

Minutes of the Monthly Parish Council Meeting held on 8th January 2008
in the recreation ground pavilion at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Dr K Beswick(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
Mr S Lilly Mrs M Turner (District Cllr) Mr R Waite (District Cllr)
3 members of the public.

Apologies: Mr C Lamont (County Cllr)

Dr Beswick opened the meeting by welcoming the VWHDC and Veolia representatives, and thanking all Councillors for their contributions so far.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting (PC/10/07)

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

2. Matters Arising from previous Minutes – a) Waste

The meeting was attended by Mr M Mackay, Deputy Director, Contracts & Procurement, Mr D Wilson, Waste Services Manager, Mr P Legge, Team Leader Environmental Protection, all from VWHDC, and Ms N Towell, Veolia Contract Manager.

Mr Waite introduced these guests, and explained that with landfill charges due to double, VWHDC is monitoring the amount of recycling and refuse in the District, using Harwell as a model. Regular meetings with HPC are intended.

Mr Mackay said there are concerns that local parishes have not been involved as fully as possible; 3 area supervisors are in place to pick up on local issues and improve communication, promoting ideas locally on all aspects of waste. Environmental Wardens can now monitor Envirocrimes, eg flytipping, litter, dog fouling, rubbish left out early for collection, etc. Fixed penalties can be issued to offenders – parish councils have greater powers which need to be considered (see DEFRA website).

Councillors were concerned about the following:

Promote greater use of green boxes and recycling, and provide figures if possible. Ms Towell agreed to look into VWH tonnage figures for 6 months ago and compare them with present figures. Mr Legge to ask Vale Housing Association to help promote recycling. Available figures to be published in HN.

Monitor the numbers of black bags left out early for collection, and litter left behind by Veolia operatives after green box and rubbish collections – this problem has been reported a number of times by grounds staff. HPC to report again if the problem continues.

Monitor where bins are left after collection, so they are not left in locations which could prove hazardous.

Continue to promote use of brown bins.

Widely publicise new rules on dog fouling – some PCs have banned dogs completely from recreation grounds.

Mr Mackay said these were valid issues, though not unique to Harwell. To continue dialogue with HPC via Mr Waite, and return to address PC meeting in 6 months' time.

VWHDC & Veolia to be invited to APM.

The representatives left following thanks from Dr Beswick.

b) Affordable Housing – a petition and other communications have been received from residents in Orchard Way, expressing concerns about the proposed development rear of Orchard Way. Mr Thomas said the proposal was too large for the site; Mr Fisher agreed and was concerned about the narrowness of the road and proposed entrance to the site.

Mr Marsh moved that based on the 2003 Housing Needs survey and the updated information of housing needs presented by VWHDC in December 2007, the Council still endorses the need for affordable houses in the village. The resolution was carried by 8 votes in favour (2 abstained).

Mr Marsh moved that following the review of all alternative sites in the village, the Council supports and endorses the current proposal for affordable housing on the Orchard Way site. An amendment to take out “the current proposal for” and substitute “a proposal for” was proposed by Mr Ricketts, and was carried by 5 votes to 3, with 1 abstention. The resolution with amendment was put to the vote, and carried by 5 votes to 3, with 1 abstention.

Mr Marsh moved that the Council recognises the concerns of the local residents and will work with them to make sure that they are addressed as part of the planning procedure. The resolution was carried unanimously.

The Council agreed to ask Sovereign to consider a smaller development, with homes in keeping with existing properties, and to ensure the entrance to the site is as safe as possible.

Residents who had attended the meeting were not entirely satisfied with this decision, but the Council will keep them informed via Minutes, Harwell News and in future meetings.

c) Consultation replies – Mr Ricketts had drafted a reply to VWHDC’s Your Vale Your Future consultation. Mr Lilly had replied to the Planning consultation (to provide a copy to Clerk). Clerk to distribute all consultation replies. SL

3. Reports from County/District Councillors/Police

Mr Lamont had sent his apologies.

Mrs Turner recently attended a planning enforcement meeting. Comments re: new PPS4 Planning Guidance to be in by 17/3/08 (listed on VWHDC website).

Customer Services number for Benefit Enquiries has changed to 0845 300 6129.

Mrs Turner attended a UKAEA Liaison Committee meeting in December.

Mr Waite reported that some problems have been experienced by people calling VWHDC’s Customer Services numbers; some calls are handled in Bromley and Coventry.

The Planning Committee has approved the Burr Street application, but there are legal complications.

Mr Waite to attend monthly meetings with Mr Mackay re: waste in Harwell.

Mr Taylor expressed thanks to Mr Waite for arranging for the Waste representatives to address the meeting; the Council felt this was very useful.

4. Planning Matters

Formal Notice of Permission has been received in respect of;

HAR/16731/3	Demolition of existing 2 houses, squash courts & tennis courts. Erection of hotel & leisure club, spa & bar (re-submission) at Land North & South of Curie Avenue for Four Pillars Hotels & UKAEA.
HAR/15647/1	1 st floor dormer extensions forming bedroom, wc & gable end with fly hip to bedroom one at 10 Barrow Rioad for Mr & Mrs Charles.
HAR/59/60(k)	Erection of compound security fencing (retrospective) at 187 Milton Park for Baumatic Ltd.

3 new Applications have been received and dealt with by members of the Planning Committee, as follows;

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| HAR/9934/2 | Erection of a single storey extension at Heron House, Blenheim Hill for Mr & Mrs Cantwell. |
| HAR/20368 | Erection of illuminated signage at Lumen House, Library Avenue, for The JNT Association. |
| HAR/13273/2 | Proposed alterations to existing front former at 20 Jennings Lane for Mr H Stamper & Mrs E Hall. |

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

Notice had been received of a Development Control Committee meeting to discuss application HAR/1123/10 Retrospective application for the construction of timber decking across stream & erection of close board fencing at Bumble Barn, Church Lane.

Committee members had been unable to attend the meeting, but had asked that previous objections be taken into consideration by Planners (ie that the decking may cause obstructions in the stream during times of high water, leading to a possible risk of flooding). The Committee members also asked whether permission had been sought from St Matthews's Church to erect the fencing.

1 more new application has been received, in respect of;

HAR/19692/1	Proposed erection of a detached dwelling on land part of Greenbanks, Downs Close for Mr & Mrs Cross.
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The Council objected to this proposal on the grounds that the site is too high and no allowance had been made for the earth bank, so that visibility for traffic approaching from Rowstock would be affected, and also that the exit onto Reading Road would be hazardous to traffic approaching the village, being very near to the Downs Close junction.

Notice of Work to Trees has been received, as follows;

Remove 1 ash tree at Ballut, Church Lane, for Mr Knibbs.

The Council had no objection.

Mr Lilly took a letter from SODC re: planning to read on the Council's behalf.

SL

5. Financial Matters – a) Receipts & payments cashbook for Nov/Dec 2007- Deferred to next meeting as bank statements have only just been received; there are also still problems with BT payments. Mr Marsh has put in an invoice for the money owing to him because of BT's banking error.
- b) Budget & precept for 2008/9 – Council discussed the recommendations from the Finance Meeting held on December 11th; financial projection is broadly in line with the budget, with slight overspending on pavilion cleaning and the showers project. Harwell News is likely to be around £400 under budget, pitch fees have increased following the addition of 2 children's teams, and a litter grant has been received for £1092. It is likely that a new van will be required next year.
- Following indications that the contractor who cuts the grass in the churchyard will be raising his fee in 2008, the contract had gone out to tender. Replies so far have not found any other contractor to be any cheaper. The Committee recommended that the grounds staff do the work, with equipment to be purchased if necessary. Preliminary discussions with grounds staff indicate they are willing to do the

work, an extra 3 hours per week being required during the cutting season. This will cost around £1620 extra on salaries, but will save around £2400 from the churchyard maintenance budget.

Anticipated income for 2008/9 is £13453; anticipated expenditure is £52600, leaving a shortfall of £39140. Budgeted expenditure for 2008/9 was proposed as follows;

Salaries	30000
Donations/subscriptions/courses	2800
Harwell News	1900
Phone, post, stationery, broadband	700
Office equipment	300
Insurance/ prof. fees	4000
Pavilion/ adventure play mtce	1500
Rec ground/ allotments	700
Dog bins/ general maintenance	1500
Cemetery/ churchyard	1000
Van/ tools	1300
Machinery	1500
Fuel	800
Misc	100
Adventure play ground	500
New van reserve	3000
Contingency fund	<u>1000</u>
	<u>52600</u>

An increase in precept was proposed as follows;

Last year's precept (33360+ one-off payment 4000)	£37360
+ 3%	£ 1120
Precept with 3% increase	<u>£38480</u>

The level of reserves should stay around £15000, although some members thought this too high. In view of the fact that extra expenditure may be required on the new pavilion project in the near future, Clerk recommended reserves do not fall below £10000.

Mr Lilly proposed that the Council accept the above budget & precept, seconded by Mrs Boughton-Waite, carried unanimously.

c) Banking – Co-op Bank current account is open – Clerk to query deposit account.

d) Insurance – Awaiting details concerning a possible rise in Fidelity Guarantee Premium.

e) Request for funding/presentation – Vale & Downland Museum Administrator has requested funding for refurbishment of the museum, and asked to make a presentation to the Council about the museum's Jubilee year. To be invited to the APM. No funding available for a donation at present.

f) Harwell News fees – Council agreed to leave fees unchanged at £12 + VAT per ad.

g) Cemetery fees – deferred until Church figures are available (draft only at present).

6. Matters relating to Council Owned Lands

a) Recommendations from Lands & Rec Committee – i) cemetery policies/new cem/fencing – cemetery policies have been redrafted to include “no planting except at headstone, no kerbs or ornaments except headstone”, paragraph on “levelling” taken out. To be circulated after approval; a testing policy is required first. Committee recommended fencing be installed in cemetery along

footpath 8 before new part is used; possible that a low hedge could be planted at the side of the spoil heap. Mr Ricketts asked that the path be cleared, and reported a bench has been damaged.

ii) Allotments – composting/holders’ Group – Committee recommended that composting be encouraged and the burning area removed. Tenants to be encouraged to start an allotment holders’ group. Clerk to write to all Tenants.

iii) rec ground – dogs/seeding/trees/play area – Mr Fisher had contacted Environmental Wardens who can issue fixed penalty notices to dog owners re: fouling in the village. Any signs erected by the Council would prevent the issuing of fixed penalties. Council to check new DEFRA rules before proceeding.

Grounds staff to purchase grass seed. Mr Ricketts is still looking at the tree planting plan. Springs for the play area gate have been purchased.

iv) verge cutting – Committee recommended arranging a rota to help grounds staff cut verges along Reading Road and Didcot Road.

Mr Ricketts proposed these recommendations be accepted by the Council; seconded by Mr Taylor, carried unanimously.

Mr Thomas reported a number of trees need restaking around the rec; the holes in the earth bank need to be filled in.

b) New pavilion report – Mr Fisher reported that a consortium agreement has been drawn up by Hodsons solicitors; he will provide a copy for examination by the Council. The document will be legally binding when adopted. Mr Fisher was proposed by Mr Thomas as the Council’s representative on the Committee; seconded by Mr Hayter, carried unanimously. Mr Lilly declared an interest and took no part in the discussion. JF

c) Tennis/Bowls clubs - lease – Mr Lilly has drafted the letters; to be given to the Clerk.

d) Dilapidated stable – the prospective buyers have renewed their interest in the purchase of the building. Mr Ricketts proposed that the original terms as suggested in September (PC/08/07) be adhered to. Seconded by Mr Hayter, carried. A valuer to be instructed to provide an independent valuation.

e) Harwell Rugby Club – the club had sent a payment for use of the pitch.

f) East Hendred Boys FC requests – the Club has asked to use the pavilion for a FA Coaching course over the 2 weekends 3-4 & 10-11 May; if there are any spare places they will be offered to residents. The Club would also like to offer coaching for 3 to 9 year-olds alongside the Saturday morning matches, and is willing to pay £10 per session towards cleaning costs. The Council gave permission for both activities.

g) Publications Scheme – The Chairman signed the updated Publications Scheme, which will now be displayed on the noticeboards.

Mr Ricketts has scanned most of the past Council Minutes; Mr Marsh offered to post them on the website; offer gratefully accepted.

h) Health & Safety queries - Mr Trembl is investigating responsibilities, including whether the Council needs to have the showers inspected annually for Legionnaire’s Disease. FT

A number of syringes have been found by the groundsman in Townsend; VWHDC has been informed.

7. Environment – a) traffic signs – ongoing.

b) Bus services/ review of transport posts – Mr Lilly reported on a meeting with OCC Councillor Hudspeth, and on conversations with the Oxford Bus Company director; the disappointing response to all queries is that no major changes are planned for bus services in Harwell.

Dr Beswick suggested that buses to John Radcliffe Hospital which run through Abingdon could be asked to extend the service to Harwell.

Mr Marsh is trying to obtain an online copy of the Sunday service timetable.

Mr Lilly took the letter re: transport posts to read on the Council's behalf.

c) Footpath 6 – Mr Ricketts has drawn up a report on Rights of Way in the parish. He will meet an OCC officer this month to discuss closure of Footpath 6.

d) Letter from school re: cycle paths – children from the school would like to address the next meeting. Mr Fisher mentioned that the school had recently received a very good OFSTED report.

e) Harwell bypass – Dr Beswick has written to English Heritage re: concerns over increased traffic through the village in future years. He is to contact the emergency services to ask for support for a new junction onto the A34.

f) North Wessex Downs AONB Annual Review – Mr Ricketts will read the Review on the Council's behalf. MR

8. Any Other Business

A resident has complained about the number of large vehicles passing through the village. Clerk to pass on the complaint to Highways/police.

VWHDC has released its planned Budget for the next year.

ORCC is holding a meeting in February to discuss possible Post Office closures. No-one from the Council is able to attend.

Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust has published its Annual Report.

Mr Lilly reported on rumours that the Slade Son & Taylor firm has been acquired by Hodsons. Clerk to write for more information.

Mr Marsh mentioned that Bobs Butchers has stopped issuing plastic bags, replacing them with re-useable ones; to be mentioned in Harwell News.

Mr Ricketts attended a UKAEA Liaison Committee at which there were more complaints about cuts in funding for the clearing up of the site.

The meeting ended at 9.45 pm.

