

Long Wittenham Parish Council meeting held on 19th October 2023

Present: Chairman Steve Brown, Cllr Steve Bolton, Cllr David Corney, Cllr Peter Rose, Cllr Mark Thompson, Cllr Liz Yuille.

In attendance: Martin Elliff (clerk) and 3 members of the public.

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2023/150 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RFO Clifford Bosley, District Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye, County Cllr Peter Sudbury.

2023/151 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- Bonfire Night 2024: Resident Emma Newman was present to ask for the council's support in resurrecting the village bonfire night at Wards Field in 2024. She said that there is lots of enthusiasm for this and she is prepared to organise it. Cllr Bolton confirmed that the Athletic Club has no plans to run the event again and said that the club would be prepared to discuss possibly taking charge of the firework display. The council agreed to support the event and suggested that Mrs Newman looks into the feasibility and practicality of the project in more detail.

Actions: Cllr Yuille to investigate insurance implications.

2023/152 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

2023/153 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Parish Council resolved to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14th September 2023.

2023/154 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

- The clerk reported that the re-application for ACV status for The Plough Inn had been completed and submitted. The application for Wards Field is underway.
- A resident had expressed concerns about the closure of the High Street during last year's Remembrance Day service. The chairman said that he has discussed this with David Haylett to ensure that it will not happen again.
- The results of the OCC speed survey on the Didcot Road had been published on the village website.
- There has been no update regarding the barn at The Grange. It is hoped that Cllr Casey-Rerhaye will have more information when she returns from holiday.

2023/155 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

None.

2023/156 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Sudbury's report, sent by email before the meeting is attached in Appendix A.

2023/157 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

P23/S2981/DIS	Street Record Mersey Way Didcot	NRR
P23/S3098/DIS	Land at Lady Grove Didcot	NRR
P23/S2961/FUL	Barn to the r/o The Little House High Street LW	NSV
P23/S3414/DIS	Land at Lady Grove Didcot	NRR

2023/158 COMMUNITY HUB

Cllr Rose reported that, at the request of OCC Highways, SODC has extended the decision on the planning application to 3rd November.

2023/159 CIL PROJECTS

- Bodkins & The Crescent resurfacing:
This project has been completed.
- Playgrounds:
Cllrs Rose and Brown have met with Claire Michellis. She has created a draft brief for Jupiter, the company with whom she works. The plan is to concentrate on Acklings initially. It has yet to be decided how the sketch to be provided by Jupiter will be paid for: either directly (approximately £1,000) or by going to tender with three of its subcontractors in which the case the sketch will be free. It is hoped to complete the project by July 2024.

2023/160 LONG WITTENHAM TO CLIFTON HAMPDEN CYCLE PATH

Cllrs Thompson, Corney, Rose and Brown had met to discuss how best to progress the suggested permissive path in lieu of the cycle path which is stalled. An OCC Highways officer has confirmed that a ramp from the road to the start of the path on the Buxton land is possible. Finding a route from the path to Bodkins is proving difficult. Cllrs Corney and Thompson will arrange meetings with Glen Pereira, the chairman of Clifton Hampden Parish Council and Robin Buxton to discuss the permissive path.

2023/161 RoSPA PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS

RoSPA carried out its annual check of the village playgrounds on 15th September. Cllr Yuille had circulated a summary of the findings. The key issues are:

- Acklings
Basketball Court: The inspector suggested that the unfinished area should be filled in. The chairman has asked for a quotation for this from a local contractor - All Aspects Home and Garden.
Pump Track: The inspector suggested that the eroded areas are repaired. The chairman said that a working party is scheduled to do this on 4th November, unless All Aspects recommend another solution.
Woodland Adventure Site: The inspector asked to ensure that routine inspection and maintenance of all play items is carried out. Clerk to write to the Pre-School.
- Bodkins:
Roller Beam: The inspector highlighted that one post is extremely loose in the ground possibly due to decay. It was agreed to remove it.
Rocker Car: The bolt at the back left of the seat has pulled through the laminate. To be repaired.
Swings: The inspector suggested that the posts are routinely monitored as, over time, the decay is may progress up the posts into the areas where the new fixings have been attached. Agreed - covered by the council's weekly inspections.

Actions:	Clerk to ask the Pre-School to confirm that the Woodland Adventure Site is inspected on a weekly basis and that they have an up-to-date Risk Assessment.
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2023/162 INSURANCE

The 2023-24 insurance premium was paid on 4th October. As the three-year agreement with Clear (BHIB) comes to an end next year, Cllr Yuille suggested that the cover is reviewed and new quotes sought next Summer.

Long Wittenham Parish Council meeting held on 19th October 2023

2023/163 OCC GRASS CUTTING AGREEMENT

OCC had sent a revised schedule to the grass cutting agreement which was signed in 2017. The chairman had circulated details of the minor changes which concern the number of cuts carried out each year. The council agreed to sign the revised schedule which will take effect in April 2024

Actions: Clerk to sign and return the revised OCC grass cutting agreement schedule.

2023/164 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

None.

2023/165 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS

- Didcot Road Zebra Crossing: Cllr Corney suggested that the hedging next to the crossing is obscuring drivers' view of the crossing. The chairman offered to trim the hedge to improve visibility.
- Community Speedwatch Signs: Cllr Corney reported that the signs have been purchased and asked if Gary Carberry can be approached to install them. Agreed.
- Thermal Camera: Cllr Thompson has secured the use of SODC's thermal imaging camera for checking the insulation of houses in the village for four weeks from 5th December. He will attend training in its use on 2nd November.

2023/166 MATTERS ARISING FROM CHAIRMAN

None.

2023/167 FINANCIAL REPORT

- Half Year Accounts
The RFO had circulated half year accounts prior to the meeting.
- Income during September

06/09/2022	SODC (Precept 2nd payment)	£11,109.00
19/09/2023	SODC (CIL)	£36,800.00
September Income Total		£47,909.00
- Expenditure during September

09/09/2023	Logs Unlimited Inv 230261	£632.52
13/09/2023	Clerk's Salary September 2023	£336.73
19/09/2023	Playsafety Inv 74478 (RoSPA Inspections)	£270.00
September Expenditure Total		£1,239.25

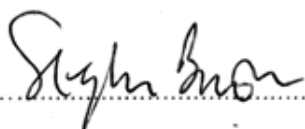
2023/168 ANY MATTERS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

None.

Meeting Closed at 9pm.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 16th November 2023

Signed:



Date: 16/11/23



APPENDIX A

County Councillor Report October 2023 – Pete Sudbury

1. School:

- a) I held a meeting with officers, alongside John Howson, newly appointed Cabinet Member for Children's Services, to discuss their approach to school buildings. Unfortunately, the organiser missed the memo asking to invite Chris Brotherton. However, it was clear the officers both know him and respect his opinions. They agreed to follow through with a further meeting with him. Much of the problem concerned the insistence on some of the standards for a 1FE building, when this is only intended for half FE. The reason for that is that it may well become a 1FE in the future.
- b) I have also had a discussion with highways officers over insistence on designing a whole estate around getting large buses to the school, despite a serviceable bus stop and pedestrian crossing within easy walking distance. That comes down to the need to be able to get the vehicle in for school trips.

2. Verges:

The current policy (which I largely wrote) is to prioritise keeping paths and vision splays clear, and to cut most verges only once, towards the autumn.

3. HIF:

- a) I've asked to be directly involved on the climate mitigation of this scheme. One vital component of that would be to close older bridges (including Clifton-Hampden) to through traffic, except for access. I've made it clear I cannot see how I (in my role on climate change) could support any scheme that doesn't meet the criteria recently set by the Climate Change Committee...and using the new highway to shift traffic off the old ones would be a very big part of that. Similarly, the Welsh gov't criteria are helpful in this regard:
 - (i) Going forward, the Welsh Government will only consider future road investment for projects that:
 - (1) Reduce carbon emissions and support a shift to public transport, walking and cycling
 - (2) Improve safety through small-scale change
 - (3) Help the Welsh Government adapt to the impacts of climate change
 - (4) Provide connections to jobs and areas of economic activity in a way that maximises the use of public transport, walking and cycling
 - (ii) In developing schemes, the focus should be on minimising carbon emissions, not increasing road capacity, not increasing emissions through higher vehicle speeds and not adversely affecting ecologically valuable sites.
- b) I've not been spectacularly successful in my line that S106 ought to be spent on local cycle lanes.
- c) I've not had an answer about whom we should ask to put forward a proposal for funding, bypassing the huge queue of projects in the officer domain.

4. Pedestrian crossing:

Fwded conversation about need to cut back vegetation. Response is that crossing hasn't yet been adopted, so developer still has control and can go ahead and do the needful.

And delighted to see that the traffic calming and speed limit changes past Saxon's Heath have got speeds down around 20mph. That's a great result, especially for Saxon's Heath residents!

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