



Minutes of the Meeting of the Strategy Committee held in the Community Office at 8pm on Tuesday 26th January 2016

Present Councillors: Matt Reid (MR) – Chairman
Rachel Huckvale (RH)
Tom Bindoff (TB)
Ian Hill (IH)
Roger Beattie (RB)
Jo Read (JR)
Terry Jackson (TJ)
Robin Wilson (RW)

Officer: Sarah Pullen

001/16 Apologies for absence
Tony Williamson, John Lorimer, Jeremy Bell

002/16 Chairman's Remarks
There were none.

003/16 Minutes of the Strategy Meeting held on 18th November 2015 were received by Council on the 8th December 2015 to be signed as a correct record
Resolved: That these minutes were a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman.

004/16 Declaration of Interests
There were none.

005/16 Matters Arising
1. Consultation on Children's Centre
There has been no further progress since the loss of budget. However, it was noted that the OCC cabinet met today and there were no changes to the budget. More information is expected in February.

00616 Update on on-going issues
1. **Subsidised Travel Review/Buses**
IH discussed the possible options that are being looked at for the Bus Services. JR stated that the Go-Ride service is a valuable service, especially for the youth of Watlington. It was agreed that it is important to obtain local opinions on the services. Once we have more information, this can be publicised in the Watlington Times.

2. Post Office in Watlington

TJ stated that it is important for the Community that the Parish Council is as involved as possible with this. However, as the Post Office is a private company this is difficult. It should be known that we are willing to help.

Resolved: To arrange a meeting with Watlington Business Association, Nicki Jackson (Post Mistress), and Royal Mail for a fact finding session. This should be on the April agenda for further discussion.

3 Ecotec

There was a discussion about what can be done to ensure that other Councils are warned about this company's business practice. It was suggested that a letter is written to the Parish Council News, and that the wording is agreed with Full Council.

Recommendation to Council – To remove from future agendas.

4.Safeguarding Children – Implementation of Policy -TW/EW/RH

EW has now left this committee and TW is currently away on holiday. RH is happy to take over from EW with this project. It was agreed that all areas that are owned or managed by WPC, should be considered, such as the Playgrounds.

Resolved: For RH to speak with TW and report to the next meeting.

007/16

Main Discussion Items

33 High Street

The County Council have assured us that they are continuing with this and will keep us up to date. It was noted that we should have appointed members at the January Full Council meeting, but it was not on the agenda. Therefore, it should be added to the Full Council February agenda.

Communications Policy

Item 2 – It was agreed that a meaningful list of Council goals for the year should be publicised to the community, and used to measure performance. This should be complete by May. Draft recommendation to Full Council that we adopt this approach. This should be added to the agenda as a major item for discussion at the next meeting. This will enable detailed discussion. Points to be considered will include:

- Number of items to include on the list? This should be achievable within 1 year.
- Headlines could include: Neighbourhood Plan, Buses, Paddock, Broadband.
- Improvement of communications with the Parish, to include Noticeboards.

Appointment of new WPC Solicitor

It was noted that our solicitor has now retired, and has been replaced by a new lady Vanessa Hoare. It was agreed that it is important to have a meeting with her which should include KT plus one or two Councillors.

Recommendation to Council: To appoint the new solicitor to deal with the Cuxham field initially.

Cuxham Field lease ends 31/3/2016

The lease is due to expire on the Cuxham field at the end of March, and it was agreed that it is important to get papers drawn up whatever is decided/agreed with the tenant.

It was noted that the lease should not continue without the fence being reinstated. It is unsure if the tenant has responded to this as the Clerk is away. It was agreed that consideration should be given to any right to buy, a rent review, and a break clause in the agreement. It was agreed that a lease should only have a term of 3 years.

Recommendation to Council: To renew the existing lease providing the fence is done.

NB: It was noted that the Operations committee should do an inspection of all Parish Council land and that Cuxham Field should be added to the Risk Assessment.

008/16

Review of WPC Policies/Procedure

Review of Standing Orders

TB noted that the standing orders all refer to 'he' or 'his'. The Parish Council should not be sexist and should be changed as appropriate. Other changes needed are:

- (3.l.2) – change the word 'as' to 'at'.
- (3.e to 3.g) – do not indicate that questions should be logged in advance. This refers to the Public Questions on the agenda. Before the change is made NALC model standing orders should be checked.

Recommendation to Council: With the above corrections to accept the Standing Orders.

It was suggested that some refresh training of standing orders would be beneficial to Councillors.

Risk Assessment Review

- **Property / Assets** - Loss / damage of assets Item (3) The Cuxham Field and Allotments should be added
- **Property / Assets** - Item (7) Should include the need to inspect all assets, not just the community office and the pavilion.
- **Council business** - Improper use of council funds Item (5) Item 5 should include BACS payments.
- It was suggested that all pages of the Risk Assessment should have a revision number and date.

Recommendation to Council: With the above corrections to accept the Risk Assessment.

Disciplinary Procedure Review

IH has reviewed this document and there are some 'typos' which need correcting.

Recommendation to Council: With these corrections to accept the Disciplinary Procedure.

009/16

Short Discussion items

Office Broadband

There is no update on this yet. It was felt that unless there is a massive incentive to change, it would be better to stay with BT.

There was a discussion about the 'Talk Talk' email address which the parish council is currently using. KT to talk to Vision ICT who supply the website and domain and confirm redirecting emails to the .gov.uk address. Emails should also be responded to from this address so that eventually it will be easier to change our supplier away from Tiscali. The .gov.uk address should be promoted.

Celebration of the Queens 90th Birthday

It was noted that St. Leonard's Church are proposing to hold a flower festival in the Church. TJ said that there has been a good response from people wishing to commemorate in some way.

Request from a resident of Chapel Street re changes to road/speed etc.

Agreed that this should be passed to the County Council. We should reply to the resident to explain the limitations of the Parish Council and explain who this has been forwarded to. TJ/TB to draft response. This should be raised with Keith Stenning.

Staff illness/compassionate leave.

The question has been raised about insurance held to cover any long term illness by Council employees. The OALC may be able to advise. KT to check insurance policy.

010/16

Correspondence

Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire – Parish Councils are encouraged to support celebrations. The Church of England may also be organising events and it is important that there is no overlapping and to inform their office of any events. Noted.
It is felt that the events page on the Website is underused and difficult to maintain.

011/16

Items for Future Meetings

Icknield Community College Link

IH advised that the interviews are taking place on Friday. Ian has volunteered but was the only Councillor to do so this year. KT circulated the invitation for this to Councillors previously.

012/16

Any Other Business to note

Old Church, Christmas Common

The SODC appeal against planning permission to The Old Church in Christmas Common has shown covenants on the land. The question has been asked about adding this to the Community Asset Register, and therefore we need to take advice on liability if we do this.

Resolved: To look at the issues involved in adopting and speak to the Solicitor, Vanessa Hoare to investigate.

Correspondence from Councillors

It was noted that correspondence should always be sent via the Clerk. Councillors should not send emails or letters using the word 'us' implying the views of the Council if this has not been agreed at Council previously.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 22.04