

# *Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council*

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

## **PRESENT**

Chairman	Keith Brooks
Vice-Chairman	Jim Donahue
Councillors	Sarah Hanfrey Rachel Hatcher
Clerk	Felipa House

Public:

Hilary Jensen, Roger Pratap (Majesticare), Steve Oakes (Majesticare), Neil & Julie Huntington.

## **1. Apologies for absence**

Cllrs. Bowen & Huxtable.

## **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.

Roger Pratap reiterated Majesticare’s offer of presenting their ideas, answering any questions & receiving comments from residents. An open letter from Majesticare was sent to Cllr. Brooks & is now also on the website. Some tidying-up was carried out last week & security cameras with motion sensors will be installed. The idea of hoardings has been dismissed. Neil Huntington was concerned that a local rat problem may be exacerbated by open outbuildings at the back of the building & requested that Majesticare ensure the outbuildings are secured. He also asked whether the clean-up work was now completed. Roger stated that any left-over items will be removed on an ongoing basis. He will be visiting the site himself next week to check. Neil requested that the building be made properly wind- & watertight, including the roof, & every effort made to protect it from the elements & vandalism. Roger stated that all accessible areas on the ground floor had been boarded up. First-floor windows will also be securely & permanently shut as well by the contractors & Roger felt these were sufficient measures. Cllr. Hanfrey asked whether Neil would be allowed to accompany Roger when he visits the site. Roger agreed to this. Roger felt that the deterioration of the building was due more to vandalism & general wear & tear when it was previously occupied than it being left unoccupied for the last 18 months. Cllr. Hanfrey asked whether the Council would be able to see a copy of the Christie’s report detailing the condition of the building as it was. Roger will consider this request. Majesticare thought that rebuilding would commence within a few months of the building’s closure & hence had not secured/tidied the site immediately. Cllr. Brooks stated that he was happy to come along on a site visit as well if beneficial.

## **4. Agree minutes of Parish Council meeting 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

Cllr. Hatcher stated that the dates of the traffic survey were incorrect. Charles Cotgreave also wished some figures regarding the replacement village hall windows to be changed. The Clerk will make these amendments & reissue the Minutes for approval at next month’s meeting.

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

Cllr. Simister was not present.

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

Cllr. Bulmer was not present but had circulated his report before the meeting. A deal has been signed with the Government to deliver £215m of investment in transport infrastructure & affordable housing in Oxfordshire. The road money is for major improvements & cannot be used for day-to-day maintenance but will help to improve the overall standard of the road network.

OCC have a new website that brings together over 2,000 services & activities in one online directory, all aimed at giving residents useful information & advice on subjects to give them greater choice & control over the support & services they may need. See [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/livewell](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/livewell)

Oxfordshire will receive nearly £3m in extra funding from the Government to help repair local roads affected by this winter's weather.

## **7. Review planning applications**

Cllr. Brooks had received an email from a resident asking whether the Council could directly designate Eastfield House, rather than waiting for SODC. Cllr. Hanfrey will investigate & report back at next month's meeting.

**8. Finance** Approve payments & note receipts for the preceding month. Note current bank account reconciliation.

Monthly salary for the Clerk

Expenses for K. Brooks for printer cartridges (£10.05)

Invoice from SODC for dog-bin emptying Jan. – Mar. '18 (£50.23)

Payment to the Art Café for Village Plan open day in May (£25.00)

Invoice from SiteSpider for annual website maintenance (£50.00)

£70 had been received in advertising revenue for the 'Bulletin', as well as a refund for a training course from OALC (£48) & half of the allotment rental from WDAS (£204.37).

Cllr. Donahue requested 3 months' use of SurveyMonkey to obtain residents' opinions for the village plan. This will cost £37 per month. The Council approved this request.

The Section 137 limit for 2018/19 has been set at £7.86 per elector.

## **9. Village green**

An article about the Royal wedding event will be published in this month's 'Bulletin' & will also be on the website. The Council approved a request by the organisers for a balloon modeller &/or face painter at the event & will contribute up to £200 towards the cost.

## **10. Village green working group/pavilion**

Cllr. Donahue has asked Carrie Leadbeater-Hart to help regarding the amendments needed to the pavilion plans. Cllr. Hatcher will confirm whether she can do this.

Cllr. Donahue asked Cllr. Brooks whether a working party had been planned. Cllr. Brooks felt that everything was currently in order on the village green & that he would await direction from WoTHabs

as to how to proceed. One of the villagers has expressed an interest in their work & could perhaps be invited to join the VGWG.

The village maintenance schedule is now on the website & the 'News' section will reflect this. Cllr. Hanfrey will notify the village's Facebook page. She has already informed the PCC. Cllr. Brooks will inform the VGWG & cricket club.

### **11. TAPAG (Traffic and Parking Action Group)**

The laser traffic surveys have been arranged & will take place outside 'Racquets' on the High Street & in Hardwick Road.

TAPAG are trying to arrange a meeting with PCSO Bell & OCC Highways to discuss verge erosion, what facts TAPAG have uncovered from their work to date, output from the surveys & what are (un)reasonable courses of action. The Clerk volunteered to email her OCC Highways contact as he has prepared a lot of information for the Council in the past.

TAPAG are preparing for the open days & compiling questions for the surveys.

Cllr. Hatcher has emailed the Bridge Company & OCC regarding the extension of the 20mph limit.

### **12. Village hall refurbishment project**

Cllr. Donahue had submitted a motion requesting confirmation of the Council's decision to support & maintain the village hall in the short/medium-term. The supporting document had been submitted only a few days before the meeting; Cllr. Hanfrey did not feel this was enough time & abstained from the vote on this motion. The other councillors were in favour but the motion was not carried. The Clerk will clarify the position with OALC to ensure that this does not happen again.

Cllr. Hanfrey could not confirm the Council's decision regarding the village hall as she could find no evidence in the Minutes of this. She requested that the Clerk confirm where the Council's decision to support the village hall could be found.

Cllr. Hanfrey also requested that the Council review any documents or proposals from the village hall committee as soon as possible after their issue & that the VHMC compile a list of improvements needed, together with costs & recommendations.

A final quotation from The Wallingford Window Co. Ltd. has been received, with a final price of £8427.00 including VAT. The Council resolved unanimously to proceed with this purchase.

### **13. Village environment/maintenance**

The Clerk requested that the playground be checked regularly & its condition documented to satisfy insurance requirements. Cllr. Brooks volunteered to carry this out. The Clerk will create a template.

### **14. Village Plan**

2 open days are planned: Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May at the village hall & Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May at the Art Café. Surveys will also be distributed as people leave the Royal wedding party. A survey will be available on the website in May & June & hard copies can also be distributed to households if needed. The Clerk volunteered to collate these.

As well as payment for SurveyMonkey & the Art Café, the Council approved spending on printing for surveys, leaflets & display boards. The cost for these will be confirmed by Cllr. Donahue.

**15. Governance processes**

Cllr. Hanfrey had submitted a motion before the meeting to examine the way the Council deals with consultations. She suggested that to provide a consistent service to residents the Clerk should in future receive all consultation replies, collate them & make them public. The Council approved this motion.

**16. Annual parish assembly**

As attendance at this event has been quite low for the last few years it was felt that as many village groups as possible should be invited, including the Art Café, school, PTA & church. The availability of the village hall for the week beginning 21<sup>st</sup> May will be checked. Refreshments should also be provided. The Clerk will send out invitations to all the groups & Cllr. Hanfrey will produce a flyer as soon as possible to accompany this month's 'Bulletin'.

**17. Applications for parish councillor vacancy**

The Clerk had received 3 applications. Interviews will be carried out by the Chair & Vice-Chair in the next few weeks. Cllr. Hanfrey requested that applicants be asked about their skills so that they can enhance the skills already possessed by the Council.

**18. 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

Cllr. Hanfrey volunteered to be the Council's representative in the Local Area Forum. Cllr. Hatcher will accompany her.

**19. Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May at 8pm. The Clerk reminded the Council that this will be the annual meeting. Councillors wishing to stand for Chair (& Vice-Chair) should submit their applications before the next meeting to help councillors decide upon their voting preference.

*Meeting closed at 10.00pm.*

**Signed.....  
Chairman**

**Date.....**