

# HARPSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at Harpsden Wood Lodge on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 7.45pm

Present: Cllr Kester George (KG) Chairman  
Cllr Malcolm Plews (MP) Parish Councillor  
Cllr Tony Wright (TW) Parish Councillor  
Cllr David Bartholomew (DB) OCC Councillor  
Cllr Paul Harrison (PH) SODC Councillor

In attendance: Mrs Sarah Tipple (ST) Clerk

**2664 Welcomes and Apologies:** There were apologies from Cllrs Catherine Rubinstein and Robin Dorkings.

**2665 Declarations of pecuniary interests and/or requests for dispensations from Members regarding any item on this agenda:** There were none.

**2666 Approval of Minutes of last Council Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016:** The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record. TW reminded ST to attach the appendices to the minutes when she circulated them by email to Councillors.

**2667 Matters arising other than those subsumed below:**

**2635: Manorial Waste:** It had been established that the track running from Woodlands Road to Red Hatch Lodge was not in fact manorial waste. The plan was that the public would, however, still be granted access to it via motion-sensitive automatic gates. Although the Council had no legal power to remove them, KG would write a letter to SODC lodging the Council's objection to the fence and gates. **Action:**  
KG

**2668 Oxfordshire County Councillor's Report:** David Bartholomew's full report is attached at Appendix A. The main points were as follows:

- OCC was joining forces with its neighbouring councils to create a Regional Adoption Agency for the Thames Valley;
- A new online 'toolkit' had been launched by OCC which provided information and advice for those wanting to act to safeguard their home or business against flooding;
- OCC's adult social care performance was above the national average;
- OCC had launched a county-wide campaign for a Home Library service whereby volunteers chose and delivered books to those unable to get to a library. Details could be found at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/homelibrary](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/homelibrary);
- grant funding had been announced for 'open-access' children's services which would complement a new service for children and young people aged 0 – 19 year across the county, ensuring that children at risk of abuse and neglect were protected and that families needing extra help were identified at an early stage;
- Oxfordshire's Commission on Health Inequalities had published its recommendations to narrow the health and wellbeing gaps dividing communities in the county;
- The link between Oxford Parkway and the city centre had been opened in December. At the opening, OCC leader Ian Hudspeth reminded Chris Grayling, the Secretary of State for Transport that if the County was to absorb the projected extra houses and jobs, then OCC needed the funding for the infrastructure to deliver sustainable development;

In matters more specific to Harpsden:

- P16/S3438/O Retirement Village: OCC Highways had objected on the basis of sustainability as there was no direct access to the village, and inadequate vision splays. They had also made reference to OCC's strategic position, namely that Henley

could not take any more large-scale development not already identified in the Neighbourhood Plan (NP).

- P16/S2861/O Mount Ida. After DB's intervention, OCC Highways had objected on the basis of sustainability with no direct and safe access to the village. He thought that both applications might be withdrawn rather than risk being refused.
- DB had managed to obtain some residual stocks of some 'Speedwatch Posters' as requested by ST on behalf of Odette Moss of Gillotts Lane, and would arrange for their delivery soon;
- DB had postponed the joint meeting scheduled for Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2017 between the Chairman and Planning Leads of the nine parishes in his Division because of further delays on the Third Bridge traffic modelling study and to await the outcome of John Howell's planning conference on 20<sup>th</sup> January in Watlington, which KG and TW were attending on behalf of Harpsden Parish Council. He agreed to seek assurance from John Howell that an established NP would still take precedence over a lack of five year land supply when applications were being considered;
- When questioned about Thames Farm, DB explained that both the application for 110 and the one for 95 homes had gone to appeal but as there was a huge backlog in the appeal system, these were unlikely to be heard until the end of the year;
- Shiplake Parish Council had agreed to press forward with a NP to find sites for 32 homes, a 5% increase in the current number of houses in the village. He warned that despite SODC's assurance that the figure would not be more than 5%, it was feared it could rise to 10%.
- the pile of rubble at the end of Woodlands Road left over from the Chelford House development had still not been removed. The Area Steward had advised that it should now be reported to SODC as fly-tipping. **Action: ST**
- Alex Hersham, the owner of the former Wyevale Garden Centre site had asked DB for a private meeting to discuss his plans but DB had advised him the correct forum for such a meeting would be at a Parish Council meeting.
- TW stressed how important it was for Jason Sherwood, the Locality and Road Agreements Manager at OCC to pay close attention to the comments on planning applications on the SODC website as OCC had a responsibility to listen to local knowledge submitted by local people.

**2669 South Oxfordshire District Councillor's Report:** PH's full report is attached at Appendix B. The main points to do with planning were as follows:

- as Didcot Garden Town constituted a major part of SODC's development, a draft masterplan would be published in the spring or summer 2017 incorporating all comments from the website, events and conversations with community groups; further consultations would then take place;
  - In December the Housing Minister, Gavin Barwell, had announced new ways that NPs would affect development. John Howell had summarised these in his blog as follows:
    - The new rules meant that NPs should not be considered out of date when i) the NP was less than 2 years old or had been part of the development plan for less than 2 years, ii) the NP allocated sites for housing, and iii) the Local Planning Authority could demonstrate a 3 year supply of deliverable housing sites. SODC had a 3.8 year deliverable land supply. John Howell's full statement could be found at [www.johnhowellmp.com/news/neighbourhood-plan-update/917](http://www.johnhowellmp.com/news/neighbourhood-plan-update/917)
- This had significant implications for existing NPs and emphasised the importance of keeping them up to date. It was thought, however, that the concession to only a 3 year land supply being applied might only last for two years, at which point it would revert to 5 years again.
- SODC's enforcement department was enjoying success in persuading landowners to regularise breaches in planning conditions.

- The application for 245 houses by Gladman at Emmer Green was being considered by a new SODC officer, Joan Desmond, who had dealt with the developer in a previous job. A final decision had not been made, although Reading Borough Council had raised objections primarily based on traffic.
- The application by Gallagher Home for 95 dwellings on Kennylands Road in Sonning Common, was also still under consideration, despite this being a site which had been allocated only 25 in Sonning Common's NP. OCC Highways had no objections to this application on either traffic grounds or visual impact.
- A further application on Kennylands Road for another 30 houses, this time by TA Fisher, had also been submitted. PH was fearful that all three applications would be approved, which would provide open-season for other developers who had already taken out options on land in the area.
- 3 new NP Planning Officers had been appointed: Ricardo Rios, Rachel Riach and Holly Jones. It was hoped to support this team with further recruitment.

## **2670 Planning Matters**

### **2670.i SODC Decisions**

#### **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

**Outline permission granted**

#### **P16/S3286/FUL**

The Coach House, Harpsden, RG9 4AP

Subdivision of existing dwelling to form new 1 bed dwelling and new orangery to rear

**Permission granted**

#### **P16/S3213/HH**

Harpsden Wood Cottage, Harpsden Woods, RG9 4AF

Proposed two storey front and single storey rear extension

**Permission granted**

#### **P16/S3748/LDP**

Peacock Barn, Harpsden, RG9 4AX

Insertion of additional rooflight and window, enlarging an existing window, creating new patio doors that were formerly windows, and forming a wall to accommodate new doors and minor internal alterations

**Application withdrawn**

### **2670.ii Outstanding Applications and Appeals:**

#### **P16/S2360/LB**

Hunts Farm, Harpsden Bottom, RG9 4HY

Refurbishment and extension of existing farm house and conversion of two farm out-buildings and yard to residential use, including amenity garden space and off-street parking  
KG and TW had visited the site and had no objection to the conversion of the two farm outbuildings, but echoed the Conservation Officer's objections to the extension of the farmhouse. The application had now gone to Committee.

### **P16/S2861/O (Outline)**

Mount Ida, Reading Road, Lower Shiplake, RG9 3PH

Outline planning permission for the demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of seven dwellings with matters of access, layout and scale for consideration

Objection on the basis that the site had been rejected from the Neighbourhood Plan, mainly because of the negative impact of more traffic on to this main road at one of its narrowest points.

### **P16/S4292/FUL**

Barn at Thames Farm, Reading Road, RG9 3PH

Change of use of barn to 4 residential units (C3) plus associated parking in the form of proposed outbuilding, courtyard, landscaping, demolition, closure of access from Thames Farm field and amendments to access onto Reading Road.

The Council awaited the paperwork before forming a final opinion. When the original application to build the barn had gone to appeal, the inspector had said that development of the barn would have no bearing on decisions made on the rest of the land and that no changes to the external structure of the barn would be permitted.

### **2670.iii. Former Wyevale Garden Centre site**

Alex Hershman (AH), the owner of the site, was still pursuing his proposal for 34 new homes, a space for the cadets to meet, and some office space. He was proposing traffic mitigation measures by placing a roundabout at the entrance to the site and widening the footpath. He had said he was holding back his application so as not to bias the Thames Farm hearings.

### **2670. iv. Land south of the Waterman's Allotments**

A front page article in last week's Henley Standard had outlined a former Harpsden resident's proposal to sell their fields which had once belonged to Harpsden Court, to Henley Town Council to make way for affordable housing. KG had been in touch with the owner's property adviser, who had explained that the story had been accidentally leaked into the public domain. He had apologised to KG for the discourtesy both to the Parish Council, and to their tenant, who had leased the land for her equestrian business for over 30 years. KG would be meeting the adviser later this week to see if Harpsden's interest in the land could be preserved, since it provided an informal green belt between Henley and Harpsden. Meanwhile ST had been contacted by email by the owner of Harpsden View whose house overlooked the fields and who would strongly oppose such a development. KG agreed to phone them to explain the situation. **Action: KG.**

### **2671 Financial Matters**

#### **2671.1 Bank Balances and Reconciliations**

Community Account: £314.85

Business Saver Account: £5,916.52

ST had previously circulated by email the bank reconciliations for the 2 months to 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016 for the Business Saver and Community Accounts and both were now approved by Councillors and signed by the Chairman. They are attached to the minutes at Appendix C.

#### **2671.2 Approval of Payments**

ST tabled the following payments for approval:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Power</u>
John Hodges Trust – room hire	£320.00	
Chilterns Conservation Board	£25.00	Section 137
Woodland Trust donation	£300.00	Section 137
Harpsden PCC – cemetery upkeep	£500.00	War Memorials Act 1923 s. 1; Local Govt Act 1948

CAB donation	£50.00	s. 133 LGA 1972 s. 142 power to provide information.
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The payments were authorised by a resolution of the Council and signed by the Chairman and are attached at Appendix D. The Section 137 payments to the Chiltern Conservation Board and the Woodland Trust were proposed by TW, seconded by MP and carried unanimously.

**2671.3 Budget vs Actual Expenditure:** This was circulated by ST and approved by Council and is attached to these minutes at Appendix E.

**2671.4 Clerk's salary review:** The Chairman said that the Clerk's workload had not abated as expected since the completion of the NP and that her growing experience was more valuable than ever, not least in keeping the Council briefed on the continuing upheaval in the Planning System. He therefore proposed an increase of 10% from £3,600 to £3,960. This was seconded by TW and carried unanimously.

**2671.5 Budget 2017-18 and Precept:** ST had previously circulated a proposed budget for the next financial year. She explained that most costs would remain at similar levels to the current year and proposed a few minor increases in the Council's donations to worthy local causes. With a proposed budget of £6,275 for the coming year, it was agreed that a precept of £6,000 should be requested from SODC. MP proposed approving and accepting budget, it was seconded by TW and carried unanimously. A copy is attached at Appendix F.

**2672: Review of Financial Regulations:** ST had previously circulated by email the Financial Regulations. There was no change from last year's document. It was resolved to adopt the Financial Regulations for the year.

**2673: Approval of Asset Register:** ST had previously circulated by email the Asset Register and this was now approved by Council after being proposed by KG and seconded by TW.

**2674: Relations with Crest Nicholson:** KG tabled the draft of a letter written by the Chairman of Harpsden Cricket Club in which he was seeking a 3 year sponsorship deal with Crest Nicholson, the builders of the new development at Highlands Farm. In exchange for about £5,000 p.a. Crest Nicholson's name would appear on the players' shirts and on the three pitch covers. After discussion it was agreed that this could place the Parish Council in a difficult position with local residents. KG would explain to the Cricket Club's chairman why the Council did not favour the Club's idea and hoped that they could find an alternative sponsor. **Action: KG**

**2675: AOB:** There was none.

**2676 Dates of next meetings:**

Council Meetings: Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017, Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017, Monday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2017, Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2017, Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

Annual Parish Meeting (APM): Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2017 - date to be confirmed.

Approved:..... Date: 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017  
Kester George, Chairman