

# HARPSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the AGM and Council Meeting held at Harpsden Village Hall

on

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2014

Present:	Mr Kester George (KG)	Chairman
	Mr Malcolm Plews (MP)	
	Mrs Odette Moss (OM)	
	Mr Rob Simister (RS)	SODC Councillor
In attendance:	Mrs Sarah Tipple (ST)	Clerk
	Mr Tony Wright (TW)	Resident
	Mrs Sarah Conlan	Planning Director, Crest Nicholson Homes

**2455 Welcomes and apologies:** There were apologies from Cllr Robin Dorkings (RD), Cllr Nick Young (NY), Cllr David Bartholomew (DB) and one resident, Ben Wilson.

**2456 Election of Chairman:** As this was the first meeting of the new Council year, KG handed over the Chair to MP, who proposed that KG should remain as Chairman. OM seconded the proposal and after a unanimous show of hands in favour, KG resumed the Chair. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office form was duly signed by KG and countersigned by ST.

**2457 Election of Deputy Chairman:** OM proposed MP as Deputy Chairman, KG seconded the proposal and upon a unanimous show of hands in favour, MP resumed the position of Deputy Chairman. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office form was duly signed by MP and countersigned by ST.

**2458 Declarations of interests:** KG, OM and RS in respect of their houses in Harpsden.

**2459 Minutes of 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014:** The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record.

**2460 Matters arising:**

**2444: Community Governance Review:** Tony Wright, a local resident, and KG had written to Mr Buckle of SODC, to reiterate Harpsden's claim to include the whole of Woodlands Road within the parish of Harpsden. It was agreed that Henley's claim to include Highlands Farm within its parish boundary was premature as the outcome of the Neighbourhood Plan was still uncertain.

**2448: AONB:** KG explained that Eye and Dunsden had put in a claim to include the gravel pits within the AONB, Harpsden had put in a claim to include the north bank of the Harpsden Valley and to extend the AONB from Harpsden Woods to the river through Sheephouse Farm. Shiplake, meanwhile, was claiming all the land along the river including land owned by Mr Schwarzenbach. The Chairman of Eye and Dunsden Parish Council was coordinating these claims to extend the AONB.

**2461 Oxfordshire County Councillor's Report**

DB had sent his report by email to ST who would circulate it to Councillors after the meeting. In matters specific to Harpsden, RS and John Tilney, a local resident, had advised DB that the problem of flooding along the valley road had still not been fixed. The problem had recently become particularly severe and had resulted in the road being covered in flint and stones and the base around a telegraph pole being eroded away. DB had agreed to inform the Area Steward who would advise the drainage team. DB's full report is attached to these minutes at Appendix 1.

**2462 South Oxfordshire District Councillor's Report:** RS explained that Oxfordshire's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) had been extended to 2031 and one of

its key tenets was the duty of neighbouring District Councils to cooperate with Oxfordshire if it could not fulfil its housing needs. RS further explained that the 5% predicted growth in SODC's population over the next few years, together with Oxfordshire's predicted 13% growth, may necessitate some modification to the number of new houses identified in SODC's Core Strategy but he was unsure how these potentially revised numbers (upwards or downwards) would impact the Neighbourhood Plan. He stressed, however, that SODC would robustly defend its position with regard to any requirement to assist neighbouring District Councils.

**2463 Neighbourhood Plan (NP)**

ST gave KG, MP and OM sufficient copies of the Henley Magazine, which contained a double page spread on the public consultation on the draft NP, to distribute to their neighbours in Harpsden Woods, Northfield Avenue, Manor Wood Gate, Gillotts Lane and Gillotts Hill. She would deliver the remainder. KG stressed the importance of ensuring all Harpsden parishioners had the opportunity to comment on the draft NP. ST had also posted the document on the website. KG asked ST to draft a reply to the consultation on behalf of Harpsden Parish Council, which would include the following points: i) to verify that the 60 dwellings identified at Highlands Farm as Mixed Use C2 would definitely count towards the 400/450 target; ii) that the traffic report Crest Homes would be producing in conjunction with OCC once the planning application had been submitted, would be studied in detail iii) to question Crest Homes's suggestion that traffic generated by 190 dwellings at Highlands Farm would not necessitate any improvements to Greys Road; iv) to ascertain what Crest Homes's plans were with regards to improvements on Gillotts Lane and to insist that the Lane be protected from an increase in traffic from the top; and v) to ask how the school catchment areas would be redrawn to reflect the additional requirement for primary school places generated by the Highlands Farm development. KG urged Councillors to respond to the consultation as individuals as well.

**2464 Review of Adequacy of Insurance prior to Renewal:** ST had previously circulated by email a comparison of three insurance quotes: to renew with AON at a cost of £406.34, to take out a new policy with Aviva at £278.95 or with Zurich Municipal at £273.76 on a 3 year Long Term Agreement. The level of cover provided by each insurer was similar in most categories, except for the £12million cover provided by Zurich for Officials Indemnity, which compared with £500,000 and £250,000 with the other two. With Public Liability cover at £12million, Employers Liability at £10 million and Personal Accident, Libel and Slander, Legal Expenses and Money cover all being roughly the same as with the existing insurers, it was unanimously agreed that the enhanced cover provided by Zurich, and at a significantly lower cost than the existing insurers, was more than adequate for Harpsden Parish Council's needs. ST would complete the necessary paperwork and payment.

**2465 Approval of Annual Return and Annual Governance Statement:** ST circulated to each Councillor a copy of Section 1 and Section 2 of the Annual Return, noting that the accounting statement reflected the figures approved at the APM. The precept had remained the same, the Clerks' salary had been increased for the duration of the NP but would return to its previous level from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and other expenditure had decreased slightly year on year. Other income had increased due to the two grant payments received from OCC for the traffic survey and the new noticeboard. Councillors read the Annual Governance Statement in Section 2 and agreed that the Parish Council had:

- Prepared its accounting statements in the way prescribed by law
- Made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge
- Only done things it had the legal power to do and had conformed to codes of practice and standards in the way it had done so

- During the year given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the council's accounts
- Considered the financial and other risks it faced and had dealt with them properly
- Arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls met the needs of the Council
- Responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit
- Disclosed everything it should have done about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end

MP proposed and OM seconded approving the accounting statements for 2013-14 and the Annual Governance Statement. Following a unanimous show of hands the documents were approved by a resolution of Council and signed by KG and ST.

**2466 Electronic PAYE payments and possible revision of two signature rule:** ST pointed out to Councillors that there was now a requirement to make payments of PAYE/NIC and VAT to HMRC electronically. As Harpsden Parish Council did not have an internet banking facility, there could be a bank charge when the signed cheque was presented to the bank in order to have the bank make an electronic BACS payment on their behalf. She further explained that a Legislative Reform Order, which repealed s. 150(5) of the 1972 Local Government Act, would allow larger councils to make electronic payments to staff and would require only one signature. She suggested that as Harpsden was such a small parish council, the requirement for two councillors' signatures should remain in order to demonstrate robust and effective controls over expenditure and payment systems and this was agreed unanimously.

**2467 Planning Matters**

**2467.i SODC Decisions**

**TPO 13S12**

Thames Farm along boundary with A4155 and the boundary with Harpsden Woods alongside the bridle path known as Harpsden Bridleway

**TPO confirmed on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

**P14/S0466/FUL**

Land at Highlands Farm

Erection of temporary structures for filming purposes

**Temporary permission granted: expires 26<sup>th</sup> May 2014**

**2467.ii Outstanding Applications and Appeals**

**P14/S0809/HH**

Woodhill, Harpsden Woods, Harpsden, RG9 4AF

Replacement two-storey side extension on existing extension footprint

**NO OBJECTION**

**P14/S1351/HH**

Kings Farm, Kings Farm Lane, Harpsden, RG9 4JG

Two-storey rear extension

**NO OBJECTION**

**P14/S1309/HH**

Ash Farm, Upper Bolney Road, Harpsden, RG9 4AQ

Alterations and extensions to dwelling including raising link roof, conversion of garage to habitable location, new dormer windows and rooflights, alterations to the roof and

single storey extension. Demolition and replacement of existing outbuilding and erection on new carport and log store to the western side of the house

**KG and MP agreed to visit the site and talk to Richard Wilson who owned Upper Bolney House**

**Action: KG and MP**

**APP/Q3115/A/14/2217931**

Thames Farm, Reading Road, Shiplake, RG9 3PH

Outline application for up to 110 dwellings

Tony Wright wanted to know whether the 110 proposed houses at Thames Farm would count towards the 400/450 being allocated to Henley and Harpsden or if they would be in addition to this number. He feared that if developers were to put in applications of this size whilst the NP was still being drafted and indeed once it had been adopted following a referendum, it would damage the integrity of the NP. He argued that the NP had been written to prevent large developments from happening in an uncoordinated way and wanted clarification from Nexus Planning, the consultants employed by the NP Governance Committee, that this was indeed the case. KG had already received an email from Nexus stating that they considered it highly unlikely that the application would receive approval from the Secretary of State at appeal as the site was outside the Core Strategy. NP working groups had proved that sufficient brownfield sites for the 400 houses existed in Henley and Harpsden which met the requirements of the Core Strategy. The remaining 50 houses, if required, had been allocated by the draft NP to Gillotts Academy, which although a greenfield site, complied with the Core Strategy's requirement to support the local school. KG would write on behalf of the Parish Council to object to the appeal.

**Action: KG.**

**2468 Financial Matters**

**2468.i Bank Balances and Reconciliations**

Community Account: £915 – the £25 donation to V. Rubinstein's charity had not yet been cashed and ST had not yet purchased the new noticeboard with the grant money of £890 received from OCC

Business Saver Account: £4,878.34

ST had previously circulated by email the bank reconciliations for the two months to 17<sup>th</sup> April 2014 for the Community and Business Saver Accounts and both were now approved by Councillors and signed by the Chairman. They are attached to the minutes at Appendix 2 and 3.

**2468.ii Approval of Payments**

ST tabled the following payments for approval:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Power</u>
CPRE annual subscription	£36.00	Section 137
Clerk's salary	£781.57	
Clerk's PAYE	£165.00	
Insurance renewal	£273.76	

The payments were authorised by a resolution of the Council and initialled by the Chairman and are attached at Appendix 4. The Section 137 payment to the CPRE was proposed by Cllr Plews, seconded by Cllr Moss and carried unanimously.

**2468.iii Budget vs Actual Expenditure:** This was circulated by ST and approved by Council and is attached to these minutes at Appendix 5.

**2469 AOB**

MP pointed out that the proposed boundary change to move houses in Bolney Road, Manor Wood Gate and Northfield Avenue from Harpsden Parish into Shiplake Parish, might disenfranchise the residents of those houses when it came to voting in the NP referendum. KG agreed to seek advice from Mr Buckle at SODC. **Action: KG**

**2470 Dates of next meetings:**

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2014 7.45pm

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014 7.45pm

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2104 7.45pm

**Approved:..... Date: 28<sup>th</sup> July 2014**  
**Kester George, Chairman**