



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL
Whitchurch-On-Thames Village Hall 20:00 Thursday 14th November 2019

Members Present:

Chairman	Jim Donahue
Vice Chairman	Rachel Hatcher - arrived 8:10
Members	Katherine Higley – arrived 8:07 Jonathan Steward Diana Smith – Co-opted during meeting Jean Marc Grosfort – Co-opted during meeting

Officers Present:

Clerk	Jim Donahue - Acting
-------	----------------------

Public and Press:

Will Barclay, Jessica Reed, Dan Wood, David Green, Richard Wingfield, Neil Huntington, Hilary Jensen, Robin McCaw, Peter Dragonetti

The meeting started at: 20:07

- 1 Apologies for absence & read Mission Statement 20:00
- 2 Declaration of Interests by Councillors on any items on the Agenda.
- 3 Update on interviews for new Clerk - The Council has been reviewing a number of candidates. They recently made an offer to a qualified clerk from the local council. As this just occurred this week we are still waiting for references. If they accept the role the handover will start this month and the new Clerk will be in place for the December meeting. 20:05
- 4 Co-opting of new Parish Councillors
 - **Resolution:** Councillors unanimously voted for Diana Smith to join the council.
 - **Resolution:** Councillors unanimously voted for Jean Marc Grosfort to join the council.
 -
- 5 Advertisement of Councillor Vacancy – **Resolution:** The council agreed to advertise the vacancy left by Warren Beard’s resignation.
- 6 Public Forum - an opportunity for members of the public to express their point of view on any item on the agenda. With the Chairman’s permission, a member of the public may express their point of view on specific items of business. Five minutes are reserved per item. 20:15

Jessica Reed has recently contacted the council about recent dents to both her and her partner’s cars on the High Street. She said that she would be interested in joining TAPAG.

Hilary Jensen requested that the draft minutes be issued prior to their approval at the following meeting to allow Parish Council decisions to be communicated earlier. It would also allow interested 3rd parties mentioned in the minutes to comment on the minutes prior to approval. Cllr Donahue explained that the decision made at the September meeting was based on the time the clerk needed to prepare minutes and to allow councillors at least a week to review minutes before they were finalised. He indicated that they could review the situation once a new clerk is in place.

7 Chairman’s Announcements 20:25

Cllr Donahue noted that next month’s meeting will need to be moved from the 12th December due to elections. He asked all councillors to confirm if they would be available for a meeting on the preceding Thursday 5th December when the Village Hall will be available.

6 To approve minutes of the meeting of 10th October 2019 20:30
Resolution: Minutes with attachments approved.

7 Planning Applications – to discuss and agree Council’s response to the following: 20:35

7.1 P19/S2736/LB 2 Hill Cottages High Street Whitchurch on Thames RG8 7HG
 Installation of a roof light to the rear elevation. **Resolution:** The Council voted to object to the retrospective planning approval and support the recommendations of the conservation officer who clearly stated the windows do not follow conservation area guidelines.

7.2 P19/S0366/FUL – Amendment to plans for fence between Village Hall and Coombe Park
Resolution: The Council agreed to stand by the previous objections that were made for this planning application. In addition, we noted that the trees that are being removed are diseased but hope that some other native trees can be replanted. Clerk to update comments.

8 To receive reports from the representatives of Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council. 20:45

8.1 SODC District Councillor Report - SODC update provided in **Attachment A**

9 Finance 20:50

9.1 To approve the payment schedule for October

The following payments were made:

Payment	Amount
Azalea Landscapes for annual maintenance work	£4875.00

Rialtis Business Solutions – VAT on annual license for financial package	£23.80
Amanda Holland – reimbursement for remembrance Sunday wreath	£13.50
Contribution to Goring Heath remembrance Sunday bugler	£30.00
Old Stables rental for councillor and clerk interviews	£30.00

10 Traffic and Parking improvements update – Will Barclay/ TAPAG

21:00

To request Parish Council approval for next phase of improvements including required Budget

Will stated that he was grateful for the advice of Mode Consulting which has been very helpful to secure the support of OCC. He provided the following summary of the plan:

The plan involves restricting parking along the High Street with double yellow lines. Within the lines there will be space for 24 cars in 5 distinct blocks. There will be space for 17 cars between Manor Road and the Church entrance in three blocks. There will be 7 car spaces between Manor Road and the top narrows. The top narrows will have space for 4 cars. Importantly both the top and bottom narrows will have restrictions close to the pinch points. For example, the bottom narrows northbound exit will have restrictions from the post box to beyond the northern boundary of the Greyhound. Both of these measures should eliminate the congestion and southbound pavement hopping which is becoming all too familiar. The other parking blocks ensure there is enough space for cars and the refuse vehicles to move into allowing better flow all along the High Street.

There is not enough room at the top narrows for legal pavement parking. Therefore, our consultant suggests actual bays are marked discreetly. I have asked for the same for the 3 spaces just north of Manor Road as cars are now attracted to the pavement stopping pushchair and mobility scooter access. I've also asked for consideration to be given to discreet bay marking in the bays south of Manor Road. This would be a cross at a 'large car width' distance from the kerb. None of these minor requests will materially affect the overall plan but may improve it.

The next step, PC willing, is to organise an informal public consultation in late January where diagrams will be on display and TAPAG members will be available to answer questions. It may be prudent to ask a member of Mode to attend but that is an additional £250 and not budgeted for. As in all things it is the minority that usually make the noise, therefore, it is very important for those in favour of addressing the traffic

issues to attend the informal consultation and make their feelings known. At least this will give us an opportunity to gauge sentiment. This will be good preparation for the formal consultation which should take place in early spring.

As to resolving other traffic issues that came out of the village plan this will be continue to be progressed. Until designated 'Residents Only' parking can be enforced it is not currently possible to implement this part of the longer-term plan, but we are expecting changes to the law to devolve enforcement of traffic to local authorities. Peter Dragonetti indicated that prospect for devolving traffic enforcement to local authority in South Oxfordshire is in consultation, but was not aware of a timeline.

The concerns of verge erosion, both in the High Street and Manor Road, are already being addressed separately through another department within OCC.

A 20mph speed limit would have little effect traffic flow, however, moving forward this is still part of the overall Traffic and Parking plan for the village to address safety concerns.

Will also noted that the new flows will help reduce pollution due to the need for less stopping and starting.

Cllr Higley suggested briefing the new traffic proposal to school children to make them aware of local issues.

Richard Wingfield suggested use of conservation area the yellow lines which are thinner than standard yellow lines. He also suggested that the PC consider issuing ticket notices which would not carry fines, but they have proved effective in the past.

Resolution: The PC voted unanimously to support TAPAG progressing with traffic flow improvement initiative.

Resolution: The PC approved the funding request which is in line with the previously approved long-term budget agreed for the Village Plan. This is for an additional £1000 for Mode Consulting (£3000 in total) and £5120 to pay OCC in the next fiscal year for consultation and implementing the yellow lines.

- 11 Changes to Boat and Landscaping at Church Bell Mouth – Will Barclay 21:20

Will Barclay provided a request for Parish Council contributions to the relandscaping of the land in front of the Bell Mouth at the church entrance. Will was representing the owner of the land and said that he was working with a group of her friends to help her refurbish the land. He presented a summary of the amount of money that he was aware that the parish council spent on the development and maintenance of the areas over the past 2-3 years. He was not able to share a timeline or cost estimate for the transition.

Cllr Donahue reiterated a previous discussion the PC had, stating that they would like the transition from the current landscaping with the boat to be relatively seamless.

Members of the Council indicated that a contribution from the PC may be appropriate, but it was not possible to do so unless we can see the plans and projected costs.

Richard Wingfield asked if the deeds were checked. Will understood that OCC Highways owns the land outside of the wooden posts but the landowner owns the land inside of the posts.

Action: Will to come back to the Parish Council with a plan for relandscaping the land including a budget for the work.

12 New Pavilion update – Neil Huntington 21:30

Neil reported good progress on from the New Pavilion team. Monthly meetings are being held and minutes are posted on the Whitchurch web-site along with other documents. Sarah resigned, but Frances Dixon joined so there are still a total of 6 members. The fundraising target is £300,000. The results from the quantity surveyor showed total costs of about £260,000, but recommended adding fees for contingency and inflation for an overall target of £300,000.

They are in the process for applying SODC Capital grants which is due in December. Jean Marc indicated that Village Hall team will not be applying for SODC capital grants so there will be no conflict between the two teams.

John Bradon is working to secure charitable status. They will also approach Sport England and other fundraising bodies. Cllr Higley asked if they could talk to school encourage children to be engineers.

13 To review progress on any open actions from previous Parish Council meetings and agree any revision of actions on the action list - including the following: 21:35

- PC – 126 - Cllr Steward to survey immediate neighbours of the Village Hall to see if they would like the boat there. **Closed:** Some immediate neighbours do not want the boat on Manor Road. Will suggested Hillside, Swanston Field, the Maze, or Polish Church.
- PC-127 - Cllr Steward to circulate the options to members of the Village Green WG and Green Team for feedback. A final decision on the bench design to be purchased to be presented at the next meeting. **Resolution:** Agreed to purchase three hardened wooden benches from Mole Valley. £190 each.

- PC 128 - Cllr Hatcher to provide update from TAPAG plans to protect the verge on High Street and Manor Road. **Update:** TAPAG is looking into this with OCC. Will suggested use of logs or stumps on temporary basis until OCC provides a permanent solution.
- PC 125 – Clerk to Prepare bank mandate variation to remove I Chantry, K Brookes, D Bowen, add remaining councillors, and update mailing address. Action: Cllr Donahue to follow-up. **Update:** Jim submitted the request but needs to verify if it went through.
- PC 131 - Cllr Steward to get 2 more quotes for weedkilling for a decision at the next meeting. Jon to send email summarising informal quotes. **Update:** Cllr Steward says that the Azalea Landscaping quote is the only one he could get as others would not provide quotes. Cllr Steward to send an email explaining why other providers are unable to provide quotes.

- 14 Discussion of approaches to address Dog Fouling on the Village Green 21:45
Jon proposing to laminate posters and laminate an put at certain places.

Resolution: The Council agreed that Cllr Steward should put up laminated copies of signs warning of the health risks of dog fouling. This would go on the Village Green and other areas where this is a problem.

- 15 Confidential Business - To consider and, if thought fit, approve the following motion: In 21:50
view of the confidential nature of the business about to transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw. **Resolution:** approved.

- 16 To review most recent GDPR request from Mr Bowen. 21:55

Resolution: The Council agreed a response Mr Bowen’s most recent request. The view was that the request was repetitive of previous requests. The Council had already provided the requested information under earlier responses.

- 17 To confirm the date and time of the next Meeting. 5th December 2019, 20:00 – subject to councillor availability.

- 18 Meeting Close 22:00

Action: Cllr Grosfort to find the insurance for the Village Hall and ensure the Liability Insurance has been renewed.

Meeting closed at 10:20.