

**MINUTES OF ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 2ND MARCH 2017 IN THE
VILLAGE HALL, ASTON AT 7.30 PM**

1. Members Present: Richard Haines (Chairman)
Jane Everex
Ben Lings
John Ordish
Paul Sparrowhawk
Jane West
Phil West

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu – Clerk
Charles Mathew, Oxfordshire County Councillor
Hilary Fenton, West Oxfordshire District Councillor
Steve Good, West Oxfordshire District Councillor

Members' Apologies: None

2. Minutes of previous meeting – on 2 February 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
Proposed by Phil West, seconded by Ben Lings.

3. Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items
John Ordish, as Treasurer and Church Warden, the request for a donation from St James; Church, Aston (item 6a).

4. District and County Council Matters
Hilary Fenton gave a verbal report on matters relating to West Oxfordshire District Council. The District Council has set its budget for 2017/18; the District's council tax remains the 2nd lowest of the Shire Councils. The Local Plan is expected to be reported on by the Inspector in/shortly after May 2017. The District Council has issued a press release reporting on the public responses to its survey about Oxfordshire County Council's unitary proposals.

Charles Mathew noted that the Parish Council would be discussing the current consultation on the Minerals and Waste Plan later in the meeting.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) *NHS Oxfordshire Consultation "The Big Health and Care Consultation"*

It was resolved that the Parish Council would not respond to this consultation. It was agreed that more needed to be done to publicise this consultation so that residents are aware of it and can respond individually.

Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

b) Review of Parish physical assets

John Ordish and Jane Everex carried out this review. There were no defects identified which need urgent attention due to potential harm to the public.

The routine maintenance requirements identified during the survey were discussed and the following action was agreed:

Oddjobs to be asked to provide a quotation for the staining/painting and repairs of the benches on Southlands, the war memorial green and the VE/VJ seat on the playing field. Volunteer support to paint the bench and telephone box in Cote to be gratefully accepted. John Ordish volunteered to clear the weeds from inside the Cote bus shelter.

Three quotations to be sought to replace the noticeboard on Southlands with an identical new structure, to be constructed in hardwood – Paul Sparrowhawk, John Ordish and Phil West to ask the contractors identified to provide quotations.

c) Anti Social Behaviour

None.

6. New Business

a) Request for a donation towards the maintenance of the churchyard at St James' Church for 2016

It was resolved to give a donation of £800 – proposed by Jane West, seconded by Paul Sparrowhawk.

b) Oxfordshire County Council consultation on Proposed Main Modifications to Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan

It was resolved to respond supporting the categorisation of the local area as Policy M8 (Minerals Safeguarding Area) rather than Policy M3 (Mineral Strategic Resource Area) due to the reasons cited in paragraph 4.33 (distance from area of need, unsuitability of local roads and bridge weight restrictions). Letter also to express continued reservations about the volume of minerals extraction included within the Plan which is significantly above recent historic annual requirements.

c) Request from residents to relocate the dog bin on Ham Lane

The Parish Council considered the letters received. It was agreed that the Parish Council would in principle consider relocating the bin to the verge opposite the outbuildings at the entrance to Ham Lane, subject to the outcome of discussions with the District Council.

d) Request from a resident to permit planting on a Highways grass verge

It was observed that this is an issue for Oxfordshire Highways, as the public verge is owned by the County Council. However, it was resolved that the Parish Council would strongly oppose planting or the installation of any obstruction on the highway verge in this location as the verge is required to provide refuge to pedestrians walking down Ham Lane (there being no footways). The Parish Council has resisted similar requests for other public verges in the parish. The Clerk was asked to inform the resident who had made the request and to also advise Oxfordshire Highways of the Parish Council's strong opposition to this proposal, should Oxfordshire Highways be approached with the same request.

New Business (continued)

- e) *Email from resident about modifications to metal barriers on footpath end between Woodbridge Close and Cote Road*

It was noted that the modifications had been designed and completed by Oxfordshire Highways on the Parish Council's request, and that the modifications therefore fully satisfied Oxfordshire Highways' own risk assessments. However, the original design brief hadn't been able to be fulfilled due to the limitations caused by the narrow width of the footpath in this location. There was dissatisfaction with the quality of the work, and the Clerk was asked to request that improvements were made, with the addition of "elbow" finishings on the top of the two barriers furthest from Cote Road so that they are finished in the same way as the barrier at the Cote Road end, and improvement of the tarmac repair, with the filled areas to be recut and filled to a more neat, squared shape.

There was a discussion about whether it would be possible to install a meshed metal barrier on the footpath edge on Cote Road, although there would need to be consideration of the impact that this could have on enabling wheelchair and pushchair users to access the dropped kerb. The Clerk will contact Oxfordshire Highways.

- f) *Update on changes to Eynsham Neighbourhood Policing arrangements*

It was noted that Superintendent Kath Lowe has sent the following information by email to communities in the Eynsham area:

"I am writing in response to questions that have been raised in the Eynsham community regarding planned changes within Thames Valley Police in our approach to neighbourhood policing.

Over the last year Thames Valley Police have reviewed the way we respond to and investigate incidents and crime in our communities. We wanted to make sure that our structures and processes are as effective as possible to support how we manage demand and meet the needs of the public.

We have mapped out where demands are placed on our service to ensure that we are able to provide the right resources to the areas of greatest need, at times of greatest need and protect the most vulnerable in our communities. As a result of this review, during the summer we will be making changes to the way we are structured across our local policing areas. This means that in some areas and at certain times we will have more or fewer police officers available depending on demand and our assessment of threat, risk and harm.

The police base in Eynsham was considered as part of the review and I am pleased to confirm that we will be retaining our Police Community Support Officers in the village. For some months now Police Officers have not been permanently based in Eynsham without any noticeable impact on the community.

As part of the new structure we are creating new 'neighbourhood problem solving' teams to enhance our capability to deal with neighbourhood problems. This will mean a whole team of officers being available to respond to calls for service. These officers are in addition to our emergency response teams who will continue to respond across West Oxon as they do now.

I would like to reassure you that our aim is to create a more effective and efficient police service which will ensure that we can provide the best service to you when you need us. "

7. PLANNING

New planning applications

17/00264/FUL Penny Black House, High Street, Aston
Conversion of part of outbuilding to annexe
No objections or comments.

PLANNING (continued)

New planning applications

- 17/00411/FUL Land West of Bull House, Bull Lane, Aston
Erection of two dwellings with associated works
Response: No objection, but the following comments/requests for conditions to be submitted:
- The Parish Council would like there to be a construction traffic management plan in place for the build, to include a prohibition on contractors' vehicles parking on Bull Lane and Bull Street ;
 - Whilst the application does not require formal consultation with Thames Water on the capacity of the waste water system to cope with the new properties; the Parish Council continues to raise this issue. The local sewerage system regularly fails and has to be pumped out using sewerage vehicles. Thames Water carried out an assessment of the local sewerage system in 2015 which concluded that the local sewerage system is not able to cope with additional properties being connected to it. The cumulative impact of new build properties will continue to exacerbate this problem.

Follow up to previous planning applications

- 14/01496/FUL Thistle Cottage, Ham Lane, Aston

It was noted that a metal post and rail fence has now been installed in front of some of the properties fronting Ham Lane on the boundary of the metalled road, encroaching upon the approximately 1m wide highway verge which is located on the edge of the properties. The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she has already sent photographs to the Planning Department of West Oxfordshire District Council and asked them to take the issue up with Oxfordshire County Council who have been dealing with the encroachment issue. Parish Councillors expressed frustration that the issue of the re-establishment of the highway verge at this location has still not been resolved, despite the fact that the Parish Council has been pursuing it with both WODC and OCC since before the plans were approved in 2015. The Clerk was asked to write to David Nimmo Smith, the County Council Cabinet Member for the Environment, to ask him to ensure that this situation is finally rectified, with the letter to express the Parish Council's dissatisfaction with what has been done to date and to highlight the risk that the obstruction of the highway presents to pedestrians, particularly children.

Planning applications approved

- 16/03960/FUL Land North of Back Lane, Aston
Construction of two detached dwellings with associated garaging and alteration to existing vehicular access
- 16/04068/HHD Marsh Cottage, Back Lane, Aston
Erection of carport

Planning applications refused

- 16/03910/FUL **Westfield House, Bampton Road, Aston**
Erection of three dwellings with associated works

8. Community Trust

John Ordish provided an update on matters relating to the Community Trust and a copy of the recent meeting minutes were put in the folder. The Community Trust is intending to hold a drop in meeting on Wednesday 29th March from 6pm at the Village Hall where residents can come to find out more about what the Community Trust does and the future plans for sport in Aston and the children's play areas. The Community Trust is intending to follow this up with a presentation at the Annual Parish Meeting in May.

9. Parish Infrastructure

a) Village maintenance

The Clerk was asked to prompt WODC again about the repairs needed to the dog bins at the entrance of the footpath from Bull Street to the village hall and at the "T" junction towards Cote.

b) Metal chicanes/barriers at footpath ends – Woodbridge Close, Cote Road, Bull Street

Discussed under agenda item 6e.

c) Road markings (white and yellow lining)

The Clerk has informed the County Council that the white central road and Give Way lines throughout Aston and on the junction of the Great Brook Road with the road to Chimney/Aston need to be repainted, and that the yellow "No Parking" zig zag markings outside Aston Primary School also need to be repainted. Oxfordshire Highways report that these locations have been added to the maintenance list for consideration when they receive the lining funding for summer 2017.

10. FINANCE

a) Account Balances – Noted

b) Statement of Internal Control and Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control

In order to assist the Parish Council with their annual review of the effectiveness of the internal control system the Clerk had recirculated the Parish Council's Statement of Internal Control in the Clerk's Briefing Notes.

The Parish Council resolved to readopt this Statement and members confirmed that they are satisfied with the internal control procedures being followed – proposed by Jane West, seconded by Paul Sparrowhawk.

c) February invoices presented for approval and payment

		Statute
Clerk's salary and working from home allowance	374.00	LGA 1972, s112
Clerk's expenses – printing – 206 sheets @ 7p	14.42	LGA 1972 s111
Information Commissioner – renewal of Data protection registration	35.00	LGA 1972 s111
West Oxfordshire District Council – emptying of dog bin in February	21.25	Litter Act 1983
A J Mitchell – cleaning of bus shelters on 18 February 2017	27.00	LGA 1972 s111
John Ordish – plaque for new bench	43.50	PCA 1957 s1
St James' Church – grass cutting grant	800.00	LGA 1972, s214
Total	£1,315.17	

It was resolved to make the above payments, proposed by Jane West, seconded by Paul Sparrowhawk.

11. Parish Councillors' reports from meetings attended since last meeting

Richard Haines and Ben Lings reported on their attendance at the Oxfordshire County Council meeting about the unitary authority proposal on 22 February 2017.

Oxfordshire County Council is planning to submit its proposals to the Secretary of State in May. If the Secretary of State is supportive, the County Council will issue further consultations relating to the detail of the proposed changes from September 2017.

Richard Haines said that it remains unclear whether decisions of the proposed Area Executive Boards would be able to be overridden by the main Executive Board as the constitution which would detail their respective powers has not yet been published. It appears that planning matters would be split into two areas, with planning decisions made centrally for large developments and infrastructure, and local planning committees created to make decisions on more localised planning applications. The County Council say that they are trying to learn from the other unitary authorities which are being created around the country and are in essence following the model being put in place in Wiltshire.

Signeddated.....