

Minutes of the Monthly Parish Council Meeting held on 20th November 2007
in the recreation ground pavilion at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Mr S Lilly (Vice-Chair) Mr. M. Ricketts Mr J Fisher
Mr G Taylor Mr R Thomas Mr D Hayter
Mrs D Boughton-Waite Mr F Treml Mr D Marsh
Mrs M Turner (District Cllr) Mr R Waite (District Cllr)

Apologies: Dr K Beswick Mr C Lamont (County Cllr)

1. Minutes of the previous meeting (PC/09/07)

The Minutes from the October meeting were signed as a true record.

2. Matters Arising from previous Minutes – a) Affordable Housing

Mr S Roberts from Sovereign Housing attended the meeting. The land owner is still willing to sell. The Council is concerned that there are already too many empty flats in the village; VWHDC has confirmed that there is a shortage of houses. Mr Roberts explained that a new Housing Needs survey is required if the Council wants to change the type of housing in the project; the deadline for the funding runs out in March. The Council arranged a further meeting to discuss affordable housing on 11th December, starting before the Finance meeting. District Councillors to contact Enabling Officer at VWHDC in the meantime. Mr Roberts left at 8.10.

b) Local Sponsorship Fund

Chilton Parish has confirmed that each PC should apply separately for funding.

3. Reports from County/District Councillors/Police

Mr Lamont had sent his apologies.

PCSO Brian McCreath attended the meeting. He informed the Council of a scheme by Harwell School to promote cycling in the parish, including the provision of cycle routes.

Milton Park has agreed to buy a SID machine, which will be exclusively for the use of the Wantage East area, including Harwell. Neighbourhood Specialist Officer PC S Lynch has asked for £30 per annum from each Parish to cover maintenance costs. The machine would be useful on Reading Road and Didcot Road but useless on the High Street, as a clear 100 yards is required to take readings. Some youths had been apprehended last weekend after being reported for drinking and driving cars on the recreation ground. Following a spate of car tyre slashing, one man had been apprehended. Mr McCreath left at 8.40.

Mr Waite reported on waste plans; there are plans to use Harwell as a model for monitoring waste. Director of Waste to be invited to January meeting. Street and drain cleaning in Harwell is unsatisfactory.

Under VWHDC's Health Improvement Plan 2007-2010, health improvements are to be considered. Mr Lilly pointed out that distance from major hospitals is a concern.

Mrs Turner attended a presentation on Affordable Housing recently.

The Planning Application at the rear of Blenheim Terrace was discussed by Planners recently. More consultation is planned before a decision is made.

Mr Ricketts asked whether data used in the Open Space Consultation is available for inspection; he had identified several discrepancies in the document. Both District Councillors to find out and report before the December meeting.

RW,MT

SEERA is to be disbanded by 2010; SEEDA may take over.

4. Planning Matters

Formal Notice of Permission has been received in respect of;

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| HAR/13118/1 | Proposed ground floor & 1 st floor extension at Willow Tree Cottage, Barrow Lane, for Mr & Mrs Pickles. |
| HAR/20270 | Extension & alterations to form chalet bungalow & attached garage at Craig View, Reading Road, for Mr Bladon. |
| HAR/13273/1 | Erection of double garage at 20 Jennings Lane for Mr Stamper & Ms Hall. |
| HAR/20272 | Single storey rear extension to form larger kitchen & breakfast room, loft conversion with dormer window & rooflight to form bedroom with shower room at Hill View, Church Lane, for Mr & Mrs Jones. |
| HAR/10326/3 | Conversion of existing car port into habitable accommodation at Jasmine Cottage, Didcot Road, for Mr Markham. |
| HAR/20311 | Erection of single storey side/rear extension at 5 Hengest Gate for Mr Champion. |

(This application had been considered by members of the Environment & Planning Committee since the last meeting; Mrs Boughton-Waite and Mr Lilly had declared an interest as neighbours - other Committee members asked that neighbours' comments be taken into consideration by Planners).

Notice of Work to Trees has been given as follows;

Fell 1 sycamore at Harwell Village Hall for Harwell Village Hall Management Committee.

3 new Applications have been received, as follows;

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| HAR/15647/1 | 1 st floor dormer extensions forming bedroom, wc & gable end with fly hip to bedroom one at 10 Barrow Road, for Mr & Mrs Charles. |
| HAR/15729/2-LB | Minor internal alterations at 1-2 The Cherry Barn, High Street, for Fellside Estates Ltd. |

The Council requested that neighbours' comments be taken into account by Planners.

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| MIL/7643/5 | Conversion of barn to dwelling at Grove Farm, Milton Hill, for Mr & Mrs Hartwright. |
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Notice of this application is for information only.

Amended Plans had been received in respect of;

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| HAR/19966/1 | Demolition of shed, erection of 2 detached dwellings with associated garages, improvements to existing access, provision of parking spaces for Blenheim Terrace & Burr Cottage, amended siting & design of dwellings. |
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Members of the Environment & Planning Committee had discussed these plans in depth. In addition to reiterating former objections, the Committee members felt that approval of this application would set a precedent for further backfill projects, and had particular concerns about the number of vehicles using the proposed exit onto Burr Street, as well as the narrowness of the proposed drive, which could

create difficulties for waste lorries and emergency vehicles. It also seems there are issues over land ownership, which need to be clarified. There was a Development Control Committee meeting to discuss this application on 5 November, which was attended by District Councillors (see Item 3); further discussion to take place.

VWHDC has prepared a new checklist for planning applications; Mr Lilly took the document and will draft comments on the Council's behalf. SL

Dr Beswick had asked Dr Hughes of Keep Harwell Rural for his comments concerning a Harwell By-pass. Deferred for further discussion until all Councillors have seen the document.

VWHDC has prepared an Open Space Consultation document, which Mr Ricketts has been looking at (see Item 3). He will draft comments after a reply is received regarding his queries. MR

VWHDC has also prepared documents entitled "Your Vale, Your Future"; copies were taken by Mr Marsh, Mr Ricketts, Mrs Boughton-Waite, Mr Fisher and Mr Thomas. DM,MR,DBW,JF,RT

5. Financial Matters – a) Receipts & payments cashbook for October 2007- The receipts and payments cashbook for October was signed as a true record. Mrs Boughton-Waite had checked petty cash and done bank reconciliation.
- b) Requests for funding- i) Poppy wreath – Harwell RBL has again purchased the wreath laid at the war memorial by the Council; invoice expected. Mrs Boughton-Waite proposed payment of £20 for the wreath, seconded by Mr Fisher, carried unanimously.
- ii) Abingdon CAB/ South & Vale Carers Centre – there is no money available at this time.
- c) Banking – Alliance & Leicester have finally updated signatories. Co-op Bank is processing the Council's application.
- d) Salaries – NALC has sent details of pay awards for Clerks. Mr Ricketts proposed that the Clerk's salary be raised to £8.041 per hour from £7.846 per hour, backdated from April 1st 2007. Seconded by Mr Fisher, carried unanimously.
- e) Audit completion – the external audit has now been completed. The auditors commented that the level of the Council's Fidelity Guarantee Cover may be insufficient, and recommended a review of cover by the Council. The auditors also desired that £369 which is held by the Council for the Memorial Garden and new pavilion projects, be shown in the Council's cash balance on the Annual Return, rather than shown as separately held funds. The Council noted the auditors' comments, and the level of cover will be reviewed at the Finance meeting in December. Mrs Boughton-Waite proposed that the Council approve and accept the Annual Return; seconded by Mr Fisher, carried unanimously.
6. Matters relating to Council Owned Lands
- a) Recommendations from Lands & Rec Committee – deferred for further discussion at next Lands meeting.
- Mr Lilly to draft a letter to football clubs about the state of the pavilion recently; owing to mud left everywhere, the cleaner has had to work extra hours. SL
- b) Harwell News query - Mr Ricketts wanted clarification on acceptance of ads from franchisers. The Council agreed to leave the decision to the Editor.

c) Tennis & Bowls Clubs – leases/ rent review - Mr Lilly is still working on the Leases; Mr Taylor proposed accepting the recommendation from the Lands & Recreation Committee to raise rents as follows; Tennis Club annual rent to be raised from £160 to £180, Bowls Club annual rent to be raised from £195 to £210; seconded by Mr Ricketts, carried unanimously.

d) Dilapidated stable – Mr Lilly reported that the prospective purchasers are still interested. He will arrange a new valuation. SL

e) Play ground report/ play seminar – Mr Hayter has contacted a firm which will make the spring for the gate. Clerk to order according to Mr Hayter’s instructions.

f) East Hendred Boys Football Club request – the Club has received Lottery funding to hold a Coaching Course, and has asked the Council for permission to hold the course in the pavilion, some time in April 2008. Any spare places will be offered to Harwell people. The Council granted permission.

g) Publications scheme – deferred until the Chairman is present.

h) Health & Safety queries – electrical testing has been done; fire extinguisher sign has been removed from meeting room. An asbestos register will need to be kept if any is located on the Council’s land. Mr Fisher has been looking into some aspects of Health & Safety, and has asked Mr Russell to check memorials in the cemetery; Mr Treml agreed to investigate further. FT

7. Environment – a) traffic signs / speed restrictions on A4185– Mr Fisher reported that it seems VAS are least effective on straight roads, where motorists become used to them. In order for the PC to have a greater chance of obtaining any signs, it has to raise the profile of its concerns, eg at District Council level, in the press, etc. He proposed that the Council pay the requested £ 30 per annum for the use of a SID machine (as outlined by PCSO McCreath at Item 3). Seconded by Mr Thomas, carried by majority vote of 8 to 1.

OCC is changing speed limits along the A4185; the new limit will be 40mph along the length of the road from North Drive all the way to Chilton.

b) Bus services – Mr Lilly updated the Council on past and current decisions. The tender for running bus services has been awarded to Thames Travel, which intends to implement a Sunday Service between Grove and Didcot; however, the Newbury service and late night Oxford service have been withdrawn., in spite of complaints. Mr Lilly and Mr Marsh to attend a meeting with Councillor Hudspeth from OCC on 27th November. SL,DM

c) Footpaths – Mr Ricketts has walked the remaining footpaths, and has produced a review of Rights of Way, highlighting problems around the parish. OCC has been in touch regarding the closure of footpath 6 near The Holloway; it has also taken responsibility for the footpath to the rear of Manor Green.

d) Didcot Forum/ Public Exhibition – Mr Ricketts attended the Forum; although not very well presented, issues such as looking after existing open space and improving routes to the River Thames were discussed. Mr Ricketts to draft comments to return to the organisers. MR
There is a Public Exhibition planned for Saturday 24 November at 116 Broadway, Didcot, themed “Natural Greenspaces for Didcot”.

e) Harwell churchyard – the contractor who currently cuts the grass in the churchyard is raising his prices from 2008. To go out to tender. The Council is also considering asking the grounds staff to take on the job. Deferred to next Lands & Recreation Committee meeting.

f) OALC Winter meeting – Mrs Boughton-Waite may be able to attend.

DBW

8. Any Other Business

ORCC has written to advise that the Post Office is aiming to close 2500 post offices across the country.

A review of Primary Education is being undertaken by OCC. ORCC is advising that small schools may be at risk, and urges PCs to support local schools.

OCC has produced a Fire Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan 2008-13, and an Action Plan 2008-9 Consultation Document. These items are available on the OCC website.

Mr Ricketts has started a draft "Action List" for outstanding projects.

Mr Treml reported graffiti on the A34 bridge and Didcot Road surface.

Mrs Boughton-Waite read a message from Mr J Mulford, in which he has offered to help the grounds staff to mend the bench from Drewitt's Corner. Gratefully accepted by the Council.

She also asked for the grass at the war memorial to be cut every November before the Remembrance Service.

The meeting ended at 10.15 pm.