch during the daytime.

The conclusions were, therefore:

With sufficient warning before the event, there may be a bit of mayhem in the first few days, but a few parking restrictions should be sufficient to keep the situation manageable.

We can have white lines across entrances. This is only advisory, but would help to emphasise that leaving a vehicle's nose protruding across an entrance is still an obstruction of that entrance.

What we can do is to go through the process of setting up double yellow lines for just about anywhere in the Village. At this time there is no intention whatever of deploying them. The thinking is that as the real picture unfolds we have available both the threat of painting double stripes on a particular bit of road and the ability to call such a thing up quickly. *No one expects to paint anything*, but the tool is there if it is needed.

One point which did come up in discussions and which will make things easier: parking on Streatley High Street won't be permitted.

## **6. County Councillor Report.**

Cllr. Sexon was not at the meeting so no report.

## **7. District Councillor Report.**

None.

## **8. Traffic & Pavements Group – report & update.**

Richard Wingfield did not have anything significant to a report for the meeting.

## **9. Village Hall Report**

Stephen Trinder. No report.

## **10. Planning**

P13/S0210/LB External works including enlarged window opening on east elevation, formation of double door opening to south elevation, installation of conservation rooflight to front to serve stairwell and internal works including conversion of bedroom to en-suite bathroom. The Baulk, Path Hill, Goring Heath RG8 7RE. Recommend No Strong Views.

P12/S3199/Ful Land at Old Gardens. An amended drawing had been sent for this application, showing that the bedroom window with a Juliet Balcony, the window remains but the balcony removed.

## **11. Village Green Committee**

**Football Pitch** – the junior football pitch should now be playable. We need to arrange for the white lines to be marked and AFC Whitchurch are in the process of applying for monies to acquire goal posts. Before the pitch is used the access to the adjacent horse field to enable easy ball retrieval needs to be put in place as agreed with the field owner – the Parish Clerk has the details of this and has previously obtained a quote for the materials required.

**Car Park** – the wooden post and rail fence has now been erected around the required part of the car park. We are now awaiting the final bit of work to be undertaken by Swallow Developments on our behalf, which is the re-installation of the 5 bar gate across the back of the car park. Once this work and the planting have been completed we will need to consider how access to the car park is controlled / look into purchase and installation of a lockable bollard.

**Planting** – the initial WoTHabs planting session went ahead in Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2013 with a good turnout of volunteers from around the village. The majority of the mixed hedge was planted, along with 6 trees. This leaves the remainder of the mixed hedge, the holly hedge and 4 remaining trees to plant.

We are currently being held up waiting for the 5 bar gate to be installed and for a skip (which is on site due to the laying of the shared driveway) and some soil to be moved out of the way, however the follow up planting session now needs to be arranged. Sally Woolhouse has sent a comprehensive email covering the final items which need to be completed.

**Sponsorship** – in total we had 10 offers to sponsor trees and 4 offers to sponsor benches, which is great news. 6 of the trees have been planted, 2 are on site awaiting planting and the final 2 are on order.

The benches have all been ordered (and I think delivered) and we are now awaiting slightly better weather to agree siting and installation of these. The Parish Clerk is arranging plaques to go on the trees and benches that require them.

**Website** – as the Village Green will soon be regularly used, the Village Green section of the website now needs to be updated with a calendar showing when it is booked out and also a booking form and contact details for potential hirers.

**12. Finance** – Approve Payments **APPROVED.** To note receipts.

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
28/01/2013	Sustainable Furniture UK Ltd	08	£370	Bench for VG (Caroline Hooper)
29/01/2013	Sustainable Furniture Ltd	08	£370	Bench for VG
31/01/2013	Sustainable Furniture UK Ltd	76	£740	2 benches for VG
01/02/2013	J. Welham	SO	£419	Jan Salary
01/02/2013	HMRC	SO	£95	Tax January
08/02/2013	Wot Current Account	TRANSFER	£8	transfer to clear overdraft
20/02/2013	SustainableFurniture UK LTd	78	£609	2 benches, plain & luytens
28/02/2013	Playsafety Ltd	79	£86	Playground inspection 2011
28/02/2013	Swallow Developments Ltd	80	£984	Fencing on VG
28/02/2013	Penwood Nurseries	81	£142	2 trees for VG + delivery cost
28/02/2013	Playsafety Ltd	79	£86	Palyground inspection 2011
28/02/2013	Playsafety Ltd	79	£86	Inspection 2011
04/03/2013	K. Brooks	82	£5	Bulbs & seeds for mound.

**Total** 3,087.50  
**Payments**

To Note Receipts.

None.

The Clerk reported that she had struggled to get 3 quotes for the Grass Cutting Contract at such short notice so close to the season starting. As the previous contractor had just closed his business without warning and advised by email during February.

The Council had been informed and it was too late to start a full tender process.

Two quotes had been received, both ex VAT from,  
Berinsfield Community Business Total £3071 for the season.  
CD Facilities Total £4620 for the season.

The council agree to award the contract to Berinsfield Community Business.

### **13. Environment Group Report**

Cllr. Brooks reported,

1. More work has been carried out on the Mount project, which is shaping up nicely. This has included more grass seeding and planting of bulbs for the spring and summer.
2. The leaflets delivered to the village asking for sponsors of trees and benches for the village green produced many generous donations and The Village Green Committee are in the process of allocating these.
3. More planting is envisaged shortly when the contractors have finished their work.
4. A request from the Allotment Society to contribute 50% of the price of a new tractor which could also be used for other tasks other than the allotments say to pick up leaves in Hardwick Road for instance. This will be put to the PC.
5. There seems to be little movement on removing the debris from the virtual pavement opposite the Greyhound in Eastfield Lane so I am proposing we get a work party together and clear it ourselves.
6. There was a successful work party last weekend, which we were involved in to create the new path at the southern edge of Hardwick Road. Many volunteers turned out and under the guidance of Sally and Peter Woolhouse we proceeded to hack our way through the jungle. All the people involved should be congratulated for turning out on a cold Sunday morning in February.
7. The Environmental Group has also been involved in the work to be carried out in Muddy Lane. Sally, John and myself met with the representative from SE who was very knowledgeable about trees and we carefully surveyed the area to determine which trees must go in terms of safety for the overhead electric cables. It was also very pleasing that they are also willing to remove other trees at the same time which are not suitable. Initially the overall impression will be that may be too much has been removed however this will allow vigorous growth for the younger saplings and produce a fine habitat for years to come.
8. A meeting with Keith Stenning and Lee Turner (OCC) Chris Hulme (police) and Councillor Rodney Rose with myself, Harry and Peter Hawley to discuss the Bridge closure when it is rebuilt in the autumn proved very useful. We still need to decide how we are going to ensure that it is not too chaotic but of course we must expect some disruption to our normal life.
9. Lastly the long awaited installation of our new light opposite the Greyhound may be imminent, as I understand from my colleague Alan Cockbill at OCC who is in charge of lighting.

### **14. Sustainability and Allotment Report**

#### **Allotments:**

The WOT PC/WDAS Agreement presented at January's meeting has been agreed by WDAS with the 50% of annual NSLAG fees.

- Request the parish Clerk issue a signed copy under PC letter head to the WDAS and for the PC records.
- Request the PC issue the WDAS an invoice for £183.95 for 50% of this year's NSLAG fees.

Attended the WDAS AGM on Friday:

- Ros Heath re-elected Chairman, Mike Marshall - Treasurer, and Roy Tichelli – Secretary.
- Outline of the PC WDAS agreement communicated to members and agreed
- Members agreed to the new Tenancy Agreement between individual members and WDAS. Mike to request Jenny's support to implement this.
- WDAS agreed to increase annual fees from £14 to £20 for full allotment and £10 for half allotment. Rationale was to keep up with inflation, allow tenants to value plots more, and to allow for capital improvements such as new tractor lawnmower.
- Other improvements to use of WOT web-site to communicate waiting list and general information to be implemented on the coming year.
- Increased participation and cooperation with PC is seen as positive.

**Whitchurch Maze Committee** Going ahead with Maze brick upgrade for this spring. Brick application form to be included in net week's Bulletin as an insert.

- Goal is to sell 130 brick. 100 brick sales will pay for upgrade to existing bricks. Response required by 30<sup>th</sup> April.
- 30 additional sales needed to pay for new cover for pedestal to the same standard as the ne Whitchurch History plaque.
- Felipa House to be POC for ordering and payment on behalf of the Whitchurch Society
- Issue of £1000 held by Whitchurch society put to one side.
- Red Hadley paver bricks to be provided by: [engravebricks.co.uk](http://engravebricks.co.uk)
- Phil Wise will perform the Maze upgrade, probably in June.

### **Hardwick Road Verges Project:**

PC should have received £8000 for the Hardwick road improvements.

- £2000 original Big Society Funding
- £6000 form OCC for 2 verges renovation

Unsuccessful in additional £2000 proposal for TOE2 funding.

Work on pathway near Hardwick Estate entrance started February 24<sup>th</sup> with several volunteers – SSE to complete the tree cutting work due to power lines.

Next Steps:

- OCC Council designers to propose design and estimate for work at Village entrance and verges– to include drains and bollard locations and design – waiting for a response from the council.
- Hire contractors and organise volunteers for Whitchurch Village entrance
- Complete work on verges along as current budget allows according to agreed prioritisation.

### **PAWS Climate Week and 2013 Programme:**

March 4- 10 is National Climate Week. PAWS sponsoring activities include:

- Whitchurch Litter Blitz – Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March 11 – 1pm meeting at Greyhound
- Extreme Weather and Flooding- Professor Nigel Arnell, Director of the Walker Climate Institute, Reading University and other local experts. x Pangbourne Village Hall. Thursday, 07 March, 8- 9:30pm.
- Youth Climate Action Workshop, Langtree School, Woodcote. 22 March from 4 – 7pm – invitation only
- Recycle Swap Shop, Saturday March 9<sup>th</sup>, 9.30 -12.00pm, Pangbourne Village Hall

I request  
that the  
PAWS  
annual  
programme  
be  
published  
in the  
Whitchurch  
Bulletin:

### **15. Other Matters for the Chairman**

Richard Wingfield requested if on the website which area each Parish Council dealt with be added so the public would know who to contact. Council agree Clerk to action.

He also requested that the pending work be SSE should be put on the village website, Clerk to send details.

*Members of the public then left the meeting.*

The council then invited Harvey Ainley to speak, he gave details of his interest to become a Parish Councillor.

Cllr. Brooks proposed him, seconded by The Chairman, Mr. Harvey Ainley was co-opted to be a member of the Parish Council.

**16. Note date of next Meetings:**

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April Annual Village Assembly.**

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May Annual Parish Meeting.**

**Meeting closed at 9.30pm**

**Signed.....Chairman/Date.....**