

Long Wittenham Parish Council meeting held on 20th July 2023

Present: Chairman Steve Brown, Cllr Steve Bolton, Cllr David Corney, Cllr Peter Rose, Cllr Liz Yuille, RFO Clifford Bosley, District Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye.

In attendance: Martin Elliff (clerk) and 4 members of the public.

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2023/114 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Ron Carter.

2023/115 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- Chris Hancock from the Oxfordshire Roads Action Alliance (ORAA) was present to brief the council on the decision by OCC's planning committee to reject the planning application for the HIF1 project. The group plans to have a meeting in early September to decide what to do next and he hoped that the council would want to be involved. He will keep the council appraised.
- Cllr Corney had received complaints from residents who had challenged people cycling on footpaths and from whom they had received verbal abuse. The council agreed that this is beyond the powers of the PC. Cllr Corney will explain this to the residents.
- Resident Mike Duff had suggested by email that the council might put a 'No Through Road' notice at the Didcot Road end of Fieldside to deter drivers blindly following SatNav instructions. The council agreed that there was no significant increase in traffic on Fieldside and no sign is necessary.

2023/116 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

2023/117 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Parish Council resolved to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2023.

2023/118 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

- Cllr Yuille reported that the second website post, asking people to come forward to be Zone Co-ordinators for the Emergency Plan, had yielded one more volunteer bringing the total to three, with four vacancies. It was suggested that the Emergency Plan is maintained in draft format and another attempt to elicit more volunteers be made in the Autumn.
- In response to the website post advertising vacant allotments, four people had expressed interest. Their details have been forwarded to Tanya Ellis, the village allotment administrator. They have been told that if they want to proceed, the council will arrange for the plots to be cleared as and when appropriate. Ms Ellis had wanted to attend the meeting to discuss this but had been prevented from doing so. The council hopes she will be able to attend in September.
- The clerk reported that attempts to obtain an update on the Grange barn had failed as the conservation officer dealing with it is on maternity leave. There had been no response to emails to SODC's planning department. Cllr Casey-Rerhaye offered to chase.
- The meeting with OCC to agree the details of the Didcot Road entry restrictions has yet to take place.
- Parents at the Primary School had borrowed the council's hedge trimmer and the hedge on the High Street has been cut back.

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- The chairman reported that Cllr Sally Duff had resigned from the council and expressed his thanks for her contribution over the last seven years. The village had been advised via a post on the website. The council approved a vote of thanks to Cllr Duff for her service. The 'Notice of Casual Vacancy' is displayed on the council noticeboard.

Actions: Clerk to advise Cllr Duff of the council's vote of thanks.

2023/119 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

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

2023/120 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

None.

2023/121 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

P23/S1959/DIS	Land at Ladygrove Didcot	NRR
P23/S2057/DIS	Street Record Mersey Way Didcot	NRR
P23/S2140/DIS	Land at Lady Grove Didcot	NRR
P23/S2222/HH	Challis Farm High Street LW	NSV

2023/122 COMMUNITY HUB

Cllr Rose reported:

The planning application is proceeding. Thomas Homes (TH) met with the SODC planning officer to discuss our response to objections raised in the consultation. The planning officer was impressed with the plans overall and commented that she had never seen so many expressions of support for an application. Most of the issues raised were resolved. A way forward was agreed but these will lead to some minor alterations in the plans. TH will submit a formal response in the near future. We expect a decision in mid to late September, which will be made using delegated powers. Following this, there will be lengthy discussions in order to draw up an S106 agreement - the planning officer hopes that the Parish Council will be involved in this process.

Two issues were raised by OCC concerning archaeology and school design. The former is resolved but discussions continue about school design.

Some residents raised concerns during the consultation that the kitchen was not large enough when catering for larger numbers. Discussions with a resident who is an architect suggested that the kitchen would be sufficient when catering for larger numbers but that the suggestions from one resident to enlarge the kitchen were feasible. However this would result in a smaller storage space. TH agreed that this issue can be resolved at a later date after planning permission has been granted.

2023/123 CIL PROJECTS

The chairman had circulated the revised CIL Projects list from the Neighbourhood Plan before the meeting and asked councillors to review and submit any amendments or additions to him so that it can be approved at the September meeting.

He had also circulated a list of projects for 'early action'. It was suggested that a working group should meet separately to agree and prioritise the list, and to seek volunteers to implement the projects. Agreed.

Actions: Clerk to co-ordinate a meeting date and time for the working group.

2023/124 VILLAGE SIGNS CLEANING

It was suggested that some road signs in the village need cleaning. There were concerns that, as this is OCC's responsibility, doing it would set a precedent. It was agreed that councillors should identify what signs need cleaning before the end of the month and if it is a significant number, quotes for cleaning can be obtained.

2023/125 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

In the absence of Cllr Duff, a new representative to sit on the Village Hall Committee (VHC) is required. Cllr Rose volunteered to represent the PC at the VHC AGM on 27th July. A permanent representative needs to be appointed.

2023/126 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS

- **Bodkins Lay-by:** Cllr Bolton advised that people parking for the playground are churning up the recently reseeded verge. It was suggested that plastic matting would help to preserve the grass. The estimated cost is approximately £300. Agreed.
- **Trees & Bulbs:** Cllr Bolton had circulated a list of locations for new trees and bulb planting. Agreed. He will break the list into phases for implementation.
- **Riverside Footpath:** Cllr Corney reported that the eroded river bank next to the footpath from Wards Field had been reported to OCC but they do not have the funds to repair it. They have cut back the vegetation next to the path to make it more visible and safer. It was suggested that he asks how much the repair would cost.
- **Dog Training Issues:** Some residents had expressed concerns about the way a dog was being trained on Acklings. The chairman had exchanged emails with the owner who has agreed to stop training the dog on village playgrounds.
- **Best Practice for Parish Councils:** Cllr Corney asked if the council is taking advantage of the various resources available for clerks and councillors. The clerk is CILCA qualified and a member of SLCC. The council is a member of OALC. Councillors are urged to utilise these resources as appropriate.
- **Community Speedwatch:** Cllr Corney reported that the group wants to expand the team by leafletting the village asking for new volunteers. The council agreed to finance this. The leaflet will also ask if residents want the roads off the High Street and Didcot Road 'watched'. The group also wants to put up 'Community Speedwatch Area' signs on the three entrances to the village.
- **Grounds Maintenance:** Cllr Corney suggested that the contract with Logs Unlimited should be extended for another year. He will discuss this with them as well as Cllr Bolton's suggestions for modifications to the 'No Mow May' schedule which had been circulated. Agreed.
- **Length of PC Meetings:** Concern had been expressed about the length of recent meetings. It was agreed not to limit public participation. It was suggested that any items on the agenda are supported by a brief summary of the issue with recommendations, circulated by email in the week before the meeting. Agreed.
- Cllr Corney had been approached by residents concerned about the number of Earthline lorries passing through the village. It is thought that they emanate from the Headington School boathouse development which should be completed soon.

Actions:	Cllr Bolton to liaise with the chairman regarding Bodkins lay-by. Clerk to identify the owner of the strip of land next to the footpath behind Westfield Road on the Land Registry. Cllr Corney to obtain cost of bank repair. Cllr Corney to seek quotes for 'Community Speedwatch Area' signs.
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2023/127 MATTERS ARISING FROM CHAIRMAN

With the departure of Cllr Duff, the chairman suggested that the HR Sub-committee only be called as necessary. The two employees, the clerk and RFO, are happy with this. Agreed.

2023/128 FINANCIAL REPORT

- The RFO had circulated the 2022-23 Internal Audit Report before the meeting. No issues had been identified. Approved.
- The RFO had circulated 1st Quarter Accounts for 2023-24 before the meeting.
- Expenditure during June

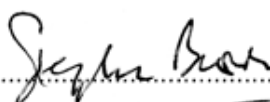
06/06/2023	SODC Inv 1035193 (Election)	£200.00
06/06/2023	Logs Unlimited Inv 230100	£310.81
15/06/2023	Clerk's Salary June 2023	£336.53
22/06/2023	Auditing Solutions Ltd Inv A8166	£456.00
	June Expenditure Total	£1,303.34

2023/129 ANY MATTERS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

None.

Meeting Closed at 9:30pm.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 21st September 2023

Signed: 

Date: 14-9-23

APPENDIX A

District Councillor Report July 2023 - Sam Casey-Rerhaye

Let's talk rubbish – we want to know what residents think of our waste services

We've launched a new survey to find out what residents think about our waste and street cleaning services. We will use the feedback to find out what aspects of our waste service people are happy with as well as the areas where we could do better.

Residents can complete the waste survey online now.

Comments are open until Monday 10 July 2023. Please do help spread the word with your local networks and share our social media message on your pages and local Facebook groups throughout the next month.

If anyone has questions or requires the survey in an alternative format (for example large print, Braille, audio, email, Easy Read and alternative languages) they should email waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk or call 01235 422146

Rural England Prosperity Fund

More than £1.2m is being made available to help improve the rural economy across our district. We've secured funding from the government's Rural England Prosperity Fund, which can be used to provide a boost to projects such as creating rural business hubs, setting up community energy schemes and diversifying farm businesses beyond agriculture.

Any organisation with legal status will be able to apply for the funding when it opens in the Autumn this year. This will include public sector organisations, higher and further education institutions, private sector companies, voluntary organisations and registered charities

Before the application process begins our Economic Development team wants to understand which organisations might apply and for what type of project, and so is asking anyone interested to send an Expression of Interest in the run up to the funding scheme opening later this year.

There are more details on the scheme on the South REPF page.

Anyone with questions about the scheme please email business.support@southandvale.gov.uk.

Air Quality Survey

We've launched a survey on the council's new joint Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). The AQAP sets out proposals for the next four years to improve air quality in the districts. This includes the good news that most places have seen a consistent reduction in one of the main measured pollutants: nitrogen dioxide

Wallingford, Watlington and Abingdon have seen the levels of the pollutant nitrogen dioxide fall below the national objective level over the past three to five years so it is proposed they will no longer be designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) in the future. Air quality monitoring will continue at those places.

Look on our website for the AQAP survey.

How to save energy costs in community buildings

The Climate and Biodiversity team is inviting local community organisations to an online forum on making cost savings through improving energy efficiency in community buildings such as local sports clubs, village halls and parish buildings.

The event will include speakers detailing their experience of making changes to their community buildings. There will also be information on the practical and financial support the councils can offer.

The event will take place ONLINE from 6pm - 7pm on Tuesday 11 July – groups should email climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk to register and they will be sent the meeting link

Please pass on to any groups who run a community building.

Planning 'surgeries' for town and parish councils

The planning team holds monthly surgeries for members of town and parish councils to discuss can general planning queries. To book their 15-minute online meeting they should use this planning surgery link.

If there are any questions, please contact Emily Hamerton emily.hamerton@southandvale.gov.uk

Comedy Takes Over Cornerstone Arts Centre

Cornerstone's Summer season is in full swing and jam-packed with comedy shows. There is something for everyone in this season's diverse line-up.

If you have a taste for impressions catch famous comedian Debra Stephenson on 8 June or if you want to introduce younger ones to the genre try Comedy Club 4 Kids on 2 June, laughs are guaranteed!

Head to the Cornerstone website to find out more.

sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk

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