



Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held in the Community Office at 8.00pm on Tuesday 9th February 2016

Present:

Councillors:

Ian Hill –Chairman (IH)
Matt Reid – Vice-Chairman (MR)
Tom Bindoff (TB)
Tony Williamson (TW)
Roger Beattie (RB)
Terry Jackson (TJ)
Jo Read (JR)
Jeremy Bell (JB)
Jon Lorimer (JL)

Officer:

Sarah Pullen

County Councillor:

Stephen Harrod

Members of the Public:

10

16/16 Apologies for absence

Rachel Huckvale, Robin Wilson, Bob West, Elizabeth Winton, Jane Bryant

17/16 Chairman's Remarks

IH asked if any Councillor could help man the office next week in the Clerk's absence and with both Rachel Gill and Chris Wiltshire on holiday. Barry Adby has offered his help. TW and JR offered to cover one morning each. IH will send out a schedule.

18/16 To receive Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest notified.

19/16 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 12 January 2016 to be signed as a correct record

33 High Street, pg 2, Minute 5/15 – it was noted that the correction to the December minutes should have said 3 non-councillor members and not 3 WPC representatives.

NP Forum, pg 5, Minute 11/16 – This should read the 'NP Forum' not 'NPCC Forum'. It was agreed that the CC should be removed.

Resolved: That with the amendments shown above the minutes from the meeting be agreed as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

20/16 Matters arising from the Minutes

TW email to SH and AB, pg 2 Minute 7/15 – It was noted that within the body of the text which is copied in speech marks that TW sent to AB and SH he used the word 'us' which implies that he has sent this email as a Parish Councillor and not as an individual. It was noted that this email sent by TW does not come as a Parish Councillor and therefore does

not necessarily reflect the views of the Parish Council. It was noted that Councillors need to be very careful when sending emails that it states that it is their view as an individual if this is the case.

21/16 Public Questions

There were none other than the next agenda item.

22/16 Community Asset at Christmas Common

10 Residents from Christmas Common were in attendance to discuss this issue.

See Map attached to the end of these minutes.

Sylvia Mountford said that the Forestry Commission sold a small piece of land in 2011. After community discussion this was bought by one of the residents who shared the vision of the community to keep this plot as an open outdoor meeting space at the centre of the village (*PLOT number 1*).

However now this neighbour has since put in a planning application for 2 houses on this site as a brown field, and then submitted an alternative application for a single house on part of the site. At the SODC planning meeting when they first discussed this application it was deferred for a site visit. SODC then further discussed the application on the 20th January 2016 and it was refused as the land was in the AONB and the development was thought to be detrimental to the AONB. There was a question as to whether it could be considered as infill.

[This application had been sent to the SODC Planning Committee for consideration as the WPC had refused this application]

The community's vision for this land was to have it as a social area as it was originally common land and they would like to claim it back as common land. The plot is also adjacent to the disputed footpath (*shown on attached map*) which the Ramblers Association from Henley are keen to have reopened.

Following a Freedom of Information request to the Forestry Commission, the residents have found out that the purchaser of the land spoke to them many times over a 14 month period. Ian Davis (Forestry Commission) also confirmed on the 29/1/2016 that there were covenants in place requiring the land to be retained for community use.

The residents asked the Parish Council to help them recover this land for the community. It was offered for sale in 2012. The residents are trying to raise the money needed to buy this piece of land. There has been a petition on this issue which has been signed by 121 people. (It was noted that there are only 56 residents in the village).

TW asked exactly what the residents want the Parish Council to do.

MR said that a core working group needs to be established. Would the PC be behind registering this land as a community asset and if so what needs to be done, what sort of cost is involved.

After much discussion it was:

Resolved: That the Council was willing to support the residents in securing use of the land as public amenity land. (8 in favour and 1 abstention).

MR, TJ and TB were delegated as a group to work with the residents in achieving this aim.

23/16 District Councillors Report

Anna Badcock had sent her apologies for this meeting.

24/16 County Councillors Report – Stephen Harrod

SH said he had sent out his monthly report but this had not yet been distributed to Councillors.

Budget – OCC are discussing this next week. Additional savings of £20M have to be made. The maximum permitted increase in Council Tax (4%) was proposed. SH said that in his opinion the Council Tax needs to be increased nearer to 15%. OCC could sell property and make staff cuts but they have already sold 100 properties and have terminated many leases. Director's salaries have been cut by half and senior Managers have had their salaries cut by 40% but still more savings need to be found. OCC have support from MP's and a new settlement is to be announced. The key points are rural councils facing more severe cuts than urban areas but are less able to support them. SH referred Councillors to his monthly report for further information. (Note following meeting: WPC does not appear to have received his monthly note for January. This has now been circulated.)

Central Library – Because of construction work at the Westgate Centre, the Central Library has moved to temporary premises in the nearby Castle Quarter. This temporary library will be in use until October 2017.

Watlington Issues

Speeding on Howe Road – Mark Francis is happy to come and have a site visit. It would not be possible to paint roundels on the road here as there are street lights which indicate a 30mph speed limit. There had previously been a suggestion that the gates in this location be moved to a more appropriate location. This would need to be paid for by WPC but is supported in principle by OCC.

Keith Stenning had indicated he would be support 'Dragons Teeth' on Howe Road. SH said it would be useful to see a copy of the AQMA Low Emission Strategy report from SODC as per the copy that TB had.

Pedestrian Crossing on Britwell Road – If OCC have funds they would recommend building out into the road and Keith Stenning thinks this would be the best solution in this location. There would need to be a consultation before anything could be done with both the Parish Council and the local residents.

Cleaning of the area behind the library (OCC Land) – This has been cleaned by one of local residents, Mike Young

25/16 Thames Valley Police Report

No report had been received from the Police.

26/16 To receive the Balance of Accounts and approve the list of Payments

TW read out the Balance of Accounts and proposed that the list of payments be settled as per the prescribed process. TW will look at the BACS payment book.

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

27/16 Committees:

A: FINANCE – There has been no meeting

B: PLANNING – 2/2/2016 – Jeremy Bell

Resolved: That Council accept these Minutes.

76 Hill Road – The applicant had attended the meeting and said that this application would be withdrawn. However as no formal notice of this had been received that committee considered the application as submitted, and objected to it.

C: STRATEGY- 26/1/2016 – Matt Reid

Resolved: That Council accept these Minutes

Jeremy Bell said that he is not a member of this committee and therefore does not need to submit apologies.

1. Post Office

TW said that we should not wait until April before meeting with the Post Office. It was agreed that a meeting with the Watlington PO manager and with PO Manager responsible for finding alternative premises for post offices in rural areas should be organised in time to provide input for the Full Council meeting in April. It was reported that timetable for closure of the PO was not driven centrally, but depended on how long the local manager was willing to continue with the present arrangement. TW to organise this meeting.

2. Ecotec

It was agreed that there was little to be gained by further work on trying to get the donations offered by Ecotec.

3. Safeguarding

TW had prepared a report on what the council needed to do to implement the requirements for safeguarding vulnerable individuals using Council assets or facilities. This has been sent on to MR and KT for checking and implementation.

4. Communications

It had been proposed that a special Full Council meeting be organised to discuss the proposals of the communication group, and to get feedback on what is worth implementing. MR to organise this meeting.

5. Appointment of a Solicitor/Cuxham Field

Resolved: That Vanessa Hoare is appointed to deal initially with the Cuxham Field lease. It was noted that some wording on the existing lease will need to be changed. It was agreed that Nick Greaves would be asked for his views on renewing the lease, and in particular on whether the rental should be revised.

Resolved: That we renew the existing lease for a period of 3 years with the proviso that the fence which has been put on our boundary is addressed.

[Post Minute Note: There are photographs filed in the office which show the clearly the original boundary line]

6. Standing Orders

Discussion took place on this issue with regards to the need for advance notice of public questions. IH summarised the development of standing orders to cover this point. Before 2008 no public questions were allowed; then questions were allowed but only on agenda items; then general questions were allowed but with notification prior to the meeting needed. TB said he is concerned about the fact that notice of questions need to be given. TW said he disagreed as it should be a courtesy to notify. TJ said that she agreed with TB's view. MR said that he thought the standing order should remain as is (Notice to be given by noon of the day of the meeting). There was also a suggestion of an Open Forum such as Tetsworth Parish Council allows.

After further discussion a vote was taken on whether the Standing Order should remain as is. **Vote: 7 in favour, 2 against**

CARRIED

Resolved: That the revised Standing Orders be adopted and that they be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

IH was thanked for his work on revising these.

7. Asset Register

Concern was expressed that the Asset Register may not include all the small parcels of land such as the green at Hurdlers Green. The Asset Register will be reviewed and if necessary updated by IH and KT.

8. Risk Assessment Review

This had been revised and circulated by IH this prior to the meeting.

Resolved: That the revised Risk Assessment be accepted.

9. Disciplinary Procedure Review

This had been circulated by IH this prior to the meeting. One typing mistake was noted (paragraph 2.a.iv) where the word "is" should be replaced with "if".

Resolved: That with this single correction the Disciplinary procedure should be accepted.

10. The Queens 90th Birthday Celebration

TJ said that there will be some events on the 11th and 12th June but these will not be run by the Parish Council. She also said that the Flower Festival will be held in May.

11. Broadband

No action had been taken yet on changing the ISP for the parish office. The main problem was the need to change the email address. It was agreed that we should start moving towards using a private domain name for the PC email address, to allow us freedom in the future to switch ISP.

D. OPERATIONS – 20/1/2016 – Tom Bindoff

Resolved: That Council accept these Minutes.

Car Park Work Party – This will take place on the weekend of the 27th February.

Breedon Paths – TW said he has a number of paving slabs available which could be used to resolve the flooding problem at the library entrance to the Paddock.

E. ALLOTMENTS.

TB reported that the hazel trees are being coppiced next month.

F. PAVILION AND SPORTS FIELD – There has been no meeting. The meeting scheduled for 25/1/2016 was cancelled. The next meeting is in March.

G. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE – 1/2/2016

Resolved: That Council accept these Minutes

Gill Bindoff gave an update to Full Council.

Housing Needs Survey – These have all been delivered. Gill Bindoff is attending a meeting on this issue tomorrow.

Traffic Group – They had held a well-run workshop and the Parish Council need to consider their views on the options. TW requested a minute of this meeting.

Sites Group – They have been putting together a new site map.

Housing Numbers – There is still no real certainty. Realistically this number will not be available until the issues with Oxford City housing allocation are resolved, and the NP Forum should continue on the basis of the agreed number of 79 houses but with the likelihood that this will increase to possibly double this number in due course. We cannot wait for the revised number.

Project Plan – A roadmap of work to be done is being completed and will be issued shortly. This covers only the period till April and needs to be extended to cover the period till completion of the NP.

Recommendations from the NP Steering Committee – These were discussed and it was:

Resolved: That the Terms of reference for the NP Steering Committee be changed as below with inclusion of an additional paragraph (new text in italics).

“The NP Steering Committee:

- Consists of at least six members drawn from the Parish Council at a Full Council meeting and reviewed at the Annual Parish Council meeting in May;
- The Chairman and members must be councillors.
- *In addition, two members of the Coordination Group of the NP Forum are given a standing invitation to attend and take part as non-voting members of the Steering Committee to aid communication between the Forum and the Steering Committee.*
- The Parish Council may dissolve or alter membership of the Steering Committee, and shall notify such a decision to the committee at least one month before the date on which the Parish Council wishes the change to take place.”

Vote: 8 in favour, 1 abstention. CARRIED

Resolved: That the Full Council be asked to initiate discussions with SODC about the renewal of the B8 consent for H&H carriers for their site on the Industrial Estate, and in particular about enforcement of the authorised route for their vehicles which directs them away from the town centre. The committee understand that this consent comes up for renewal during the course of this year, and that SODC would be entitled to reconsider it in the light of the AQMA for the town centre. IH and TB to do this.

TW said that he had concerns about the need to keep the NP Forum and the NP Steering Committee separate particularly with the cross over between spouses. JB said that he thought this was fine as Gill Bindoff does not have a vote when she attends the NP Steering Committee meetings.

28/16. Youth Club

The paper on this written by Ian Hill was noted. The Youth Club have not yet found a Treasurer, and there is still a possibility that the Council will be asked to manage the existing capital fund for youth facilities.

29/16 Selection of members for Charlotte Coxe Shadow Trustee Body (paper from IH was attached to the agenda)

It was noted that this Body will meeting 2-3 times a year.

Resolved: That IH, TW, RB and JR be selected for this committee for the interim.

The intention is to have 6 Councillor Members so more need to be appointed. IH will speak to the Councillors who are not present at this meeting.

30/16 Correspondence for Information - List Attached to Agenda

Letter from Stocker and Co – Land at back of Hurdlers Green. JL and TW will have a site visit and report back to the next meeting. It was thought that in principle we should consider looking at selling this piece of land. It was also thought that we need to have an audit of the condition of all our pieces of land.

Due to Standing Order 3(w) and with the time being nearly 10pm it was:

Resolved: That the meeting be allowed to continue until 10.15pm at the latest.

31/16 Reports from Organisations and Representation on other bodies – To note reports that have been received

SODC have launched a consultation on their proposed Low Emission Strategy which includes a consultants' paper that recommends a number of actions to address the AQMA areas in the district. For Watlington two recommendations are made: improved enforcement of the HGV weight restrictions, and removal of all on-street parking on Couching Street and Shirburn St. It was agreed that this is a very big issue which cannot be ignored.

Resolved: That IH to organise a meeting with Clare Spendley and IH, TB, TJ and TW to attend the meeting.

TB said that he thought the NP Traffic Working Group should also be asked to attend. IH said that he thought this was not a good idea as it is important that there not be too many people attending and the Traffic Group have seen the report. JB said that he supports this view that this is a Council responsibility.

A response is needed by the 25/3/2016 so the meeting must take place ASAP.

32/16 Other Matters for Discussion at the discretion of Chair

There were none.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 10.10PM