

**MINUTES OF ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL  
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015 IN THE  
VILLAGE HALL, ASTON AT 7.30 PM**

**1. Members**                    **Richard Haines (Chairman)**  
**Present:**                    **Ben Lings**  
                                      **John Ordish**  
                                      **Paul Sparrowhawk**  
                                      **Jane West (arriving at item 4)**  
                                      **Phil West**

**In Attendance:**    Helen Sandhu – Clerk  
                                     Hilary Fenton – West Oxfordshire District Councillor

**Apologies:**                Jane Everex

**2. Minutes of previous meeting** – on 6 August 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.  
Proposed by Paul Sparrowhawk, seconded by John Ordish.  
Richard Haines thanked Mr Ordish for taking the notes of this meeting in the absence of the Clerk.

**3. Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items**

John Ordish, as a Trustee of Aston Parish Community Minibus, their request for a donation at item 6b.

**4. District and County Council matters**

Hilary Fenton reported on matters relating to West Oxfordshire District Council. The District Council is encouraging residents to respond to Oxfordshire County Council's survey on changes to the Household Recycling Centres (proposal to reduce the number of sites from 8 to 3 or 4, including the probable closure of Dix Pit in Stanton Harcourt). The District Council would not want to see Dix Pit closed. Mrs Fenton informed the Parish Council that Oxfordshire County Council is also considering cancelling the household green waste collection service (this service is delivered by West Oxfordshire District Council on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council who provide the funding).

The Inspector has accepted the draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and will now consider it in detail.

Mrs Fenton ended by saying that West Oxfordshire District Council is very keen to see the Wenrisc Ward of Witney Community Hospital reopened – the ward has been temporarily closed due to a lack of funding. Financial pressures led the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust to make a choice between closing either the Wenrisc Ward or a ward in Abingdon Community Hospital as both provide the same service. The decision was made to temporarily close the Wenrisc Ward as it needs work to enable it to meet the required hospital standard, whilst the Abingdon ward doesn't. The NHS Foundation Trust is currently saying that the Wenrisc Ward is expected to reopen in October 2015.

## 5. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) *Proposed litter bin near Vicarage Close bus stop*

The Parish Council considered the list of available bins included in the agenda. It was resolved to purchase a Glasdon hooded plastic Trimline 25 litre bin (dark green) which will be attached to the bus stop pole. Proposed by John Ordish, seconded by Paul Sparrowhawk.

b) *Anti-social Behaviour*

None noted.

## 6. New Business

a) *Informal Consultation from OCC on additional Disabled Persons Parking Place (DPPP) adjacent to existing one outside number 30 Cote Road*

It was resolved not to object to this proposal.

b) *Donation request from Aston Parish Community Minibus*

It was resolved to give a donation of £210. Proposed by Richard Haines, seconded by Ben Lings.

c) *Potential Community Speed Watch Group*

Background information provided by Richard Haines had been included in the Clerk's Briefing Notes. Mr Haines reported on his attendance at a meeting organised by PCSO Sandra Syphas following an expression of interest in setting up a community Speed Watch group from several local residents. The meeting was also attended by 5 residents (one additional resident interested in the group was on holiday) and Richard Soper who is the Chairman of North Leigh Parish Council. Mr Soper is also the Chairman of the North Leigh Speed Watch group and he was present at the meeting to provide information on how their scheme is operated. The North Leigh Speed Watch group is run by the Parish Council (with members from outside the council), using the council's public liability insurance. Mr Soper advised that one of the conditions imposed by their insurer is that a member of the Parish Council must be present on each occasion that speed checks are done.

There was a discussion about the need to consult with the wider community before the Parish Council considers whether to support the introduction of a Speed Watch scheme in our parish. The view was expressed that Thames Valley Police should play a greater role in the detection and enforcement of speeding in our parish – traffic officers are regularly seen in Bampton, Curbridge and Standlake but not in our parish.

A question was raised about whether a Speed Watch group could be operated without direct Parish Council involvement, with the Parish Council considering donation requests from the group for financial support like other groups in the parish.

The Clerk was asked to contact the Parish Council's insurer to ask whether there would be any additional insurance fee for operating a Speed Watch scheme, and what rules and regulations the Parish Council would have to adhere to; would a member of the Parish Council have to attend every speed check?

The Clerk was also asked to contact Thames Valley Police to ask if the group could operate with the Parish Council's consent but without direct Parish Council involvement.

**New Business (continued)**

*d) Resident complaint about the position of the bus stops in Aston*

The Parish Council considered the concerns raised by the resident as reported by the Clerk.

It was noted that there had been a long process to assess the best location for the bus stops in Aston in 2011 when the North Street stop was removed. The process had been initiated by Oxfordshire County Council with input from RH buses (the bus operator at the time). The County Council concluded that the current bus stop locations on Cote Road and near Vicarage Close would be optimal, and the locations were subject to rigorous assessment and review. The County Council would be unlikely to make any further changes at this point in time.

It was also noted that there is no funding to install a path between Vicarage Close and Ham Lane, and that there is probably insufficient verge width along some of this distance in any case.

*e) OCC consultation on household waste recycling centres (HWRC) strategy*

It was resolved to respond to this consultation by letter, expressing the Parish Council's objection to the proposals if they will lead to the closure of Dix Pit. The letter to point out that closing Dix Pit would significantly increase the mileage residents would have to travel to access a HWRC. The additional journeys would increase vehicle emitted pollution and congestion on the roads towards Oxford which are already over capacity. Residents would incur additional travel costs to dispose of their waste in a responsible manner. Closure of HWRCs would increase the amount of waste sent to landfill and would be likely to lead to an increase in flytipping. The proposals would shift cost from the County Council to the District Councils, with no ultimate saving to the taxpayer.

*f) WODC Consultation on West Oxfordshire Design Guide*

It was resolved that the Parish Council would not respond to this consultation.

*g) OCC Consultation on the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy prior to submission to the Inspector*

It was resolved that the Parish Council would not respond to this consultation which is for representations on whether the way the Core Strategy has been prepared is legally compliant and whether the content of the plan meets the government's tests of soundness only. It was noted that other professionals and the Inspector will be more qualified to make these assessments.

**7. Community Trust**

John Ordish informed the Parish Council that the Community Trust has recently paid for a fire risk assessment for the village hall. The Community Trust will write to the Parish Council to request a donation to cover the cost of the assessment.

**8. Parish Infrastructure**

*a) Remedial works on culvert on Great Brook Road*

The remedial work is planned to start in the week beginning 21 September, taking 1-2 weeks. The road will be closed for some/all of this period. The Clerk informed the Parish Council that Andrew Vidovic, the OCC Bridge Engineer, has advised that the work will involve the rebuilding of the two headwalls of the culvert and the installation of metal railings on the new headwalls. An attempt will also be made to remove the hump in the road created by the installation of the culvert pipe. Mr Vidovic has also advised that the OCC Countryside Access team are considering what action to take to deal with the deterioration in the metal pedestrian bridge which crosses the Great Brook. There are concerns about the safety of this bridge, and there is a possibility that it will be

**Parish Infrastructure (continued)**

removed while the road is closed for the culvert work and the footpath closed (for anything up to one year) while a replacement bridge is ordered and made. The Parish Council will be informed when final decisions have been made.

The Parish Council expressed concern about the closure of this footpath and access over the Brook and about the possibility of Oxfordshire County Council being unable/resolving not to replace the bridge.

*b) Closure of North Street from 1 September for up to 2 weeks*

The road closure has been granted to enable sewerage connection to the new properties at North Street Farm. The published diversion is via the B4449 through Cote to Standlake.

*c) Trees on North Street – edge of agricultural field and footway*

The Clerk has informed Highways that there are concerns about these two trees via the OCC online reporting system.

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

Oxfordshire Highways was contacted about these barriers which restrict access to people in wheelchairs/disability scooters, in conflict with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

OCC response (provided to Charles Mathew): "I can confirm that these footpaths are public highway and any existing barriers were either installed by OCC or adopted by OCC from the original developer.

The barriers should be staggered and offset by 1200mm and be 1200mm high to comply with DfT's Inclusive Mobility guidance. However, the installation of these barriers probably precedes this guidance.

The county council does not have any funding allocated to remove or amend these barriers but will consider doing so if funded externally."

The Parish Council expressed disappointment that the County Council is able to fund the installation of disabled persons parking places (as discussed earlier in the agenda) which will provide a benefit to very few people, but is unwilling to fund work which would provide equality of access across its footpath network and benefit many more people. The Clerk was asked to convey this view to the County Council.

The Clerk was asked to obtain an estimate from the County Council of the cost of making all four barriers compliant.

**9. PLANNING**

**New Planning applications**

15/02669/HHD Tarpan Farmhouse, North Street, Aston  
Erection of two storey rear extension  
No comments.

15/02988/FUL Manor Farmhouse, Woodbridge Close  
Erection of two dwellings, new access, screening, garaging and landscaping  
It was resolved not to object but to respond that the Parish Council has concerns about the potential detrimental impact of the development on the privacy of 1 and 2 Manor Close. This needs to be preserved by enhanced screening between these properties and the site boundary (it was noted that the existing hedge does not provide cover at the lower

level). The proposed first floor window on the east elevation of plot 2 would also have a detrimental impact on privacy.

It was noted that the application indicates that many of the trees on site will remain - the Council would not wish to see these trees removed at a future point.

The Clerk was also asked to request that WODC prohibits the parking of vehicles involved in the construction of the site on Bull Street due to the adverse impact this would have on highway safety.

### **Updates to previous planning applications**

14/01496/FUL Thistle Cottage, Ham Lane, Aston  
Erection of 7 dwellings and associated works

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she had contacted Builders Ede about the Parish Council's concerns in relation to the new boundary fences and the gaps created between them and the modern stone wall on Southlands. Builders Ede have advised that the close board fence is intended to be permanent and that it has been put up immediately behind the existing boundary of the Thistle Cottage site which is a (largely collapsed) natural stone wall. There is a gap between the natural stone wall and the more modern wall on Southlands which was probably erected when Southlands was built. Builders Ede have been asked how they intend to repair/rebuild the natural stone wall and have been informed that the planning permission for the site does not appear to grant permission for the erection of close board fencing on this boundary.

The Clerk was asked to contact WODC planning for advice on what could be done about the small strip of land between the (fallen) natural stone wall and the modern wall on Southlands. There is significant plant/weed growth on this which blocks the footway on Southlands and presents a nuisance to adjoining residents.

15/01550/OUT Land North of Cote Road, Cote Road, Aston  
Proposed residential development for up to 41 dwellings

The Clerk has contacted the District Council to ask about the process which would need to be followed if the Parish Council would want the Conservation Area extended to include this site – response awaited. The Clerk will contact the Planning Department of WODC to ask what steps now need to be taken to protect the green space at the rear of the development. This will be discussed further at the October Parish Council meeting.

The Clerk was asked to contact WODC Planning about the proposals for the disposal of sewerage from the development between the Village Hall and Saxel Close. The approved outline planning application indicates that the site will have a separate system which will discharge water into the ditches. However, information which has now come to light during the application process for the Gladman site indicates that Thames Water will need to upgrade the entire sewerage system in the area. It would be preferable for the site on the Village Hall side of Cote Road to be connected to the mains sewer rather than discharging cleaned waste water into the ditch system.

**PLANNING (continued)**

**Planning applications granted**

- 15/02311/HHD 1 Manor Close, Aston  
Removal of leylandii hedge, installation of close boarded wooden fence and gate (retrospective)
- 15/02393/LBC South Barn, Cote, Bampton  
Refurbishment of existing sunroom including replacement of external doors with new bi-folding door, insertion of two velux rooflights and block up front stable door
- 15/02681/HHD Notley House, Back Lane, Aston  
Erection of single storey rear extension

**10. FINANCE**

- a) *Account Balances at 31 August 2015* - noted.
- b) *Bank reconciliation at 29 June 2015* - noted.
- c) *Annual Return for 2014/15*  
BDO Stoy Hayward LLP has completed the external audit. The Audit Report is unqualified and no "Issues Arising" report has been issued. The audited Annual Return was approved and accepted by the Council – proposed by John Ordish, seconded by Jane West.
- d) *August invoices presented for approval and payment*

		Statute
Clerk's salary and working from home allowance	364.20	LGA 1972, s112
Clerk's expenses – printing – 73 sheets @ 5p	3.65	LGA 1972 s111
Mr C J Smith – tree work	20.00	LGA 1972 s137
West Oxfordshire District Council – 3 cuts of verges and war memorial – May & June (5 invoiced in year to date) + summer planting at war memorial	1,393.65	HA 1980, s116 WM (LAP) Act 1923 s1 & 3
West Oxfordshire District Council – emptying of dog bin in September	21.04	Litter Act 1983
Aston Parish Community Minibus - donation	210.00	LGRA 1997, s27
Des Johnston – 2 cuts of playing field (11 invoiced in season to date)	112.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,124.54</b>	

It was resolved to make the above payments – proposed by Paul Sparrowhawk, seconded by John Ordish. The cheques were signed by Richard Haines and John Ordish.

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

John Ordish informed the Parish Council that he attended a meeting of the Patient Participation Group at Bampton Surgery on 20 August 2015 following contact from a resident who is concerned about the proposed changes to the District Nurse system. The Medical Practice is proposing to stop having some of its District Nurses based at the Bampton Surgery, with the nurses all to be based at and shared with the Carterton Health Centre. Mr Ordish said that the doctors and patients at Bampton Surgery are opposing this proposal and are attempting to have the decision reversed. The Minutes

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of the PPG meeting were put in the folder. It was agreed that the Parish Council should not become a standing member of the PPG, but that the Clerk will contact Bampton Surgery and ask that the Parish Council is kept informed of all major issues that will affect residents of our parish who are patients of the surgery.

**12. Date of next meeting:** Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015, 7.30pm  
Monthly Parish Council Meeting

Signed .....dated.....