

# HARPSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held In Harpsden Parish Hall on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 7.45 pm

Present:	Cllr Kester George (KG)	Chairman
	Cllr Catherine Rubinstein (CR)	Parish Councillor
	Cllr Dominic Day (DD)	Parish Councillor
	Cllr Matt Leeman (ML)	Parish Councillor
	Cllr Matt Phillips (MP)	Parish Councillor
In attendance:	Cllr Leigh Rawlings (LR)	SODC
	Cllr David Bartholomew (DB)	OCC & SODC
	Anne Marie Scanlon (AMS)	Clerk

### **4007 Apology for Absence:**

There were none.

**4008 Declarations of pecuniary interests and/or requests for dispensations from Members regarding any item on this agenda:** There were none. Councillors completed and signed the new Declarations in accordance with SODC guidance.

### **4009 Acceptance of the Civility & Respect Pledge**

The Civility & Respect Pledge was accepted and signed.

### **4010 Acceptance of the New Code of Conduct**

The new Code of Conduct was accepted by the Council.

### **4011 Approval of Minutes of last Council Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022:**

The minutes were approved.

### **4012 Oxfordshire County Council Report:** (attached at Appendix 1)

DB presented his general report (attached) for OCC and then addressed matters specific to Harpsden.

#### **(i) UNNAMED ROAD LINKING A4155 TO HARPSDEN WAY (SHEEPHOUSE LANE)**

DB confirmed that the improvement works would take place from 28 November 2022 up to and including 07 December 2022. A Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) would implement the temporary closure and “No Waiting” restriction. This would be a 24-hour road closure with access being maintained for emergency service vehicles and for those frontages within the closure area, subject to the progress of the works and liaison with the works supervisor.

DB said progress was being made on officially changing the road name from ‘Unnamed road’ to ‘Sheephouse Lane’ and full instructions on the process were contained in the email from Simon Turner at SODC sent 16 September 2022.

- (ii) [P21/S4616/FUL](#) ERECTION OF 11 DWELLINGS AT REAR OF CROSSWAYS**  
The planning inspector had heavily criticised SODC for failing to supply up to date land supply figures and had allowed the appeal.
- (iii) P21/S4271/RM WYEVALE 40 DWELLINGS**  
An amended RM application addressing the issues previously raised had been submitted. DB said he was supportive of the proposals with the exception of extending the 30mph speed limit towards Henley.
- (iv) P21/S5382/FUL WYEVALE 55 DWELLINGS**  
DB said he had been assured last April that the application was going to be refused, SODC had still not issued the refusal notice and DB was unable to get an explanation as to why.
- (v) P17/S3119/FUL BARN CONVERSION AT THAMES FARM**  
Work at the site should have commenced in April to avoid the planning permission lapsing. The SODC view was that work had not begun but the developer was challenging this view.
- (vi) P20/S2808/DIS: THAMES FARM**  
DB and LR had met with the SODC Deputy Chief Executive and Taylor Wimpey (TW) on 8<sup>th</sup> August to discuss site tidying and maintenance, and proposals for tree replanting. TW undertook to investigate the situation and had agreed to respond by 22<sup>nd</sup> August.  
TW had not responded by the agreed date and cited ‘unexpected leave’ as the reason. TW had said they would respond by 2<sup>nd</sup> September and again had failed to meet their own deadline. TW responded on 6<sup>th</sup> September and had said that they could not undertake any tree replanting until the ground stabilisation had been completed. DB and LR had challenged TW’s assertion that it needed to be.

In discussion Councillors questioned whether Sheephouse Lane would need a sign. DB said that a sign would not be urbanising and would be helpful for drivers. The Council asked if they could choose the sign regarding design. DB said it was doubtful, but he would enquire. ML said he objected to any signage as it was unsightly in a rural setting, unnecessary with SatNavs etc and therefore he considered it a waste of money.

Regarding the Crossways Appeal KG said it was very disappointing that the DC had been found to be out of land supply twice running. He said that HPC and HTC had met the land supply target imposed on them and the decision had been made to grant planning permission to the developers on grounds that were irrelevant to Harpsden and Henley. MP asked what the issue with land supply had been. LR explained that the evidence was obtained from developers and that while that did not constitute a guarantee it was the only source of evidence. LR and DB agreed that the planning system was deeply flawed.

CR said that it would be logical that if the new figures were delayed then the previous figures should have been used. DB said that there should be a Judicial Review as the figures on land supply had been available. DB said that the DC would not fund a JR and the only way it could happen was if Harpsden and Shiplake funded it.

DB said the Appeal System was unfair that there had been times when everyone involved had objected but planning permission had been granted at Appeal. KG noted the disparity between the lawyer representing SODC and the one who argued for the developers. CR asked who the PC should complain to, and DB said that questions and complaints about the appeals process should be sent to the local MP (John Howell).

MP asked about the meeting between DB, LR and TW.

DB said that TW were insisting they could not start the replanting due to subsidence. He said that LR had asked the TW representative if that meant the highway was unsafe. The maps of the site showed that the voids were in the middle of the site and not at the edges. Regarding building on the site nobody knew what was going to happen. TW had to find a solution to the drainage problems and put forward to SODC and none had been forthcoming.

**4013 South Oxfordshire District Councillors Report** (attached at appendix 2)

LR's report is attached.

The following items were discussed with the Council

MP asked if any more people were being employed by the Planning department. LR said that lack of staffing had never been an issue and that the largest team in Planning was the one that handled applications. He said that Planning Enforcement was well staffed in comparison to other authorities, that the problems were being caused by the current planning rules.

CR questioned whether Enforcement was still too busy to tackle 'small' cases. LR said they were still using the system that they had put in place after Covid, and they had achieved their initial targets, but they were planning on conducting a review of the system.

LR said that Oxfordshire 2050 had collapsed as the partners could not agree. SODC had withdrawn from The Oxfordshire ARC and LR said he was unsure if the scheme would continue as the present government seemed to have shifted focus to Investment Area Zones. SODC had no information on this proposal so he could not comment further.

With regards to Broadband, he said that operators had statutory code powers that allowed them to do as they wanted. Airband had alerted HPC to their erecting two poles in the village.

**4014 Discussion about raising awareness of JHNNP and the referendum to accept it.**

KG said the referendum to vote on the Joint Henley Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHNNP) would take place on 24<sup>th</sup> November. A joint letter from Henley and Harpsden would be issued. Henley wanted to do it two weeks before the referendum so that residents would not forget about the vote.

KG said that voting cards would be issued and that it would be in Harpsden's best interests to get residents to vote in favour of the plan especially as the JHNNP bolstered the case to extend the AONB.

And (2) it was agreed

that ML would draft and circulate some key points re publicising the referendum, to form the basis for discussion or a meeting. Action ML.

Both MP and ML agreed that there was a danger that people would see a site earmarked for development and vote against the plan on the basis that they disagreed with that particular site possibly being built on. MP hoped that people would understand that the plan was the result of five years' work and much negotiation to propose sites that would be least damaging to the area. KG said that residents needed to understand that if the JHNNP failed then it would mean that LAs (including SODC HPC and HTC) would have no say on subsequent developments in the area and all local control would be lost.

MP suggested that while there would be a joint letter from HPC and HTC, that Harpsden could also write to Harpsden residents. ML said that the consequences of the referendum needed to be explained clearly and succinctly – what would happen if the referendum passed and what would happen if it failed. This would need to be done in advance as in the four weeks before the Referendum, HPC would only be able to release 'neutral' information.

MP suggested that the Council have another meeting, dedicated solely to raising awareness of the referendum and what it would mean for Harpsden. KG agreed. It was agreed that ML would draft and circulate some key points re publicising the referendum to form the basis for the discussion.

**ACTION** MP to circulate a document containing key points re publicising the Referendum.

**ACTION** KG & MP to organise a meeting to discuss JHNNP referendum and action to take.

**4015 Planning Matters:**

These are set out in the document circulated by the Clerk on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and available on the HPC website.

The following comments were made by the Council.

**4015 (i) New Applications since the last meeting:**

**P22/S1707/HH AMENDED**

**Keepers Cottage, Mays Green, RG9 4AL**

Single storey rear and side extensions, replacement entrance portal, conversion of detached garage to ancillary accommodation and the creation of a new field access.

*It was noted by the Council that the amendment did not affect HPC's decision not to object.*

**P21/S4271/RM AMENDED Twice**

**Wyevale Country Gardens Reading Road near Harpsden RG9 4AE**

Reserved matters application for 40 dwellings and 250 sqm Use Class E(c) (i, ii and iii), E(g) (i, ii, iii) and/ or F2(b) floorspace for the approval of details of the appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale pursuant to Condition 1 of Outline Planning Permission P18/S0951/O (as amended / clarified by amended plans and additional information received 17/11/21 and 21/07/22) AS AMPLIFIED BY INFORMATION RECEIVED 3/8/22 AND AMENDED BY PLANS RECEIVED 10<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 22 AMENDED AGAIN 10<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST

*It was noted that a resident's group, T FAG had lodged a warning to SODC not to agree to any proposition that would prejudice the consideration of Taylor Wimpey's application to build 95 houses on Thames Farm.*

**P22/S3379/T18**

**AIRBAND Internet**

Prior notification for proposed installation under telecommunications code system operator of two 10.5m wooden poles. The poles would be installed with 9m above ground.

**Planning Officer** Hannah Gould

**Target Decision** 20<sup>th</sup> October

**4014 (ii) SODC Decisions since the last meeting:**

APP/Q3115/W/22/3297007

**P21/S4616/FUL AMENDED 17 FEB**

**Land West of Reading Road, Lower Shiplake RG9 4AA (CROSSFIELDS)**

Proposed erection of 11 dwellings with associated access, landscaping, and parking

**Permission Granted** by Appeals Inspector on the grounds that SODC lacked the land supply imposed upon it.

**P21/S5337/FUL. AMENDED 7th June**

**Black Bears Polo Club, near Lower Shiplake, RG9 3NN**

Proposed Equestrian Canter Track, ecological, protection mitigation and enhancement strategy submitted 7/6/22

**PLANNING PERMISSION 15<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 22**

HPC/PL2

**P22/S2144/FUL AMENDED**

**Incline Cottage, Gillotts Lane, Harpsden RG9 4AY**

Installation of Solar PV and the change of use of the land from agricultural land to residential garden where the solar panels will be located. The proposal is to install 32 ground mounted panels. Amended 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022 to reduce the change of use of agricultural land. **Planning Permission 10<sup>th</sup> August 2022**

**P22/S2271/FUL Re (P21/S3765/FUL)**

**Woodlands House, Harpsden Woods, Harpsden RG9 4AE**

s73 application to vary condition 2(approved plans) - revision to previously approved garage - on application P21/S3765/FUL. Re-siting of tennis court and erection of games room , with associated landscaping; erection of garage; erection of entrance gates.

**Planning Permission 11<sup>th</sup> August 2022**

**P22/S0158/FUL AMENDED**

**Harpsden Hill House, Harpsden Bottom RG9 4HX**

Proposed demolition of existing house and attached ancillary buildings & erection of replacement dwelling & detached garage building with flexible ancillary accommodation. (Additional ecological, landscape and lighting information submitted 2nd June 2022)

**Planning Permission 29<sup>th</sup> July**

**4015 (iii) Outstanding Applications and Appeals: P21/S5382/FUL**

**P21/S5382/FUL**

**Wyevale Country Gardens, Reading Road, Harpsden RG9 4AE**

Full Planning Permission for demolition of existing structures, development of Class E (c) (I, ii, iii), E (g), (i, ii, iii), and/or F2(b) floorspace & required parking & servicing facilities on SE part of the site.

Development of 55 dwellings on the rest of the site with associated parking, open space, and landscaping.

**No decision** a/o 26<sup>th</sup> September 22 (Under Consideration)

*Development of 55 dwellings with associated parking but less open space than in the previous application for 40 dwellings, an application that had attracted many objections, including one from HTC.*

**P22/S2164/FUL**

**Crowsley Park Lodge, Harpsden Bottom, Harpsden RG9 4JD**

Replacement dwelling but preserving the original gable and chimney (roof level only)

**No Decision** a/o 25<sup>th</sup> September (Under Consideration)

**P22/S2002/LDE**

**The Annex, The Orchard, Upr Bolney Road, RG9 4AQ**

Use of a self-contained attached dwelling known as 'The Annex' for more than four years.

Emailed to KG, CR, MP, ML & DD 7/6/22 (via this report)

No Decision a/o 25<sup>th</sup> September 2022

**P22/S1690/FUL** P22/S1690/FUL

**The Mount, 21 Rotherfield Road, RG9 1NR**

Demolition of existing house and associated outbuildings and structures and redevelopment of site with three detached dwellings with associated access, hard and soft landscaping, and other infrastructure

**No Decision (under consideration)** a/o 25<sup>th</sup> September 2022, *despite strong objections from Henley and Harpsden*

**P22/S0903/FUL AMENDED**

**Poachers Cottage, Mays Green, RG9 4AL**

Conversion of redundant barn to 1 x dwelling house

*It was noted that the amended floor plans (submitted 5<sup>th</sup> August) had no bearing on HPC's objection, which remained valid.*

**NO Decision** a/o 25<sup>th</sup> September 2022 (Under Consideration)

#### **4016 Financial Matters**

##### **4016.i Bank Balances and Reconciliations** (attached at Appendix 3a)

Community Account:	£328.41
Business Saver Account:	<u>£487,772.04</u>

**Total of both accounts a/o 1st September 2022 £487 119.64**

AMS had previously circulated by email the bank reconciliations for the 2 months to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022 for the Community and Business Saver Accounts and both were now approved by Councillors and signed by the Chairman. As agreed at the previous meeting AMS would transfer all money in excess of £100 in the Community account to the Business account.

##### **4016.ii Approval of Payments** (attached appendix 3b)

AMS had previously circulated the schedule of payments for September which showed no outstanding payments.

A late request had come in since the Schedule of Payments was distributed for membership of the Chiltern Society for £40.

The Council agreed that AMS should pay this amount as soon as possible and this was the only payment that would appear on the revised Schedule of Payments.

##### **4016. iii Review of Budget vs Actual Spend.** (attached appendix 3c)

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

##### **4016. iv Review of CIL money and vote to retain CIL funds received to date**

AMS had circulated a document showing the dates by which CIL money should be used. The Council, having seen the document, and discussed likely future needs, agreed to retain the CIL money previously received and to accept any future CIL money due.

At the previous meeting (18 July 2022) ML had agreed to devise an investment strategy for CIL funds with a view to protecting the money available and to create a better return on the funds. ML presented his strategy document (attached appendix 4) which he had previously

distributed by email. ML suggested that various investments and diversifying funds to take advantage of the protected amount of £85,000.

Council agreed with ML's investment and diversion of funds strategy. ML to commence putting the strategy into practice in consultation with HPC and to take no individual action without a Council mandate.

KG asked whether SODC had increased the rate of CIL paid by developers as their rate was much lower than surrounding Councils, which made the area more attractive to developers.

**ACTION** ML to distribute proposals for investment in the light of the discussion set out above.

**ACTION** KG to contact LR to enquire about CIL rate.

**4016.** v **To approve the Statement of Internal Control** (attached appendix 5)

AMS had updated the Statement of Internal Control in line with the new 2022 guidelines and the Council voted to accept it.

AMS updated the Council on issues that were hampering her work as Clerk. At the previous meeting the Council had agreed to purchase a dedicated computer for Council work as advised by the Internal Auditor, to allow all HPC related work to be kept in the same place and in the event of the Clerk leaving to be able to transfer to the next Clerk immediately. More importantly AMS needed to run HMRC software to comply with new regulations. The Council had purchased a second hand computer. Unfortunately, the new computer was unable to run the software and had several other problems.

The Council agreed to purchase a new computer (with a warranty) to enable AMS to put both the Internal and External Auditor's suggestions into practice. With regards to cost the Council agreed that CIL money could be used to purchase the device as it was essential to the proper running of the Council, would belong to the Council and would be placed on the Fixed Assets register.

**ACTION** MP to return the second-hand computer to the seller and to purchase a new computer for the parish.

**4017.** **To approve maintenance work on Hunt's Green**

The Council voted that the Clerk hire a gardener to trim Hunt's Green and for the Clerk to put the Spring maintenance in her diary and to hire someone to do it at that time.

**4018** **Dates of next meetings:**

21<sup>st</sup> November

**Approved:** .....

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022

**Kester George, Chairman**