

**MINUTES OF ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
Thursday 4 May 2023 at the Village Hall, Aston, at 7.30pm**

Members R La Forte (Chair)
Present: J Ordish
G Ball
B Lings
P Sparrowhawk
A Chapman
R Anstee

In Attendance: Elaine Anstee – Clerk
2 members of the public

1. Apologies from Members: None.

2. Annual Parish Council Meeting

- Election of Chair – This item was chaired by R La Forte as the outgoing chair. He indicated his willingness to continue for another year. He was proposed by J Ordish, seconded by P Sparrowhawk and unanimously so elected.
R La Forte signed the Acceptance of Office form.
R La Forte then continued as Chair of the meeting.
- Election of Vice Chair – It was decided, as no one wished to stand for this role, to continue as in 2022 with councillor's taking it in turns to chair a meeting where the chair is absent.
- Election of Transport Representative – it was RESOLVED as proposed by R La Forte, seconded by R Anstee, with all in agreement that G Ball continue in this role.
- Election of Community Trust Representative - it was RESOLVED as proposed by R Anstee, seconded by J Ordish, with all in agreement that R La Forte continue in this role.
- Election of Representative to the local committee of Cote Chapel - it was RESOLVED as proposed by R La Forte, seconded by R Anstee, with all in agreement that B Lings continue in this role.
- Election of Representative for the RAF Brize Norton Local Community Working Group meetings (currently 1 evening meeting per year and an invitation to an evening summer semi-formal event). It was RESOLVED as proposed by R La Forte, seconded by P Sparrowhawk, with all in agreement that B Lings continue in this role.
- Discussion and decision on who will submit PC news article to Voices (bi-monthly) – R La Forte to continue to write and submit the Voices article.
- Portfolio assignments agreed as shown below:

Policy and Strategy Framework Governance Official Representation Public Relations Protocol	R La Forte (Chair) J Ordish
Finance and Management Precept IT Council Archives Asset Management	Resources B Lings A Chapman
Flooding and Drainage Waste Collection and Recycling Grounds Maintenance Traffic Calming/Issues Transport/Bus Environmental and Regulatory Conservation Area Champion *Rural Economy/Local Business	Environment P Sparrowhawk A Chapman
Sports and Leisure Parish Clubs/Societies Community and Public Health Public Events Heritage *Chimney Champion *Cote Champion	Health and Leisure P Sparrowhawk R Anstee
Vulnerable Residents Champion Neighbourhood Policing Assets of Community Value Voluntary Sector Engagement Liaison with Neighbouring Parishes (and RAF BzN) Liaison with Parochial Council Broadband	Communities Gill Ball Ben Lings
Local Plan Neighbourhood Plan TBC Planning and Development Sect 106 and CIL Community Emergency Plan Community Trust Liaison *Shifford Champion	Strategic Planning Russell La Forte John Ordish

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3. **Minutes of the previous meeting** of the Parish Council on 20th April 2023 were agreed it was RESOLVED as proposed by P Sparrowhawk, seconded by G Ball, with all in agreement, that the Chair signs them.

4. **Parish Councillors - Disclosure of interests on agenda items** – R La Forte declared a nonpecuniary interest in agenda item 14 as a Community Trust Trustee.

5. *Youth Football Club and Pitch Maintenance – moved forward from agenda item 9f*
 Standard tractor tyres can leave divots and clumps of mud on the field. There are specialist tyres that reduce this issue, but it would not be expected of the existing contractor to purchase these.
 This is an issue particularly at the start of the grass cutting season.
 Cut height ideally would be 25mm to 30mm. The current fortnightly cut program starting in April from Wednesday 19th April does not meet the FA guidance, which is every 5 to 7 days, dependent on weather and growth.
 It was agreed to ask the contractor to change the current pattern of 2 weekly cuts to cuts every 5 to 7 days depending on weather and grass growth. The cut height to be 25mm to 30mm.
 It was RESOLVED as proposed by R La Forte, seconded by J Ordish, with all in agreement that as this is a variance to the current budget, the clerk to write to the football club to request confirmation of contribution to extra costs. This to be billed at the end of the season.

6. **Meeting Open for Public Participation – none.**

7. **WODC/OCC Matters** – not in attendance but a brief report had been submitted by email from OCC Cllr D Levy:
It was good to attend the Parish meeting a few weeks ago, and to hear the views of an impressively large turnout.
One of the key topics was road repair, and I am pleased that, now the weather is improving, the County Council's contractors are cracking on with fixing them as quickly as they can. You will also have heard that a proper repair of the road to Ducklington and Witney has been scheduled.
The Botley Road closure for Network Rail to build a new station has started. Buses are dropping off and picking up in Osney, and people can walk or cycle under the railway. So far, there doesn't seem to have been too much traffic chaos. At the same time, trains from Oxford to Didcot have been suspended as NR discovered serious faults in the viaduct over the Thames at Nuneham Courtney.
I have a meeting lined up with the County Council's landownership team, and hope to be able to find out more about where the North Farm proposition has got to by the time of the next parish council meeting.

8. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) *Planning Appeal 22/00986/FUL and APP/D3125/W/23/3317512*

Briefing from the Chairman on the appeal actions to date. Councillors have been briefed in full by email during this process.

- Statement of Case was submitted to the planning inspector on 28th April 2023.
- 22nd May 2023 – case conference.
- 30th May 2023 – proofs of evidence and witness statements to be submitted.
- 20th June – Planning Enquiry – up to 5 days.
- 25th August 23 – decision.

Draft traffic report has been received and will be reviewed and submitted as part of proofs of evidence. G Ball and R La Forte leading on co-ordination of witnesses.

It was RESOLVED as proposed by R La Forte, seconded by J Ordish, with all in agreement to pay £360.00 (inclusive of VAT) for Invoice 775 from Hydro-GIS Ltd in respect of flood report.

b) *Traffic Calming Update and other traffic issues*

- 20 mph – Parish Council requests for changes to be sent by letter to OCC and a separate letter to Cllr A Gant in regards the issues with the implementation of the scheme.
- The Square, Aston – Clerk to chase OCC Highways again.
- West and Wales gas upgrade to pipes – corner at end of Bull Street – there has been no response to enquiries to OCC Highways.
- Bridges at Beddles Turn and over Great Brook – the bridge over the Great Brook is due remedial work in the 2023-24 season but no news on Beddles Turn.
- Parking areas in Foxwood – the clerk's request for a meeting with OCC and Cottsway has not been responded to. The clerk will keep requesting.
- Water pooling on the road (B4449) outside St Jospeh's Court has been looked at by Thames Water, OCC and no action has been taken. The water is pooling even when there is no rain so indicative of a leak.

c) *Coronation 6th May 2023*

- The Parochial Church Council have purchased and made available a 'Book of Congratulation' for the Coronation. The book will be available in St James Church from 1st May to 8th May and then forwarded to the Palace after the coronation. The chair will sign the book on behalf of the Parish Council.
- A quote has been requested from G.P. Fabrications, Witney, for a gate at tower end of St James Church onto Church Lane to commemorate the coronation.

d) *Footpaths/Treescapes*

Deferred to June meeting.

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e) *Allotments*

The council discussed the approach to reviewing the current process for appointment of trustees and the registration of the land which currently sits with the Charity Commission. The council must appoint the trustees but does not have any other involvement with the allotments. There was no consensus for the Parish Council to take control of the allotments. To be able to change the current trust document, get the land registered with the Land Registry and create a new constitution the allotments trustees need a chairman, and the Parish Council must appoint one. The clerk to ask the existing trustees if there are any suggestions for a Chair. The clerk was given permission to assist the trustees if they wished.

f) *Anti-Social Behaviour*

None at time of agenda.

9. Planning

New planning applications – None

Update on Ongoing Planning Applications – For Information

- a) **North Farm** – Still no new update.
- b) **Hawthorns** – Matthews Homes are due to start the work to reduce the height of the fence and plant hedge.
- c) **Marsh Furlong** – No news on the adoption of the pumping station by Thames Water.
- d) **Terra** – moved to agenda item 8a.
- e) **Children's Home** – Roof trusses now complete and completion on target for end of October 2023.
- f) **St Joseph's Court** – Surface water and drainage.

Update on Previous Planning Applications – None since last meeting on 20th April 2023.

10. New Business

a) *Bus Shelters*

The bus shelter on the High Street is sustaining scratching to the Perspex roof from the overhanging branches and as these belong to the owners of 'the Limes' the clerk to contacted them about getting them cut back.

b) *Grounds Maintenance contracts 2024 onwards*

It was agreed that the clerk would prepare the contracts and they would be reviewed by P Sparrowhawk and R Anstee initially before being presented to council.

c) *Cleanslate Grant Request*

It was RESOLVED as proposed by J Ordish, seconded by R Anstee, with all in agreement to grant £100 to Cleanslate.

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d) Cote Chapel

The clerk reported on the minutes of the Cote Chapel management group.

e) Insurance Renewal

It was RESOLVED as proposed by R La Forte, seconded by R Anstee, with all in agreement to appoint BHIB Ltd for a term of three years as the parish Council's insurer.

11. Governance – None

12. Community Trust – Nothing to report since previous meeting.

13. Parish Infrastructure

- The gravel on the footpath along North Street from driveways and the broken surface of the road make it difficult to walk on.
- The weeds in the gutters in Aston and along the B4449 towards Cote need action. Clerk to request the road sweeper, check if the ground maintenance team can sweep the path along North Street and when the weed killing is scheduled to be carried out.

14. FINANCE

a) *Receipts and Payments Account to 31 March 2023 –*

It was RESOLVED to receive and approve the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 as proposed by R La Forte and seconded by P Sparrowhawk, with all in agreement.

b) *Annual Return for 2022-23*

- The Statement for completion by the Parish Council and a report by the Clerk had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes. The Council reviewed the statements to be made and confirmed that the answer in each case was "Yes." RESOLVED as proposed by R La Forte, seconded by J Ordish, with all in agreement.
- It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the return covering the financial accounts in Section 2 of the Local Councils Annual Return to the external auditors as proposed by R La Forte and seconded by P Sparrowhawk.

c) *Internal Audit for 2022-23*

This has been completed by N Hoskins and there are no matters to bring to the attention of the Parish Council.

d) *Bank Reconciliation as at 31 March 2023*

It was RESOLVED as proposed by R La Forte, seconded by P Sparrowhawk, to agree the bank reconciliation to the 31 March 2023 as presented.

e) *Notice of Public Rights for 2022-23*

It was agreed that the dates of the public rights for 2022-23 will be 5th June to the 14th July 2023 being 30 working days and the notice to be issued on the 4th June 2023.

- f) It was RESOLVE to approve the following payments for the period April 23 as proposed by P Sparrowhawk, seconded by G Ball, with all in agreement.

	NET	VAT	Gross Amount
Clerk's expenses 642 x 7p/Microsoft Office £49.08	85.84	8.18	94.02
D Johnson – Grass cutting and WM Maintenance – Invoice - 2368	100.00		100.00
<i>Hydro-GIS Ltd Inv 775 – Flood review for TERRA Appeal</i>	300.00	60.00	360.00
Total approved	£485.84	£68.18	£554.02
Total of previously decided	£0.00	0.00	£0.00
Monthly Standing Orders/DDs			
Clerk's Salary including WFH Allowance	412.21		412.21
HMRC PAYE	98.60		98.60
Total SDOs	£510.81	£0.00	£510.81
Total	£996.65	£68.18	£1064.83

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

Clerk attended the SLCC branch meeting on 4th May 2023.

16. Matters arising since publication of agenda/

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

(For discussion only)

Treescape to be deferred to the July meeting.

Clerk's hours/succession planning for the July meeting.

SDO's review to include a break in the meeting duration.

17. Date of next meeting: **Thursday 1st June 2023, 7.30pm**

the monthly meeting of Parish Council

Meeting closed at 21.29pm.

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