

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OAKLEY & DEANE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 8<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2018**

**Present:** Mrs. Blackman (Chairman), Mr. Bealing, Mr. Bullions, Mr. Ellison, Mrs. Gavin, Mr. Hewitt, Dr. Johnstone, Mr. Law, Mr. Parry and Ms. Tofts. One member of the public attended the meeting.

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mr. Startin and from Mrs. Taylor (Borough Councillor).

### **2. Co-option of Parish Councillor**

Mr. Ellison proposed, and Ms. Tofts seconded, that Mr. Ken Crafer be co-opted to the Parish Council, and all members agreed. The clerk was asked to write to Mr. Cramer to inform him of the decision and give him copies of all the policies and procedures, and to welcome him to the Parish Council.

### **3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

Mr. Ellison proposed a motion that a quote he had prepared and read to the members should be included as an addendum to the February minutes. The quote read "Following the distribution of the draft Parish Council February meeting minutes, Mr. Ellison wrote to the Chairman. He expressed concern about an incorrect statement attributed directly to him in item 6 g ii. A detailed correction will be given by Mr. Ellison when the March 8<sup>th</sup> Parish Council agenda item 7 g ii is reached." ( The formal response is recorded in March minutes item 7 g iv). Mr Ellison felt that should the minutes be signed without this addendum it would create an incorrect impression of the facts. Mr. Bealing seconded the motion and the majority of members agreed, and it was resolved that the clerk should add the addendum to the minutes. With this caveat, the minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and the chairman had approval to sign the minutes once the addendum was added.

### **4. Notices, Circulars and Correspondence**

- a) **Date of Annual Parish Meeting and Attendees:** the clerk confirmed that now the partner for the Manydown development has been announced, she had extended the invitation to attend the APM to the partners, but had not as yet had a response.
- b) **Thank you from The Gap:** the clerk received a thank you note from The Gap Youth Club for the donation of monies raised at Carols at the Pond. The clerk asked if representatives from the group would like to attend the April meeting to give the members more information about what they do, and this has now been agreed.
- c) **HALC Cancellation of the Round Robin:** the clerk informed members that HALC have now stopped sending the Round Robin emails; she explained that she had found them really useful and that the new system, whereby clerks use a forum to ask questions, is not as well used and most clerks do not have the time to log on each day to see if there is a question they can answer. The Round Robin came out once a month, all the questions were on the same email, and it was very easy to identify anything that you could help with. It was also a good way to see what other parishes were doing, and to join forces to find a solution. Mr. Ellison suggested bringing

the issue to the HALC AGM and Mr. Parry proposed that the clerk should email other clerks to gauge their views. If a majority have the same opinion it may influence HALC to change their decision.

- d) **BDAPTC meeting March 26<sup>th</sup>:** Ms. Tofts will attend the meeting at the Civic Offices.
- e) **Cricket Showcase Weekend:** the clerk informed members that she had spoken with the Oakley Cricket Club and they had invited members to attend the Showcase Weekend 24 / 25 March. There will be former England players attending, a softball tournament, food and drink and opportunities to meet the players and find out more about the club. The club has been selected as one of only three in the country to receive ECB support this year. TV and local press will be at the club over the weekend. If any members are available and would like to attend, the clerk will let the club know.
- f) **St Leonard's Church Plans:** the clerk circulated copies of the leaflet issued by the Church showing their vision for the St Leonard's site. Mrs. Blackman commented that it would be difficult if not impossible for coffins to be carried from the church to the Burial Ground. Dr. Johnstone expressed concern about possible disturbance of Saxon burials. There is as yet no formal application lodged with the Borough.

## **5. Clerk's report**

The clerk had distributed her report to the members in advance of the meeting. Ms. Tofts asked for clarification on the two complaints about parking in Fox Lane, and the clerk confirmed they were separate occasions, and that one related to vehicles parking too close to the junction with the B3400 and the other was simply the volume of cars parked along the grass verge. Ms. Tofts also commented on the complaint made by a resident that during the recent bad weather there was no formal process for checking on residents (not just the elderly) who may need assistance. Ms. Tofts said she felt there was a lack of co-ordination. Mr. Ellison commented that the Village Agent scheme could offer a possible solution at least with regards to the elderly residents, but the clerk informed him that she had advertised in Link and Spotted Oakley for volunteers and not had any responses. The BDAPTC meeting will have Disaster Planning on the agenda (the clerk had requested this) and Ms. Tofts suggested that OCA could possibly help out. The clerk was asked to invite the Village Agent for Overton to the Parish Council meeting in May to talk to members.

## **6. Planning Matters**

- a) **Minutes of the Planning Meeting** held on 15<sup>th</sup> February were circulated to all members in advance and there were no comments or questions.
- b) **18/00400/HSE 17 Kennet Way:** as the meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March was cancelled due to bad weather, the application was discussed at the main meeting. Mr. Bullions' report was sent to members in advance, and the Planning Committee had no comments and no objections.
- c) **Gas Governor at Avon Road:** Mr. Bealing had contacted BDBC but had received no response. The chairman asked the clerk to write to the resident informing him that the land was not owned by Southern Gas Network so

could not be leased to him by them. She was also asked to write to Southern Gas Network to inform them of the situation.

- d) **Lights and signage at One Stop:** the clerk was asked to contact BDBC to inform them that despite the application for new exterior lights and advertising signage not being approved yet, the old signage and lights appear to have been removed during the refit, and new ones installed.

## **7. Working Party Reports**

The Chairman asked if there were any further comments on the **Community Action Plan** she had sent out at the end of November 2017 as she had only had responses from Mr. Ellison, Mr. Startin and Ms. Tofts. All members confirmed they did not have any further comments to add, and so the final version will be issued in April.

### **a) Burials and Churchyards**

There was no formal report but Dr. Johnstone confirmed she had contacted Mr. Fogarty, and the clerk informed members that she had contacted a surveyor and was awaiting his response to a request for a survey of the walls.

### **b) Environment**

- i) **The Working Party report** was issued to all members in advance of the meeting. Ms. Tofts confirmed that the school Environment projects would be on the topic of Nature Stories. The Infant school had informed her that they used their donation from the Parish Council to purchase bulbs, seeds and other 'natural environment-related' items.
- ii) **Licence for removing toxic waste:** Ms. Tofts had spoken with Mr. Small, who in 2017 had offered to clear the silt from Rectory Road pond and spread it on his land. However, he does not have a license for removing toxic waste and requested that the Parish Council obtained one for him. Ms. Tofts asked for approval to approach the Environment Agency to find out the process for procuring a licence. Mr. Ellison advised that the best way forward was to get quotes from authorised disposers, but Ms. Tofts confirmed that she had done that in 2017 and that the costs were in excess of £10,000 which cannot be justified in the context of the overall precept amount. Dr. Johnstone suggested that even if we obtained a license it may not be transferable. Ms Tofts asked if the Lengthsman could do the clearing but the time and costs involved are significantly in excess of the work he could do for the village. The decision was taken and agreed by a majority that the only option is to plant a bog garden, allow the pond to flood and then contact HCC for them to resolve it.
- iii) **Permissive Footpath:** the clerk had obtained a quote of £823.20 for the works to cut the hedge and install the kissing gate, and all members agreed it's acceptance. The clerk is to contact Mr. Ansell to confirm when the work can be done, as the presence of nesting birds may cause a delay. Mr. Law will provide details of the signs for marking the diversion.
- iv) **OCA Sponsorship of the Jubilee Flower Bed:** OCA had offered to pay £180.00 annually to sponsor the flower bed, but the handyman's quote was £220.00 per annum. The clerk in her capacity as Treasurer of OCA agreed that the sponsorship would be increased to £200.

- v) **Lengthsman Scheme:** Ms. Tofts and the clerk met with Leonie Brown, Clerk of Pamber Parish Council, and David Saunders the lengthsman. Funding from HCC was approved, at a value of £1000 per annum, of which a minimum of 25% has to be used for footpaths. Pamber, as Lead Parish, do all the administration and pay Mr. Saunders' invoices etc. The list of tasks the lengthsman can provide will be distributed by the clerk to all members and shown on the new website. It was proposed by Mr. Ellison and seconded by Mrs. Gavin that the contract be signed, and all agreed.
- c) **Finance**
- i) **The Working Party report** was issued to all members in advance of the meeting.
- ii) **Burial Ground Fees:** Ms. Tofts queried the proposed increase in fees for ashes interments, for subsequent ashes interments in an existing grave, and for subsequent interments in an existing grave, all of which showed an increase of over 100% on 2017 charges. Mr. Ellison confirmed that the rates charged previously were out of line with those charged by other burial grounds in the area. Mr. Law proposed and Mr. Bullions seconded that the fees be accepted, and the majority of members agreed.
- iii) **Pitch Fees and Pavilion Lettings:** Mr. Ellison informed members that the costs of hire were subsidised by the Parish, because if we raised the rates to cover all costs, the charges would be out of reach for the majority of local users. It was proposed by Mr. Parry and seconded by Mrs. Gavin that the proposed fees be accepted and all agreed.
- iv) **Cricket pitch fees:** all members agreed that the fees be charged as per the Working Party recommendation.
- v) **Risk Assessment:** no members had any queries or comments about the updated Risk Assessment which had been circulated to all members in advance of the meeting.
- vi) **NALC Legal Briefing re Deane Churchyard Grant:** the clerk received a legal briefing note from NALC in relation to Parish Council payments relating to churches or church property in general, including burial grounds. Previously the Parish Council had relied on s 137 of the 1972 Local Government Act which states that a council may incur expenditure for any purpose except one which is subject to a statutory provision, restriction or limitation. However, the Briefing Note confirms that the 1894 Act specifically excludes any payments to churches or church property and this specific clause will override the general clause of S137. The result is that no further grants can be given to All Saints Church for grass cutting.
- vii) **Approval of Payments:** it was proposed by Ms. Tofts and seconded by Mrs. Gavin, and approved by all members, that the following payments be approved:

Payee	Amount	Service	Status
NEST	37.83	Clerk Pension February	Paid DD
EE and T Mobile	18.13	Clerk mobile phone	Paid DD
BT	66.49	February Landline	Paid DD
HMRC	498.51	February Contributions	Paid EFT
BDBC	304.50	February Grounds Maintenance	Unpaid EFT

M Bastick	208.00	Handyman Hours	Unpaid EFT
T Harrington	167.93	February Cleaning	Unpaid EFT
Larkstel	1,938.00	February Grounds Maintenance	Unpaid EFT
Nigel Jeffries	582.79	February Grounds Maintenance	Unpaid EFT
P T Lock	180.00	Repairs to church gate	Unpaid EFT
SE Water	120.18	Supply to PH and NF	Unpaid
Malshanger Estate	184.78	Water to allotments	Unpaid
N Goodyear	84.00	Notice board removal	Unpaid
Goslings	420.00	Allotments + Jubilee Flower Bed	Unpaid

It was noted that Mr. Parry and Ms. Tofts would approve the EFT payments.

viii) **Expenses:** Mrs. Blackman reminded members to submit any expense claims relating to 2017/18 as soon as possible so they can be included in the accounts for the financial year.

ix) **Payment relating to the Village Show Funds:** at the February meeting it was agreed that provided OCA would take over the holding of the funds of the Village Show, they would be transferred before the end of the financial year. Both the Village Show Committee and OCA have agreed, and a cheque for the balance, being £3,790.45 (as at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018) was prepared. Ms. Tofts proposed, and Mrs. Gavin seconded, that the cheque be signed and all members agreed.

x) **PO Box:** it was agreed in October 2017 that the clerk should have a PO Box as from April 2018 rather than having her address used on the website and all other correspondence. When she investigated further she found that Royal Mail only take credit or debit cards as payment for PO Boxes and as the cost is £318 she asked if she could have approval to claim the £318 back immediately. Although all members agreed that she could, Mr. Ellison raised the point that it is not good practice to rely on the goodwill of the Clerk and that a suitable alternative to the clerk having to use her own funds for Parish Council purchases must be pursued. Dr. Johnstone agreed that it was unfair, and Mr. Parry and Ms. Tofts concurred. Ms. Tofts suggested raising it at the meeting with the MP in May, and Mr. Ellison proposed that it should also be raised with HALC and NALC. The clerk said she wondered if a credit card might be more acceptable because funds would not leave the account until the payment was approved, whereas with a debit card as soon as the transaction is made the funds are paid, which cannot be accommodated under the 'two approvers' rule. However, whether the bank would allow us to have a credit card is not clear. The clerk will investigate possible options and report her findings to the next meeting.

**d) Highways and Transport**

i) **The Working Party Report** was sent to all members in advance of the meeting. Ms. Tofts confirmed that a Speedwatch session held on March 7<sup>th</sup> at Leamington Court showed that almost 12% of vehicles were speeding, and one driver was abusive to the team (this has been reported to the police). The supplier of the SID the team are considering to purchase will attend the next working party meeting to talk about the different variants that can be included, so that an informed decision can be made. Mr. Law informed members that he had again approached BDBC about the speed

limit at the Deane Gate, but due to the lack of longer term information on speeding it has not been progressed, which is another justification for purchasing the new SID.

- ii) **Potholes:** Mr. Harding prepared a document which he asked to be approved for inclusion in Link and on Spotted Oakley about reporting potholes, and all members agreed it could be published.

**e) Parish Council Government**

- i) **GDPR:** the clerk informed members that her course had been cancelled but that she had reserved a place on a course in April. She had received from another parish a NALC guide to GDPR which included example privacy notices and other useful information.

- ii) **Bramley IT project:** Ms. Tofts had contacted her colleague who agreed that using .gov extension email addresses for councillors was a very good idea especially with the arrival of GDPR and increased data transparency. This will be progressed for the April meeting.

**f) Publicity and Events**

- i) **The Working Party report** was circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Suggestions for the display at the Village Show were requested – members were asked to contact the Working Party with any ideas they had.

- ii) **Carols at the Pond:** it was proposed that the Carols at the Pond service be held on Saturday December 15<sup>th</sup> 2018 and all members agreed.

- iii) **Merchandise:** it was proposed that the Working Party progress the idea of Christmas cards as no calendars will be produced in 2018, and all members agreed.

- iv) **Calendars:** it was agreed that Ms. Tofts could take some of the remaining calendars to the school, and that Mrs. Blackman would take some for the cub group.

**g) Sports and Play Areas**

- i) **The Working Party report** was issued to members in advance of the meeting. The gas boilers at Newfound were inspected on Tuesday March 6<sup>th</sup> and a new gas safe certificate was issued.

- ii) **Septic tanks at Newfound:** the clerk confirmed that she had not received a response from KLG regarding the septic tanks at Newfound, and Mr. Law recommended another company, and will provide the contact details.

- iii) **Avon Road Play Area:** Vitaplay have carried out the removal of the Robin Rocker and replaced it with the Moon Rider unit that was originally ordered. Mr. Ellison asked for approval that when he is satisfied the work has been completed the clerk can release the payment, and all agreed.

- iv) **Use of Newfound by North Waltham FC- Clarification:** as noted earlier in the minutes, Mr. Ellison had proposed an addendum to the minutes of the February meeting, in response to a comment made in his absence on this subject at the earlier meeting, in that he had in September 2017 said that he would not allow any other teams to play at Newfound on a Saturday. In fact, in February 2017 he had informed members that he had refused a request from Beggarwood for use of Newfound but it was not recorded in the minutes that they had asked for a Sunday afternoon. Over 90% of the OYFC teams play on a Sunday, either at Newfound or Peter Houseman, so it is unlikely that any other teams could be accommodated in the

foreseeable future. However, on Saturdays there is capacity at Newfound which is why permission was given to North Waltham FC. Also, a further question was asked in February about why North Waltham did not use a local pitch, Cuckoo Meadow, but Mr. Ellison informed members the pitch was only suitable for U10's football when North Waltham Warriors were U15's. Mr. Ellison has agreed to set out a table of the provision of sports ground facilities in the Parish's control, showing for example the different pitch and goal sizes, and will present this to a future meeting.

- v) **Oakley Park Cricket Club:** the clerk had spoken to the club about the donation from the Wates Development S106 schedule which was to be £36,918 but which the Club knew nothing about. After requesting help from the Borough Council, the clerk was informed that a survey in 2014 had identified that cricket facility changing rooms across the Borough were in need of update, and it was this that had triggered the S106 funding.

#### **8. Reports from representatives to other organisations**

- a) **Andover Road Village Hall:** the Planning Application has been halted as there is a legal issue, in that the land surrounding the Hall is subject to a charitable trust and as such, the land cannot be exchanged for a replacement piece offered by Malshanger Estate. The particular piece of land is essential for access to the site, and legal negotiations are ongoing.
- b) **East Oakley Village Hall:** nothing to report
- c) **Jubiloaks/Oakley Woodlands Group:** Ms. Tofts will attend the AGM of Oakley Woodlands Group on March 15<sup>th</sup>.
- d) **Village Show Committee:** a meeting report was circulated to all members in advance of the meeting.
- e) **Oakley Community Association:** a meeting report was issued to all members before the meeting.

#### **9. Confidential Items**

**Resolved:** that owing to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

- 10. Date of next meeting** is confirmed to be 12<sup>th</sup> April 2018