

Long Wittenham Parish Council meeting held on 20th April 2023

Present: Chairman Steve Brown, Cllr Ron Carter, Cllr Sally Duff, Cllr Peter Rose, Cllr Liz Yuille, RFO Clifford Bosley, District Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye.

In attendance: Martin Elliff (clerk) and 7 members of the public.

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2023/057 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Steve Bolton, Cllr David Corney, County Cllr Pete Sudbury.

2023/058 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- The Bursar of Headington School, Richard Couzens, was present to update the council on the progress of the boathouse on The Maddy. Despite some issues, he is hopeful that the project will be completed by September. Residents asked if the facilities will be available to members of the village. Mr Couzens said that, although it is too early to make any commitments, he is confident that some form of access will be possible when the pupils are not using it. He wants to set up an event to allow residents to see the progress being made and will liaise with Cllr Rose.
- The chairman advised that the grant application from the Friends of the Primary School, to finance a school trip, will be submitted for consideration at the PC meeting in May.

2023/059 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

2023/060 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Parish Council resolved to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2023.

2023/061 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

- Pre-School Finance: Cllr Yuille has arranged to meet with the Pre-School's treasurer on Friday 28th April.
- Unsung Heroes: four residents have been nominated. Cllr Duff has drafted a letter of thanks for the chairman to review.
- Village Map: a number of amendments had been suggested by residents. These have been passed to the map maker who is working on a new version.
- Emergency Plan: Cllr Yuille has received feedback to the draft plan. A new version will be circulated for approval at the next meeting in May.
- Dog Fouling: Cllrs Carter and Corney are to meet before the May meeting to discuss this.

2023/062 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Cllr Casey-Rerhaye's report, sent by email, is attached in Appendix A.

2023/063 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Sudbury's report, sent by email, is attached in Appendix B.

2023/064 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

P23/S0635/FUL	Long Wittenham Athletic Club LW	SUP
P23/S0881/LB	The Grange High Street LW	NSV
P23/S0902/LDP	37 Wessex Way LW	NSV
P23/S1143/DIS	Frenchs High Street LW	NRR

P23/S1194/DIS Land at Ladygrove Didcot

NRR

2023/065 COMMUNITY HUB

Cllr Rose reported that the planning application is expected to be submitted by Monday 24th April.

A flyer has been designed encouraging residents to support the application. This will be distributed to all households in the village.

Thomas Homes (TH) has created an initial design for the existing school site. This includes the new village green, and there was discussion as to whether the war memorial should be moved to make better use of the space. It was suggested that the village should be consulted before the design is finalised.

Cllr Rose expects the outstanding issues over economic viability and bio-diversity to be addressed by TH in the week commencing 24th April.

2023/066 FOREST SCHOOL TIDY-UP

Logs Unlimited had quoted £43 to tidy-up the Forest School at Acklings before the Pre-School starts to use it. Approved. Emily Smout asked if it could be mowed as well. Cllr Duff suggested that Wittenham Warriors pay for this.

2023/067 HIF1

Some local parishes are supporting the Oxfordshire Roads Action Alliance (ORAA) which is opposing the HIF1 road across the Thames. The chairman asked the council to confirm its support for the project. Agreed. He suggested that the council writes to OCC to confirm its support and to ORAA to make it aware of the council's stance.

Actions:	Chairman and Clerk to draft letter to OCC and ORAA confirming the council's position on HIF1.
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2023/068 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Duff reported that Cath Nicholson has taken over the administration of the Village Hall 200 Club, but a new treasurer for the Village Hall Committee has yet to be appointed.

2023/069 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS

- Safari Supper
Wittenham Warriors are looking for suggestions for suitable village groups to benefit from any profit from the Safari Supper in September.

2023/070 MATTERS ARISING FROM CHAIRMAN

- The chairman had circulated a request from the Coronation Celebrations Committee asking the PC to fund flyers and a banner. Only the flyers are now required at a cost of £30. Agreed.
- OCC Traffic Engineers working on the Didcot Road entry feature want to have a Zoom call with members of the PC to discuss the options. Councillors should advise the chairman if they wish to join the meeting.
- Cllr Yuille has had an email from Peter Hutson of Elivia advising:
 - The Didcot Road street lighting and zebra crossing beacons should be operational by 19th May.
 - There should be a physical site boundary on Fieldside. It was agreed that marker posts are all that are needed.

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- The development has not yet been formally handed over to the management company.
- The tap on Fieldside will be removed.
- Any dead trees will be replaced after November.
- There are no plans to tidy up the trees in front of the flats on Didcot Road.
- Cllr Duff asked if the large puddle on Fieldside could be filled in. This part of Fieldside is the responsibility of Dom and Sally Jarman. She will ask the Jarmans if they have any objection. Agreed.
- The chairman suggested that, to foster links with the community, residents be asked to take on projects on behalf of the council. Agreed.

2023/071 FINANCIAL REPORT

- 2022-23 Year End Accounts: these had been circulated before the meeting. Approved.
- 2022-23 Audit: the RFO will liaise with the clerk to make the appropriate documents available to the internal auditors.
- 2023-24 Budget: this had been circulated before the meeting. Approved.
- CIL Projects: There had been much discussion by email regarding the CIL project list circulated by the chairman. Cllr Rose said that, once the likely cost of equipping the new village hall had been assessed, the rest of the CIL funds from the Elivia development could be drawn down as needed for projects on the list. The chairman suggested that he identifies a few key projects that could be done this financial year.
- Expenditure during March

06/03/2023	Logs Unlimited_Inv 221165	£674.20
06/03/2023	OALC Inv L00186-2023-3 (Membership)	£188.59
13/03/2023	Bosley Expenses (Printer Ink, Paper, Litter Pick)	£57.29
13/03/2023	RFO's Salary March 2023	£408.00
13/03/2023	Clerk's Salary March 2023	£353.13
17/03/2023	Community 1st Oxon Inv 525 (Membership)	£55.00
23/03/2023	Logs Unlimited Inv 221243	£518.40
23/03/2023	Sovereign Inv 0000131657 (Bodkins Slide)	£1,420.98
23/03/2023	Logs Unlimited Inv 221244	£960.00
23/03/2023	SODC Inv 10321743 (Dog Bins)	£452.09
27/03/2023	Brown Expenses (Playgrounds, Stationery, Posters, Travel)	£265.12
27/03/2023	Gary Carberry Inv 00000207	£88.00
28/03/2023	Plainlaw Inv 7719	£1,510.80
30/03/2023	Logs Unlimited Inv 221261	£385.26
	March Expenditure Total	£7,336.86

Actions: Chairman to compile a list of key CIL projects and circulate for next meeting.

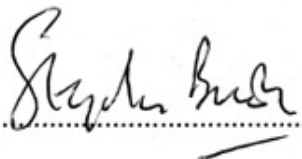
2023/072 ANY MATTERS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

The Annual Parish Council Meeting will take place before the usual monthly meeting in May. Councillors will be required to complete "Acceptance of Office" and "Register of Interests" forms. The clerk will circulate these forms in advance of the meeting. The Council Core Documents will also be circulated so that they can be reviewed by councillors and approved at the meeting.

Meeting Closed at 9:40pm.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 18th May 2023



Signed: 

Date: 18th May 2023

APPENDIX A

District Councillor Report April 2023 - Sam Casey-Rerhaye

For this April issue, I have focused on climate, environment and planning updates:

Energy

Following the successful bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and the award of £376,000 for works to the Cornerstone arts centre in Didcot we have now started work looking at our other buildings, with a contract awarded for site decarbonisation assessments for the South Oxfordshire Leisure Centres and the Riverside Park and Pool. These assessments will determine what works are required to decarbonise the buildings and will inform the evidence required to make future funding bids to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.

We have also appointed APSE Energy to undertake a feasibility study into investing in solar energy on council land, with an aim to offset the councils' unavoidable carbon emissions. The report will include a financial model as well as contractual, planning and grid supply issues and will feed into future decisions about investments in a solar farm.

Bid to Net Zero Fast Followers Fund

Officers submitted a funding application to the Net Zero Living, Fast Followers programme. If the bid is successful this project will fund an officer post and consultant support to develop an approach to investment in nature-based carbon offsetting in Oxfordshire, aiming to offer Oxfordshire's businesses and local authorities' opportunities to invest in nature-based carbon sequestration schemes within the county. South Oxfordshire are leading the bid, and Vale of White Horse District Council, Cherwell District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council and the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership are project partners.

Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding

The Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles has awarded £700k from the pilot LEVI scheme (we were previously unsuccessful with 'OEZV' wanting to "level up" other areas). The money will be used across the county to fund cable gullies enabling Oxfordshire residents with properties on the street without off street parking to run an Electric Vehicle charging cable under the pavement to charge their EVs.

Nature Recovery

Officers in the Climate and Biodiversity team worked with the Parks and Communications team to develop the 'Let it Bee' project which aims to promote wildlife friendly management of council owned land. This follows on from the No-Mow May trials which ran across the last growing season and will involve a total of nine sites covering around 11,000m² where the grass will be left to grow for the benefit of wildlife. The sites are located in Berinsfield, Didcot, Wallingford and Woodcote. In addition, we have also created a new wildflower meadow at Cronshaw Close in Didcot where the grass was scarified, and a wildflower mix was sown. All the sites will be monitored this summer to

determine how successful the approach is both in terms of wildlife benefit, costs and public perception.

Bathing Water Application

In early March we were disappointed to learn from Defra that our joint application with Wallingford Town Council for Bathing Water Status had been unsuccessful. The letter from Defra did not go into the reasons that our application was unsuccessful however, following further enquiries we have now been told that the reason our application failed was that the site did not attract a large enough average number of users across the bathing season.

Defra have so far failed to answer our questions about how many users the site would need to have attracted to allow it to be designated, and we are currently following this up. We are also understand, that of 9 other applications for bathing water status submitted this year only one river-based application was successful, all the others have been given the same reason for refusal as we had in Wallingford.

Thames Water – sewage capacity and new developments

Planning department work is ongoing with Thames Water on approving planning applications and sewage capacity. We have started regular meetings to discuss modelling and sharing of information and we also challenge Thames Water where there are known issues in new application areas, including flooding. Grampian conditions (where infrastructure needs to be provided before houses) can be used but need to be reasonable from a planning inspector's point of view or they can be over-turned on appeal.

Planning and Enforcement

This has been another busy year for the Planning team, both in its day-to-day business of assessing and monitoring applications and in the work of the Planning Policy team to develop the new Joint Local Plan with Vale of White Horse Council. The results of the "issues consultation" means the new plan will focus more strongly on environmental factors, sustainability and green infrastructure than just on further housing growth. The current Local Plan (LP2035) remains in place and we await further news from Government about proposed planning reforms.

The new system to assess and take action on reported breaches of planning rules has been assessed by the cross-party Scrutiny Committee as being effective and proportionate; we cannot feasibly take action on every single planning breach, but the new system ensures that the most serious cases are acted upon the quickest.

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APPENDIX B

County Councillor Report April 2023 – Pete Sudbury

I'm afraid I have nothing to report except a degree of frustration.

Two reasons for that:

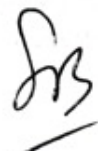
As a result of a tip-off from a Green colleague at SODC, I discovered that OCC has not made any applications for S106 towards active travel. I have had a call with a senior officer, who explained this as partly about the lack of local transport strategies. I found that very unconvincing, as I'm aware of 2 strategic projects at an early planning stage (£several millions) and two local projects, including, of course, the LW-CH cycle route. I am continuing to knock away at this, enlisting the support of the Director of Environment and Place.

The other (rather sad) bit of news is that the periodic Electoral Commission review of Division Boundaries has concluded that the Wittenhams will no longer be in my Division at the next election: this is because the growth in Wallingford makes the number of voters too large for an even distribution. On the downside, it means that (should I be mad enough to stand again), I won't have

the joy of knocking on doors in either of the Wittenhams where, in my memory, the sun is always shining at election time. On the upside, it means there is a hard stop on making sure I leave things properly sorted: the cycle path and making sure we have agreed that the HIF road is used to take the traffic that currently comes through the village, rather than being additional to it (please add to this list).

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A handwritten signature, possibly 'PS', is written in the bottom right corner of the page.