

# HARPSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at Harpsden Village Hall on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016

Present: Cllr Kester George (KG) Chairman  
Cllr Malcolm Plews (MP)  
Cllr Robin Dorkings (RD)  
Cllr Tony Wright (TW)  
Cllr Catherine Rubinstein (CR)  
Cllr David Bartholomew (DB) OCC Councillor  
Cllr Paul Harrison (PH) SODC Councillor

In attendance: Mrs Sarah Tipple (ST) Clerk

6 parishioners from Gillotts Lane  
Brian Marsh from Red Hatch, Woodlands Road

**2602 Welcomes and Apologies:** There were no apologies.

**2603 Declarations of pecuniary interests and/or requests for dispensations from Members regarding any item on this agenda:** There were none.

**2604 Approval of Minutes of last Council Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016:** The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record.

**2605 Matters arising:**  
There were none.

**2606 Oxfordshire County Councillor's Report:** David Bartholomew's full report is attached to these minutes at Appendix 1. OCC had received details of future grant funding from central Government and the levels were even worse than had been feared. OCC would have to make a total of £69m of additional savings, although the government had announced transitional funding of £9m across two financial years to ease the process. OCC had called for a debate on a single Unitary Council for the whole county and had been surprised by the District Councils' and Oxford City Council's call for the abolition of OCC and the establishment of four district unitary councils, two of which would include District Councils from other counties. DB was in favour of three unitary councils, one in the south, one in the north and one for Oxford City. The Parish Council unanimously supported DB's suggestion. It also agreed with DB's opinion that one combined report on behalf of the County and District Councils, which explored all the options in the unitary debate, would suffice. With regards to the third Reading Bridge, OCC and SODC had previously agreed to contribute funds to a traffic modelling study to remain part of the process, which had now become known as a 'Strategic Outline Business Case.' OCC had made it clear that it did not inherently support the scheme and would await the results of this stage of the process before deciding whether to support a full business case. The proposed four-lane third bridge would link the end of the A329M at Thames Valley Park with the crossroads of the A4155 and Caversham Park Road, spanning the River Thames and the Redgrave and Pinsent Rowing Lake. In

matters more specific to Harpsden, DB had supported the PC's view that the land at Sheephouse Farm was inappropriate for industrial development, particularly as the former Wyevale Garden Centre site was available nearby. He also expressed his disappointment that an application to build two houses where one currently stood at Dulverton on the A4155 had been submitted.

**2607 South Oxfordshire District Councillor's Report:** Paul Harrison's full report is attached to these minutes at Appendix 2. He reported that Oxfordshire's District Councils were evaluating the options for either three or four new local unitary councils, as DB had mentioned earlier on, to replace the current County and District Councils. Two of these would include councils from other counties, namely Cotswold District Council in the west of the county and South Northamptonshire Council in the north. The Councils were commissioning independent experts to work with them and other stakeholders to produce detailed plans and costings. Their proposals would be considered by each of the District Councils prior to public consultation in the summer. PH reminded Councillors that information on rubbish collections was available at [www.morerecycling.co.uk](http://www.morerecycling.co.uk) or on the 'Binfo' app for I-phones. PH was pleased that residents of Henley and Harpsden had voted in favour of the joint Neighbourhood Plan. Whilst he still did not know the date of the Thames Farm appeal court hearing, PH would let the PC know of the date of the Bremont Watch application committee hearing as it would certainly help the PC's case against the application if it was represented.

**2608 Neighbourhood Plan (NP)** The NP referendum had taken place on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March. Residents of Henley and Harpsden had voted overwhelmingly in favour of adopting the NP by a majority of about 82%. The turnout had been just over 28%.

**2609 Gillotts Lane:** It was agreed that Gillotts Lane had become a crucial issue in the light of the Highlands Farm development. David Chenery (DC), on behalf of the Gillotts Lane Residents' Association, thanked those Parish Councillors who had walked up Gillotts Lane with the residents on 4<sup>th</sup> March. He made the following points:

- to widen the lane by purchasing a slice of land from Lucy's Farm at the southern end
- to create passing places where possible and to tarmac over the passing places which had naturally developed over time
- to install kerbing along the residential side of the lane to protect property and land
- to install speed bumps along the lane. Despite having been told that street lights were necessary for speed bumps to be installed, DC could cite several examples in the area where this was not the case.

Malcolm Plews (MP) had received a letter from Vectos, the traffic consultants to Crest Nicholson, which stated that passing places could indeed be constructed. These would control the traffic system up and down the hill, but they would not control the speed. This could be done by chicanes. Vectos would be carrying out a full topographical survey to establish where best to install the passing places. They had also suggested a 'gated' entrance at either end of the lane which would prioritise traffic in one direction. Speed bumps were not, in their opinion, appropriate and would not be allowed by OCC. Vectos said that kerbing could be installed, although this would be very expensive as the whole road would need resurfacing in order to bed the stones in properly and kerbing could make the lane look too 'urban'. Vectos suggested wooden posts instead alongside each property, which would complement the rural nature of the lane.

Eileen Bottjer (EB), another Gillotts Lane resident, expressed concern that about 3' of grass verge belonging to her property had been eroded by vehicles and she would

like that to be reinstated before putting in any posts. She also requested that construction vehicles had to be prevented from using the lane during the building phase.

Odette Moss wondered if anything could be done about the apparently contradictory speed signs at the end of Sheephouse Lane.

Other suggestions were a restriction on the movement of HGVs along the lane, a sign saying 'Access Only' and a 20mph speed limit.

DC said he would like to be informed when the topographical survey was going to be undertaken.

KG assured the residents that the PC would do its utmost to insist that substantial improvements to Gillotts Lane should be made if housing were to go ahead at Highlands Farm, as well as improvements to the valley road and to Sheephouse Lane.

**2610 Manorial Waste and the track past Redhatch Lodge:** the owners of Red Hatch Lodge (RHL) had installed a gate at either end of the track running from Woodlands Road round Harpsden Wood to the entrance to their house, allegedly to keep their children safe. The gates could still be opened by the general public by means of push-buttons, although this was not obvious. The solicitor to Brian Marsh, the owner of Red Hatch, had said that the owners of RHL owned the freehold to the land but not the public right of way along it. The fear was that the gates threatened to close the track to public access after ten years, despite the fact that the track had been continually used by walkers for several decades, and appeared on old maps, such as the tithe map of 1842. A further issue had arisen as the gate at the RHL end of the track had been installed on a piece of 'manorial waste', which did not belong to RHL. Manorial waste was land that had been left unsold when the original Harpsden Court Estate had been sold off and in effect, was not owned by anyone. It was agreed that KG would check if the footpath was actually listed on the OCC's footpath database and that he would ask the Phillimore Trust about the ownership and legal status of the track, as they had sold the wood to the Woodland Trust some twenty years ago, and may have sold some portion of the land and/or the track to RHL. **Action: KG**

**2611 Review of Risk Assessment and Review of Financial and Non-Financial Controls:** ST had previously circulated this document and highlighted the main changes and actions since its approval and adoption in November 2012 and its review in March 2015. KG proposed approving the review, which was seconded by MP. After a unanimous show of hands, it was resolved to approve the Review document.

## **2612 Planning Matters**

### **2612.i SODC Decisions**

#### **P15/S3491/HH**

Yew Tree Cottage, Harpsden Bottom RG9 4HS

Erection of oak framed garage

**Planning permission granted**

#### **P15/S3874/HH**

Crowsley Park Lodge, Harpsden Bottom, RG9 4JD

Erection of single storey and 2 storey side extensions with alterations to fenestrations

**Planning permission granted**

**P15/S3869/LB**

Hunts Farm Cottage, Harpsden Bottom, RG9 4HY

Replace windows, remove existing wall and 1950s stud partition and low ceiling from existing kitchen. Paint windows, doors, soffits and fascias. Insert rooflight in existing roof, rebed existing ridge and hip tiles, repair existing roof.

**Planning permission granted**

**2612.ii Outstanding Applications and Appeals:**

**P15/S3812/HH**

Hunts Farm Cottage, Harpsden Bottom, RG9 4HY

Construction of patio at side and rear of existing house including retaining wall structure and garden steps.

**No objection.**

**P16/S0077/O**

Highlands Farm, Highlands Lane, Rotherfield Greys, RG9 4PR

Outline planning application to demolish existing buildings and develop up to 170 dwellings along with up to 2,000m<sup>2</sup> employment space, a Community Hub, public open space, sustainable urban drainage, earthworks, structural planting, substations and associated infrastructure

**The parish council had insisted on a planning condition being that any CIL money would be used to make improvements to Gillotts Lane.**

**P16/SO642/FUL**

**Land at Sheephouse Farm, Harpsden RG9 4HF**

Demolition of existing buildings, alterations to vehicular access to Reading Road, construction of new buildings for use by Bremont Watch Company, new access drive, car parking and landscaping.

**Whilst the Council felt the design had much to commend it and wanted to support the business itself, it objected to the development at this site on the basis that this was not land designated for employment in the NP. The Wyevale Garden Centre site would be much more suitable. Tony Wright expressed grave concerns over the three 'uncontrolled' crossing points across the A4155 and the narrowness of the pathway which could result in pedestrians being hit if passing traffic and/or cyclists were forced into the side by oncoming traffic. Moreover, Bremont was proposing a new bus stop just before the allotments, with the bus having to stop in the middle of the road, forcing traffic to queue up behind it. He also had concerns about the construction of a third access road onto the already busy A4155.**

**P16/S0724/FUL**

Hunts Farm Cottage, Harpsden Bottom, RG9 4HY

Change of land use designation from agricultural to residential (C3). Extension to existing garden of Hunts Farm Cottage.

**The Council noted Richard Bossons's strong objection to this application.**

**P16/S0863/FUL**

Harpsden Village Hall, Harpsden RG9 4HH

Addition of a 2 bedroom flat as a first floor extension to Harpsden Village Hall

**No objection**

**Public Footpath going through land at Cedars, Upper Bolney Road.**

The owner of Cedars, who also owned Upper Bolney Lodge directly opposite, wanted to move the footpath that ran through its garden, to the field owned by Upper Bolney. The Council could see no objection to this sensible proposal, which would increase the size of the garden at Cedars, and therefore its value. KG would let the footpaths authority know. **Action: KG**

**2613 Financial Matters**

**2613.i Bank Balances and Reconciliations**

Community Account: £281.52

Business Saver Account: £4,496.62

ST had previously circulated by email the bank reconciliations for the 2 months to 19<sup>th</sup> February 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 3 and 4.

**2613.ii Approval of Payments**

ST tabled the following payments for approval:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Power</u>
Clerk's salary and expenses	£711.27	
Clerk's PAYE	£165.00	

The payments were authorised by a resolution of the Council and signed by the Chairman and are attached at Appendix 5.

**2613.iii Budget vs Actual Expenditure:** This was circulated by ST and approved by Council and is attached to these minutes at Appendix 6.

**2613.iv Review of Asset Register:** This was circulated by ST and approved by Council and is attached to these minutes at Appendix 7.

**2614 Plans for APM:** The Golf Club had accepted MP's invitation to present the Club's proposals and plans to move the Club House from its current location to the top of Chalk Hill at Harpsden's APM. It was agreed that it would be helpful if all Councillors had seen the proposals prior to the APM. **Action: MP to arrange with Golf Club and Councillors.** ST would prepare and print the APM flier and put the advert in the local paper. **Action: ST**

**2615 AOB:** KG wondered if the PC would pay to frame the tithe map of Harpsden from 1842 and hang it in the committee room. It was agreed that this was an excellent idea. ST would establish if the grant of £288 from SODC to celebrate the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday could be put towards this type of venture. **Action: ST and KG**

**2616 Dates of next meetings:**

APM - Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016 7pm

AGM and Council Meeting: Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016 7.45pm

Council Meeting: Monday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2016 7.45pm

Council Meeting: Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016 7.45pm

Council Meeting: Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016 7.45pm

**Approved:..... Date: 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

**Kester George, Chairman**