

HARPSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held In Harpsden Parish Hall on Monday 17th July 2023 at 7.45 pm

Present: Cllr Kester George (KG) Chairman
Cllr Matt Phillips (MP) Parish Councillor
Cllr Dominic Day (DD) Parish Councillor
Cllr Catherine Rubinstein (CR) Parish Councillor

In attendance: Anne Marie Scanlon (AMS) Clerk
Cllr Leigh Rawlins SODC

4068 Apologies for absence

Cllr Matt Leeman (ML) Parish Councillor
Cllr David Bartholomew (DB) OCC

4069 Declarations of pecuniary interests and/or requests for dispensations from Members regarding any item on this agenda: There were none.

4070 Approval of Minutes of last Council Meeting on 22nd May 2023 & the Extraordinary Meeting on 12th June 2023:

The minutes were approved.

4071 Oxfordshire County Council Report:

DB had sent his apologies and his report (attached at appendix 1).

4072 South Oxfordshire District Councillors Report (attached at appendix 2)

LR had emailed his report ahead of the meeting.

- (i) He advised the Council that the Councillor Community Grants Funding was available to support local projects that would benefit residents. He invited HPC to apply.
- (ii) LR said that SODC had secured funding from the government's Rural England Prosperity Fund and that any organisation with legal status would be able to apply for the funding when it opens in the autumn. He said HPC should investigate the scheme before it opens.
- (iii) LR said that fly-tipping should be reported via southoxon.gov.uk/flytipping or by calling 03000 610610
- (iv) LR said residents could offer their views on air quality by completing a survey at Survey.southandvale.gov.uk/s/AirQualityActionPlan which would close on 27th July.

- (v) LR said that SODC would be taking up the government's offer to help buy homes specifically for refugees from Afghanistan, Hong Kong, and Ukraine. SODC plans on purchasing 23 homes with the government grant supporting 40+% of the total cost.
- (vi) LR said the next meeting about extending the AONB would be on 25th July. KG would also be attending. KG told the Council he had seen the draft report from Terra Firma Consultancy on the land study, which was largely favourable to the AONB extension.

The Council had the following questions for LR.

DD wanted to know if a road or bypass was going to be built to accommodate the large number of people living in Didcot. LR said that eventually there would be a road, that the Council were investigating various plans.

CR asked if SODC would be building or buying homes for refugees. LR said they would not be building from scratch but hoped to purchase the properties from planners. DD wanted to know if refugee homes would be placed in areas where schools were under-subscribed. LR said that it would take more account of where children were already attending school.

ACTION: AMS to put links to fly-tipping reports and Air Quality Survey on the parish website.

4073 To review the results of the Internal Audit

The Internal Audit had been circulated previously by AMS and was also available on the website.

The Council had read the audit report and noted the suggestions made. They also noted that the Clerk had already addressed some of the issues mentioned. AMS informed the Council that the External Audit was underway, and she had responded to the External Auditor (Moore) regarding their questions about the Internal Audit. She was awaiting a response from Moore.

AMS said that the Council would need to appoint another Internal Auditor as it was good practice to change auditors after three years.

ACTION AMS to find a new internal auditor. KG would ask around his colleagues on the Joint Parishes AONB Group.

4074 Planning Matters: (Appendix 3)

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

Discussion was confined to the two new applications.

P23/S1769/O

Hallemead House Woodlands Road Harpsden RG9 4AB

P23/S2339/FUL

Huntswood House, Harpsden Bottom, RG9 4HY

The Council had no objections to either application.

4075 Financial Matters

4075.i. Bank Balances and Reconciliations (attached at Appendix 4a & 4b)

Community Account:	£100
Business Saver Account:	£186,585.60
Total of both accounts: a/o 1st July 2023	£186,685.60

AMS had previously circulated by email the bank reconciliations for the 2 months to 1st July 2023 for the Community and Business Saver Accounts (attached appendix 4b and 4c). The bank reconciliations noted the following income.

CCLA Interest £2,861.45 (2 months)
Interest from Barclays Bank for the quarter £365.65

Expenditure for the two-month period was as follows.

Clerk's Salary for two months	£890.34
Annual Donation to The Woodland Trust	£500.00
Annual Donation to the upkeep of Harpsden Church Cemetery	£500.00
Eye & Dunstan Parish Council (percentage of payment for the report commissioned to aid the bid to increase the AONB)	£700.00
Zurich Annual Insurance	£296.50

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.

4075.ii Approval of Payments (attached 4c)

AMS had previously circulated the schedule of payments for May. The Council agreed to pay the following.

Election Fee	£200.00
CPRE Membership	£36.00
Internal Audit Fee	£425.00
Clerk Training	£25.00
Netwise Extra Storage	£100.26

Total **£786.26**

AMS informed the Council that the original invoice for the election fee was £400 as there were two 'elections' but she had informed SODC that only £200 had been budgeted for and they had agreed to defer the balance of £200 until the next financial year.

4075.iii Review of Budget vs Actual Spend (appendix 4d)

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

4075. iv Review of CIL Income and Expense (attached appendix4e)

The Clerk had previously circulated itemised CIL income and expenditure. There had been no CIL income or expenditure since the previous meeting in May.

- (i) The Council voted to accept the payment of £35,037.82 from Wyevale due in October 2023.
- (ii) The Chair and other Councillors completed the paperwork to open an investment account with Cambridge etc and a cheque for £100,000 of CIL money was signed.
- (iii) Gillotts Lane Flooding. DD had contacted Daniel Depp (DDP) at OCC to find a solution for the parishioner whose garden was regularly flooded by rainfall running off the resurfaced road. The resident had also been trying to get OCC to take action to divert the floodwater away from his home. DD had been emailing the parishioner to let him know that HPC were also attempting to get OCC to take positive action. DD would contact DB again to try to get the situation resolved. The Council expressed sympathy with the parishioner and said they would endeavour to get the remedial work done.
- (iv) DD suggested that some of the CIL money could be used to repair the road between Chalk Hill and the boundary for Binfield Heath. Council acknowledged that the road needed resurfacing and agreed to consider a proposition from OCC Highways. DD said he would contact DB in the first instance to get the process started.
- (v) CR asked AMS to check if CIL money was time based.

ACTION: AMS to forward the paperwork and cheque to Cambridge & Counties Bank. AMS to check that there were no spending dates for CIL but to let the Council know if there were.

DD to contact DB & DPP re remedial work on Gillotts Lane, and to make initial enquiries to DB about the possibility of resurfacing the road between Harpsden and Binfield Heath.

4076 Parish Matters

- (i) Purchase of 'Gates' for entrance to the Village

Subject to finding acceptable sites, Council agreed to purchase two gate features for the village. They would meet to consider possible locations for placement and would report the possibilities to the next council meeting in September. They would apply to the Community Grant Scheme for funding towards the Gates. Council asked Clerk to check if Planning Permission was needed for the Gateway features.

ACTION: CR to liaise with other Councillors to agree a date and time to inspect possible locations for placing the Gates.

AMS to contact DB regarding need for planning permission for Gateway feature.

(ii) Purchase of new noticeboard. The Council had received a grant to purchase a new noticeboard. MP had sourced a vendor but had not had the time to complete the purchase. DD said he would take over the responsibility for the purchase of the noticeboard.

ACTION: MP to send details of noticeboard vendor to DD to organize the purchase of the gates.

(iii) CR said that the recent Hoo-Ha had made a small profit which the organisers wanted to reinvest in the community by planting trees and they wanted suggestions as to where. KG suggested the Harpsden Parish Church Cemetery as a candidate. The Council were still of the view that the tree felling alongside Chalk Hill had been badly mismanaged and wondered if this area might be a candidate for new planting.

ACTION. KG to consider possible sites for tree planting.

4077 Dates of next meetings:

18th September

20th November

Approved:

Date: 18th September 2023

Kester George, Chairman

