



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Virtually at 20:00 Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

**Members Present**

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

**Officers Present:**

Clerk	Jane M. Yamamoto
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**Public and Press:** 4 residents

The meeting started at 20:00.

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|-----|---|-------|
| 1   | <b>Apologies for absence &amp; Mission Statement</b>  | 20:00 |
|     | No apologies were made.   |       |
| 2   | Election of Chair, Vice-Chair, RFO, Membership of Working Groups and Committees   | 20:05 |
|     | <b>Resolutions:</b> The Chair, Vice-Chair, RFO were re-elected. The Parish Council voted to make Cllr Smith the Chair of TAPWG and the other committee members were re-elected. The updated Parish Council Points of Contacts are provided in Attachment 1. Cllr Steward resigned as the Parish Councillor for Open Spaces. |       |
| 3   | Co-option of New Councillor   | 20:10 |
|     | <b>Resolution:</b> The Council voted to co-opt Paul O'Grady as a Parish Councillor.   |       |
| 4   | <b>Declaration of Interests</b> by Councillors on any items on the Agenda   |       |
|     | No declarations were made.  |       |
| 5   | Public Forum - an opportunity for members of the public to express their point of view on any item on the agenda.   | 20:15 |
| 5.1 | A resident expressed serious concerns about the discharge application for Eastfield House. There was no way to increase the parking space, the Travel Plan was out of date and they had cut down trees in the Conservation Area.  |       |
| 5.2 | A resident stated that the Eastfield House applicant had provided misleading and inaccurate information. The plans doubled the number of the care home residents with only 15 parking spaces and made no considerations for the consequences of traffic.  |       |
|     | Cllr Smith agreed with both residents' points and confirmed that the Parish Council would continue to object to the proposals despite SODC's approval of the Travel Plan after an appeal had been lodged. Cllr Steward felt that the applicant had lied on their application.   |       |
| 6   | Chairman's Announcements  | 20:25 |

I have been taking a Community Development course for the past couple of months sponsored by Oxfordshire Community First and Abingdon College and it has given me some ideas for community building initiatives over the next year as we come out of lock down. As things start opening up in the village, I suggest that we think about focussing on the well-being of our community:

- Encourage the re-engagement of community groups
- Organise a community celebration by September 2021
- Agree a way forward for new community ownership of the Fete for 2022
- Consider an initiative that Community First Oxfordshire would be willing to help us with called: Take Stock and do a Community Review. This is not meant to be a new Village Plan, but as it has now been a few years since we completed all the surveys we did for that, it could be a good way to re-engage with the community to better understand their needs and to help get more people involved in planning new initiatives to encourage community spirit going forward.

I sent around a brochure and I think it is something we as a council could look at doing once we have the new members on-board and up to speed if things continue to open up. I think this is a subject for slightly later in the perhaps after the summer when we see how much things have opened up, but I would be interested to hear people's thoughts about this.

Councillors seemed generally supportive of these ideas.

7 To approve minutes of the meeting of April 8<sup>th</sup> 2021.

**Resolution:** The Council voted to approve the minutes.

8 Planning Applications – to discuss and agree Council's response to the following: 20:35

8.1 P16/S1919/DIS/ 20:20

Eastfield House, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7EJ

Development work as amended Travel Plan received 31 March 2021. The amendment is for: As amended by Landscaping Plan received 8 April 2021

**Resolution:** The Council voted to object to the application and submitted the following comments to the Planning Officer in charge of the application. The Council voted to object to the discharge of the conditions. They do not believe that the Travel Plan is up to date or accurate and that it is based on assumptions that are unrealistic and which are unenforceable. There are serious concerns that the onsite parking will prove to be inadequate and that vehicles will park on the cul de sac road which has no footpaths and will consequently cause a major inconvenience and a safety hazard to the residents and to children going to and from the School at the far end of the road.

There are also concerns about the attitude shown to the trees on the site. In the past the applicant has cut down important trees on this Conservation Area site and has now presented plans of the remaining trees which are not accurate and does not take into account tree growth over the past decade.

Finally, the applicant has presented floor space figures that do not add up, and we fear that the total capacity of the Home could be increased beyond the forty-five beds stated on the application further exacerbating the parking problem. Even without an increase in capacity the parking provision is inadequate and the proposed overdevelopment of the site leaves absolutely no room for increased provision on site.

**Action 174** – Cllr Donahue to write a letter to the District Councillor and MP concerning the objection to the Eastfield House application.

8.2 P21/S1208/DIS 20:45

The Limes, 14 Swanston Field, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7HP

The application is for discharge of condition 3 (Schedule of Materials) in application P18/S1756/HH Proposed front and rear extensions and internal alterations.

**Resolution:** The Council voted to submit they support the application.

8.3 P21/S1447/HH  
Willow House, Eastfield Lane, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7EJ  
Proposed garage conversion into habitable space with new front windows and side door.

**Resolution:** The Council voted to approve this application.

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

No reports were received.

10 **Finance:**

20:35

10.1 **Resolution:** The following payments were approved for May:

Payment	Amount
Clerk salary (May 2021)	BACS
Zoom (May 2021)	£14.29 DD
Philip Weir (website hosting)	£61.10
Scofell	£699.32
A. Aitchison (poles for football nets)	£151.95
Ruby & Grace (roses for Hoptons)	£17.50 DD
Community First (2021-22 membership)	£55.00
Came & Company (Annual insurance)	£626.94
Nova Press (Inv 8642 Bulletin)	£450.00
SODC (Q1 Dog bin emptying)	£215.28
Acqua Salva Serra (Inv 841 for repair to tap on VG)	£94.00
Heritage Trees (Manor Road)	£2,730

10.2 Bank reconciliations and reports

**Resolution:** The Council voted to approve the reports.

10.3 CIL monies received

10.4 Councillor Grant received

10.5 Insurance renewal (Attachment 2)

**Resolution:** The Council voted to accept the insurance renewal and approved the premium of £626.94.

11 Motion to approve Cllr Leadbeater-Hart to join TAPWG – Cllr Leadbeater-Hart seconded by Cllr Steward 21:15

**Resolution:** The Council voted to defeat the motion.

12 Motion for the TAPWG TOR 4.1 Membership to be amended to, “At least two members of the members will be of the Parish Council”. – Cllr Steward seconded by Cllr Leadbeater-Hart. Cllr Steward raised another motion to defer the motion. **Resolution:** The Council voted to defeat the motion to defer discussion debate on this motion. 21:20

**Resolution:** The Council voted to defeat the original motion.

- 13 Motion to approve that the resident concerned may proceed with their proposed work on the yew trees on the Parish Council side of the boundary in the Manor Road Conservation Area – Cllr Higley seconded by Cllr Smith 21:35  
**Resolution:** The Council voted to approve the motion.
- 14 Motion to approve the vote by email for the Whitchurch Award – Cllr Donahue seconded by Cllr Smith  
**Resolution:** The Council voted to approve the motion.
- 15 Parish Councillor application and recruiting  
The Parish Council agreed to interview the candidate that has applied and other candidates that apply prior to the next meeting.
- 16 Update on Deep Cleanse Table for May 13-17, 2021 (Attachment 3)
- 17 Update on the Duty of Care work by Heritage Trees – Cllr Higley (Attachment 4) 21:45
- 18 To review progress on any open actions from previous Parish Council meetings and agree any revision of actions on the action list
- 19 To confirm the dates and times of the next meetings on Thursday, May 20, for Annual Parish Meeting and Thursday, July 1, 2021 for the next meeting. The next meeting will be delayed as virtual Parish Council meetings are no longer allowed under previous lockdown legislation and there is uncertainty as to whether face-to-face meetings will be allowed until after 21 June.  
**Resolution:** The Parish Council agreed to delegate powers to the Clerk to make payments for items already budgeted for until the next meeting in July, consulting with the Chairman as required.
- 20 Confidential discussion for thank you notes from the Parish Council 21:55
- 21 Meeting closed. 22:00

## Attachment 1

### First points of contact for Parish Council related activities

- **General** – Chairman Jim Donahue, 07557 668601 or [Email](#) or Clerk Jane Yamamoto, 07876 714906 or [Email](#)
- **Village Hall** – PC contact Katherine Higley, *for information on hiring the hall please see the web-page [here](#).*
- **Traffic and Parking** – Diana Smith (*see TAPWG below*).
- **Pedestrian Safety** – Jim Donahue [Email](#), Diana Smith [Email](#), Carrie Leadbeater-Hart [Email](#)
- **OCC road, pavement and drainage** work – Jim Donahue, 07557 668601 or [Email](#)
- **Open Spaces Maintenance** – vacant
  - Village Maintenance Contractor Supervising Officer – Jon Steward
  - Village maintenance working parties, and Open Space guardian responsibilities are coordinated by the [Green Team](#)
- **Allotments** – John Coupland – WDAS Chair, [Email](#), PC contact - Katherine Higley, [Email](#)
- **Village Emergency Planning**, Jim Donahue, 07557 668601 or [Email](#), Village Emergency contacts are defined in the Emergency Plan [here](#).
- **Planning Applications** – applications assigned to lead councillors (contact Clerk Jane Yamamoto for general questions, 07876 714906 or [Email](#))
- **GDPR Officer** – Katherine Higley, [Email](#)

### Working Groups affiliated with the Parish Council

#### **Village Green Working Group:**

##### **Terms of Reference**

Alistair Aitchison (Chair and Football Club) [Email](#)

Cormac Neeson (Cricket Club)

Gavin Jones (Whitchurch Primary School)

Gill Goodwin (WoTHabs)

TBC (Parish Council Representative)

#### **Traffic and Parking Working Group (TAPWG):**

##### Terms of Reference

Diana Smith (Chair) – [Email](#)

David Baty

Marc Cresswell

Linda Gray

Kit Marriott

Frances Parkes

Mike Rayment

#### **Tea Hut Replacement Working Group:**

##### **Terms of Reference**

Chair and members TBC

Attachment 2

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

Date: 13th May 2021

Dear Sirs,

**Our Client: Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council**

We are the Risk and Insurance Brokers for the above clients and have pleasure in confirming details of their insurance arrangements as follows:

**Business Description** Parish Council

**Employers' Liability Insurance**

Insurer Ecclesiastical Insurance Group

Policy Number 5306532

Expiry Date 31st May 2022

Limit of Indemnity any one occurrence £10,000,000

**Public/Products Liability Insurance**

Insurer Ecclesiastical Insurance Group

Policy Number 5306532

Expiry Date 31st May 2022

Limit of Indemnity any one occurrence £10,000,000

This statement of cover extract has been prepared purely as confirmation of the insurance in force at the date of this letter which is subject to the terms and conditions of the insurance policy. We accept no responsibility for the inadvertent or negligent act, error or omission on our part in preparing the statement or for any loss, damage or expense incurred by the recipient arising from reliance on the information given. We remain solely the agent of our Client and owe no legal duty or otherwise to the any third party.

Should the insurance cover be cancelled, assigned or changed in any way during the period of insurance neither we nor insurers accept any obligation to notify any recipient.

Yours sincerely,

**Andy Cotter** Cert CII

Director

Came & Company Local Council Insurance (a trading name of Arthur J. Gallagher)



Attachment 3

**South Oxfordshire District Council – Deep Cleanse Service**

<u>AREA</u>	<u>LITTER PICK</u>	<u>SWEEP</u>	<u>WEEDS</u>	<u>MOSS</u>	<u>PHOTO</u> <u>(If applicable)</u>	<u>PRIORITY?</u>
High Street from Greyhound Pub to Toll Bridge		Cleaning of pavements- roots growing through pavements make this a dangerous footway for a heavily used area				<u>High</u>



## Attachment 4

### Duty of Care report – key findings

#### **Manor Road**

##### Group of Ash

Heritage Tree Services have recommended that the group of Ash is monitored in 24 months for signs of Ash dieback. They may have to be felled or re-pollarded depending on the result.

##### Group of pioneering Sycamore

Heritage Tree Services has recommended monitoring the group and have also recommended that we consider proactive management in the future by thinning out numbers of these species. Heritage Tree Services recommends that this would need to be part of a cohesive management plan with neighbouring properties.

##### Laurels

This species can become invasive over time and Heritage Tree Services have recommended that they do not impede on the footpath. We should draw this to the attention of the Green Team.

##### Overall recommendation

Trees 9 through to 22 comprised solely of Yews and are part of historical landscape which formed the entrance to Coombe Park. Since the initial site visit and subsequent survey, logs have been placed to deter car parking on the verge.

Heritage Tree Services have recommended:

- a. Continue to support the development of wildflowers to promote wildlife ecology in this area. This could be promoted using insect habitation, nest boxes, hedgehog hotels, wood piles etc, along with a community information board to promote the wildlife friendly approach.
- b. The continued use of logs to prevent car parking, this will protect the Yew trees present from compaction and root damage. The use of logs is strongly recommended as this presents multiple benefits such as fungal associations beneficial to plant health, encourage deadwood specific invertebrates to name a few.

#### **Manor Road Playground**

Heritage Tree Services carried out a ground assessment of the beech tree in the playground during the initial survey.

Heritage Tree Services have now carried out a climbing survey. This survey has showed that the overall vitality of the tree appears good, the base and secondary unions are all sound, the main significant union has historically failed and the poor observed union on the south eastern lateral should be managed as a precautionary measure. This should be completed by September 2021.

Pink Chestnut – a resistograph was taken of the Pink Chestnut. The findings show only healthy timber present with no indication of decay other than the localised probing which was externally observed. No further action required.

In addition to this Heritage Tree Services have recommended that we leave a metre clearance of grass around each tree for the benefit of the trees.