

# HARPSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at Harpsden Village Hall

on

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2015

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

In attendance: Mrs Sarah Tipple (ST) Clerk

**2553 Welcomes and Apologies:** There were apologies from Martin Akehurst (SODC Councillor) and David Bartholomew (OCC Councillor).

**2554 Declarations of pecuniary interests and/or requests for dispensations from Members regarding any item on this agenda:** There were none.

**2555 Approval of Minutes of last Council Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015:** The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record.

**2556 Matters arising:**

**2556.i:** KG had established that the Golf Club was indeed in the AONB.

**2556.ii:** CR asked KG to explain the system by which Councillors commented on planning applications. KG explained that if the deadline for submitting comments allowed the planning application to be discussed at a meeting of the full Council then the opinion of the majority of Councillors would be submitted. Otherwise the planning application would be given to the Councillor living nearest the property concerned for his or her views, with other Councillors being given the opportunity to comment as well.

**2557 Feedback from Peter Brett's Transport Consultation:** Peter Brett Associates (PBA) had presented their quantitative findings at a meeting attended by ST and had received qualitative comments from many stakeholders in the area at several 'surgeries' the previous week. This had enabled KG to repeat his concerns about additional pressure on Gillotts Lane, the valley road through the village and Sheephouse Lane, citing a recent collision on Gillotts Lane caused by a car skidding on stones on the road brought about by the constant erosion of the bank. Police had attended the scene of the accident in which one of the cars had had to be written off. At the PBA surgery it was agreed that measures such as additional signage regarding the unsuitability of the lane for HGVs, kerbing to reinforce the banks on either side of the road, the introduction of a chicane system, which still allowed the passage of emergency vehicles, and even a 'residents only access' at peak times of the day, could all bring about improvements to the road. TW was concerned that the traffic consultation had come too late as the Neighbourhood Plan had already been submitted to SODC without its inclusion, but KG reassured him that due regard would be given by both OCC and SODC to the recommendations from the traffic consultants. The final report would be presented at a meeting between PBA, Henley Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council on 5<sup>th</sup> August. KG and RD would attend and ST would confirm the time.

**Action: ST**

- 2558 Feedback from OCC/Parish Chairs' Meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015:** ST had previously circulated the slides from this meeting which KG had been unable to attend. As it was suffering some severe budget cuts, OCC was looking to parish councils to become more involved in such projects as hedge-cutting or sign cleaning. Despite repeated complaints to OCC to cut back the laurel overhanging the bottom of Woodlands Road, the work had not been done and it was now posing a severe danger to traffic turning left from Reading Road. CR agreed to ask the daughter of the owner of the house, Ann Cottingham, if there was anything she could do to help and ST would obtain a quote from Robin and Stephen Head to cut back the laurel. It was agreed that some budget could be put aside by the Parish Council to cut grass or hedgerow that was causing a nuisance although this needed further discussion. **Action: CR and ST**
- 2559 Election of Oxon representative to Chilterns Conservation Board:** ST had previously circulated the statement of persons nominated and a brief description of each candidate. It was unanimously agreed to vote for Susan Biggs, the Chair of Kidmore End Parish Council.
- 2560 Highways Matters:**
- 2560.i:** Nick Young (NY), owner of Juniper Cottage, had asked ST if the 'Reduce your Speed' sign by the football ground could be remounted onto the pole from which it had fallen. Councillors could see no objection in him doing this and ST would ask Marcus Hooker, the hall caretaker, if he might help him. **Action: ST**
- 2560.ii:** The new owners of School House opposite the village hall had asked ST if the parish council would object to a sight mirror being installed on the white fence outside the hall opposite their property. As the hall belonged to the John Hodges Trust, ST would refer this matter to the Trustees. **Action: ST**
- 2561: Oxfordshire County Councillor's Report:** David Bartholomew's full report is attached to these minutes at Appendix 1. In matters specific to Harpsden there was to be a Thames Farm Appeal Review meeting in Shiplake at 4.45pm on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> August, the exact location to be confirmed.
- 2562 South Oxfordshire District Councillor's Report:** Paul Harrison's full report is attached to these minutes at Appendix 2. He explained that the other District Councillor, Martin Akehurst, had been signed off for a significant period due to ill health. PH had recently been elected Vice Chairman of SODC which meant in all probability that he would be elected Chairman the following year. In matters specific to Harpsden, PH mentioned that the planning inspector at the recent Thames Farm appeal hearing had suggested that SODC did not have a five year land supply, which could mean that planning applications had to be approved even if the sites were not in the Neighbourhood Plan. SODC strongly disagreed with this as even though it only had a four year land supply in the Didcot area, it had a nine year supply in the rest of the district, which more than compensated for Didcot's undersupply. PH also mentioned the introduction of a kerbside collection of small electrical items one week alternating with a collection of textiles and clothing the next. As this could have a negative impact on charity shops in the area, residents were being encouraged to continue to donate higher-value clothing items to charity shops. PH also explained that recent government policy had lowered the requirement of affordable homes that had to be built as part of a new development from 40% to 10% in schemes where fewer than 10 homes are to be built. On planning matters, PH agreed to forward to the parish council the list of Councillors on SODC's Planning Committee. He also clarified that if the parish council objected to a householder's planning application, SODC officers could overrule that objection unless it was 'called-in' by the ward member.
- 2563 Planning Matters**
- 2563.i SODC Decisions**
- P15/S1513/HH**
- Harpsden Wood House, Harpsden, RG9 4AF

Extension to east elevation to include a garage and orangery/utility together with alterations to the projecting east wing and central bay of the northern elevation and alterations to existing Coach House adjoining north elevation  
PLANNING PERMISSION GRANTED

**P15/S1441/LDE**

Jubilee Park

Certificate of Lawful Development for existing parks services

CERTIFICATE REFUSED

On the balance of probabilities and an assessment of available evidence, a material change of use of the land did occur to enable a separate green waste site, but this change had not occurred ten years or more prior to the application date, despite two sworn affidavits from Henley Town Council's parks services personnel to the contrary. KG agreed to ask Mike Kennedy, the Town Clerk, how these sworn affidavits had come about. **Action: KG**

**2563.ii Outstanding Applications and Appeals:**

**P15/S0506/HH**

Little Hill Cottage, Harpsden Bottom, Harpsden RG9 4HR

Removal of existing extensions, outbuildings and hardstandings, extensions and alterations to existing 2 storey house, new 2 storey garage/outbuilding

NO OBJECTION

**2564 Financial Matters**

**2564.i Bank Balances and Reconciliations**

Community Account: £1,432.15

Business Saver Account: £4,146.30

ST had previously circulated by email the bank reconciliations for two months to 20<sup>th</sup> June 2015 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.

**2564.ii Approval of Payments**

ST tabled the following payments for approval:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Power</u>
Chiltern Society Donation	£25.00	Section 137
Centrewire re kissing gates	£514.80	Highways Act 1980, ss 43,50
JNP Associates – internal audit	£70.00	

The payments were authorised by a resolution of the Council and signed by the Chairman and are attached at Appendix 5. The Section 137 payment to the Chiltern Society was proposed by KG, seconded by MP and carried unanimously.

**2564.iii Budget vs Actual Expenditure:** This was circulated by ST and approved by Council and is attached to these minutes at Appendix 6.

**2564.iv Review of the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit:** The internal auditor had recommended ST wherever possible to find a statutory provision that covered the item of expenditure rather than using Section 137; the notice board, the CAB donation and the website expenditure could all have been made under s 142 LGA 1972, using the power to provide information. ST would action this with immediate effect. The Council reviewed the effectiveness of the internal audit and found it to be very effective. JNP Associates had been very thorough, very helpful and had completed it with the minimum of fuss. As Jean Nunn-Price had recently retired, ST would look for an alternative auditor for next year.

**2565 AOB** There was no other business and the meeting closed at 10.15pm.

**2566 Dates of next meetings:**

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015 7.45pm

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2015 7.45pm

**Approved:..... Date: 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015**  
**Kester George, Chairman**