

Long Wittenham Parish Council meeting held on 21st November 2024

Present: Cllr Ian Burton, Cllr David Corney, Cllr Peter Rose, Cllr Mark Thompson, Cllr Liz Yuille, RFO Clifford Bosley, County Cllr Pete Sudbury.

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

In the absence of Chairman Brown, Cllr Yuille took the chair and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2024/189 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Chairman Steve Brown, Cllr Steve Bolton, Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye.

2024/190 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- Resident Julie Carberry had asked if a new mobile phone mast could be installed in the village to improve signals. Resident Jim Brown was present and said that he has carried out a survey and found that the mobile signal is good in all parts of the village as it is well served with masts in the area. He suggested where problems exist, the faults will likely lie with the phone providers. Cllr Thompson stated that there were times when areas of the village did not receive a signal, irrespective of network provider. Jim Brown will provide a report for the village website so that residents can see his findings.
- Resident Paul King (aka Wilf) had complained about the condition of the footway on Didcot Road from Saxons Heath to the zebra crossing. The worst 'pothole' on the path had been reported to OCC via Fix My Street and the response was that it did not meet their criteria for repair.
- Several residents had complained that the clearing of weeds from the road gutters on Westfield Road had not been fully completed during the SODC 'Deep Cleanse' in October. SODC has advised that it is on Biffa's 'to do' list.

2024/191 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

2024/192 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Parish Council resolved to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 17th October 2024.

2024/193 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None.

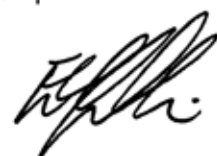
2024/194 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

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

2024/195 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Sudbury was present to report:

1. He continues to do what he can to help resolve the problems with the Community Hub legal agreements.
2. To combat flooding, he has asked that all gulleys are cleared before Christmas. He has convened a flooding summit at the end of the month.
3. At the recent cabinet meeting it was reported that the number of roads in good repair in the county has gone up. OCC Highways has been working hard to do things better.
4. As a result of the implementation of 20mph zones, accidents in the county are down. Some insurers now give discounts for people in 20mph zones.



2024/196 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

P24/S3209/HH	37 Westfield Road Long Wittenham	NSV
P24/S3341/HH	The Clock House Long Wittenham	NSV
P24/S3338/S73	Little House High Street Long Wittenham	NSV
P24/S3248/HH	Fair View High Street Long Wittenham	NSV

2024/197 COMMUNITY HUB

Some progress has been made. See Cllrs Brown and Rose's report in appendix B.

2024/198 CIL PROJECTS

● Acklings Playground

Cllrs Rose and Brown and Claire Michellis will attend the SODC meeting in December at which the grant application will be considered. The FCC grant decision is also expected in December.

● Outdoor Gym Equipment

Yiannis Michellis has started an outdoor fitness group which meets at Bodkins. If the group is still active in the New Year, it will be asked to identify what equipment might be used. It was suggested that the members of Long Wittenham Athletic Club (LWAC) are asked if they would use outdoor gym equipment and if so, what type and where it could be located. Cllr Yuille reported that the equipment should create no specific insurance issues.

Actions: Cllr Burton to discuss Outdoor Gym Equipment with LWAC members.

2024/199 LONG WITTENHAM TO CLIFTON HAMPDEN PERMISSIVE PATH

Cllr Thompson reported that, despite constant chasing, Savills have still not counter-signed the agreement with the Gibbs estate. He has obtained three quotations for the installation of four gates on the path.

Until the agreement is signed, no progress can be made.

2024/200 HIGH STREET CHICANES

ODS has provided a detailed quotation for the removal of the chicanes and replacement with humps:

Removal of 2 chicanes and installation of speed humps	£16,169.02
Traffic Management and diversion for 1 week	£1,359.35
Oxfordshire County Council Road Closure	£2,500.00

An OCC public consultation would also be required at a cost of £2,205.00.

It was suggested that before proceeding it might be useful to conduct a referendum within the village to gauge the support for the proposal and, for that purpose, to ask Chairman Brown to produce a document summarising the pros and cons of the proposal for consideration at the December meeting.

Actions: Chairman Brown to be asked to produce a document summarising the pros and cons of replacing the High Street chicanes with humps..

2024/201 SPEED INDICATOR DEVICES (SID)

Cllr Corney said that the large VAS (Vehicle Activated Sign) at the entrance to the village near the rowing club has weakened the argument for purchasing a SID. He will discuss this further with the Community Speedwatch group before proceeding.



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2024/202 **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

The clerk reported that seven contractors have asked to be invited to tender for the new contract which will start in April 2025. The invitations will be sent out at the beginning of December.

2024/203 **CLERK AND RFO SALARIES**

The chairman had reported to the council by email that he proposed that, in line with national pay scales for local government officers, the clerk and RFO salaries be increased by 4%, backdated to 1st April. Approved.

2024/204 **THE POUND**

At Sally Duff's request, Stan Kasten had spent a day and half tidying up The Pound at a cost of £135. Approved. She has suggested that the hazel tree needs some work that Stan cannot do. The council is concerned that it has no responsibility for The Pound but is regularly being asked to fund maintenance. It is supposed to be a community space, maintained by the community. It was suggested that an appeal is posted on the website asking for volunteers to come forward to take on the responsibility of maintaining it.

Actions: Clerk to discuss maintenance of The Pound with Sally Duff.

2024/205 **PC MEETINGS REMOTE ACCESS CONSULTATION**

The Government has introduced proposals enabling remote access to council meetings and a consultation has been launched to allow councils and individuals to express their views. The council agreed that it should respond positively to the proposal, but also express its concern that there will be significant cost implications. It was suggested that Jim Brown be asked to estimate the cost of the appropriate equipment.

Actions: Clerk to respond to the remote meetings consultation.
Clerk to ask Jim Brown to estimate remote access equipment costs.

2024/206 **REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Bolton said that Long Wittenham Athletic Club is investigating the possibility of running a laser display set to music for next year's Bonfire Night. The council approved the idea in principal, awaiting more details.

2024/207 **ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS**

- **Bodkins Playground Fence**
Cllr Bolton had requested by email that consideration be given to enclosing the playground area at Bodkins with a fence at an approximate cost of £5,000. To be discussed at the meeting in December.
- **Defibrillator Training**
Cllr Rose suggested that with four defibrillators in the village, some training for residents might be appropriate. The South Central Ambulance Service will run a course for twenty people for £200. He will investigate running a trial course in the New Year. It was suggested that the course is advertised on the website and in The Bridge. Agreed.
- **Cllr Burton reported that resident Robert Calcutt had complained that rights of way around Wards Field had been blocked for the Village Bonfire Night at the beginning of November. It is unlikely that the event will run again, but the council noted that rights of way should not be blocked for any village events without the appropriate temporary traffic regulation orders in place.**



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2024/208 FINANCIAL REPORT

- Lloyd's Bank Charges
Lloyd's Bank has informed the council that from 14th January 2025 it will impose a £4.25 monthly charge.
- Precept 2025-26
The RFO will circulate a 2024-25 forecast and draft 2025-26 budget before the meeting in December so that councillors can set the Precept for 2025-26 at the meeting.
- Expenditure during October

02/10/2024	Rose Expenses (Lloyd's Card Reader Batteries)	£5.00
02/10/2024	Grant 021 Wittenham Warriors	£200.00
02/10/2024	Logs Unlimited Inv 240344	£1,364.57
02/10/2024	Elliff Expenses (Website Hosting & Domain renewal)	£47.78
07/10/2024	Rose Expenses (Fieldside Gate Key Cutting)	£10.00
07/10/2024	SLCC Inv MEM250713-1 (Membership)	£112.00
07/10/2024	Clear Inv LCO01596 (Insurance)	£668.07
15/10/2024	Bosley Expenses (Payroll)	£203.20
15/10/2024	Clerk's Salary September 2024	£345.15
23/10/2024	Grant 022 Oxfordshire South & Vale Citizens Advice	£350.00
30/10/2024	SODC Inv 10379911 (Dog Bins)	£515.23
30/10/2024	M Rainbow Inv 29102024 (Bulb Planting)	£500.00
	October Expenditure Total	£4,321.00

2024/209 ANY MATTERS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

None.

Meeting Closed at 9pm.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 19th December 2024

Signed:



Date:

19/12/24

APPENDIX A

District Councillor Report November 2024

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Every responsible authority (in our case the County Council) is required by law to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). SODC is a member of the Local Nature Partnership, to which this responsibility has been delegated, and there have been a number of workshops involving large

numbers of stakeholders over the past 18 months or so. The final draft LNRS has been available for public consultation **for 6 weeks from 15th October**. The link is here:

Oxfordshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) survey - phase 1 | Let's Talk Oxfordshire

Council tax on empty homes – possible changes

We are consulting about decreasing the time a home qualifies as empty for the purpose of the council tax premium. This is part of a policy approach to ensure homes are not left empty for long periods to help address the housing crisis. Please see the link below if you would like to respond, and the consultation ends on 26th November:

Proposed changes to the additional Council Tax charge for long-term empty properties - South Oxfordshire District Council - Join the conversation - South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse - Citizen Space

SODC has reviewed its Net Zero Targets

- **Review of the 2025 Operational Net Zero Target.** The Cabinet has adopted a revised operational net zero target of 2030. While we recognise the significant progress made in reducing the council's operational carbon emissions, these have reduced by 19 per cent since the council's Climate Action Plan baseline year of 2019/20 and by 52 per cent since Greenhouse Gas reporting commenced in 2009/10, there are still issues that mean we will not reach the (very ambitious) initial target of 2025.
- **Review of the 2030 District Net-Zero Carbon Target-** Cabinet has formally recognised that the aspirational target of being a net zero carbon district by 2030 cannot be met. Cabinet commits to a new but still ambitious target of 2045 for reaching net zero carbon for the district, and to work within our sphere of influence to accelerate this decarbonisation as much as possible, in particular by working in partnership to deliver the Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan.

We have joined **UK100 as part of our efforts to accelerate our work and address where we can, some of the barriers and challenges.**

Members of UK100 share best practice and details of successful projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move towards net zero.

The council has already made good progress – for example:

- buys electricity for its buildings (such as council offices and its arts centre) that is from 100 per cent renewable energy sources;
- has a programme of installing solar panels and air source heat pumps at its leisure centres in Didcot, Thame and Wheatley and its arts centre, Cornerstone, enabled by various funding sources including the council's budget, the government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and Swimming Pool Support Fund;
- has had 62 EV chargers installed at its car parks;
- has ordered an electric food truck for the waste collections fleet;
- has given grants for many community climate and nature recovery projects through its grants programme;
- has regularly lobbied government on climate change and nature recovery actions
- has supported cultural organisations with their climate change ambitions by supporting Green Arts Oxfordshire and its carbon literacy training programme.
- Has adopted a new waste strategy which includes objectives to reduce all waste and therefore impact on the environment'



Councillor Community Grant

There are only a few weeks left until the deadline for applications for the latest round of the Councillor Community Grant Scheme. All applications must be completed by midday **Friday 29 November**. Please get any applications in quickly, but do let me know first what you are planning! If you have any questions, email the Community Enablement Team.

Christmas highlights at Cornerstone

This December, Cornerstone Arts Centre is offering festive shows for everyone:

Hundred Watt Club (5 December): A cheeky, vintage-inspired burlesque and cabaret show with plenty of laughs, sparkle, and circus acts. Perfect for a memorable night out with friends — adults only!

Oxford Gospel Choir (7 December): Kick off Christmas with soul-stirring gospel and holiday tunes, supporting Camerados. Get ready to clap, sing, and celebrate.

An Elf Advent-ure (8 December): A sensory theatre experience for ages 0–3, as little ones join 'Elf' in a magical countdown to Christmas, full of festive sights and sounds.

Cinderella Pantomime (18–31 December): KD Theatre Productions presents Cinderella, a magical pantomime filled with comedy, enchanting characters, and lavish costumes. Don't miss the discounted Preview Night on 18 December!

Sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk / 01235 635566

APPENDIX B

Community Hub Development Progress Report

On Thursday 7th November Chris Brotherton (Director, Thomas Homes) met with Cllrs Rose and Brown to discuss progress with the planning approval for The Hub.

In the Spring SODC Planning Department gave approval in principle to the plans subject to the completion of legal agreements to secure all of the ancillary items associated with the development.

The S106 Agreement (Town and Country Planning Act) needs to secure all of the commitments by the various parties involved to make sure that everything is properly recorded and agreed. In this instance the S106 is a lot more more complex than usual as it involves so many parties and will also be the mechanism for the transfer of land between the various parties.

The key parties are:-

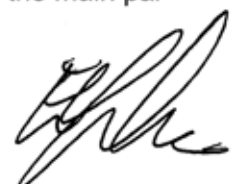
LWPC as the applicants for the development and owner of the Village Hall, Thomas Homes as our Agents and the Developer, OCC as the joint owners of the school, the Diocese as the other joint owners, and of course the site land owner. The PC will have the benefit of the planning consent once the S106 is settled and Thomas Homes hold the copyright of the plans for the development.

Cllrs Rose and Brown have been trying to get some progress on the S106 as it had stalled with OCC. It was originally drafted by SODC and sent to Thomas Homes and OCC for them to add their input.

Although we have been working with and had the support of numerous officers at OCC the S106 was held up as a new team of officers had become involved.

Cllr Rose has, on several occasions, asked Cllr Pete Sudbury to make representations on our behalf and Cllrs Rose and Brown and Chris Brotherton's Project Manager have all been writing to various contacts at OCC to try to move things along.

At last, early in November there was a round table meeting with all of the key parties and following an extensive discussion all of the outstanding issues with the S106 agreement were agreed. This should mean that the draft S106 can be completed in the next month or two. Once the main par-



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ties have reached a final draft it will then come to the PC and to the landowner's representatives for us to check we are happy with it. Should we have any issues these will be dealt with by our Solicitor, Steve Stratton, whom we appointed last year to look after the PC interests.

OCC Property and Legal Officers now have to write a report to their lead Councillors to finalise all of the agreements. This should happen early in the New Year.

Completing the S106 Agreement will enable SODC to give us Planning Consent.

However there are still some key legal issues to be dealt with between us as developers and OCC as the Highway Authority. We will need a S278 agreement for the adoption of the new roads on the development and also a S38 Agreement (both Highways Act 1980) for all the highway works on the existing Highway mainly the new roundabout and access road.

Chris Brotherton is planning to build a "haul road" to gain access to the site from the gateway by the unsurfaced lay-by on Didcot Road. This will enable construction of the site to commence whilst the roundabout and access road are still under construction. This will reduce the overall the time it takes to complete the works.

Chris Brotherton and his partner are due to retire in the near future. Although they will continue to oversee the project they are currently negotiating with other companies, one of whom will undertake the actual construction work once full planning permission is achieved. As everything that affects the PC will be covered by the Planning Permission which is in our in our name and the associated S106 agreement which will legally bind everyone to the same requirements we can expect the development to be built as approved.

Cllr Steve Brown - Chairman

Cllr Peter Rose - Lead for Hub and NDP

14th November 2024

