

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 6th March 2023

Present:

Rachel Arnold	(RA)	Vice Chair
Gill Sellars	(GS)	Councillor
Joe Deane	(JD)	Councillor
Keith Hickson	(KH)	Councillor
Tony Pentland	(TP)	Councillor
Trudi Gasser	(TG)	Parish Clerk

In Attendance:

2 Members of the public
Charlie Maynard (CM) District Councillor

MIN REF	ITEM
23/015	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
	Matthew Judson (MJ) Chair Dan Levy (DL) County Councillor Lysette Nicholls (LN) District Councillor
23/016	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
	No declaration made.
23/017	APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 6TH FEBRUARY 2023
	Minutes had been circulated for comment and were approved for publication.
23/018	QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC
	<p>Church Clock Repairs: It was asked whether the PC had considered the request from last month to help with the funding of the necessary repairs – a deposit had already been paid for the work. JD PROPOSED the PC reimburse the net figure (£1797 as instruction for the Church to claim back the VAT had been supplied. RA SECONDED, all were in favour – it was RESOLVED that the PC fund the repairs from the fund held in the Burden donation.</p> <p>Bowling Machine for Cricket Club: The cricket club has the opportunity to purchase a second-hand bowling machine, the club selling it want a quick sale. It was understood this type of equipment comes within the remit of an S106 grant for sports equipment.</p> <p>GS PROPOSED the PC purchase the equipment, donating the equipment to the club and apply for an S106 grant to cover the cost (10 to 12 weeks turn around). JD SECONDED, all were in favour. It was RESOLVED That the PC fund the equipment and apply for 106 funding to cover the cost.</p>
23/019	REPORT FROM DC/CC COUNCILLORS
	<p>County Council: DL provided a report - see annex.</p> <p>District Council: CM provided a report - see annex.</p>
23/020	PLANNING
	<p>The following application had been received and circulated to all for comment:</p> <p>APPLICATION NO: 23/00066/HHD PROPOSAL: Installation of solar panels on south facing roof slope and insertion of a velux window to the main bedroom and to the room above carport Town and Country Planning Act</p>

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	LOCATION: Sables Barn Main Road Stanton Harcourt The PC had no objections to the application
23/021	VILLAGE HALL Nothing to report following last month’s report.
23/022	GUARDROOM RA had circulated options for a key safe to enable bookers to obtain access when no one is available to let them in. It was discussed and decided to use the existing box on a trial basis. It was also agreed that each member of the PC would take in it turn to be responsible for the Guardroom booking, etc on a monthly basis. Action: GS to write up the process for Guardroom hire preparation Action: KH to arrange a training session with Dragon IT on Google workspace to enable all members of the PC to view bookings, etc Action: JD to progress the purchase of the required part for the water heater at the Guardroom Action: GS to continue to try to resolve the lighting issue, to enable the lights to be dimmable.
23/023	COUNCILLOR RESPONSIBILITIES JD – Nothing to report GS – Nothing to report KH – attended a Festival Committee meeting, confirmed that they are working on a Risk Assessment, as requested by the PC in order to provide Insurance cover for the Fete. RA – nothing to report TP – confirmed that 5 members have now been recruited for Speedwatch, the recruits would need to undertake an exam, once passed the scheme would be operational.
23/024	ANNUAL MEETINGS The dates were confirmed as follows: Annual Meeting of the Parish Council – 7.30pm on Monday 22 nd May (followed immediately by the May Ordinary Meeting. Annual Parish Meeting – 7pm on Tuesday 23 rd May. KH volunteered to make the arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting – Action: TG/RA to forward contact details of previous table bookers. Due to the date of the May meeting (as the first two Mondays are Bank Holidays and availability of Councillors), there would be no meeting in June. Action: TG to publish dates of meetings on the PC website.
23/025	FINANCE It was confirmed that the new PC bank account and Guardroom bank account were now open. All payments would now be made online and would require authorisation by two Councillors. A Finance update was circulated – draft year end accounts would be circulated for the April meeting. Payments Made: WODC Bin Empty £148.63 John Woodward Maintenance £722.72 Robin Smith Maintenance £220.00 Glanville Consultants Village Hall Car Park £1050.00

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23/026	STANDING ORDERS TG confirmed that the Standing Orders had been updated to reflect the change of bank and move to online payment. TG circulated the revised standing order and asked all to review ahead of adoption at the next meeting.
23/027	VILLAGE VOICE GS had circulated copy to all for approval which detailed the PC's expenditure over the past year – all approved the copy. TG requested that an article appear in village voice to remind all drivers to take care on blind corners due to horse riders, following a near miss.
23/028	CORRESPONDENCE Already covered in public session.
23/029	ANY OTHER BUSINESS Nothing to report.
23/030	NEXT MEETING: Monday 3 rd April 2023 – in The Holland Room, The Village Hall.

Signed

Date

COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

County Council Update – Dan Levy

Stanton Harcourt

1.

The budget was passed at the County Council meeting, and will see additional investment in Adult Social Care and SEND, as well as funds for flood alleviation, including better gully clearing, and for active travel. There is additional money for cost of living support. There is of course not enough money to do all the things we would like to do. I gave a summary of the budget in February's newsletter.

It was surprising that opposition councillors wanted further cuts in areas such as libraries and home to school transport, in order to save a band D household 32p per week.

2. National Rail have now announced the revised dates when Botley Road will be closed at the railway bridge for station rebuilding and bridge replacement work. It will commence on April 11, and remain shut until the end of October. It will then reopen until March 2024 and then be shut until October. NR's graphic is attached.

Trains will run except for two very short periods in July/August 23 and August 24. Buses will run up Botley Road, with the last stop being Frideswide Church. There will be a through route for people on foot or bikes under the railway. That is quite a long walk for people with mobility issues, and we are in discussions with NR about whether we can move the last bus stop closer to the bridge. The Fire Service is planning on putting some of its vehicles currently in Rewley Road Fire Station to the west of the closure. It is all going to be challenging while the work is happening, but we will get a better station with more platforms, and with East West Rail in place giving us a service to MK as well as our current two routes to London and one to Worcester.

3. There is still no update on how the A40 "HIF2" work is going to be reshaped to reflect the inadequacy of the money made available by central government for this project bequeathed to the current administration by the previous one. Like Cllr Charles Mathew before me, I continue to support a rail link between Carterton, Witney, Eynsham and Oxford, as well as improvements to the A40.
4. Do keep reporting potholes and other road defects on Fixmystreet. Weather permitting, the backlog will get attention. Wet weather followed by sub-zero temperatures is a real problem. You may have noticed that the A40 by Barnard Gate has now been made safe and that other much needed work has been done. There is much more to do.
5. Cassington's 20mph limits are now in place and Eynsham's have been in operation for a few months. South Leigh's scheme was approved last week. It does make a difference to driver behaviour, and to the safety of residents.

District Councillor update – Charlie Maynard

My biggest news is that I've just been selected as the parliamentary candidate for the Lib Dems for the Witney constituency. I am campaigning very hard from now to the election to win this seat. If you would like to help in any way, please get in touch.

Here are some updates of what I have been up to over last month.

Sewage / Thames Water

Have a look here for Thames Water's new sewage map - <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/edm-map>. Standlake STW (which also takes Northmoor's sewage) is the single worst performer in West Oxfordshire in 2023, with the STW dumping sewage non-stop for 23 days.

Lidia Arciszewska and Alaric Smith (fellow district councillors) met with them on March 3rd. Here are some of the actions we are pursuing:

1. WODC has now implemented a "Validation Check List" which requires all developments to check with Thames Water what is the capacity status of the relevant Sewage Treatment Works ("STW"). This will result in the status of the STW at the start of any planning application. Cotswolds district council have followed us in taking this action, Forest of Dean is applying it on a voluntary basis
2. We are seeking to apply a condition on all new housing so that if the STW is below capacity, there is an obligation for the STW's capacity to be increased before occupancy is permitted. We are pushing hard for the capacity to be increased by the full amount of any shortfall, but that is not in the bag. We're also working to ensure that buyers and their solicitors are fully aware of this condition in all instances.
3. We are working with Thames Water to question their STW capacities. The capacity of a STW is calculated using some of the following inputs: catchment population, per capita consumption and infiltration rates. We are taking each of these components apart to seek to verify whether the STWs are indeed at sufficient capacity or not. In most cases they are not – and TW are increasingly accepting our view. Now they need to spend the money to upgrade the works and pipes. Ongoing pressure required.
4. We're also starting work on a "cheat sheet" which other local authorities can use so they can shortcut our six months of discovery and get to the same point as we have quicker.

The Moors, Ducklington

The national planning inspector over-ruled WODC's councillors and has given outline planning approval for 120 homes to be built on this field which has a terrible track record of flooding. The key problem here is that the Environment Agency, in its wisdom, in 2010 redesignated this site as being in Floodzone 1 (the least bad) from Floodzone 3 (the worst). This is despite the fact that according to the EA's own flood data, the flooding on the Windrush is increasing both in severity and frequency. More news on how we are addressing this is imminent, but will relate to challenging the EA's floodzone map

Upper Thames Hydro – www.upperthameshydro.com

Last year I commissioned a study on the hydropower potential of the weirs on the Upper Thames. The report by Renewables First is available at the above website. David Jeffcoat, a Standlake parish councillor, and I are seeking to build a team to take this project forward. Our goal of the project is to work step by step towards constructing community funded hydropower plants where feasible on the Upper Thames.

ACTIONS CARRIED FORWARD FROM EARLIER MEETINGS:

	ACTIONS CARRIED FORWARD	
Pre-June	GS – B4449 Reducing the noise and vibration BT OpenReach replaced the wrong manhole cover. The one by 10 Beaumont Green has been recorded as Urgent by both OCC Highways and BT OpenReach	Cfw
CFW from June mtg	21/064 TG to create and circulate a list of current policies (a PC Policy Register) ready for review.	Cfw
CFW from July mtg	21/092 All/PC to continue logging TW complaints with DL/OCC None received – Notice to be put on Village Voice (Hardcopy & Facebook) asking all issues to be sent to Parish Clerk with the Title ‘Water Issues’ PC will then progress with Thames Water. Action MJ TG to report on issue type statistics at future meetings (standard agenda point)	Cfw
	21/097 S106 MJ to obtain quotes for additional Play Equipment	Cfw
CFW from Nov mtg	JD to look at sensors for electric lights once transferred to the PC	Cfw
	21/122 Public Session Archive in the Guard Room? GS to see if we can install sufficient storage	Cfw
	22/009 Village Hall GS to circulate the original Car Park refurbish plan to the VHC for review for completeness GS to return to Parish Council with quotations for Car Park refurb	Cfw
	22/010 RECREATION AREAS GS to identify whether the VHC would like the equipment moved from the Bury Mead play park to the Leys to provide additional options for the Village Hall long term strategy	Cfw
CFW from June Meeting	22/0269 Welcome Pack JD currently drafting a document	