



## Minutes of the Meeting of the Strategy Committee Held in the Community Office at 8pm on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2015

**Present:**

**Councillors:**

David Tindale – Chairman  
Tony Williamson – Vice-Chairman  
Ian Hill  
Tim Horton  
Nick Greaves  
Robert Barber  
Neil Boddington  
Robin Wilson  
Roddy Orr

**Officer:**

Kristina Tynan

12/15 Apologies for absence

Rhian Woods, Bob West, Elizabeth Winton, Nick Hancock.

13/15 Chairman's Remarks

There were none.

14/15 Minutes of the Strategy Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015 were received by Council on the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2015 to be signed as a correct record

**Minute 6/15** –Charlotte Coxe Charity - Following discussion it was agreed to remove the following sentence from page 2, 3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph 'TH has said that NG.....initially agreed with TH'.

It was also agreed to remove the sentence on page 3, paragraph 3 'NG had asked.....money going to FOWL'

**Resolved:** That with the amendments above it was agreed that these minutes are a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman.

15/15 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest notified.

16/15 Matters Arising

1 **Community Speedwatch Scheme** – IH will speak to Keith Lovelace about where he has got to on this issue and how this issue will progress.

2. **Youth Club** – TH said that there is nothing further to report.

3. **Civil Enforcement Issue** – It was agreed that this be referred to the Operations Meeting for further discussion as we have been told that there is not Thame and Henley Partnership.

Main Discussion Items

**1. South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 Refined Options – Deadline 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015**

It was noted that there is only 1 minor modification of significance to the Parish, in that the rules are relaxed for villages and small villages to get some windfall sites. RB said that we need to defend the environment of small villages and hamlets where it would be unsustainable for windfall sites eg Christmas common. He said that there is a perception that Christmas Common is bigger than it is, but it only has 19 houses and there is no gas, no sewerage, no 3 or 4G mobile signal. The one major development in Christmas Common was in the 1950's when the forestry cottages were built.

IH said that we do not wish to see any housing outside of the sustainable area and that we want to stop houses becoming more expensive by the building of extensions etc. This requirement could also be included within our Neighbourhood Plan so that no housing is put outside of the sustainable area. IH said that at present there is only infill mentioned in some named villages. If any Councillor has specific comments to make to send to RB ASAP. After discussion it was:

**Resolved:** That RB draft a response which will be sent to IH and NB for comments. It will then be sent to all Councillors for approval and if the majority of Councillors agree it will then be sent to SODC, by the Clerk on the deadline date of the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015.

**2. Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule Consultation –Deadline 26/3/2015.**

NG had sent out a draft paper on this issue and IH said that it needs to be put into a response form which will need to be sent to SODC tomorrow. It was noted that 5% of the total receipts will be taken for administration costs which was felt to be excessive. 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. It was also agreed that SODC should be urged to accelerate the CIL process as they are way behind other District Councils. It was also noted that it is not clear what autonomy Parish Council's will have to spend its money in the Community and that sewerage is not on the list of infrastructure costs that could be covered.

TH stated that the Finance Committee will be recommending a separate bank account for CIL monies received. NG was thanked for his work on the draft paper. After discussion it was:

**Resolved:** That IH/NG and NB draft a response which will then be sent to all Councillors for approval and if the majority of Councillors agree it will then be sent to SODC, by the Clerk on the deadline date of the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

*It was agreed that the CIL issue be on the May Strategy Committee Agenda.*

**3. Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015/2031- Deadline 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015**

IH had circulated a draft paper on this issue. It was noted that the consultation was in 4 volumes and was 471 pages long. IH stated that rural areas were only mentioned in the overview document (Volume 4). There was ambiguity on bus strategy with no plans mentioned. TH said that the key thing for Watlington is to champion a review of Watlington. He said that OCC still gets money from Central Government and can use it just on the Science Vale for example. In the Plan, Watlington does not even get a mention. The Neighbourhood Plan for Watlington should press on this as a local issue and so something is needed in the Local Transport Plan on Watlington. It was noted that Watlington was in LTP2 but taken out in LTP3.

IH was thanked for his work on the draft paper. After discussion it was:

**Resolved:** That IH draft a response which will then be sent to all Councillors for approval and if the majority of Councillors agree it will then be sent to SODC, by the Clerk on the deadline date of the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015.

**4. Charlotte Coxe Charity -** A brief note was circulated before the meeting summarising the current position regarding the sale of 33 High Street.

IH stated that there was concern at OCC that the response to the consultation on 33 High Street was very poor, only 9 responses were received. IH referred to a note sent by Peter Clark (OCC) to the

Council that was issued in confidence. He agreed to circulate a copy of this to Councillors and asked them to respect the confidentiality of this. We are now in the position where OCC is thinking of reconsidering the involvement of the parish in the running of the CCT, but has agreed that it would be reasonable for us to get our own quotes for work on 33 High Street for two options:

1. To restore the building to a usable state with all services reconnected where it would be fit for use as an office or retail premises, or for sale or long lease as residential with the buyer required to make it usable for that purpose;
2. To restore and refit the property to state in which it could be offered for short term residential letting, so allowing the CCT to retain the property as an asset.

TH said that a possibility could be raised of transferring the whole of the Charity to Watlington Parish Council which would have a number of pluses such as OCC lose a lot of problems, WPC could hold it in trust and this Council would have to get best value for the property. TH said that given everything else there may be a valid reason to go back on what taking over the whole Trust would entail, but that should give an assurance that we would not seek to take over the library.

**RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:** 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.

If Council resolves to do this we need to write to Peter Clark informing him of the outcome. It was agreed to ask Bob West for advice on a specification of works

#### 18/15 Short Discussion items

1. **Cuxham Field** – A note had been prepared by NG and RB on this issue and was circulated prior to this meeting.

It was noted that the lease expires in March 2016. Discussion took place on the paper and there was concern about the post and rail fence which the tenant has erected about 10m into the field in order to give him wider access between the field and his land. Under the terms of his lease he should not have done this without permission. It was thought that we need to get legal advice on this. NG also asked that we seek a legal view on having a 15 year lease with bi-lateral breaks/reviews after 5 years. TH stated that IH and himself are meeting with Roger Brockingham who gave a seminar on Leases for SLCC that they attended. He may give us some free advice on this issue. After discussion it was:

**Resolved:** To send a letter to Keith Green asking for his legal advice on this issue. NG to draft and circulate it to Councillors prior to it being sent by the Clerk.

#### 2. **Footpath 4 – The Clerk had sent an email to Richard Drew which stated**

*'It is now more than two months ago that our further meeting with you was necessarily set back. This meeting was postponed through illness and you have also said subsequently that you wish to take the issue of the footpath back to a meeting of the Beechwood Board.*

*May we again press you to attending a meeting with us. As we have several times related, the whole matter has become extended beyond what either party would desire. If we need to make representations elsewhere through finding no settlement, then we should commence soon. You only took soundings from us on a variety of matters at our only meeting. For all that we want to give the Board a full opportunity to return on the access issue if there is any chance of avoiding costly disputation this year'*

#### **The response to this email by Richard Drew was:**

*'I refer to your email earlier today and of the 12th March 2015. May I also refer you to my emails of the 28th January 2015 and 23rd March 2015 attached and would be grateful for your response. Our previous meeting was held on the 9th January 2015 when I met with Ian Hill, Tim Horton and Robert Barber to fully understand the Parish Council's position following the departure of John Errington. The Company initially consulted with the Oxfordshire Footpath Officer and the Definitive Footpath Map to*

*establish the correct line of the Watlington Hill Footpath and in addition have created viewing point's along the line of the footpath for those using the path.  
The Company have taken all possible steps to establish the correct line of the path and are anxious that the Parish Council are aware of this.'*

This issue was discussed and RB suggested that we start the process of a Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO). However it was thought that perhaps we should ask for a meeting and if they do not wish to have one then we start the process of a DMMO.

**Resolved:** That we ask for another meeting with Richard Drew and the Beechwood Estate.

**3. Safeguarding Children** – Local Parish Council's should have in place a Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure – document was attached to the agenda.

**Resolved:** To defer this issue to the next meeting and that the Clerk seek advice on OALC on this issue.

**4. Skips on High Street in parking spaces**

**Resolved:** That this item be deferred to the next meeting.

**5. Buckinghamshire Replacement Minerals and Waste Local Plan - Consultation**

**Resolved:** That we do not comment on this consultation

19/15 Update on on-going issues that are not agenda items for this meeting

1. **Buses** – TH said that there is nothing further to update from the Full Council meeting. The new timetables should be available soon and we can see what has been lost or gained.

20/15 Correspondence

1. **SODC/Vale of White Horse** – Civil Parking Enforcement – letter stating no further work on this issue will be done. – **This issue has been referred to Operations.**

2. **OCC – Draft Council Weight Restriction Enforcement Prioritisation Policy** – Response to the letter we sent – **This was noted.**

3. **John Howell** – improved mobile coverage throughout the UK – **Noted.**

4. **OCC** – New ways of running local government to protect frontline services – attached for information. – **Noted.**

5. **FOWL** – letter to WPC on Charlotte Coxe Trust – attached to agenda.- **Noted.**

6. **Weight Restriction Enforcement Prioritisation Policy** – Draft amended after Consultation 6/2/15– this was attached to agenda – IH reported that there are 3 changes to the draft which are very minimal. It was also noted that ANPR is unaffordable with the limited enforcement budget available within OCC.

**Resolved:** That Ian Hill will send a letter to OCC on this issue.

21/15 Items for Future Meetings

**Ernst and Young Report - Strategic Financial Case for a Unitary Council** – Item that TH Has asked to be discussed – *June Strategy Meeting.*

**Icknield Community College Link**

HGV Monitoring System – IH – *June Strategy Meeting.*

Items above that were deferred from this meeting.

22/15 Any Other Business to note – Items to be notified to the Clerk in advance of the meeting.

**End of Term Dinner** – RB suggested that we have a dinner for the end of term dinner for Councillors and their partners.

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 10.02PM**

