



Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council in the Community Office Held at 8.00pm on Tuesday 14th April 2015

Present:

Councillors:

Ian Hill – Chairman
David Tindale – Vice-Chairman
Tim Horton
Nick Greaves
Tony Williamson
Robert Barber
Neil Boddington
Rhian Woods
Elizabeth Winton
Nick Hancock
Robin Wilson

Officer:

Kristina Tynan

Press:

David White – Henley Standard

Members of the Public:

2

53/15 Apologies for absence
Roddy Orr, Bob West.

54/15 Chairman's Remarks
IH said that this is the last Full Council meeting of this Council's term and thanked all Councillors for their work during the last 4 years.
He also said that we have a full agenda for this meeting and that hopefully we can get through the business as quickly as possible.

55/15 To receive Declarations of Interest
Agenda Item 11b Planning Report, Watlington Church Hall item – TH declared an interest in this item as he is the Chairman of the Watlington Church Hall Concern that has proposed financial modes of partnership in allied matters. He signed the 'Declaration of Interest' book and left the room for this item the whole of the Planning Report.

56/15 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 10th March 2015 to be signed as a correct record
Minute 38/15 page 14 – Ecotec and Roadworks – The Company referred to as 'NBS should read 'MBS'
Resolved: That these minutes, with the amendment above, are a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman.

57/15 Matters arising from the Minutes

Nominations for the Parish Council Elections – TH thanked the Clerk for dealing with the nomination forms by checking and delivering them to Abingdon which administratively went very well.

Ecotec and Roadworks – It was noted that works to the verges in Cuxham are being done. RB said that the first stage for the ones in Watlington is to put top soil down which hopefully will be done soon.

LTP4 – IH said that whilst he was looking at the Mineral and Waste Consultation he found a section on transport in general, including a map which stated that Watlington is due to be over congested by 2021 and said that he was surprised that no mention was made of this in LTP4. The document also said that mineral extraction will be increased by a third so there will be more traffic movements. RB said that there is mineral extraction in Ewelme and this fact should also be mentioned.

Resolved: That IH write to Stephen Harrod regarding this issue.

58/15 Public Questions

No public questions were notified.

59/15 District Councillors Report

There was no District Council report.

It was noted that Angie Paterson will not be standing for District Councillor in the Elections in May.

Resolved: That we send a letter to Angie Paterson stating our appreciation for her thoroughness in getting back to us with reports on issues we had raised with her.

60/15 County Councillors Report

Stephen Harrod had sent apologies for this meeting. His Monthly Report was attached to the papers sent out with the agenda.

61/15 Thames Valley Police Report

No report had been received.

62/15 To receive the Balance of Accounts and approve the list of Payments

TH read out the Balances of Accounts and proposed that the list of payments be settled. TH also asked Councillors to note that the first half of the precept has been received. He mentioned the payment of £12.50 to Swyncombe Parish Council and said that this was a third of a payment for broadband leaflets with the other two thirds being paid for by Swyncombe PC and Pishill with Stonor PC. The payments for the noticeboards are for 2 in the recreation ground and we received a £500 grant for our County Councillor, and for 1 in the Chalk Pits, of which we had £500 earmarked for this. The difference will be paid for by WEG. The Berinsfield payment includes gardening work in the paddock for mulching and strengthening the soil.

Resolved: That the Balances of Accounts and the list of payments be settled and that they be signed by the Chairman

63/15 Committees:

A: FINANCE – 17/3/2015 – Tim Horton

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

Budget Figures - TH stated that at the meeting it was resolved to put budget figures on our website and the actuals when the accounts are completed.

Election Costs - TH also mentioned the probable Election costs and the email that was sent by Angie Paterson regarding the questions we raised at the last meeting which has the assertion from the Returning Officer that we will be paying a third of the total election costs for Watlington. TH said that the Returning Officer has the power to decide on the allocation of costs. He also said that if Watlington had to have a By-Election in the next year what the costs of this would be. The Finance Committee will be looking at election costs at their next meeting. It was noted that the Election costs

will need to be paid in this financial year. RB said that he hoped that the new Council will form some dialogue with the Returning Officer and other Parish Councils. We did ask OALC to get involved as did other Parish Councils. OALC can only act on recommendations from member Councils. It is not sure what the Vale of the White Horse is doing regarding allocation of Election costs and TH said that he would find out.

Resolved: That this matter be further taken up with OALC

Graffiti on the Pavilion – This was taken off by Blast-Off who did an excellent job. The Clerk to congratulate them on their work.

B: PLANNING –7/4/2015- Robert Barber

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

P15/S0941/FUL Land adjacent to St Leonards Church, Prospect Place, Watlington

Church Hall Application – As a lot of committee members were on holiday it was felt that although the committee was just quorate it would be better to deal with such a major and controversial application at a later date when more members were present. RB proposed at the meeting that this item be deferred until the next Planning Committee on Tuesday 5th May 2015 as long as SODC will grant us an extension, and this was agreed unanimously by Members.

After the meeting Gill Bindoff put in a complaint that the Planning Committee had acted unlawfully in deferring this application and had asked for clarification from OALC. She had stated:

‘Obviously, I know that consideration of planning applications can be deferred for a number of reasons. My worry is that they can't be deferred at a meeting which is quorate just because the committee would like to consider their response to the consultation when more members of the committee are present. - especially when the response to other applications on the agenda is discussed as normal’

The Clerk asked OALC for their comments on how the Planning Committee had acted and RB read out the OALC response from Jan Gossett which stated:

‘In my opinion there is no problem with the decision made by the Planning Committee to defer the decision on the planning application relating to the Church Hall to the next meeting of the Planning Committee providing that the Parish Council is able to respond within the time frame set by SODC. In view of the fact that this is a contentious application, received only shortly before the date of the meeting and that many of the members of the Planning Committee were absent this seems, again in my opinion, a sensible decision. It gives all concerned time to properly consider the application and opens the discussions and decision to more members. I accept Mrs. Bindoff's comments that other applications were discussed at the meeting. However the circumstances surrounding this application were such that the Committee felt justified in deferring a decision to their next meeting - and this is a legitimate course of action. It is probable also that the other applications may have had to be discussed in order to meet SODC's deadline’.

RB said that as lot of residents had turned up at the meeting for this item he did allow questions from them.

P15/S0500/O 32 Cuxham Road, Watlington - Erection of new dwelling

RB said this only had a site plan but the Committee voted in favour subject to the applicant satisfying the NPPF on flooding guidance.

RB stated that the Planning Committee also looked at 3 applications for garages all in rural areas in the Parish and all in front of the houses. One application was put forward with a recommendation for approval and two were not.

RB said that the Planning Committee has been a well qualified and run Committee for the last 4 years. He stated that in these 4 years the Committee have looked at 165 planning application of which 130 were recommended for approval and 30 for refusal which is a 78.79% rate of approval. SODC in the same period have a 93.4% rate of approval in Watlington – they have only refused 6 in Watlington during the same time period. The Committee sent a representative to SODC on 3 separate planning applications (we only have a 5 minute time slot) and we lost badly every time. Some applications have had extremely robust responses. RW reported that if Householder applications go to appeal we are not

allowed any further submissions and that is why it is very important to put in a good response. Only two applications in Watlington went to appeal and a garden wall in Howe Road was the only successful appeal-refused by both WPC and SODC.

C: STRATEGY – 24/3/2015- David Tindale

Minute 17/15 item 2 CIL Consultation, paragraph 1, line 3 - Dave Tindale said that the wording should have read: ‘For Parish Councils with Neighbourhood Plans, the District Council would get 75% and the Parish council 25% of the CIL money. The District Council may take a proportion of the CIL revenue (up to 5% of receipts) to cover the costs of administering the levy (including initial set-up costs). It is not clear whether this is 5% of the full CIL amount or 5% of the District's share’.

Resolved: That with the amendment shown above, these minutes be accepted by Council.

Charlotte Coxe Charity

Resolved: That the Council as a matter of urgency ask at least one local builder for two quotes for restoring 33 High Street. These two quotes to cover a) reconnection of all essential services and minor remedial work to get the property to suitable state for letting as commercial premises or sale (lease or freehold) as a residential property, or b) refurbishment to a state in which it could be offered for short tenancy residential letting. A specification of works will need to be done prior the quotes being sought. That Council writes to Peter Clark informing him of this

It was agreed to ask Bob West for advice on a specification of works.

Cuxham Field – NG has drafted a letter on this issue which will be sent to our Solicitor, Keith Green. RB said that it is crucial that we sort out the boundary issue.

Footpath 4 – We will be asking for another meeting with Richard Drew on this issue.

D. OPERATIONS – 18/3/2015 – Robert Barber

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

RB said that this was a long meeting with many issues discussed but there were no recommendations to Council.

Hedge and Scrub Works – RB said that the work that has been done by Owain Devey in the car park- Watcombe Road hedge - has been much admired and there is now a view of the Watlington roofline. He said that he hopes that Council will keep the hedge at this height in the future which will be much easier to maintain. The Johnson's Alley hedge is booked in to be cut in September and one resident has expressed concern. The hedge in the recreation ground has been done and the trees behind the public conveniences will be removed. The willow hedge has also been removed and a hedge will be planted. The Chestnut paling needs some attention before being put back.

Re-marking of the Recreation Ground Car Park – This will be discussed at the next meeting following discussion on site with Football Club representatives.

Hill Road and Watcombe Road – TH is still trying to get a metal bollard put on the corner of Watcombe Road and Hill Road.

Car Park Drains – This will be further discussed at the next meeting.

Car Park re-marking of two hour bays – RB said it is very important to do this so that the Car Park Order can be implemented.

Pavement on Britwell Road – The Clerk to email Stephen Harrod regarding the date for the Site Visit.

Playbark for Zipwire – The Clerk has ordered this. TH asked that an email be sent out asking for help with unloading of the bark.

E. ALLOTMENTS – 16/3/2015 – AGM Meeting Minutes – Tim Horton

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council

TH thanked the Bindoff's for doing the minutes for this meeting. TH reported that it was attended by 22 members which makes this the largest meeting for several years. There is a very positive outlook and they were very responsive to changes being made. We now have a map showing the plot numbers and location of allotment holders. Most of the Allotment Rents have been collected already for this year. There is a little concern about the main track. The Committee understand how the money is spent and they were very pleased to have the £300 which has been earmarked for the Allotments. They are keen that we intervene if a plot is not being looked after. KT is their Clerk and Officer and if plots are not being looked after she will send a letter to the allotment holder. The Allotment Agreement was slightly modified this year. The Allotments are enjoyed by many holders and their families. RB thanked George Bruce and Gill Bindoff for cutting the top of the hedge which abuts the Recreation Ground.

TH said that after the Elections it would be good to have two Parish Councillors on this committee.

F. PAVILION AND SPORTS FIELD – There has been no meeting

G. AFFORDABLE HOUSING - There has been no meeting.

H. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN CORE COMMITTEE– Minutes 2/3/2015 attached and 30/3/2015.

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

NH said that it has been agreed to hold the next meeting after the Elections have taken place and after the May Full Council meeting.

The main activity has been analysing the results of Consultation 2 and there was a presentation of initial results on the 30th March. On the whole the results showed clear preferences although some issues are very split in the community as for example the question about whether on-street parking should be retained was 50% for and 50% against.

The results will be put on the Neighbourhood Plan Website. NH said that there are also a lot of individual comments on 63 topics which are being put on a spreadsheet.

NH stated that Rachel Gill has been working hard on Consultation 2 and has done much more than her paid hours and thanked her very much for all her work. After the Elections, Council will need to be presented with challenging questions and will have to make key decisions such as how much more money needs to be invested into this and whether there are any grants available.

NG asked if we are on schedule with the Plan. NH said that it was planned to have the Referendum on 30/9/2015 but this will not now be achievable. There may also be an issue regarding the Government enthusiasm after the Elections and of the Parish Council.

The next key phase is to produce a Draft Plan and then to send it for Formal Examination. There are two periods during which objectors can lodge formal objections. The timescale for this would be out of our control.

TW asked if in relation to the Marlbrook Residents group the NPCC are engaging with them? RW said that NPCC attended a meeting organised and chaired by the Group but the NPCC cannot just go to them because they shout the loudest. The NPCC need to be invited to engage with a Group, they would not convene a Group.

NH said the NPCC have met with many official organisations including the Business Association, U3A etc and have encouraged Interest Groups to come forward with their comments. The NPCC cannot dictate what people want.

TH said that he has asked the NPCC to speak to himself and the Clerk to discuss financial issues with urgency. NH said that he is mindful of the need to do this but the NPCC do not have any figures as yet but a meeting will be arranged. NH said that the one question that has serious financial implications is that if a legal challenge arises which will need to go the High Court and he said he has no idea of the scale of cost for this. NG asked if this could be insured against. TH said that a dialogue between ourselves would be very constructive.

TH asked if the Developer and Land Owners meeting will be on a one by one basis. This was confirmed to be so. TH said that he was disappointed that a response has not been received from everyone that has suitable land within the Parish. RW stated that we have had to complete Consultation 2 before meetings are set up with Developers and Landowners. TH said that this is one

of the most important parts of the process. RW said that it is very important that we are not seen to be influenced by Developers or Land Owners before we have a mandate from the local community therefore meetings could not be set up before this stage as we need to know which areas would be most supported by our residents. NB said that we will be meeting with all with validity but not with the ones who have withdrawn as a secondary part of Consultation 2. It is not a negotiation of land it is an opportunity for them to make representations to the NPCC.

TH said that not all land owners have come forward with proposals. NB said that Consultation 2 includes sites which have not been proposed by any Land Owners or Developers. He said that it needs to be a deliverable Plan and the NPCC can only put forward ideas, they cannot put forward land that has not been put forward for development. The rules are that we have to be led by the responses from the community otherwise the NP would not pass the Inspection. RB stated that on the basis of responses to Consultation 2 a draft Plan will be produced and then the community will be consulted again. RB said that if we are getting somewhere with identifying sites than we need to have a Sustainability Appraisal as for example water courses would have an impact on proposed sites and issues would need to be addressed at this stage.

RB said that a few people including Gill Bindoff and himself had offered to write the Sustainability Appraisal but had not had time to produce anything. NH said it is difficult to appraise anything until we have a draft Plan as we would then have to have ecological and landscape assessments. Once the Plan has been drafted there is then a list of parameters that have to be followed. Once the community has identified the preferred sites a Sustainability Appraisal will be done. RW said we cannot put forward a draft Plan until the Land Owners and Developers have been spoken to.

RB said that good communication is to be encouraged and is key as various people have the wrong idea. It was noted that door to door leafleting has been done, information is on website and a number of meetings and Public Consultations have been held but it is impossible to make people read it.. NG said that he hoped that the draft Plan will provoke public participation.

TH said that the NPCC have done an incredible job but said that there are 2 parcels of land that have not been considered and these could be a solution. NH requested that if any Councillor knew of any potential development sites not included in the NP documentation to date then they should come forward with those sites by the end of April.

RW said that there has been consultation on all SHLAA sites and preceding this, a standard list of questions was sent to all of these landowners/agents as well as to owners of all other sites the NPCC felt could be developed and the owner of the land to which TH referred may have not replied. RW advised that the whole NP process has proved to be extremely fluid, with no set parameters. When the Watlington NP started there were no completed Neighbourhood Plans anywhere, the whole thing is experimental. RW said we had advertised in the Henley Standard and Watlington Times to encourage landowners and developers to put forward development sites. IH stated that any suggestions of sites for consideration be given with a means of contacting the owner. There is a precedent of picking up sites such as happened in Henley. NH said that the whole NP process is largely untested and assumptions have to be made such as how many houses have to be built, this is a key factor in creating the Plan but is unlikely to be certain until 2017 by when SODC will have completed their consultations and defined new housing allocations.

IH stated that any suggestions of sites for consideration be given with a means of contacting the owner. There is a precedent of picking up sites such as happened in Henley. NH said that the whole NP process is largely untested and assumptions have to be made such as how many houses have to be built, this is a key factor in creating the Plan but is unlikely to be certain until 2017 by when SODC will have completed their consultations and defined new housing allocations.

TW said that he has been very impressed with the thoroughness with which the NPCC are going through things.

IH stated that there is still a lot of work to be done and wished the NPCC well with the progression of the NP.

Sustainability Appraisal – It was noted in Minute 15/15 (2/3/2015) of the NPCC Minutes that the NP Steering Group have offered to do this.

I. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP – There has been no meeting.

discuss.

Email from Tony Williamson – Latest update on the flooding issue at The Goggs –He said that he had been told by OCC that the Environment Agency agreed to put sets down to edge the stream; He is waiting to hear if it has been programmed in. Nothing has been heard about the ditch at the back of The Goggs where the flowing water came from.

65/14 Reports from Organisations and Representation on other bodies – To note reports that have been received

There were no reports received.

66/14 Other Matters for Discussion at the discretion of Chair
To note any other matters raised by Members of the Council

RB stated that this is his final Full Council meeting and wished all Councillors who are standing for Election all the best. DT echoed this sentiment.

B4009 Shirburn Road – It was noted that there is a fantastic display of daffodils when you enter the town.

Laminated Signs on the Paddock Gates – It was noted that these are changed/taken down on a regular basis as it has been agreed in the past that permanent signs would not be effective.

Friday Undercroft Market – TH said this is now to be weekly and will operate for slightly longer hours. The stalls have been of very good quality and a lot of good comments have been given by the community.

Cuxham Road – RWN reported that the sides of the pavement have now fallen into the stream and make this area very vulnerable. This has been reported to OCC.

End of Term Councillors Dinner – This will take place on Friday 24th April – IH is organising this.

Ian Hill thanked all Councillors for their support during the last 4 years. Thanks were then given to both Ian Hill and the Clerk for their work.

IH then wished all good luck for the Elections on the 7th May 2015.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.45PM