

Long Wittenham Parish Council meeting held on 21st March 2024

Present: Chairman Steve Brown, Cllr Peter Rose, Cllr Mark Thompson, Cllr Liz Yuille, RFO Clifford Bosley.

In attendance: Martin Elliff (clerk) and 1 member of the public.

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2024/040 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Steve Bolton, Cllr David Corney.

2024/041 CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR

Ian Burton was proposed by Cllr Rose and seconded by Cllr Yuille. Agreed.

2024/042 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- The treasurer of the Pre-School, Hannah Fraser-Mackensie, was present to discuss the agreement between the school and the PC for the Woodland Adventure site at Acklings. It was agreed that the agreement, which was written over ten years ago, is now out of date. The chairman suggested that he drafts a new one and circulate it. The fence between the site and the playground needs some maintenance. It was agreed that the school should do the necessary remedial work and that the fence should be replaced as part of the Acklings upgrade expected to take place this year.
- A resident had asked by email why the bollards had been installed on the verge next to the war memorial as it causes traffic congestion and pollution. She had been invited to attend the meeting, but did not do so. No other comments about the bollards have been received.

Actions: Chairman to draft and circulate a new agreement for the Woodland Adventure site.

2024/043 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

2024/044 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Parish Council resolved to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 15th February 2024.

2024/045 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

- Cllr Yuille reported that the post box at the eastern end of the village appears to have been upgraded recently and can now accommodate large letters. She has advised Prew Bowtell.

2024/046 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Cllr Casey-Rerhaye was present.

She is working on an Annual Report which should be circulated in the next two weeks.

She reported that the owners of The Grange barn have told the SODC conservation officer that, rather than submit a planning application, they intend to repair the barn. No timescale for this has been set.

There had been 1,200 responses to the Joint Local Plan Reg18 consultation. The next step is to analyse the responses. It is hope to go to a Reg 19 consultation in the Autumn/Winter.

The chairman raised concerns of residents that high archaeological survey costs associated with planning applications in the village were frustrating development. Cllr Casey-Rerhaye said that she would take this up with the appropriate officers.

2024/047 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Sudbury was present.

He asked if the damaged bollards on Didcot Road had been replaced. The chairman confirmed that they had, but said that Elivia has still not signed the necessary legal agreement and is still in control of the section of Didcot Road outside the development. This is holding back the relocation of the bus stop. He will email Aaron Morton of OCC Highways and copy Cllr Sudbury.

Cllr Sudbury said that the EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) process is now working faster and more humanely.

He said that the climate change crisis may be more urgent than previously thought. He believes that some of the issues can be dealt with at parish council level. He suggested that it should be part of a council's risk register and that an emergency plan should allow for severe weather events. He hopes to provide some guidance.

2024/048 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

P24/S0663/DIS	Land at Lady Grove Didcot	NRR
P24/S0722/AG	Rosehurst Farm Long Wittenham	NRR

2024/049 COMMUNITY HUB

Cllr Rose reported that there was a meeting with the planning officer a couple of weeks ago and the planning application is making progress. We await a report from the planning officer outlining the planning conditions we will have to undertake, and the Heads of Terms for the S106 agreements. Once these are completed and agreed, a final decision will be made. There is another meeting next week to discuss these issues.

2024/050 CIL PROJECTS

- Acklings Playground:
Cllr Rose reported that the revised plan from Jupiter is still awaited. He has completed an application for the SODC CIL 2024-25 grant fund.
- Allotments Water Supply:
The chairman said that he has so far failed to get interested parties to a meeting to discuss the best location. He will pursue this.

Actions:	Chairman to meet with interested parties to discuss the Acklings water supply location.
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2024/051 LONG WITTENHAM TO CLIFTON HAMPDEN CYCLE/PERMISSIVE PATH

Cllr Thompson reported that he and Cllr Corney have now heard back from Charles Campion the Savills' land agent for the Gibbs family, who said there is broad agreement for the permissive path to go ahead. Mr Campion has spoken to the family representative, Christopher Purvis, who is very supportive and he has written to the family trustees, who actually own the land. On that basis he is content for the path to go ahead.

Mr Campion has asked that we share with him a draft written agreement, stating that it is a permissive path which it is used with the land owners consent, that consent may be withdrawn at any time and it is used by people at their own risk.

If Clifton Hampden's NDO gets the go ahead, then Mr Campion expects that the permissive path would then be improved to become a cycle path.

On Robin Buxton's property, a new hedge has been planted along the strip of land which has been fenced off for the permissive path. Mr Buxton has said that he would like to open his section of the route this spring.

They have two quotes to cut back the hedge and clear the verge between the village and the start of the path: Logs Unlimited £1,234 + VAT and Mark Oldroyd, the hedge contractor used by Robin Buxton, £1,500 + VAT.

Most of the cost (up to £1,500) can be met by submitting a county councillor grant scheme application.

They finally heard back from Rebecca Crowe, the transport planner for OCC, who said that OCC is not progressing a cycle scheme between the two villages at this time. She has been asked to keep them informed of any developments.

The council approved Logs Unlimited quote. The clerk will apply for the County Councillor grant.

Actions: Clerk to apply for the county councillor grant to fund the permissive path work.

2024/052 FUN RUN

The council was asked to approve the funding of the awards for this year's Fun Run: £140.44. Approved.

2024/053 SPEED LIMIT EXTENSIONS

Jonathan Beale, OCC's Senior Officer for Traffic & Road Safety, has advised that the public consultation for this is likely to start around the end of March.

2024/054 SINODUN CLOSE DEFIBRILLATOR

The defibrillator has been ordered from London Hearts which offers a 50% grant. The council has paid £750. It will be delivered in seven to ten days and will be installed by SOHA's contractors within four weeks.

The clerk said that there is no support contract in place for the defibrillator in the telephone box on the High Street. It will need a new battery in April and a support contract with Community Heartbeat will cover that. The cost is £135 (excl VAT) per annum for a minimum of 4 years. Approved.

The council also approved the funding of a support contract for the defibrillator at Sinodun Close once it is installed.

Actions: Clerk to arrange support contracts for the High Street and Sinodun Close defibrillators.

2024/055 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

None.

2024/056 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS

- The chairman suggested that gravel is laid in front of the noticeboard on Fieldside as the area is prone to flooding. Estimated cost £100. Approved.
- Cllr Rose reported that Andrew Wilson has not been able to make any progress on surveying local roads to identify potholes, owing to the inclement weather. It was suggested that the village's FixMyStreet Superuser, Andy Mortimer, might be able to bring some pressure to bear on OCC to repair potholes.
- Cllr Bolton had suggested by email the planting of three to four sack of bulbs at an estimated cost of £200. Agreed. The council requested that Cllr Bolton identify the planting locations.

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- Cllr Thompson reported that Tanya Ellis, the village allotment administrator, is under the impression that she cannot allocate new plots at the western end of the village because she is waiting for the PC to clear them. He was asked to inform Ms Ellis that the council will only clear those plots that are covered in bushes and brambles, not those that have simply become grassed over. On that basis, Ms Ellis should inform the council which plots need to be cleared. She has been invited to several PC meetings to discuss this but has not attended.

Actions: Clerk to email the FixMyStreet SuperUser about potholes.

2024/057 MATTERS ARISING FROM CHAIRMAN

The chairman said that he has had numerous reports of issues with the management of the village hall. It was suggested that the clerk write to the chairman of the Village Hall Committee (VHC) making him aware of the concerns.

The school has cut back the overhanging hedges as requested. Other locations where householders have been asked to do this will be monitored.

Actions: Clerk to write to the chairman of the VHC.

2024/058 FINANCIAL REPORT

- Scribe Accounts
The clerk and RFO requested approval to subscribe to the Scribe Accounts system and run it in parallel with the RFO's existing system for a year, with a view to adopting it in the future. It will cost a one-off set-up fee of £249 (excl VAT) and £30 (excl VAT) per month thereafter. Approved.
- The RFO will be circulating 2023-24 End of Year Accounts and a budget for 2024-25 to be approved at the April meeting.
- Expenditure during February

08/02/2024	Community Heartbeat Trust Inv 18865 (LWAC Defib Suppt)	£135.00
14/02/2024	Gary Carberry Inv 000264 (Bus Shelter Maintenance)	£544.00
14/02/2024	Clerk's Salary February 2024	£360.15
21/02/2024	Parish Online Inv 38UD046-0006 (Annual Subscription)	£22.50
26/02/2024	Running Imp Inv 420177 (Fun Run Prizes)	£140.44
	February Expenditure Total	£1,202.09

2024/059 ANY MATTERS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- Cllr Rose said that the Village Welcome Pack needs to be reviewed but questioned whether it is really needed. To be discussed at the April meeting.
- There is concern that, in the event of a major power outage, some residents will be without telephone communication. To be discussed at the April meeting.

Meeting Closed at 9:35pm.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 18th April 2024

Signed: 

Date: 18-4-24