



MINUTES OF MEETING OF WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL
At the Village Hall at 20:00 Thursday, November 11, 2021

Members Present

Chairman	Jim Donahue
Members	Nick Brazil Katherine Higley Jon Steward

Officers Present:

Clerk	Jane Yamamoto
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Public and Press: Cllr Dragonetti, Henley Standard, 1 resident

The meeting started at 20:00.

1 **Apologies for absence & Mission Statement** 20:00

Cllrs O'Grady, Smith and Steward sent apologies for their absence.

2 **Declaration of Interests**

Cllr Higley declared an interest in the playground as her children use it. Cllr Donahue declared an interest in Thames Bank Cottage as he is friends with the owners.

Cllr Leadbeater-Hart declared an interest in the Greyhound Pub as her band sometimes plays there.

3 **Public Forum - an opportunity for members of the public to express their point of view on any item on the agenda.**

No comments.

4 **Chairman's Announcements** 20:05

Polish Church Gardens Heritage Lottery Funding – Green Team Application – Cllr Donahue wrote a letter of support for the Green Team's Lottery grant application confirming the Parish Council's support for the work the Green Team are doing on the Polish Church Memorial Gardens. This is for funding for the information boards which were more than expected and other supplies for maintenance of the gardens.

Queen's Jubilee - Roy Bailey has conformed they can to play for the platinum Jubilee of June 5th. We had paid £250 in the past which is already in our budget. The Royal web-site encouraged communities to have a Big Jubilee Lunch on Sunday the 5th to encourage communities to celebrate their connections and get to know each other a little bit better, coming together in a spirit of fun and friendship. A Big Jubilee Lunch can be big or small - street party or picnic, tea and cake or a garden barbeque.

This probably doesn't require a huge degree of coordination but we should encourage one or more residents to help organise the event with assistance from Jane. It would help if councillors spread the word.

Greyhound Flooding improvements – Following up from the OCC drainage work on the High Street, it was recommended that one of the man hole covers in front of the Greyhound have its cover replaced with a slotted cover to act as a back-up drain to the culvert. In addition to the new drainage pipe under the High Street, OCC had also looked at a solution to improve access to the culvert that runs under the Greyhound as a back-up/overflow but recently concluded that it was

not practical. They still recommend that the cover is slotted to enable overflow and I have been pushing OCC to address this but they are now saying that they don't have the capability to make this change and recommend we use a specialist supplier.

Based on advice from the Flooding and Drainage Team, I forwarded Oak Taverns a recommended supplier and offered help from the Parish Council if they needed it.

I have spoken to the Oak Taverns manager and he would like to meet with me and perhaps one or two other councillors in the next few weeks to discuss the drainage as well as pedestrian crossing situation.

Budget review in December Parish council meeting - Jane has prepared a draft budget and we will be reminding those councillors with responsibility for budget items (e.g. Green Team, VG WG, TAPWG, Playground) to prepare estimates for next fiscal year's budget spend.

Action: Cllrs Donahue and Leadbeater-Hart to meet with Oak Taverns to discuss next steps on Flooding Alleviation actions at the Greyhound and feasibility of pedestrian crossing by Eastfield Lane.

5 To approve minutes of the meeting of October 14, 2021. 20:10

12.1 Cllr Leadbeater-Hart raised the issue that a one-day OCC traffic monitoring trial was insufficient evidence and the TAPWG Open Day could have been advertised better. For example, on Facebook.

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the minutes with the above addition.

6 Planning Applications – to discuss and agree Council's response to the following: 20:15

6.1 P21/S4225/HH

The White House, High Street, Whitchurch Hill RG8 7HA
Two storey side and front extensions and alterations.

Resolution: The Council voted to support the application subject to the Tree Officer's report.

6.2 P21/S4312/FUL

Technology Centre, Boztdown Drive, Whitchurch Hill RG8 7QR
Amendment to proposed link extension following demolition of existing out building

Resolution: The Council voted to submit no comments.

6.3 P21/S4454/HH

Thames Bank Cottage, High Street, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7DB
Variation of condition 2 (Approved plans) in application P20/S3813/HH (Part demolition of existing single storey rear extension. Erection of single storey rear extension. Part conversion of garage) – Various minor changes to the approved elevation with minor alternations to the kitchen area.

Resolution: The Council voted to support this application.

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

7.1 SODC District Councillor Report – Cllr Dragonetti (Attachment 1) 20:25

8 **Finance:** 20:30

8.1 **Resolution:** The following payments for November were approved:

Payment	Amount
Clerk salary (November 2021)	TBC
Zoom (November 2021) FINAL	£14.29 DD

Resident's expense for VG	£78.99
Resident's expense for High St. beds	£41.95
Resident expense for VG*	£340
Resident's expense for verge Manor Rd	£212.30
Nova Press (The Bulletin October)	£425 BACS
SODC Dog Bins Q3	£430.56
Clerk expenses – Remembrance wreath	£21.98

*Additional days of labour to concrete goal post sockets to ensure they are safely secure.

The goal posts are removed according to orientation.

8.2 Bank reconciliations and reports

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the reports.

8.3 Financial Risk Assessment, Management and Controls (Attachment 2)

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the risk assessment, management and controls.

8.4 Financial Regulations (Attachment 3)

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the regulations.

8.5 CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) must be spent by 5 years after date received.

9 Motion: To provide the Clerk with authority to approve up to 5 additional cuts to the Village Green mowing schedule at £45/cut on an annual basis– Clerk seconded by Cllr Donahue 20:45

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the motion.

10 Motion: To have a defibrillator installed near the Cricket pavilion on the Village Green – Clerk seconded by Cllr Smith (Attachment 4) 20:50

The Cricket Club will install it on the side of the pavilion and it has a 5-year battery life. It was also raised that the PC should have voted on the motion prior to its procurement. The Clerk will check if damage to it would be covered under the insurance. Alistair Aitchison will publish an article on the website with links to training.

Resolution: The Council approved the motion.

11 Motion: To approve OCC's proposal for bollards at the lower narrow for pedestrian safety, subject to consultation feedback on bollard types, location etc. – Cllr Donahue seconded by Cllr Smith (Attachment 5) 21:00

Cllr Leadbeater-Hart supported the motion, but expressed a strong preference for priority flow. There were also questions raised: if there would be signage highlighting the new traffic outline, any changes to the current herringbone patterned pavement and how soon the council would review the changes. The Chair would ask OCC and TAPWG about monitoring the changes and a communication plan would be adopted. The Henley Standard, the village website and perhaps at the Primary School were places to publicise the changes. It was unlikely that any changes to the pavement would be necessary. Cllr Higley asked how the council should respond if there was an accident at the narrows. It was recommended that the pubs be alerted to see what First Aid was available. The changes would be entirely funded by OCC.

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the motion and to work with OCC and residents to ensure the changes were communicated well to avoid traffic or cycling incidents.

12 Village Green use for resident for private classes – Cllr Donahue 21:30

It was agreed that a nominal fee of £10/week could be charged for a trial period of 3 months to contribute to the costs of upkeep of the green. During the winter, it was best that activities only take place in front of the cricket nets on the right-hand side and not on the cricket or football field. No music would be appropriate and the user must have appropriate insurance. There were also traffic concerns along Eastfield Lane and along Hardwick Road. The user must contact the Clerk for scheduling.

13 Playground Safety proposal for improvements – Cllr Steward 21:40

Cllr Higley reported that she had completed 15-20 hours of work on this item this past week. She advised that the overwhelming number of recommendations from the annual safety inspection reports from 2017 until 2021 have not been carried out (repairs to equipment and services, board with emergency contact details, weekly monitoring and maintenance checks). While she has carried out small repairs of the equipment and bins, cleaning of the slide and organised the tree work in the playground, other repairs and checks were not happening. In September, it was reported that a crack had appeared in the flooring surface under the tree and now it is a hole. She advised that every piece of equipment needed repair. She also said that the annual inspections advised that the equipment could be repaired rather than replaced. From an informal survey, over 21 residents had resistance to the climbing frame being taken out. She also recommended that long term by-laws be researched because adults had been reported drinking in the playground.

She expressed her strong view that none of the equipment should be thrown out and that the council could be found negligent if these repairs were not done as a child may be in danger.

A councillor raised the point that the equipment was dated and could be diversified to include a broader age range. The equipment and surfaces should be replaced. Another councillor felt that it was a criminal waste for it to be scrapped.

At the moment, the Parish Council does not have a lead on Open Spaces. Previous inspection reports were followed up previously by Councillors responsible for The playground and Open Spaces. Following recommendation from the 2019 Village Plan, a number of working parties were organised to clean and paint, repair and maintenance the facilities and landscaping. The playground was donated in the memory of Mrs. Popper.

The Council needed to follow the recommendations of the report but was open to a survey and to both the repair and to new equipment.

Action: Cllr Higley to provide 3 quotes to carry out the repairs following the recommendations of the report as a priority. She would also want to ensure no damage to any tree roots during the repair to the surfaces.

Action: Cllr Leadbeater-Hart to provide a non-biased survey for children and parents.

- 14 Tea Hut proposal – next steps – Cllr Donahue
Cllr Donahue spoke to the Cricket Club and they were not adverse to not having a Tea Hut. One option would be for the Cricket Club to provide access to toilets, water and electricity and they would expect a contribution from the Parish Council. The Chair recommended that the CC seek funding from SODC for capital grants.
- 15 Treescape Project – update – Cllr Higley deferred.
- 16 To review progress on any open actions from previous Parish Council meetings and agree any revision of actions on the action list. 21:55
- 17 To confirm the date and time of the next meeting on Thursday, December 9, 2021 at 20:00.
- 18 Confidential discussion for thank you notes from the Parish Council
- 19 Meeting closed. 22:00

Attachment 1

SODC Councillor Report to Whitchurch Parish Council November 2021

Council Operations

The resurgence of Covid is causing concern. SODC officers are part of the local track and trace service; over the last year SODC and VOWH officers made 745 visits for this service.

New Council building

There has been criticism of the Council for pressing ahead with the new office. Although the building will be costly, currently we are spending about £900,000 a year on our rented offices, and expect savings with the new building of £500,000 a year. So far, we must have spent, since January 2015 when the old offices burnt down, about £5 million on rent etc. Some of this was covered by insurance, but by no means all. Amongst the things that was lost in the fire were records of the land owned by the council; since taking over, the new administration has conducted a strategic property review to enable the council to plan the future use of these assets.

Thames and Sewage

The issue of poor water quality caused by sewage is very much in the news; you may have seen the Chair of the Council, Jo Robb who is the ward member of Peppard and Woodcote featured on the news a week or so ago, when she swam in the river at Wallingford, highlighting the poor record of overflows from Benson sewage works just a little way upstream. In addition to being Chair, she is also our Thames Champion, being a keen and regular river swimmer. In addition to Benson works, members of the Council are also concerned about regular overflows at Didcot and Oxford, the latter works being just in our District at Sandford. Any overflow there of course comes downstream to us all. More locally, when Thames Water provided data on the hourly overflows at all works, I drilled down into the Pangbourne data, as it appeared to be continuously overflowing. However, in fact the instrumentation was faulty. This is almost as concerning, as it would seem that no one was looking at the data, which prima facie indicated that there was a serious problem, 24 hour a day 7 days a week, at Pangbourne treatment works. In fact it was OK, and my occasional river swims at Hardwick were safe.

Eastfield House

I have been in touch with the planning officer about this, but there have been no pre-planning advice sought, so no news in this respect

Grants

There are several grant schemes from SODC and elsewhere coming live, and I set out some information on these.

Revenue Grant Scheme *The scheme opens for applications from voluntary and community sector organisations on 18 October and closes noon 26 November 2021.*

This vital funding offers two year's revenue support to voluntary and community sector organisations to help build and support thriving communities and improve the quality of life for the residents of South Oxfordshire. For further information about the grant scheme please visit SODC [website](#) or contact the Community Enablement Team on communityenablement@southandvale.gov.uk for help and advice.

Capital Grant Scheme *Launching at the beginning of November for grants of up to £75,000 and a max 50% of your total project cost. Please refer to our [website](#) where we will publish the scheme guidance and scoring criteria later this month prior to the scheme opening. We would welcome organisations booking a time with the team to discuss their project ideas and any questions so please get in touch.*

Councillor Grant Scheme Great news the scheme reopens on 22 November and closes noon on 4 February (2022). Each South Oxfordshire district councillor has £5,000 to award to projects or services that offer community benefits in their ward area. Visit southoxon.gov.uk/grants to find out more and how to apply. Peter Dragonetti



Attachment 2 - FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

For the period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022

Income

Topic	Risk Identified	Risk Level H/M/L	Management of Risk	Staff action	Internal Audit Checks (Every)
VAT reclaim	Not submitted	M	Dates identified after 31 st Mar & 31 st Oct	Diary	12 months
	Not paid by HMRC	L	Check & Report to Parish Council		12 months
Precept	Not submitted	L	Full PC Minute – RFO follow up	Diary	12 months
	Not paid by DC	L	Check & Report To PC.	Diary	12 months
	Adequacy of precept	H	Monthly review of budget to actual	Diary	12 months
Grants – Lottery	Claims procedure	M	Clerk/RFO check quarterly		12 months
	Receipt of grant when due	M	Check & Report to PC.	Diary	12 months
Grants – District	Claims procedure	L	Clerk/RFO check quarterly		12 months
	Receipt of grant when due	M	Check & Report to PC.	Diary	12 months
T I C – Grant	Claims procedure	M	Clerk/RFO check quarterly	Diary	12 months
	Receipt of grant when due	M	Check & Report to PC.		12 months
Investment Income	Receipt when due	L		Diary	12 months
	Investment Policy	L	Review policy annually	Diary	12 months
	Surplus funds	L	Review policy annually		12 months

Expenditure

Topic	Risk Identified	Risk Level H/M/L	Management of Risk	Staff action	Internal Audit Checks (Every)
Salaries	Wrong salary paid	M	Check to minute	Member verify	12 months
	Wrong hours paid	M	Check to timesheet/contract	Member verify	12 months
	Wrong rate of pay	M	Check to contract	Member verify	12 months

Topic	Risk Identified	Risk Level H/M/L	Management of Risk	Staff action	Internal Audit Checks (Every)
	False employee	L	Check to PAYE Records & lists	Member verify	12 months
	Wrong deductions – NI	M	Check to PAYE Calcs	Member verify	12 months
	Wrong deductions – Income tax	M	Check to PAYE Calcs	Member verify	12 months
	Self employed status challenged	M	Agree with Inland Revenue self employed status	Obtain letter from Inland Revenue and keep on file	12 months
Direct Costs and overhead expenses	Goods not supplied to TC	M	Order system	Approval check	12 months
	Invoice incorrectly calculated	L	Check arithmetic	Approval check	12 months
	Cheque/BACS payable is excessive	M	Signatory or invoice sent to Council	Member verify	6 months
	Cheque/BACS payable to wrong party	M	Signatory or invoice sent to Council	Member verify	6 months
	Stock loss	H	Point of sale info and control	Reconcile to Stock	6 months
Cllrs Allowances	Cllr overpaid	M	Claim form & minute	RFO verify	6 months
	Income tax deduction	M	Check to PAYE Records & lists	RFO verify	6 months
Grants & support	Power to pay	M	Minute power	Member verify	12 months
	Agreement of Council to pay	L	Minute	Member verify	12 months
	Conditions agreed	L	Use reasonable condition	RFO check	12 months
	Cheque & voucher	M	Signatory initials etc Stub & Voucher	Member verify	12 months
	Follow up verification	M	RFO check and consider budget	RFO verify	12 months
Election Costs	Invoice at agreed rate	L	RFO check and consider budget	RFO verify	Whenever

Review of the policy.

This policy was accepted by the Parish Council at its meeting on 11 November 2021 and will be reviewed annually.

Signed:

J Donahue



Attachment 3 - Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council FINANCIAL REGULATIONS December 2021-2022

1. GENERAL

1.1 These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of financial control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk and for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption. These financial regulations are designed to demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities.

1.2 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is a statutory office and shall be appointed by the council. The Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this council and these regulations will apply accordingly. The RFO, acting under the policy direction of the Council, shall administer the Council's financial affairs in accordance with proper practices. The RFO shall determine on behalf of the council its accounting records, and accounting control systems. The RFO shall ensure that the accounting control systems are observed and that the accounting records of the council are maintained and kept up to date in accordance with proper practices.

1.3 The RFO shall produce financial management information as required by the council.

1.4 At least once a year, prior to approving the annual return, the council shall conduct a review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.

1.5 In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations shall mean the Regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and then in force.

1.6 In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in Governance and Accountability in local Councils in England and Wales - a Practitioners' Guide which is published jointly by NALC and SLCC and updated from time to time.

2. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET)

2.1 Each Working Group (if any) shall formulate and submit proposals to the Council in respect of revenue and capital including the use of reserves and sources of funding for the following financial year not later than the middle of December each year.

2.2 Detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the year shall be prepared each year by the RFO in the form of a budget to be considered by the council.

2.3 The Council shall review the budget not later than the end of January each year and shall fix the Precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved budget.

2.4 The annual budgets shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

2.5 The Council shall consider the need for and shall have regard to a three year forecast of Revenue and Capital Receipts and Payments which may be prepared at the same time as the annual Budget.

3 BUDGETARY CONTROL

3.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be incurred up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget.

3.2 No expenditure may be incurred that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure. During the budget year and with the approval of council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to reserves as appropriate.

3.3 The RFO shall regularly provide the Council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at the end of each financial quarter.

3.4 The Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £499. The Clerk shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

3.5 Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year unless placed in an earmarked reserve by resolution of the council.

3.6 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.

3.7 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

3.8 Lead Councilors on Working Groups may spend up to £250 on agreed projects in the budget.

4. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT

4.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

4.2 The RFO shall complete the annual financial statements of the Council, including the council's annual return, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and shall submit them and report thereon to the Council.

4.3 The RFO shall complete the Accounts of the Council contained in the Annual Return (as supplied by the Auditor appointed from time to time by the Audit Commission) and shall submit the Annual Return for approval and authorisation by the Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

4.4 The RFO shall ensure that there is adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting, financial and other operations in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the Council shall, if the RFO or Internal Auditor requires, make available such documents of the Council which appear to the RFO or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit and shall supply the RFO or Internal Auditor with such information and explanation as the RFO or Internal Auditor considers necessary for that purpose.

4.5 The Internal Auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work required by the council in accordance with proper practices. The Internal Auditor, who shall be competent and independent of the operations of the Council, shall report to Council in writing in respect of each financial year. In order to demonstrate objectivity and independence, the internal auditor shall be free from any conflicts of interest and have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.

4.6 The RFO shall make arrangements for the opportunity for inspection of the accounts, books, and vouchers and for the display or publication of any Notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

4.7 The RFO shall, as soon as practicable, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from the Internal or External Auditor, unless the correspondence is of a purely administrative matter.

5. BANK ARRANGEMENTS AND CHEQUES

5.1 The Council's banking arrangements, including the Bank Mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council. They shall be regularly reviewed for efficiency.

5.2 A schedule of the payments prepared by the RFO will form part of the Agenda for each monthly Meeting, and be presented to Council for approval. It shall be authorised by a resolution of the Council.

5.3 Cheques drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule referred to in paragraph 5.2 or in accordance with paragraph 6.4, shall be signed by minimum two members of Council.

5.4 To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

5.5 Each invoice should also show the signature of the Chairman and the Clerk.

6 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

6.1 All payments shall be effected by cheque, BACS or other order drawn on the Council's bankers.

6.2 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Clerk. The Clerk shall satisfy him/herself that the work, goods or services to which the invoice relates shall have been received, carried out, examined and approved.

6.3 The RFO shall examine invoices in relation to arithmetic accuracy and shall analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The Clerk shall take all steps to settle all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available Council Meeting.

6.4 If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of Council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, the Clerk may (notwithstanding para 6.3) take all steps necessary to settle such invoices provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Council.

6.5 Payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) may be made by variable Direct Debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable Direct Debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

7 PAYMENT OF SALARIES

7.1 As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salaries shall be as agreed by Council.

7.2 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, may be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to and ratified by the next available Council Meeting.

8 LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

8.1 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with Council policy.

8.2 The council shall consider the need for an Investment Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Policy shall be reviewed at least annually.

8.3 All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.

8.4 All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The terms and conditions of borrowings shall be reviewed at least annually.

8.5 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

9 INCOME

9.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.

9.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.

9.3 The Council will review all fees and charges annually, following a report of the Clerk.

9.4 Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the Council and shall be written off in the year.

9.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.

9.6 The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.

9.7 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.

9.8 The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.

9.9 Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the Council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

10 ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

10.1 An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.

10.2 Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.

10.3 All members and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates (if works exceed £1000) from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11 (I) below.

10.4 The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the Minutes can record the power being used.

11 CONTRACTS

11.1 Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

(a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that these regulations shall not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:

(i) for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;

(ii) for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;

(iii) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;

(iv) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;

(v) for additional audit work of the external Auditor up to an estimated value of £250 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council);

(vi) for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed price.

(b) Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of [£10,000] shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender.

(c) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.

(d) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to

the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.

(e) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of Council.

(f) If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £10,000 or if all the tenders are identical the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.

(g) When it is to enter into a contract less than £10,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £9,999 and above £499 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10 (3) above shall apply.

(h) The Clerk RFO may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary for running of the office, repair, replacement or other work that is of extreme urgency that it must be done at once, subject to a limit of £499. The Clerk shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

(i) The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate. The Council will seek the most economically advantageous tender, and take account of both price and quality.

12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

12.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).

12.2 Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the Council.

12.3 Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the Council and Clerk to the Contractor in writing, the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13 STORES AND EQUIPMENT

13.1 The RFO shall be responsible for the care and custody of goods delivered

13.2 Delivery Notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.

14 ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

14.1 The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds of properties owned by the Council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties owned by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

14.2 No property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £50.

14.3 The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually for final accounts purposes.

15 INSURANCE

15.1 Following the annual risk assessment (per Financial Regulation 17), the RFO shall affect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.

15.2 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.

15.3 The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to Council at the next available meeting.

15.4 All appropriate employees of the Council shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the Council.

16 CHARITIES

16.1 Where the Council is sole or joint trustee of a Charitable body the RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trust and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The RFO shall ensure that any Audit or Independent Examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document is undertaken.

17 RISK MANAGEMENT

17.1 The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk / RFO shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

17.2 When considering any new activity, the Clerk I RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the council.

18 GRANT APPLICATIONS

19 REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Approved Date _____

Chair

RFO

Attachment 4

Whitchurch Parish Council Nov 5th 2021

Topic: Installation of a Defibrillator on the Whitchurch Village Green

Alistair Aitchison, village green working group representative for AFC Whitchurch, proposes, with the support of the Whitchurch-on-Thames Cricket Club and Whitchurch Primary school, the installation of a secured Automated External Defibrillator (AED) on the outside of the existing Village Green Cricket Pavillion, fully funded by the FA Premiership Defibrillator fund.

Background:

On 2 Sept 2021 Cormac Neeson received an email from Will Carter, a teacher at St Andrews school saying the following:

“I’ve been passed your email by Phil Murphy, a parent here at St Andrew’s. I’m not sure if he’s explained why I’m getting in touch, but I’ve got £90 here from the winner of the Staff Euro 2020 Sweepstake which he’d like to donate to a local football club which is currently lacking a defibrillator. Would this be applicable to Whitchurch? If so, please let me know the best means of getting the money to you and we’ll go from there.”

Cormac responded to Will as follows

“Will the best guy to deal with this is Alistair at the footy club (copied in)”

Further conversations with both Will and Cormac acknowledged that the cricket club would be happy to host it and that St Andrews school would match the charitable donation.

Alistair responded to Will saying that we are grateful for the generous offer and that he would explore what additional funding might be available through the Parish Council (Jane) and the Football Association (Andrew Earnshaw at Oxfordshire FA).

Alistair struggled to get in contact with the Oxfordshire FA but eventually got in contact with Andrew who shared with me a link to funding available through the Premiership, following the very recent cases of professional players having cardiac arrests while playing (Fabrice Muamba of Bolton Wanderers and Christian Eriksson of Tottenham Hotspurs and Denmark).

The process was very easy and offered full funding for any grass roots funding using a public facility for training or game purposes. He followed the process and, within 10 minutes, had completed the order for a fully funded Defibrillator and Wall-mountable case.

Alistair thanked Will for this kind offer and shared the link with him to share with other clubs.

The case for a second Defibrillator in Whitchurch-on-Thames

A sudden cardiac arrest can happen to anyone at any time. They can strike in children and adults, males and females and to anybody regardless of ethnicity. A cardiac arrest occurs when there is an electrical problem with the heart which causes it to stop altogether. This results in a lack of oxygenated blood being pumped to the brain meaning victims will likely die unless a defibrillator is used straight away. In our annual First Aid training, run by a trained first aid instructor and paid for by the football club, emphasis is made that in the case of cardiac arrest, only a defibrillator will restore a normal heart pattern, therefore, while resuscitation techniques are helpful, in the case of cardiac arrest, it is only an interim effort until a defibrillator or paramedic help is available.

A defibrillator is its most effective when administered within the first minute of a victim collapsing. If a defibrillator is used within the first minute, the survival rate can be as high as 90%. If a defibrillator is used within the first 3 to 5 minutes, the likelihood of survival is roughly 74% showing that having a defibrillator close by really makes all the difference.

Based on European data, there are around 60,000 out of hospital cardiac arrests every year in the UK, meaning cardiac arrests are deemed a 'health care crisis'. Astonishingly, there were over 7.4 million people living with heart and circulatory diseases in 2019 alone - thankfully with the increase in defibrillators in place around the country, more and more lives are being saved.

According to the [British Heart Foundation](#), less than 1 in 10 people survive a sudden cardiac arrest. Shockingly, 3% of defibrillators are used outside of hospitals and only 40% of bystanders who witness a cardiac arrest would be confident in performing CPR. Knowing this, the more people that are taught the importance of CPR and how to deliver it would increase this 40% figure, in turn saving more lives.

Following the well-received national defibrillator database that was rolled out by the NHS, it is clear that the more people that know about defibrillators, how to use them and where they are, will undoubtedly increase the number of lives saved. Not only this but last year, a huge 170,000 people died due to heart and circulatory problems, equating to an average of 460 people a day. Thankfully, since the British Heart Foundation has been established, this number is roughly half of the original figure.

In Summary

Having a centrally located defibrillator in the telephone box on Manor road is an excellent resource to the village; however, having an additional defibrillator specifically located where the majority of cardiovascular exercise is taking place (Cricket, Football, Jogging etc) makes absolute sense.

The cricket club (represented by Cormac) supports this initiative and has volunteered to 'host' the device. The device comes with a combination secure, wall-mountable case, the combination of the device will be registered with the emergency services and is accessible through a 999 call. The device itself is fully automated and guides the user through its use, as do the 999 services call attendants. Training is available on the FA and other websites. It is planned to construct a communication for the village website with the links to these training materials.

Attachment 5

Lower Narrows Bollards Consultation Feedback 11 November Parish Council Meeting

Background:

- The key result of the recent traffic trial is that OCC are ready to go ahead with implementing bollards on this stretch of the road that will have a clear impact on improving pedestrian safety in the village. The priority traffic recommendation could be re-evaluated in the future with more extensive trials but would not have the same level of benefit to pedestrian safety.
- They are offering us the option of “semi-flexible” bollards that have the advantage of being able to withstand a certain amount of traffic damage and would not need to be replaced as frequently from damage. They are proposing to use traditional ‘Manchester’ style flexible bollards to be consistent with the Conservation Area and would be installed with Red /White banding between the top two gold bands for reflectivity. OCC marked the proposed locations of the bollards with white dots which can be seen in the street – there are 9 on the ‘wall side’ and 6 on the ‘pub side’ + 1 to replace the existing bollard.

Feedback from consultation:

The need to improve pedestrian safety at the lower narrows pavement has been overwhelmingly supported by residents in previous surveys including the 2019 Village Plan survey. Pedestrian safety at the Ferryboat was a key recommendation of the Village Plan. The need for kerbed pavements was also raised in 2009 Village Plan.

I conducted an informal survey asking for feedback in articles in the Bulletin, web-site, and Facebook page. I also contacted residents living directly by the narrows and the Bridge company of their views. Diana contacted the church and Carrie contacted the school.

I counted approximately 17 residents providing feedback – of these 11 clearly supported it with only 1 was clearly against it. It also had 16 likes on Facebook.

The potential issues that residents raised fell into the following 4 areas:

1. Residents questioning why bollards on the wall side are required
 - OCC says these are required to address concerns of residents that the wall is being damaged and don't want to exacerbate the situation
 - We received a letter from wall owners strongly supporting bollards on both sides of the road.
 - **Recommendation:** I think we have to accept bollards on the wall side as OCC doesn't seem willing to proceed with the bollard solution unless it also addresses the wall damage concerns.

2. Risk of situation where neither car can back-up from the narrows in heavy congestions
 - Mitigated by “escape route” at larger gap at the entrance to Ferryboat Car park
 - Risk will be reduced as drivers behaviour changes over time
 - Not a big risk at moment due to lower traffic levels and drivers will hopefully adapt before traffic increases too much
 - **Recommendation:** Try the approach with the bollards, but if there are a number of issues with traffic logjams, we can ask OCC to revisit the priority direction traffic trial or look at other options.
3. Comments design of bollards
 - 2 concerns about the semi-flexible Manchester style not preventing cars from mounting the pavement. Response:
 - The bollards are still very sturdy and not as flexible as one may imagine. The new bollard outside of Geoff Weir's house is also the semi-flexible type but if you go up to it and try to bend it, you will see that it is quite sturdy and not something that you would want to drive your car into.
 - The main objective of semi-flexible bollards is to prevent bollards being broken off on a regular basis and having to be replaced as has already happened a number of times for the one at Geoff Weir’s place and take several months to get replaced. This avoids long periods of time where there is no bollard.
 - One resident asked that the two shorter bollards at the north end of the narrows are also replaced in Manchester style.
 - One person preferred Manchester styles with no gold rims.
 - **Recommendation:** Go with plastic Manchester semi-flexible.
4. Impact to cyclists is a concern from at least 4 residents including myself. I have asked OCC to see if there are more cycle-friendly alternatives to having bollards on the west "wall side" of the narrows but they have not been able to identify any. OCC’s view is:
 - The intention of the bollards is to change behaviour of vehicle drivers to keep the narrows as a single lane road instead of allowing two cars going through at the same time in an effort to improve pedestrian safety. Unfortunately, this will impact cycling behaviour as well who will also need to use the same single lane.
 - The current hatched white lines on either side of the road are not designated cycle lanes. I agree they are useful in some cases to avoid needing to wait for traffic in the other direction but not everyone feels safe using them for this purpose even without bollards.
 - Cyclists will at least have the white lines as refuge bays between the bollards if there are cars in the other direction not waiting for them.
 - **Recommendation:** Pedestrian safety has to be the priority and cyclists will need to learn to adapt their behaviour on this stretch of the road along with vehicle drivers.