

# WHITCHURCH ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish meeting of Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council on Monday 5th November 2012 at the Village Hall.

## **Present:**

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

In Attendance – Richard Wingfield, John Southey WOTHABS/TAPAG. Geoff Weir.

## **1. Apologies for absence**

Cllr. Nigel Grove, District Councillor Pearl Slatter, County Councillor Dave Sexon. Stephen Trinder VHC.

## **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.

Geoff Weir addressed the meeting stating that despite the article in the Henley Standard there are no plans to increase the toll charges.

The Transport Management plan is underway and the first meeting has been held between Oxfordshire County Council and West Berkshire County Council.

The temporary footpath bridge will start August 2013 and Bridge construction work will start the last week of October 2013.

## **4. Agree Minutes of Annual PC Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2012.**

Approved.

## **5. Matters arising from those minutes not on the agenda elsewhere.**

None.

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

None as absent.

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

None as absent.

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

Richard Wingfield reported the following concerns,

**Pedestrian safety on bridge approaches.** Tapag suggests that the PC should urge the bridge company to proceed with planning work on both approaches now, even if financial uncertainties prevent the company from committing to the work now.

**Drainage on Pangbourne approach to Toll Bridge.** The Bridge Company has re-laid a drain and this seems to have solved the puddle problem.

**High Street crossing.** Tapag currently awaits clarification of OCC requirements for a crossing point at the Greyhound to assist school families.

**Passing refuge for vehicles in mid-High St.** Tapag awaits OCC's opinion on their proposal for no-parking lines on each side of the Microbrewery entrance.

**Trimming of hedges that obstruct pedestrians.** Almost all obstructing hedges have now been cut back. Tapag approached this in two ways: by asking landowners and, where necessary, by direct action.

**Bus stop area.** The excessive growth of ivy on the garden wall of The Mount has been cut back, resulting in greatly improved visibility and safety for pedestrians. Keith Brooks and Stephen Trinder have put a lot of voluntary time and effort into this maintenance work, including top-soiling and grass-seeding the bank. However, efforts to re-establish a protective kerb near the bus stop have not made progress.

**Inspection, potholes, etc.** Two Tapag members carried out a routine inspection in October of all village roads and pavements. John Southey has been following up by reporting defects. In Manor Road there is a water-filled hole that badly needs attention and OCC has said they can't help. The PC should consider what action to take. Generally, the response by OCC to our reporting of defects is poor; some are over 12 months old, without action.

**Weed killing to protect kerbs.** Parish Council budget will be needed in the spring for next year's weed-spraying.

#### **9. Village Hall Committee – update and report.**

No report.

#### **10. Planning.**

No new applications.

#### **11. Village Green Committee**

Cllr. Austin reported,

The Junior football pitch has been mown and the winter fertilizer will be laid to help strengthen the grass. A possible two more cuts will be made this year depending on growth. The pitch will be useable next Spring and all users are aware of this timeline.

Cllr. Austin held a meeting with the owner of the neighbouring field, Richard Hazell and it has been agreed to insert 3 sections of post and rail fencing to replace the wire fencing to enable people to climb over the fence to retrieve footballs should they need to. The quote obtained by the Clerk was approx £90.00 for the materials. Volunteers will need to be recruited to help erect the fencing sections, it was agreed to approach Richard Hazell for help with this, the work can be carried out next Spring.

The Car Park is completed and the grass-crete is getting covered by the grass well. The Landscaping plans have been checked and Sally Woolhouse has obtained quotes for the hedging and trees as specified. Some of the hedging is none native and the Clerk to write to SODC planning requesting permission to change the planting, to avoid expensive plants being purchased that then are likely to die. The Lions are donating one tree to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. The plans also state some iron railings be erected, Swallow Developments are obtaining quotes for the PC as they also need some iron work for their development and will incorporate the two.

Swallow reported a large puddle in the car park during the heavy rains and have recommended that a soak away be installed to alleviate this happening again. They have been asked to quote for this work.

The Chairman confirmed that he has now signed the user agreement and returned a copy to the Cricket Club Secretary David Mattimoe.

Cllr. Austin is expecting a baby next year so Cllr. Brooks will deputise on the Village Green Committee on her behalf from January. Tim Close has resigned from the VGC as he has returned to Australia, David Mattimoe has joined to replace him.

## 12. Finance – Approve Payments/note receipts None.

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
26/09/2012	Thames Water	54	£36	Water bill 26/6-12/9/12
01/10/2012	J. Welham	SO	£373	Sept Salary
01/10/2012	HMRC	SO	£83	Tax Sept
03/10/2012	Swallow Development Ltd	56	£25,800	VG car park
01/11/2012	J. Welham	SO	£373	October Salary
01/11/2012	HMRC	SO	£83	Tax Oct
03/11/2012	R.M.Weavers	SO	£1,145	Aug/Sept Grass cutting
03/11/2012	R.M.Weavers	SO	£170	Collect fees CP + cut FP
03/11/2012	K. Brooks	60	£56	Course and compost
05/11/2012	Nova Press	57	£367	Bulletin
05/11/2012	RBL Poppy Appeal	58	£20	Wreath for remembrance
05/11/2012	Souther Electric	59	£28	Pavilion electric bill
		<b>Total Payments</b>	28,533.6 7	

**APPROVED**

**Receipts to Note.**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cash Received from</u>	<u>Receipt Description</u>	<u>Receipt Total</u>
25/09/2012	Cricket Club	Electricity Bill	£27
28/09/2012	SODC	CIF Grant for Car Park	£11,137
01/10/2012	VG Bank Account	Funds for Car Park	£8,405
03/10/2012	SODC	2nd half precept	£12,109
15/10/2012	HMRC	VAT refund	£4,892
<b>Total Receipts</b>			<b>36,569.74</b>

**13. Environment Group – Report**

Cllr Brooks reported,

1. Following on from the initial work carried out on the area in front of the Mount a work party consisting of myself, Dianne, Stephen, Martin and Paul set about clearing the area of brambles and weeds. Many bags of waste were removed and using Paul's trailer this was disposed of. I also took a lot of extra material to the recycling centre at Oakley Wood. After this Stephen and myself dug over the area and planted grass seed and compost and now we have the basis of a lawn growing. This will be much better for the village as this is the first area people see when driving into the village from Whitchurch Hill. Also it is an where walkers sit and have a break and people waiting at the bus stop now have a better area to wait by. Many people have stopped and commented favourably on the improvement and the owner of the art gallery, which is opposite, has been very supportive with cups of tea.
2. The next work party will be of a similar nature with the aim of clearing the pathway at the end of Manor Road, which enables people to walk between houses and joins the two parts of the road. A resident of this road brought this to my attention and I have already some volunteers and hope to enlist some of the residents of the road. We will be carrying this out hopefully before the end of the year weather and commitments permitting.
3. The dog waste bin for Eastfield Lane at the bottom of the Cut is being installed this week on Thursday and I will be overseeing this. I have also ordered a new style bin which will put in place at the same time as this will then complete the replacement of all the bins for a more modern style and much more pleasing on the eye.
4. I have been informed that all the lights in Swanston Field will be replaced for newer units in the near future. The new light opposite the Greyhound is still outstanding but I have been in contact with Alan Cockbill from OCC who is trying to get it done.
5. The grips in Eastfield Lane unfortunately got blocked again so I cleared these.

6. Further enquiries about the possible planting of a beech hedge around the fence belonging to the new house on the Village Green have shown that this has already been planned.

41

7. A plaque was installed by myself and Stephen to commemorate the generous donation of the cricket field to the Parish council and residents of Whitchurch on Thames.
8. I attended the Chilterns AONB Planning Conference at Benson. The meeting provided valuable information which together with that gained from the forthcoming South Oxfordshire District Council Town and Parish Forum on 21 November will enable us to formulate a plan for the village and its future development.

#### **14. Sustainability & Allotments Report.**

Cllr Donahue reported,

##### **Allotments:**

Working to renew the Council agreement with NSLAG is up for 21 year renewal this year.

- Provided consolidated feedback from allotment society and council on draft contract for renewal. Waiting for response.
- Council clerk looking into legal services for a legal review of the document

WDAS has created a new Tenancy agreement it is planning to ask all members to sign up to. I think this is a big improvement as the current rules are not clearly documented anywhere. It will ensure tenants are aware of their obligations and provide the basis for revoking their allotments if they are not well maintained.

Clear communication of the society rules to members is one of the elements I've asked the Allotments society to include in a draft agreement between the Parish Council and Allotments society that I will forward shortly.

I've forwarded the tenancy agreement to all Parish Council Members for comment.

##### **Whitchurch Maze Committee**

Phil Wise has indicated interest in performing Maze upgrades, but probably not until May timeframe when the ground is not frozen. Based on this quote, and others if necessary, I can plan an estimate and pricing of new bricks along with a subscription target.

No progress on resolution of Maze funds held by the Whitchurch Society.

Successful PAWS Orchard Day held on 20th October at the Maze to prepare Juice from windfall apples collected around Pangbourne and Whitchurch. Over 15 litres of delicious juice prepared and a good time had by all!

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

The objectives are to make the following improvements to Hardwick Road between the village entrance and Hardwick Gate:

42

1. Restoring the carriageway passing place verges to make a consistent width, single carriageway road with clearly defined and maintained passing places at appropriate places.

2. Establishing continuous safe off-road access on the south side of Hardwick Road, connecting the pavements in the village with the miles of recreational walking, cycling and bridle paths available on Hardwick Estate.

A meeting was held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2012 between WoTHabs representatives, two landowners, Parish Council representatives and Dave Sexon, the Oxfordshire County Councillor for Whitchurch and Keith Stenning, the Area Steward for Highways in South Oxfordshire. The key points arising from the meeting were that OCC supported the project in principle and would be able to provide practical and advisory support when needed but not financial support. Agreement should be obtained from OCC before any works are carried out which affect the carriageway or the verges.

Dave Sexon highlighted a 'Big Society fund' that he had access to that we should submit a proposal for via the Parish Council. He felt that this project had a good chance of securing funding from this if it was submitted soon. The WOTHabs team had updated their proposal and will submit this shortly.

Other potential relevant funds have also been identified including a Chilterns Sustainable Development Fund.

It was agreed that the project details be sent to the Clerk so she can complete the application and sent to Dave Sexon as the deadline is 19<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

**15. Confidential Item – Clerk Salary Review.**

**See Appendix 1.**

**16. Note date of next Meeting Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012. (Budget Meeting only).**

**Meeting closed at 9.30pm**

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

