

**MINUTES OF ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON  
Thursday 4 April 2024 at the Village Hall, Aston, at 7.30pm**

**Members** Russell La Forte (Chair)

**Present:** J Ordish  
B Lings  
R Anstee  
G Ball  
A Chapman

**In Attendance:** Elaine Anstee – Clerk  
9 members of the public  
Cllr C Maynard (WODC)  
Cllr L Nicholls (WODC)

1. **Apologies from Members:** There were apologies from P Sparrowhawk.
2. Following the passing of Ted Baughan a vote of thanks was given for his service as chair of the Parish Council for 20 years from 1983, work and support to the community and the village of Aston.
3. **Minutes of the previous meetings** of the Parish Council on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were agreed and it was RESOLVED as proposed by R La Forte, seconded by R Anstee, with all in agreement, that the meeting Chair signs them.
4. **Parish Councillors - Disclosure of interests on agenda items** – R La Forte declared a nonpecuniary interest in Agenda Item 12 as he is a trustee.
5. **Meeting Open for Public Participation**
  1. Resident of Chimney raised concerns about the Great Brook Bridge and advised that a contractor had been clambering around as if measuring up to repair the bridge. When asked he said the access was going to be the Great Brook Road. This has caused grave concerns because some residents do not feel safe using that road, even when not flooded. There has not been a TTRO yet so no detail on how long the works will be for or what is planned but the Parish Council wanted to make sure the concerns have been raised again. The residents want the work done but in a way that residents feel safe and listened too.
  2. Another resident raised the issue of the resurfacing of the Great Brook Road which is okay when so many of the other roads in the parish (North Street/Back Lane/Bampton Road) are in a shocking state. There should be community engagement in the maintenance of prioritising roads.
  3. Children's home – is occupied and being used.
  4. Concerns raised that the containers at the school, potentially costing £300 per week, but there is no work being done.
  5. Ham Lane, Aston – surface disastrous from the end of the tarmacked part. No clarity on ownership and responsibility for maintenance.

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 4 April 2024

6. Gulleys on North Street, Aston need clearing.
7. Clerk to raise all of the above with County Councillor and OCC Highways.

## 6. WODC/OCC Matters

OCC Cllr D Levy not in attendance – Report attached at Appendix 1.

WODC Cllr C Maynard – Report attached at Appendix 2.

WODC Cllr L Nicholls – commended the ongoing work with WASP and other stakeholders in relation to Thames Water and flooding issues and stressed that we need to be pooling resources and collecting data. Highlighted the ‘Flood Grant’ from OCC for which expressions of interest have to be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

## 7. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

### a) Quick updates:

- *Neighbourhood Plan* – Chair sent update via email prior to the meeting. To be a separate agenda item for May and comment on email to Chair in the next 14 days. Local Plan – second round of consultation due to come out.
- *Electronic Speed Signs* – request for replacement of the two existing and quote for new one for Bampton Road submitted.
- *Cote Chapel* – No update.
- *Gate at St James Church* – The RFO is now working on this.
- *Footpaths/Treescapes* – no update.
- *Thames Water* – awaiting report from flow monitors due end of April 2024/pumping station at back of Marsh Furlong and works at St Joseph’s Court (Aug 2024).

### b) *Traffic calming update and other traffic issues.*

An article was submitted to the Voices editorial team for the recent edition and requesting residents’ thoughts. As of the date of issue of the agenda 18 responses had been received by email.

### c) *Half yearly review of external Parish Council assets*

Report submitted – no issues.

### d) *Flag of Peace for D-Day 80<sup>th</sup>*

This has been ordered, received, and will be invoiced in due course.

### e) *Anti-Social Behaviour*

None reported at time of agenda.

## 8. PLANNING

### New planning applications - None

### Update on Ongoing Planning Applications – For Information

- a) Brier Furlong – ongoing reporting of CTMP breaches and letter sent to WODC Enforcement. An officer from WODC has been in contact with clerk and asked for the Contracts Managers (Living Space) contact details which have been supplied. – new CTMP breach on 28.3.24.

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 4 April 2024

Letter to planning sent on 17.3.24 to express concerns etc. WODC Cllr C Maynard will respond in his role of Cllr with responsibility for planning.

St James Court – residents have seen in the fields adjacent, contractors on site apparently measuring up. FOA request if there has been a pre app and the detail has been rebuffed and a request put in to monitoring officer for a review.

- b) Marsh Furlong – agenda item 7 under Thames Water.
- c) St Joseph’s Court – agenda item 7 under Thames Water.
- d) North Farm – latest information published in Voices and on website. Chair of Parish Council will speak to the Chair of the Allotments about footpath across allotments.

### Update on Previous Planning Applications

<b>Reference</b>	<b>23/03425/CLP</b>
Alternative Reference	PP-12688832
Application Validated	Thu 25 Jan 2024
Address	Farm Building North Of Chimney Farmhouse Chimney
Proposal	Certificate of Lawfulness to ascertain commencement of development and therefore, confirm planning permission 19/03222/FUL (Building operations and introduction of windows and door openings to facilitate the residential use of the modern farm building following the change of use from storage (use class B8) to a self-contained residential dwelling (use class C3) by prior notification 19/01114/PN56) is extant
Status	Decided
Decision	Approve
Decision Issued Date	Wed 20 Mar 2024

<b>Reference</b>	<b>23/03214/HHD</b>
Alternative Reference	PP-12480702
Application Validated	Mon 29 Jan 2024
Address	The Old Chapel North Street Aston Bampton OX18 2DJ
Proposal	Replacement of six windows and replacement of existing plastic guttering with cast iron guttering
Status	Decided
Decision	Approve
Decision Issued Date	Mon 25 Mar 2024

<b>Reference</b>	<b>23/03215/LBC</b>
Alternative Reference	PP-12480702
Application Validated	Mon 29 Jan 2024
Address	The Old Chapel North Street Aston Bampton OX18 2DJ.
Proposal	Internal and external works to include replacement of six windows and replacement of existing plastic guttering with cast iron guttering.
Status	Decided
Decision	Approve
Decision Issued Date	Mon 25 Mar 2024

## 9. New Business

- a) *APCM – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 – clashes with district and Police Commissioner Elections*  
The clerk has checked with the Community Trust and the Ordish Room is available for the APCM and monthly meetings on 2<sup>nd</sup> May.
- b) *Annual Parish Meeting Agenda – for discussion*  
Agenda agreed and Chair will circulate his report to council in advance of the meeting.
- c) *LONDON OXFORD AIRPORT AIRSPACE CHANGE PROPOSAL - ACP-2023-033 - CAP 1616 DESIGN PRINCIPLES – STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT*  
Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council would not make a response.

## 10. Governance – Policies for Review - None

## 11. Community Trust

The repairs to the roof, guttering and soffits has started.  
MUGA is at the pre-application stage and awaiting date with Planning officers at WODC.

## 12. Parish Infrastructure

- a) *Village maintenance*  
To identify any current maintenance work required. Budget remaining for 2024-25 is £1500. The Aston sign on the Bampton Road needs clearing and Back Lane has still seen no repairs by OCC Highways.
- b) *Cote Turn – waste bin – awaiting pricing from WODC/Publica.*
- c) *BBOWT Car Park – response from BBOWT was no so clerk to explore where there is OCC land and speak to officers to identify a site for a new bin.*

## 13. FINANCE

- a) *Account balances – noted.*
- b) *Review of the Year-to-Date Financial Report – noted.*
- c) *Revision to Monthly Standing orders from 1st May 2024:*  
It was RESOLVED as proposed by B Lings, seconded by J Ordish, with all in agreement, to amend the SDO's Clerk's Salary LC2 (18 -23) (below substantive range)) to change to £210.05 per month payable on the 6th day of each month from May 2024. This to include £18 per month working at home allowance.  
RFO Salary LC1 (13-17) (above substantive range) to be £185.75 including £18 per month, Working from home allowance.  
HMRC payment to change to £89.80 payable on the 6th day of each month from May 2024.

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 4 April 2024

d) *Clean Slate Grant Application*

It was RESOLVED as proposed by R La Forte, seconded by J Ordish, with all in agreement, to grant £100 to Clean Slate.

e) It was RESOLVED to approve the following payments for the period April 24 as proposed by B Lings, seconded by R La Forte, with all in agreement.

	NET	VAT	Gross
Clean Slate Grant request for 2024-25	100.00		100.00
OALC – RFO Y/End Audit course Inv 4921	30.00	6.00	36.00
D Johnson – Inv 2445	240.00		240.00
<b>Total to be decided and approved</b>	<b>£370.00</b>	<b>£6.00</b>	<b>£376.00</b>
RFO Salary including WFH allowance	185.75		185.75
HMRC (Tax and NI on above)	41.80		41.80
<b>Total of already approved/paid</b>	<b>£227.55</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£227.55</b>
<b>Monthly Standing Orders/DDs</b>			
Clerk's Salary including WFH Allowance	412.41		412.41
HMRC PAYE	98.40		98.40
<b>Total SDOs</b>	<b>£510.81</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£510.81</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,108.36</b>	<b>£6.00</b>	<b>£1,114.36</b>

**14. Parish Councillors' and clerk's reports from meetings attended since last meeting.**

None

**15. Matters arising since publication of agenda/**

**Matters which Councillors may wish to raise for inclusion on next agenda.**

**(For discussion only)**

Clerk revised contract.

**16. Date of next meeting: Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024, 7.30pm**

the Annual Parish Council Meeting and monthly meetings of Parish Council.

Meeting closed at 21.17pm.

Signed.....Dated.....

## Appendix 1

County Councillor Report. April 4<sup>th</sup> 2024 I hope everyone has had a pleasant Easter, and that the worst of the wetness is behind us. New special schools: The county council is planning two new special schools in the Didcot area to serve southeast Oxfordshire. One will specialise in educating children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) needs. Another special school is due to be built within the Valley Park development, and will specialise in educating children with Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and other needs. In addition, as many people know, we are building or acquiring small children's homes to provide care in the county for those who would otherwise have to go somewhere else. This will provide better care for the children, at substantially lower cost. The home in Aston opened recently, and one is planned in Sutton. Taking on potholes: OCC is launching a £7m programme this spring to refurbish nearly 100 roads across the county this spring from 8 April to 3 June. It is the biggest surface dressing programme for 20 years. The £7m is made up of £2.6m from the department for transport and additional budget for highways agreed in the 2024/2025 Lib Dem/Green budget (which was not supported by the Tories). This is good, but it will not make up the approximately £20m gap per annum between what we need to maintain our roads and what the government awards us. And as the weather gets worse, as appears to be the case, the pressure on our roads will continue to grow. Money for cycling and walking: Oxfordshire has been awarded £2.384 million for improving walking and cycling infrastructure. The award will be used for expansion of the school streets programme countywide and projects in Abingdon and Witney. Tenants welcomed into supported housing: Adults with learning disabilities and autism have moved into new accommodation in Witney, purchased by OCC. A further four homes are planned, including in Horspath. EV chargers: Oxfordshire has won another £3.6m to upgrade EV infrastructure. This is of course a bit chicken and egg. Most people who buy electric cars only do so when they can charge them at home, but we need to make provision for those who are away from home or who can't charge at home. And we need excess capacity so that nobody turns up in urgent need of charging to discover there is no space. Elections. Not County Council related, but there are elections for WODC on 2 May. There is one seat up in the Standlake, Aston and Stanton Harcourt ward and one in Eynsham, Cassington and South Leigh. Can I remind people that they will need to take ID to the polling station, or else get an Voter Authority Certificate, or apply for a postal vote. All the details are on the WODC web pages. Elections and voting - West Oxfordshire District Council ([westoxon.gov.uk](http://westoxon.gov.uk)) It has been a pleasure working with the two district councillors who are up for re-election. As ever, I can be contacted at [dan.levy@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:dan.levy@oxfordshire.gov.uk) and I would be delighted to hear from you

## Appendix 2

### Cllr C Maynard (WODC)

District councillor update.

**Aston parish council meeting, 4<sup>th</sup> April  
District councillor update, Charlie Maynard**

### **Thames Water / Housing**

As I write this, Bampton sewage treatment works, which also serves Aston, is discharging raw sewage - <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/edm-map>

We await the results of the monitors that have been installed around the Aston sewage network. The key goal here is to identify the parts of the network with the worst infiltration. The obvious massive problem is that Thames Water is fast heading towards Administration (i.e. bankruptcy) and the probability of Thames Water spending the money required to fix this problem is low. This makes it all the more important to ensure that the developer and landowner of the new Briar Furlong site understand clearly that occupancy will not be permitted until there is sufficient capacity both in the network and at Bampton sewage treatment works to accommodate the new houses. I am also working closely with Russell LaForte, your parish Chair, to address the council's very justified frustrations with WODC's planning department with regard to the Briar Furlong application.

West Oxfordshire District Council has been shortlisted for a national award for its work campaigning against Thames Water on sewage. I am ambivalent about this. We have made groundbreaking strides over the last two years since taking over the administration by bringing in conditions linking development to upgrades in treatment works and networks. We've also taken apart Thames Water's extremely poor quality data and have forced changes in how they calculate the capacity of their treatment works. We've persuaded them (or forced them through strength of argument?) to change how they calculate catchment population, per capita consumption and the all important Environment Agency's "multiplier", with Thames Water now agreeing to apply a 3.0x multiplier with no exceptions when considering upgrades in sewage treatment capacity. This has all be achieved with the district council having zero statutory power over Thames Water. On the (very large) downside, it's been a miserable couple of years seeing sewage endlessly spew into our rivers, with absolutely no end in sight. We need a government who is serious about addressing this issue, our current government certainly is not.

### **National Planning Inspector's decision**

A national planning inspector has ruled against the unanimous view of West Oxfordshire District Councillors, allowing a 120 unit housing development just west of Minster Lovell. This is very disappointing, doubly so as the inspector found that the District Council was not forecast to meet its Five Year Housing Land Supply. This highlights the extremely difficult task of staying within the 5YHLS and the multiple ways that developers are able to win at appeal, even if we are within the 5YHLS. There is lots of work being done to shore up defences. We will see down the track how successful these efforts prove.

### **Local elections on May 2nd**

Please vote! Please also remember to bring ID as that is now a requirement nationally.