

## HARPSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held In Harpsden Parish Hall on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7.45 pm

Present:	Cllr Kester George (KG)	Chairman
	Cllr Dominic Day (DD)	Parish Councillor
	Cllr Catherine Rubinstein (CR)	Parish Councillor
	Cllr Nick Young (NY)	Parish Councillor
In attendance:		
	Anne Marie Scanlon (AMS)	Clerk
	Cllr David Bartholomew (DB)	OCC
	Cllr Leigh Rawlings (LR)	SODC
	Crispin Comonte (CC)	Parishioner
	Sebastian Brock (SB)	Parishioner

#### **5013 Apologies for absence**

Cllr Matt Leeman.

#### **5014 Co-option of Councillor Nick Young**

Nick Young was proposed by CR and seconded by KG. Council voted to co-opt Mr Young onto HPC. NY signed his Declaration of Office and agreed to submit his Register of Interests form as soon as possible.

**ACTION** NY to return Register of Interests form to the Clerk who will forward it to SODC.

#### **5015 Declarations of pecuniary interests and/or requests for dispensations from Members regarding any item on this agenda:** There were none.

#### **5016 Approval of Minutes of last Council Meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024**

CR pointed out a typo in the final version of the minutes with minute 5011 appearing twice. The Clerk will amend the minutes to remove the typo and post the corrected version on the website. With this correction the minutes were approved.

#### **5017 Oxfordshire County Council Report:** attached at Appendix (i)

DB presented his general report which had already been circulated.

In matters specific to Harpsden DB noted the following.

##### **(i) Gillotts Lane Drainage Works**

At the request of the Chair DB had asked OCC officer Daniel Depp (DDp) for clarification of what works were proposed and how the costs would be met. He was awaiting a response but saw that the TTRO had already been issued (see **5017 (ii)**).

KG said he and DD had visited each household on Gillotts Lane and at least one homeowner had said that he would not welcome 'bunds' on the Lane. As far as KG knew, advisors in DDp's department had also advised against their use. DD said that HPC had not been

consulted and had not agreed to any of the proposed work on Gillotts Lane and asked DB if the Council would be required to pay for it. DB said that as there was no consultation and no plans had been agreed that HPC would not have to pay for any work undertaken by OCC.

**(ii) Distribution S-14(2) Notice – T13060 Gillotts Lane.**

DB said there would be a temporary road closure on Gillotts Lane to install drainage bunds across driveways and reprofile patching works. The temporary closure would be in place from 4<sup>th</sup> April and the anticipated completion date would be 5<sup>th</sup> April. The road closure would be in force from 7.30am to 5pm.

**(iii) Distribution S-14 (1) Notice – T13061 – Chalk Hill junction.**

DB said that there would be a temporary road closure at the junction of the unnamed road, running through Mays Green and Chalk Hill for work to improve road drainage. The closure would be from 25<sup>th</sup> March for an estimated 10 days and would be in effect daily from 7.30am to 5pm.

**(iv) Village Gates**

DB said he was ready to assist in the process of purchasing Village Gates when required.

**5018 South Oxfordshire District Councillors Report** Attached Appendix (ii)

LR had sent his report in advance.

- (i) Tesco Henley had placed a series of speed bumps around the car park which would hopefully resolve the anti-social behaviour that had been occurring there.
- (ii) The Local Plan consultation had closed.
- (iii) Council charges for Brown Bins would be changing to reflect the financial year – from April to March. Some residents would need to pay a part year invoice before going on to the new standardised year.

CR asked LR how long it would take to decide the AONB application.

LR said that the consideration process would continue far into 2025.

Once that process was completed the findings would have to go to the Secretary of State for approval.

CR said that SODC had lent out infrared cameras to parishioners to gauge heat loss from their homes. She had heard from many parishioners that it was a great initiative, and everyone would like to do it again next year.

**5019 Planning Matters:** (Appendix iii)

The complete Planning Report is attached and available on the website.

The Council received two presentations from Applicants.

**(i) P24/S0408/FUL**

**Crossways Woodlands Road, Harpsden RG9 4AA**

Construction of a self-build detached dwelling and associated garage and access on land to the rear of Crossways, Woodlands Road. (vehicle tracking shown on

amended and additional plans received 20th February 2024 and contaminated land questionnaire submitted 29th February 2024).

SB the owner of Crossways, had applied to do a self-build in the land around the property. Council did not support the Planning Application as they did not wish to see a precedent set for building in gardens on Woodlands Road that would undermine the rural character of the area.

(ii) **P23/S0191/FUL**

**The Orchard, Upper Bolney Road, Harpsden RG9 4AQ**

Replacement of existing 5 bed bungalow dwellinghouse with new dwellinghouse including new drainage strategy.

CC the owner of the property presented his plans in the hope of getting support for his application.

The Council were concerned about the use of zinc for the roof as it gave the building a harsh appearance that was not in keeping with surrounding homes. CC explained that it was chosen because a traditional roof would not be able to support the Solar Panels they wished to use. These were smaller, thinner, and less obtrusive than most UV Panels. CC said he would use slate to soften the appearance of the upper roof and that trees along the border of the property and proposed high hedges would help mitigate the stark appearance of the roof. Despite reservations the Council resolved not to oppose the application provided that CC changed the roof material as proposed.

**5020 Parish Matters:**

(i) **APM**

Council agreed that there had been no interest from parishioners in attending the Annual Parish Meeting. KG said he would write his annual report and put it on the HPC website. Council agreed that if parishioners wanted to have a meeting about some specific concern, they would try to facilitate it.

(ii) **Village Gates**

This item was deferred until the next meeting in May.

(iii) **AONB Extension**

In addition to comments by LR during the presentation of his report KG, who had attended most of the JPAG meetings, said that the bid for extending the AONB had gone as well as could be hoped. He said that HPC had an outstanding payment due for the preparation of the report. Half had been paid and the second half would be paid in the financial year 2024/25.

**5021 Financial Matters**

**5021.i. Bank Balances and Reconciliations** (attached at Appendix iv a & iv b)

Community Account:	£1,414.85
Business Saver Account:	£103,415.58
<b><u>Total of both accounts' a/o 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024</u></b>	<b><u>£ 104,830.13</u></b>

AMS had previously circulated by email the bank reconciliations for the 2 months to 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024 for the Community and Business Saver Accounts (attached appendix 4b and 4c).

The bank reconciliations noted the following income.

VAT refund (financial year 2022/23)	£6,984.22
CCLA Interest January 2024	£1,790.64
CCLA Interest February 2024	£1,790.02

Expenditure for the two-month period was as follows.

Clerk's Salary for 2 months	£890.34
John Hodges Trust Annual Rent	£400.00
Luke Hooker Drainage	£437.50 (CIL)
Chiltern Society Annual Membership	£30.00

Both bank reconciliations were accepted and approved by Councillors and signed by the Chairman. The Clerk retains the permission of the Council to transfer all funds in excess of £100 from the Community Account to the Business Saver Account.

**5021.ii Approval of Payments** (attached iv c)

AMS had previously circulated the schedule of payments for March. The following payments were approved.

OALC Membership	£168.00
Luke Hooker Drainage	£280.00 CIL
Moore External Audit	£1008.00 CIL
Henley Town Council	£2229.50 CIL

*A payment on a fifth invoice, not included in the schedule of payments circulated, as it arrived on the date of the meeting was also approved for payment.*

Netwise Annual Fee	£528.00
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**5021.iii Review of Budget vs Actual Spend** (appendix iv d)

AMS had circulated the Budget vs Actual Spend prior to the meeting and it was accepted by the Council.

**5021. iv To approve payment of all annual donations at the Clerk's discretion during the financial year 2024-25**

Council agreed and approved immediate payment of monthly invoices from Luke Hooker for drainage works.

**5021. v Approval of CIL Reconciliation and consideration of use of CIL money**

**(i) CIL Reconciliation**

AMS had circulated the CIL reconciliation (appendix iv e) for March prior to the meeting and it was accepted by the Council.

**(ii) Consideration of a request from HTC to donate a financial contribution of £10,000 donation the Highland Park bus service.**

HTC wanted to extend the bus service from three days to five. HPC noted that the bus service runs after 9am and stops at lunchtime, meaning it was not helpful to parents of school children or to adults who wished to commute to work.

**ACTION.** Clerk to contact HTC to enquire whether the bus service could run earlier to enable working adults and school children to commute into town.

**(iii) Drainage**

As stated in **5021**, iv agreed to pay LH invoices monthly after approval by the Chair. KG would continue to work with LH in deciding which areas needed clearing.

HPC all agreed that LH’s work to date had been very beneficial to residents and road users.

CR said that the Harp was very flooded and perhaps LH should look and see if the drainage pipes were blocked.

Gillotts Lane drainage. KG was still waiting for DDp to get back to him about remedial works and that HPC would like to know if putting a soakaway at the top of the footpath above Garden Cottage had been considered.

**ACTION** KG to ask LH to investigate drainage from the Harp.

**5022 Review of External Audit**

AMS had previously circulated the External Audit and had posted it on the HPC website. Council.

The report was accepted by the Council and noted that the Clerk, who was the RFO, felt more confident about completing the AGAR in the coming year with the support of the new Internal Auditor, who had already addressed some of the ongoing issues as noted in this report.

**5023 Dates of next meetings:**

- 20<sup>th</sup> May
- 15<sup>th</sup> July
- 16<sup>th</sup> September
- 18<sup>th</sup> November

**Approved:** .....  
**Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
**Kester George, Chairman**