

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Present:**

Matthew Judson	(MJ)	Chair
Rachel Arnold	(RA)	Vice Chair
Gill Sellars	(GS)	Councillor
Joe Deane	(JD)	Councillor
Keith Hickson	(KH)	Councillor
Andy Hayden	(AH)	Councillor
Trudi Gasser	(TG)	Parish Clerk

**In Attendance:**

31 Members of the public  
 Lysette Nicholls (LN) District Councillor  
 Charlie Maynard (CM) District Councillor  
 Dan Levy (DL) County Councillor

- Andrea Benneyworth - Programme Manager, Residential Edge of Care Services, Children, Education & Families, OCC
- Claire Lewis - Service Manager for Residential Edge of Care (REoC) Service, OCC
- Emma Admans - Assistant Manager Children's Homes, OCC

MIN REF	ITEM
24/001	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> No Apologies
24/002	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> Gil Sellars is a trustee member of the Village Hall Committee with regards to item 24/008 below - Village Hall Car Park.
	<p>Andrea Benneyworth, Claire Lewis and Emma Admans of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) attended the meeting to explain OCC's proposal to purchase a property in Sutton for the use as a Children's Home and answer any questions.</p> <p>OCC's offer had been accepted to purchase Willow Bank for the purpose of homing 2 children. The building will remain as is, with internal changes only. It is hoped that the purchase will complete in March 2024. OCC will then lodge a planning application for Change of Use.</p> <p>Below are some of the Questions/Concerns raised by members of the public:</p> <p>What would happen if planning for Change of Use is not granted?  <i>OCC would then look to sell the property</i></p> <p>Have there been any discussions with planning regarding the application?  <i>Yes, a pre-application had been submitted, with positive feedback. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> property purchased for this purpose in Oxfordshire, the homes house up to 6 children but only 2 would be housed in Willow Bank.</i></p> <p>Would the property still be purchased If 'no permissible building' was specified as a condition?</p>

	<p><i>There are no plans to extend the building, just interior changes.</i></p> <p>Is there not a more suitable house available in a less rural location?  <i>The children to be housed need nurturing in a semi-rural location and need to be in a quiet environment.</i></p> <p>Does it merit risking £1m of public money?  <i>The scheme is 50% funded by the Department of Education. The scheme will save 25% of what is currently being paid to care for Children privately.</i></p> <p>You are purchasing a 4 bed house for 2 Children, who will be sleeping in other beds?  <i>Members of staff, providing 24hr Supervision, 1 member awake at all times.</i></p> <p>There is a perception that the Children will cause trouble.</p> <p>What can be achieved in 1-6 months?  <i>There will be Experienced Staff and a Clinical team to Support the children, it is not fixed to a 6-month period, children will be moved on to another home when ready. Ofsted ratings of homes are good to outstanding.</i></p> <p>Could the children be violent?  <i>There will always be at least 2 members of staff caring for the children at all times. The staff are on shifts.</i></p> <p>Will you Continue dialogue?  <i>Yes, at PC meetings. An open day is held once the home is ready.</i></p> <p>Neighbour to property has just had the sale of their house fall through due to the neighbouring property becoming a children's home - the impact is a fact, the value of houses has and will be affected.</p> <p>Will the children be supervised at all times? Will they be allowed to wander the village alone?  <i>Children will be assessed and a risk assessment undertaken.</i></p> <p>There are more suitable locations to Integrate the children.  A ton of traffic on a very small road.  Sustainability - is funding in place for the future?  <i>The cost is between a half and a third of what is being paid to private carers.</i></p> <p>Why aren't you buying cheaper houses somewhere else?</p> <p>Describe a day for the Child. Assessed for Education package.  <i>School. (transport provided to and from). Snack/Dinner and home work. wifi off 10 pm</i></p> <p>Where will school be?  <i>Depends on the Childs needs.</i></p>
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	<p>What will happen during School holidays?  <i>Day trips, holiday, activities in the home, ie football clubs, etc. Parents won't know location of Child.</i></p> <p>Would you accept a permission that the Change of Use would revert back to residential should you leave property?  <i>Yes, the Change of Use is personal to OCC.</i></p>
<b>24/003</b>	<p><b>APPROVAL of MINUTES</b>  Minutes Parish Council Meeting of the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023 were approved for publication subject to amendment of 23/141.</p>
<b>24/004</b>	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING</b>  23/141 – ‘what3words’ had been submitted to Bill Oddie for the location of the new bin.</p>
<b>24/005</b>	<p><b>REPORTS FROM DISTRICT and COUNTY COUNCIL</b>  <b>County Council:</b>  Full report attached  <b>District Council:</b>  In summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended a rural crime meeting, currently hiring more officers. Reports of an issue of drones to case properties. Churches being targeted.</li> <li>• Botley solar farm consultation. ends V. soon.</li> <li>• Attended Thames Water meeting. Stanton Harcourt is one of the Worst affected, with repairs being minimal and improvements non-existent.</li> <li>• Working with Count &amp; District to fund railway.</li> </ul>
<b>24/006</b>	<p><b>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b>  Whilst a resident was grateful for the 20mph speed limit on Sutton Lane, over the years the verges have eroded and are no longer for pedestrian to step onto to avoid vehicles on the narrow parts – is it possible to install a sign warning drivers of pedestrians on the road?  DL praised the idea and requested an email from the PC.  ACTION: MJ to email DL requesting a sign be erected</p> <p>What’s happened with the weight limit on the B4449 through Sutton?  DL pointed out that whilst it was very difficult to put a limit in place, he would keep trying. He reminded the PC to include the requirement in all planning applications, MJ confirmed this was already happening.</p> <p>Will the flashing signs be changed to 20mph?  The signs cannot be reprogrammed, but the PC has budgeted to purchase new signs.  ACTION: KH to obtain updates quotes for PC to progress.</p>
<b>24/007</b>	<p><b>07 PLANNING</b></p> <p>APPLICATION NO: 23/03349/LBC  PROPOSAL: Internal and external alterations to convert an agricultural barn to a single dwelling and associated works Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act  LOCATION: Barn Adj To 11 Farmhouse Close Stanton Harcourt</p>

	<p>The Parish Council reviewed the above application and objected.</p> <p>Planning application by FCC Environment, for planning permission: Section 73 application to continue development approved under 13/1062/P/CM (MW.0097/13) (Proposed development and operation of a Waste Transfer Station including ancillary development) without complying with conditions 1 and 5, to extend the end date of the existing Waste Transfer Facility from 31st March 2029 to 31st March 2050 and restoration from 31st December 2030 to 31st December 2051 at Dix Pit Waste Transfer Station, Dix Pit Quarry and Landfill Site/ Former Con Bloc Works, Linch Hill, Stanton Harcourt, OX29 5BB</p> <p>The Parish Council are currently reviewing this application and will submit their comments in due course.</p> <p><b>Road Closures:</b>  A road closures was reported and has been published on the PC website. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LOCATION: Northmoor, Bablock Road</li> <li>REASON: To facilitate upgrading of a pole mounted transformer</li> <li>DURATION: 9 March 2024, 07:00 to 17:00 hours (Traffic Regulation Notices cover a maximum of 5 consecutive days.)</li> <li>ACCESS: Limited access will be maintained for emergency service vehicles and for frontages within the closed</li> </ul> </p>
<b>24/008</b>	<p><b>VILLAGE HALL</b></p> <p><b>Car Park</b></p> <p>The four quotations were obtained for the required work against a technical specification produced by specialist contractors (plan attached below):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Radcot Groundworks £83,879 + VAT</li> <li>TW Hardscaping £104,190 + VAT</li> <li>Fergal Contracting £108,759 + VAT.</li> <li>Eoin Flynn Groundworks £117,380 + VAT</li> </ul> <p>All quotes were checked to ensure they matched the specification and were like for like quotes. These are fixed price quotations.</p> <p>The project team (Parish Council and Village Hall Committee) wish to proceed with the Radcot Groundworks quotation of £83,879 + VAT.</p> <p>If addition to the fixed price quotation the project team wish to remove the bushes obscuring the walkway making it difficult for disability motor cycles to pass through etc, pave the area and replace broken paving slabs, install a cycle stand to encourage cycling, mark up the disabled bays, and if necessary relay the Gigaclear cable in ducting.</p> <p>The total cost of this extra work £8,275,71 + VAT  Total Project Cost of £92,155 + VAT</p> <p>A request was made for the PC to apply to release 106 funds -JD proposed the PC apply, MJ seconded, all were in favour. GS had prepared an application which was signed for submission.</p> <p>Jenny Beilby will pull the information together for the planning application.</p>
<b>24/009</b>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <p>Responsibilities were discussed. TG to amend the list and circulate to all.</p>

<b>24/010</b>	<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b> <b>LITTER PICK</b> A request to undertake a Litter Pick on 24 <sup>th</sup> February was received. Ceva, from the Industrial Estate had also offered to carry one out on 20 <sup>th</sup> February – MJ to suggest that they join forces and carry one out together.  <b>BUS STOP AT BLACKDITCH</b> First and Last Mile would like to see whether the Parish Council would support the erection of a bus stop or a bench to mark the bus stop on Blackditch as this is likely to encourage usage. At the moment there is nowhere to erect a timetable as the use of telegraph poles is not permitted. <b>ACTION:</b> JD to obtain more information and costing for the PC to consider.
<b>24/011</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b> Nothing to report
<b>24/012</b>	<b>NEXT MEETING</b> Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 19:30 in the John Holland Room at the Village Hall

Signed .....

Date .....

**Stanton Harcourt Parish Council**  
**County Council report, 5 February 2024**

Key activity at County Hall has been handling the floods, preparing the budget and continuing the transformation of the service provided to children with special educational needs. In my role as Cabinet Member for finance, I have been coping with the failure of central government to provide the levels of funding it claimed it was providing, which meant that we had an even larger set of challenges than we had expected. We followed this by identifying savings and efficiencies we could make. The government then, last week, announced more money would be available, which is nice, but it would be better to have a system of funding that enabled sensible planning. The current methodology is shambolic, and councils of all political persuasions have been pointing this out.

**Flooding**

Although the Eynsham Division was mostly unscathed by the recent floods, with the exception of a few areas, other parts of the county were less fortunate. It is a wake up call about building in places that can't be kept dry. The response in West Oxfordshire was better than in some other places, in part because WODC takes a more active role working with Oxfordshire than other districts. There will be a cross-agency process to improve on our flood preparedness and responses.

**A40 update.**

Homes England, who are the source or the bulk of the funding for the A40 scheme, are still in discussions with the County Council about the level and timing of that funding, and hence the project appearing to be making no progress. I share the frustration, not least because the Park and Ride is making such rapid progress. The whole scheme was over-ambitious, and it is a regret that when the current administration came into office it took over those plans rather than starting again from scratch.

**Botley Road.**

We are in continual discussion with Network Rail. We are told that the works are still on schedule to permit the reopening of Botley Road to motor vehicles in October.

**Fix my Street.**

It is very likely that the recent wet weather and the current cold spell will lead to an increase in the number and size of holes. Please use Fix my Street to report these. As mentioned frequently, we estimate that it would take around £45m per annum to keep the roads in a decent state. The government provides £20m. The Fix my Street website has been improved to make it easier to use.

**Botley West Solar Farm**

As you know, the current phase of consultation is reaching its conclusion. The County Council will be providing comments to the developer, as required. This will focus on those areas for which the County Council has primary responsibility, including highways and flooding. I think it safe to say that, among other things, it was noticeable that the consultation evidence provided by PVDP was inadequate. I was particularly unimpressed by the vagueness of cable routing options.

The District Council will be the main local authority delivering evidence, although as we all know it is the planning inspectorate and central government which will decide the application.

It was disappointing to read in the local media untruths about the position of my party with regards to the Solar Farm. It is not supported by me or my party, and I know that other members of the party, including the MP for the place where the substation might be and our candidate for the new parliamentary constituency, have also made this clear. I don't normally include party politics in my reports as councillor, and hope this will continue to be possible.

As ever, please contact me on [dan.levy@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:dan.levy@oxfordshire.gov.uk)