

GREAT COXWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Reading Room, Great Coxwell, Oxfordshire, SN7 7NG

Clerk: Joanna Farrant (clerk@greatcoxwell.com)

Minutes of Great Coxwell Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 25th November 2024, 6:30pm.

Present	Cllr Jacqui Russell (Chairman) (JR) Cllr Richard Hankinson (RH) Cllr Rory Gilmour (RG) Cllr Nick Hawkins (NH) Joanna Farrant, Parish Clerk (JF)
In Attendance	District Cllr Kat Foxhall (KF) 8 members of the public
Apologies	Cllr Kym MacDonald (KM) County Cllr Bethia Thomas (BT) District Cllr Viral Patel (VP)

Item	Minute	
1.	Apologies for Absence Apologies had been received from Cllr Kym MacDonald. Apologies were noted and PC resolved to authorise absence for KM, on the grounds of a personal appointment preventing attendance.	
2.	Approval and Signing of Minutes of Last Meeting Minutes of 09.09.2024 were approved and signed by the Vice-Chairman.	
3.	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda.	
4.	Representations by Members of the Public on Agenda Items or Matters to be Added to the Next Agenda A member of the public queried when a traffic island and traffic lights on the A420 would be installed. The Chair confirmed that the earlier building developments on the Coxwell Road had paid S106 monies towards the upgrades and the latest development had as part of the S106 legal agreement with OCC a duty to complete the installation of traffic lights before the first house is occupied on that development. There was not enough land space for a roundabout. A member of the public queried whether there could be a speed reduction on the A420. The Vice-Chair confirmed that a consultation has been carried out by OCC with a view to reducing the speed to 50mph and will be reducing the speed limit at Faringdon and Shrivenham from the current national speed limit to 50mph Several members of the public raised the issues regarding flooding and drainage, these are noted more fully in items 5 and 7 below. Bus shelter provision was raised and this will be added for discussion at the next meeting (see item 14)	
5.	County Councillor's Report BT had circulated an October and November Focus on Parishes report:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – BT has worked with District Cllrs in relation to the ditch and flooded pavement on Coxwell Rd by the building works and JR noted that does now seem to be draining. – Drainage on the Holloway has been added to the schedule of works. JR noted that pot-holes have been filled, but some repairs have already washed away. The workman had noted that a pipe drains straight onto the road from an adjoining field. PC will ask National Trust, if they know who is responsible. – A member of the public noted sand drains down onto the road and blocks the gullies. JR noted that a more frequent schedule of cleaning has been requested. – A member of public asked what is being done about flooding down the Holloway, as it reached as far as Kings House in yesterday's storm and only one drain is unblocked at present. It was noted that the ditch in front of the National Trust property needs periodically clearing. JR suggested the National Trust could be asked about the ditch clearing. – JR noted that OCC has cleared several drains previously and it could be reported again on Fix my Street by any member of the public. A member of the public noted it is already on Fix my Street, for investigation, since September/October and relates to 8 drains being covered in debris and undergrowth and uncleared ditches. JR noted that the PC met with an OCC officer over a year ago and the drains were noted for clearing. JR asked for photos to be placed on Fix my Street when the rain causes flooding, but not during excessive rain, as the PC's previous reports over the winter of 2023/4 were deleted wholesale, as OCC deemed all complaints related to out of the ordinary rainfall. – RH reported that the Fix my Street investigation on Puddleduck Lane had been closed, despite reports of drain blockage. – A landowner queried if OCC provided any guidance on road closure for landowners when clearing ditches, or whether permission is required. – JR noted that OCC's standard response is that riparian ditches are the responsibility of the adjoining landowner to clear out. – PC will investigate and follow up what works are being done on Holloway and can clarify if any permission is needed when clearing ditches from the highway. They will see if OCC would consider a public meeting with officers to allow the variety of issues raised to be discussed. 	<p>JF</p> <p>JF</p>
6.	<p>District Councillor's Report</p> <p>VP and KF had circulated a September and October report since the last meeting. KF highlighted the following: Wicklesham Quarry application – the DC has reiterated opposition. A future planning matter at Coleshill in relation to a solar farm is anticipated. JR noted the potential developer had notified the PC previously and Coleshill PC had posted leaflets around the village. KF confirmed the DC is assisting Coleshill residents to consider material conditions and push for best practice for developers around solar farm applications. KF offered to forward to PC if required.</p> <p>KF noted a consultation on council tax premium on long term empty properties – reduction to 1 year.</p> <p>KF advised there is a current Local Nature Recovery Consultation. KF clarified it is a statutory duty to develop a plan for nature recovery in relation to local habitats, so that authorities can understand what habitats/species there are in a local areas and grants can be channelled more appropriately, as well as linking to biodiversity net gain. Consultation is open until 1st December.</p> <p>KF noted that the Joint Local Plan now carries some weight in relation to planning applications.</p>	

	KF had confirmed the cobbled path was OCC land and contacted BT in relation to verges adjoining that.	
7.	<p>Correspondence:</p> <p>7.1. Hedges: JR clarified that hedging referred to in September's meeting was the hedging on the Paddocks adjacent to the Park. The hedging leading to Oakfield has been cut, with hedging and ditches around Paddocks still being followed up with the landowner.</p> <p>7.2. Ditches/Drainage – see Item 5 above. In addition, the PC will follow up on grips yet to be completed and clump of hazels/culverts yet to be cleared by OCC. A member of the public noted flooding yesterday on the corner. JR noted hourly rainfall was exceptional and exceeded the stated one in a 100-year rain event used for design, so it likely just too much for the drains in many places. The corner flooding did clear by the next day.</p> <p>A member of the public reported that water flows off Cherry Orchard, out of the ditch near Bay Tree Cottage and that the pipe past Annabelles is blocked. If that was cleared it would reduce water running down road.</p> <p>JR confirmed the PC have spoken with OCC about grips opposite Gypsy Lane, clearing the culvert opposite Oakfields and clearing the ditch that turns 90 degrees towards the golf course, currently blocked with hazels, which the PC believes is an OCC ditch. JR noted that the culvert under the road was fixed in 2018 around the entrance to the village, which is why it drains away at that point. Flood capacity is an issue.</p> <p>The PC are liaising with landowners of the Paddocks adjoining the Park to cut the hedges and liaising about responsibility for ditch clearance, as the landowner believes OCC has done it historically, but OCC believes it is a landowner responsibility at present.</p> <p>The PC have made OCC aware of all the issues raised and met with an officer on site. PC will raise again with OCC. A member of public reported that white marks have been put on the road at many drainage points, presumably for OCC to investigate. The owner of Oakfield confirmed his ditches have been cleared with an excavator and hedges cut and that water was flowing under pipe during the latest storm.</p> <p>A member of the public noted that where both landowner and OCC work in unison, it makes a difference. JR suggested a forum with OCC in relation to responsibilities and to aide communication might assist, and the PC could look into setting this up.</p> <p>7.3. Use of Park for Exercise Class – no special permission required, but PC asked users to be mindful of noise near housing and parking.</p> <p>7.4. National Trust: intending work to the pond in Great Barn to eliminate Pennywort and tree planting near Puddleduck Lane – a general invite on 14th December.</p>	JF
8.	New Business: No new business.	
9.	Ongoing Business:	JF

	<p>9.1. Verges & footpaths: grass cutting survey – will go out shortly in relation to next year's planned cutting schedule.</p> <p>9.2. Dog-mess signs – action next meeting.</p> <p>9.3. Neighbourhood Plan(NP) Update 2025: questionnaire. Action next meeting.</p> <p>7.5. Drains/Ditches: above.</p> <p>7.6. Hedging: JF to contact landowner bordering the Paddocks (park side), who has said hedging due to be cut after end of October when new tenant in place.</p> <p>9.4. Powercuts: RH has made 15 calls and no response. RH has now requested whether to contact Ombudsman, MP or Martin Lewis.</p> <p>9.5. Bus-stop sign: BT had followed up on behalf of PC and as a result damaged sign was taken down, but it has not been replaced. JF will follow up with BT/OCC again. PC clarified that PC are responsible for bus-stop shelters, but cost is high. A query was raised about shelters and will be added to the next meeting.</p> <p>9.6. Telephone box – JR to confirm with volunteer or seek renewed quotes.</p>	<p>KM/RH</p> <p>JF</p> <p>JF</p>
10.	<p>The Park/Reading Room:</p> <p>10.1. Repairs/maintenance: resolution to approve quoted Playdale repairs – JR reported that the Playground inspection recommended work, with additional work to replace a rotten post and change a cross-beam: cost £3,976.97 & VAT. It was proposed, seconded and resolved to carry out the quoted work using the existing budget line for park repairs and the £2,750 allocated to play equipment repairs in the 2023/4 budget, that was not spent in year as forecast and carried over to 2024/5 as an unallocated sum.</p> <p>10.2. Widen gate access: it was agreed to proceed on two quotes, as it had not proved possible to obtain a third. The PC agreed to use the cheaper of the two quotes, which was within the resolution approved at the last meeting. Work to take place in the New Year.</p> <p>10.3. Path to MUGA/path in Park: PC agreed to send a survey to parishioners in relation to a potential path from the gate to the MUGA using a bound rubber surface and s.106 funds. JF to action.</p> <p>10.4. Cellar work: JR reported that the s.106 application has been submitted and potential funding confirmed, subject to agreement of conditions. It was proposed, seconded and resolved to accept the conditions of the Vale of White Horse District Council, dated 21st November 2024 and the Chair and RH duly signed the letter, noting that Vale of White Horse District Council is supporting the PC. It was further proposed, seconded and resolved that the total budget for the work would be £1800, with £1635.15 being allocated from the s.106 funding and the balance of £164.85 from existing budget line of Repairs and Maintenance. PC noted its powers set out at 11.3 below.</p>	<p>JR</p>
11.	<p>11.1. JF reported current bank balances and the PC noted the bank reconciliations circulated with bank statements, as well as budget variance report circulated.</p> <p>11.2. It was proposed, seconded and resolved to approve payments since 09.09.2024 (shown inclusive of VAT), and those councillors who had authorized payments were duly noted:</p>	

	Parish Council				
<i>Inv Date</i>	<i>Payee</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Bank Recon</i>	<i>Payment Details</i>	
05/09/2024	Vale of White Horse	- £8,206.50	£30,247.42	Precept - 2nd Half	INCOME
31/08/2024	BGG Garden & Tree Care Ltd	£36.00	£30,211.42	Reading Room Grass Cut	RH/NH
31/08/2024	BGG Garden & Tree Care Ltd	£30.00	£30,181.42	Church Lane/Holloway Rd Verge Cut	RH/NH
13/09/2024	RJ Harison Plumbing & Heating Ltd	£100.00	£30,081.42	Reading Room boiler service & landlord safety certificate	NH/JR
30/09/2024	BGG Garden & Tree Care Ltd	£120.00	£29,961.42	Park Cut on 05/09/2024	NH/JR
03/11/2024	Royal British Legion	£20.00	£29,941.42	British Legion Poppy Appeal wreath	RH/JR
	Reading Room				
01/09/2024	British Gas	£22.92	£1,788.18	Electricity Supply 29Jul to 29 Aug	
02/09/2024	Room Hire	-£48.00	£1,836.18	Room Hire on 01/12/2024	
02/09/2024	Room Hire	-£98.00	£1,934.18	Room Hire WI 2024	
10/09/2024	Room Hire	- £126.00	£2,060.18	Room Hire WI 2023/4	
12/09/2024	Everflow	£2.51	£2,057.67	Water/Waste supply	
01/10/2024	British Gas	£21.01	£2,036.66	Electricity Supply 29 Aug to 28 Sep 2024	
01/10/2024	Room Hire	- £126.00	£2,162.66	Room Hire Art Club	
12/10/2024	Everflow	£8.26	£2,154.40	Water/Waste Supply	
18/10/2024	Room Hire	-£8.00	£2,162.40	Room Hire 23/10/2024	
02/10/2024	EDF	£9.72	£2,152.68	Gas Supply 9 Sep-30Sep (inclu £3.05 credit against £12.7 invoice)	

08/11/2024	Room Hire	-£32.00	£2,184.68	Roome Hire 29/30 Nov 2024
06/11/2024	Wed Coffee Donations	-£400.00	£2,584.68	Wed Coffee Donations

Powers: Park maintenance: LG (Misc Prov) Act 1976, s.19; Verges/Footpaths maintenance: HA 1980, s.43, 50, 196 Reading Room provision and expenses: LGA 1972, s.133; LG (Misc Prov) Act

- 11.3. The following income received to the Reading Room charity was noted:
donation from Coffee Morning Group to Parish Room Charity (£400)

11.4. Budget:

- 11.4.1. It was **proposed, seconded and resolved** to accept the draft budget for 2025/6 in the sum of £20,184.
 11.4.2. It was further **proposed, seconded and resolved** to request a precept of £16,350.
 11.4.3. It was **proposed, seconded and resolved** to apply £4,534.55 of forecast unallocated funds at financial year end 2023/4 towards the 2024/5 budget.
 11.4.4. For 2025/6 reserves it was noted that the sum of £12,000 would be held as general reserves and an increase to £6,000 for earmarked reserves: of which £2500 is allocated to future playground repairs or equipment replacement; £1500 for unanticipated repairs to other assets; £1000 for future Reading Room repairs and £1000 as a fund for future professional advice.

The tax base for this year had been notified and the precept request was in line with Council Tax Band D, as recommended. It was **proposed, seconded and resolved** that the Chair sign the precept request form in accordance with the resolved precept request.

11.4.5 Approve 3-5 year asset plan: the PC noted that earmarked reserves reflect a 3-5 year asset plan: playground equipment was installed in 2004 together with park furniture and thus represents and increasing risk of significant repair or replacement costs. PC therefore intended to build up a fund towards long-term equipment replacement in the Park. The Reading Room windows would require re-painting over the next 5 years, as well as the path and front entrance ramp requiring attention. PC therefore intended to build up a fund towards future maintenance work in the Reading Room over the next 5 years.

- 11.5. It was **proposed, seconded and resolved** to agree the NALC recommended salary increase from 1st April 2024 for SCP 8 for the clerk/RFO's contracted and overtime hours, if any.
 11.6. PC **resolved** to approve new direct debit banking charges to maintain the PC account, which take effect with Lloyds from 1st January 2025, with agreement to close Earmarked Reserves Account (formerly Park account) rather than pay to maintain that separate account.

	<p>New matters:</p> <p>Decided since last meeting: P24/V1734/LB: Pear Tree Cottage – replace timber/tiles (13/09/24 deadline) – permission. granted</p> <p>No further developments since last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW.0151.23: Wicklesham Quarry: objection submitted (11.06.24) - P22/V0996/RM: Appeal to Secretary of State against refusal of an application for reserved matters (comments/modification/withdrawal of previous representation by 21.11.23). Appeal allowed save in relation to discharge of conditions 7 (biodiversity enhancement plant) and 10 (lighting scheme). Conditions are being discharged piecemeal. <p>12.1. No further outstanding applications arising at the time of meeting.</p>	
13.	<p>Policies/Administration:</p> <p>13.1 Website Accessibility Statement: to be circulated and considered at next meeting.</p> <p>13.2 Biodiversity Policy: adopted subject to suggested amendments by JR to be circulated and agreed by email.</p> <p>13.3 Statutory requirement for Sexual Harassment Policy: adopted subject to suggested amendments by JR to be circulated and agreed by email.</p>	
14.	<p>Any other business to be added to the next Agenda:</p> <p>Include survey about dog-mess bins; bus-stop shelter; forum re drainage.</p>	
15.	<p>Date of Next Meeting: Monday 10th February 2024, 6:30pm</p>	

Meeting Closed: 8:05