

HARPSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at Harpsden Village Hall
on
Monday 23rd October 2017

Present: Cllr Kester George (KG) Chairman
Cllr Tony Wright (TW) Deputy Chairman
Cllr Catherine Rubinstein (CR) Parish Councillor

In attendance: Mrs Sarah Tipple (ST) Clerk

Mrs Maura Tilney Parishioner
Mr Charles Tilney Parishioner
Mr James Tilney Parishioner
Mr Andre Sypkens Parishioner
Mrs Hilary Andrews Parishioner

2724 Welcomes and Apologies: There were apologies from Cllr Matthew Phillips.

2725 Declarations of pecuniary interests and/or requests for dispensations from Members regarding any item on this agenda: There were none.

2726 Approval of Minutes of last Council Meeting on 18th September 2017: The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record.

2727 Matters arising:

2694: Path to Redhatch Lodge: KG had not written to the owner of Redhatch Lodge about the public right of way along the track to the house as he wished to clarify the situation with the owner of Redhatch. He would copy the letter to OCC to ensure this was on record. **Action: KG**

2728 i. Little Hill Cottage:

The planning enforcement process at Little Hill Cottage, now named Holly Cottage, was ongoing. A further planning application had been received by Council but had been withdrawn after two days with the explanation from SODC that the application had been registered in error and should not have been validated by the registration team. It was agreed that KG would draft a letter to SODC enforcement officers making the following points about the site:

- The finished site included approximately 0.04 hectares belonging to the house known as Little Hill;
- The main house was substantially larger than that for which permission had been granted;
- The swimming pool had been removed and been replaced with a 3-bay garage and super-structure, for which no planning had been applied or permission granted;
- Trees with existing TPOs had been removed along the footpath and front of the house
- The third structure, a gym and four bay garage, had been sited too close to the boundary with Rectory Cottage;
- The house was clearly visible from the road

KG would also seek Cllr Paul Harrison's advice on how to progress matters. **Action: KG**

ii. Site Visit to Oak Farm: KG, TW and CR had conducted a site visit and concluded that the Parish Council would have no objection to the principle of building an additional dwelling subject to the conditions to be imposed by the Planning Authority.

iii. Thames Farm: There had been no news on whether a Judicial Review of the decision to uphold the appeal would be agreed. KG would ask Tudor Taylor, Chairman of Shiplake Parish Council, if he had any further news. **Action:** KG. ST had asked Thames Valley Police for the results and statistics of speeding vehicles captured by police cameras near the Shiplake War Memorial close to the proposed southern crossing point on the A4155.

iv. Former Wyevale Site: Alex Hershman, the owner of the site, had asked to present his plans for the site at the next Council meeting. He had also asked to book the village hall to run a briefing and consultation with local parishioners.

v. Plans for No 2 Hall Cottages: Richard Wilson, Chairman of the John Hodges Trust which owned the cottage had outlined the Trust's plans in an email to ST. It was a large enough plot to accommodate two small 2-bedroom homes for less wealthy residents with the possibility of providing subsidised accommodation to keyworkers such as teachers or nurses, which was more in line with the original Trust Deed of 1909; the rental income from two homes would help the Trust achieve its other charitable activities such as donations to local good causes; although probably using a more eco-friendly timber framed structure, the Trust's intention was to pursue a design more in keeping with the existing vernacular of the village with the current plan producing two gable-fronted semis with the right hand semi staggered back from the left hand one to help with parking and to add visual interest; there would be space to park four cars with a satisfactory turning circle. If the Council still wanted to be consulted prior to the Trust submitting a full planning application, they would be welcome to meet one of the Trustees to discuss it at any time.

v. Field fronting Reading Road next to Sheephouse Lane: An application to build on the land could be expected soon.

vi. SSE Substation on Woodlands Road: A representative of SSE had visited the site and was now aware of how unsafe the substation was. They wished to erect a more suitable green caging found around most substations and hoped to erect it soon.

2729 SODC's New Local Plan 2033:

KG and TW were attending a meeting at Henley Town Council on Monday 30th October at which the response to the Local Plan from the Joint Henley Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Steering Committee would be decided. KG would make the point that the requirement to find sites for yet more houses would mean bringing forward sites in Henley and Harpsden which had already been rejected by the NP, which surely invalidated the whole NP process. It was agreed that ST would draft Harpsden Parish Council's response to the Local Plan consultation, but individuals were encouraged to respond as well. The points she would raise would encompass those made by CPRE, namely:

- **Oxford's unmet need was unsound.** There was no evidence that any houses were needed to meet Oxford's unmet need at all, much less the arbitrary 3,750, and it was unsound for the Plan to contain them.

- **It was unsound to plan for a surplus.** The Plan allocated land for the provision of 1,500 houses *over and above* the figures from the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), which were already overstated. Over-allocation of land did not mean developers would build more houses - it would allow them to cherry-pick the 'best' (often greenfield) sites.
- **The SHMA itself was now proven unsound.** The Government's new proposal for calculated housing need, if accepted, would give a need figure for the District 3,000 houses lower than the SHMA-based total in the Plan – making the much higher SHMA totals unsound.
- **It was neither sound, nor positive, to plan without a target density to make best use of land and provide more affordable housing.** Land should be used as sparingly as possible to preserve the rural environment. The District already had a large stock of low density executive houses. The whole housing stock needed to be balanced with lower cost, smaller houses, at higher densities, maximising use of expensive land.
- **Taking land from the Green Belt was unjustified.** The Green Belt removals were unsound as there were no exceptional circumstances to justify them.
- **Not mentioning the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway itself made the Plan unsound.** Although it was mentioned in the Plan, the potential magnitude of the proposed Oxford – Cambridge Expressway Growth Corridor was not indicated, nor that the South Oxfordshire Green Belt seemed to be the County Council's preferred target area.
- **Ignoring the effects of current housing allocations:** Henley and Harpsden should be allowed to absorb the effects of the 500 homes allocated within the NP before a second tranche of 350 homes could be imposed.

The deadline for responding to the consultation had been extended to **30th November 2017**. **Action: ST to draft HPC's response.**

2730 Review of Parish Boundary at Highlands Farm: Although the Henley Town Clerk had not consulted Harpsden Parish Council, she had requested a review of the Parish Boundary in relation to Highlands Farm, currently in Harpsden Parish. A significant development proposal which bordered a parish boundary automatically triggered a community governance review and as such Harpsden had no objections to the review, although Councillors would have appreciated a copy of the correspondence. **Action: KG to write to Cllr Ken Arlett at Henley Town Council to request to be copied in on correspondence which affected boundaries with Harpsden Parish.** It was hoped that Harpsden parish might benefit anyway from the CIL monies arising from the development as the review would not be implemented until May 2019.

2731 Anti-social Behaviour on Bridleway to Rotherfield Road. ST had received complaints from a local resident that cars were regularly parking in the area in front of the gate on the left-hand side on entering the bridleway off the main valley road. Rubbish was frequently dumped there and on occasion, needles and plastic gloves which appeared to have been thrown out of cars. Thames Valley constabulary had recently left notices warning walkers not to touch and to keep dogs away. The resident had had the area cleared a couple of times by reporting to fixmystreet.com but was wondering if the Council could explore preventative measures instead, such as the installation of a post to prevent unauthorised vehicular access but still allowing horses and pedestrians through. ST had raised this with OCC Highways and would report back. **Action: ST**

2732 Transport Strategy Meetings: KG and TW had attended two meetings at which various alternatives to conventional transport strategies were discussed. Increase signage at the Rugby Club had been suggested to encourage more use of their car park, as had the introduction of car clubs.

2733 **AOB:** Cllr Paul Harrison still had some money in his District Councillor’s Grant budget – please could Councillors let ST know if they had anything in mind the Council might apply for.

2734 **Dates of next meetings:**

- Council Meeting: Monday 20th November 2017 7.45pm
- Council Meeting: Monday 15th January 2018 7.45pm
- Council Meeting: Monday 19th March 2018 7.45pm
- Annual Parish Meeting: April 2018 date TBC
- Council Meeting: Monday 21st May 2018 7.45pm
- Council Meeting: Monday 16th July 2018 7.45pm
- Council Meeting: Monday 17th September 2018 7.45pm
- Council Meeting: Monday 19th November 2018 7.45pm

Approved: **Date: 20th November 2017**
Kester George, Chairman