

HARWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Monthly Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 12th April 2011 at 7.30pm in the Recreation Ground Pavilion

Present: Mr D Marsh (Chairman) Mrs K Beswick (Vice-Chair) Ms K Hawthorne Mr D Hayter
 Mrs D Boughton-Waite Mr J Fisher Mrs S Gaspar Mr R Thomas
 Mr R Ricketts Mrs M Turner (Dist Cllr) Mr R Waite (Dist Cllr)

Apologies: Mr G Taylor (late) Mr S Lilly (County Cllr)

1 PCSO, 5 members of the public.

Open Forum; Mr Marsh invited representatives of the allotment tenants' committee to speak as the first action of the meeting.

b) Representations from members of the public

The tenants had submitted a number of questions to the Council, via email; all councillors had seen the questions prior to the meeting. Mr Marsh explained that this was an agenda item later in the meeting, and that answers would not be available until the Council had discussed the matter. In addition to their original questions, the tenants stated that they had repaired a pipe which was still leaking after the groundsman had effected a repair, that Green Road surface is deteriorating further, and that branches overhanging Green Road are restricting the width. Mr Marsh thanked the tenants for forming their committee. The 4 tenants left at 7.40 pm.

a) Reports from County & District Councillors & Police

PCSO Kirby reported 1 instance of criminal damage to a vehicle, 1 instance of possession of cannabis, for which 1 arrest has been made, and 1 theft from a vehicle connected to an attempted burglary, for which 1 arrest has been made. The SID & ANPR machines were used, and traffic police have used the speed gun locally. There have been various break-ins to vehicles at open space areas around the Vale; arrests have been made.

PCSO left at 7.50 pm, following thanks from the council.

Mr Waite & Mrs Turner had provided a written report which included a warning to residents to be aware of a council tax scam, and details about volunteer litter picking in the district. Mrs Turner reported that Vale Housing Association has obtained a quote for the installation of gas heating to the flats in Gaveston Road; Mr Waite reported that the site of the collapsed cottage on Reading Road has been cleared, and planners have contacted the owner to discuss future plans for the site. The end wall of one of the neighbouring properties (previously an internal partition wall between the collapsed cottage and adjoining property) has been surveyed and has been found to be in a dangerous condition.

1. Approve Minutes of the previous meeting PC/2011/03/08

The Minutes of the March meeting were signed as a true record.

2. Matters Arising from previous Minutes

a) Actions & status reports, including External Liaison (note meetings attended by councillors)

Mr Ricketts had not contacted the Feast Committee, but reported that the Committee is planning a summer event at the rectory.

Mr Ricketts attended a Village Hall Committee meeting; Mr Marsh attended 2 meetings to discuss progression of the Community Facility proposals for the recreation ground. Notes from the meetings are to follow, once a report has been made to the Village Hall Committee.

Mr Marsh & Mrs Boughton-Waite attended a UKAEA stakeholder group meeting (no news of relevance to the parish).

Several councillors had attended a meeting with Mr Gilbert, Planning Officer from VWHDC, to discuss management of community facilities within Great Western Park. Mr Marsh also attended a similar meeting in

Didcot. He reported that some GWP planning applications are under discussion at SODC. He had re-arranged the website so that GWP matters are on one page.

b) **APM agenda items**

Taylor Woodrow can no longer attend the APM, but would like to attend a meeting later in the year. Mr Hayter suggested the Harwell By-pass could be discussed; Mr Marsh explained that there is no likelihood of funds being available for a by-pass until the next phase of building (VWHDC's Valley Park) is under way. No other matters were put forward.

3. **Planning Matters**, including

a) **Update on local development plans, including**

i) **Note outcome of GWP meeting with M Gilbert re: facilities management**

Notes from this meeting had been circulated to all councilors, and are attached to these Minutes; the Council agreed that management of any facilities located within Harwell parish should be undertaken by HPC.

ii) **Update on GWP development**

Mr Marsh had contacted SODC following press articles re: street naming for GWP, pointing out that although many of the roads, including the Spine Road, will be in Harwell parish, no consultation with the parish had taken place.

- b) **Permissions** – HAR/21294/1 Erection of 4-bedroom detached bungalow at Rose Dene, Didcot Road, for Mr & Mrs Taylor
 HAR/21459 & HAR/21459/1-LB Erection of single storey extension (works already completed) at Brewery Cottage, The Barrow, for Mr Howes
 HAR/14888/1 Conversion of part of garage to dining room at Laburnum House, High Street, for Mr Cannon

Noted. Full conditions to be kept on file.

- c) **Applications** – HAR/6071/1 Installation of photovoltaic panels on single storey office building at 1 The Court, High Street, for The Lankellychase Foundation
 HAR/21525 Proposed 2 storey rear extension & single storey front extension at 1 Wantage Road for Mr Patto
 HAR/6409/10 Amended plans re The White Hart, High Street, for Greene King
 HAR/21505 Amended plans re 5 The Cleave for Ms Jones
 HAR/8688/2 Demolition of existing garage, erection of replacement garage at Bladonstone, The Winnaway, for Mr & Mrs Rowe
 HAR/21409 Amended plans re Buskins, Reading Road, for Mr Stevens (NB Notice of Permission now received)

Members of the Planning Committee had asked that neighbours' comments are borne in mind by Planners when the above applications are considered. Notice of Permission has also been received for HAR/21480 Demolition of existing dwelling & erection of replacement dwelling at Long Acre, Reading Road, for Mr & Mrs Burgess.

P11/W0337/DIS -6 Discharge of Condition 16 on P02/W0838/O at Land at Didcot Road, Harwell (SODC application)

No comments had been sent to SODC, but VWHDC is aware of HPC's comments, through Mr Gilbert. The application concerns the Northern Neighbourhood Square.

- d) **Work to Trees** – Fell 3 x Leylandii at 6 Hengest Gate for Mrs Lyons – no comments were made.

Also received; Fell 1 x Scots Pine at Princes Manor Farm for Ms Lay. Comments to be submitted by 21 April.

Other planning matters; Mr Ricketts apologized for erroneously publishing some planning Permissions in Harwell News.

District Councillors left at 8.15 pm, following thanks from the Council.

4. **Financial Matters-**

a) **Approve Receipts & Payments cashbooks for November & December 2010 & January, February & March 2011**

Mr Ricketts had done bank reconciliation; all cashbooks were signed as a true record.

Mr Marsh explained that he had prepared a new ledger system which will hopefully be ready for the next financial year, and will replace the current cashbook system. It is currently being tested against this year's figures.

b) **Note end of year budget report & approve final accounts if available.**

The Council is underspent by around £7000, as some projects such as the cemetery upgrade have not yet been completed. It was noted that there is a large amount in unallocated reserves, which is more than is recommended. End of year accounts were not finalized.

c) **Note VWHDC Community Grant declined**

VWHDC has stated it is not granting funds for parish cleansing this year.

d) **Approve payment of annual memberships & subscriptions to OPFA, OALC & ORCC**

Mr Fisher proposed that the Council pay these subscriptions as described in the Agenda report; seconded by Mrs Beswick, carried unanimously.

e) **Discuss request for funding – Upton & Blewbury Brownies**

Regretfully declined on this occasion.

f) **Approve payment of Academy Sports Ltd invoice for resurfacing of the tennis courts**

Previously approved by the Council – see PC/2011-03-08. It was noted that the courts have been resurfaced and are to be painted shortly.

g) **Schedule of payments for approval (attached)**

Approved.

Mr Fisher wished to record thanks to the RFO for maintaining the accounts during theyear.

5. **Matters relating to Council-Owned Lands**

a) **Discuss complaints re: adventure play area**

Verbal and written complaints have been received about the deteriorating condition of the play area. Mr Fisher reiterated the fact that he and Mr Thomas had held one meeting with parents of local schoolchildren, with a view to setting up a committee to discuss improvements to the play area, but that there was very little interest in taking the matter further. It was hoped that refurbishment of the area could be factored into plans for a new pavilion building, but that project is also on hold at present. The Council agreed that the equipment is worn and that improvements are required. Deferred for further discussion once the new council is in place.

b) **Report re: cemetery project/waste collection from cemetery**

The Clerk reported that bins have been delivered to the cemetery, although some residents are still using the old spoil area. Mr Ricketts to remove a heap of earth which was left after his re-seeding etc earlier in the year. Clerk to contact Ayres re: path resurfacing, and Grace re: gate repairs, as previously agreed –see PC/2011-02-08. Mr

Ricketts volunteered to plant hedging plants at the gap in the fencing in the extension area. He also has a small amount of seeding to complete.

ACTION: MR, Clk

c) **Sports Development Project/Village Hall Project** –

- i) **Report on Community Facility Project**- discussed at Item 2.
- ii) **Tennis Club- update on courts resurfacing** – discussed at Item 4f.

d) **Approve employment contracts for grounds maintenance workers**

This item was discussed after Item 5f.

- e) **Allotments**: to discuss the report from the clerk concerning questions raised by the allotment holders and support the outline response, and specifically to agree that the allotment rent for Sept 2011 onwards will be reviewed in July 2011 when full water usage figures will be available.

Mr Ricketts declared an interest as an allotment holder, and took no part in the discussion;

Following discussion, *Mr Marsh proposed that the wording on the agenda be amended as follows; "Allotments: to discuss the report from the clerk concerning questions raised by the allotment holders and support the outline response as amended in discussion, and specifically to agree that the allotment rent for Sept 2011 onwards will be reviewed in July 2011 when full water usage figures will be available", seconded by Mr Hayter. Put to the vote, the Council voted by 8 votes in favour of the amendment, with 1 abstention.*

The Council therefore responded to the Committee's queries as follows;

No charge is made for sewage at the allotments site. The RFO to try and negotiate a reduction in supply costs. Staff costs are not allocated to allotment expenditure; some staff costs were included in a breakdown of costs last year when a full breakdown of income/expenditure was requested. Grass cutting in the bridleway is not included in time spent by staff at the allotments.

The Council welcomes the efforts of the Committee to join the National Society of Allotments, as being beneficial to the Committee, however, it felt it would be unnecessary to collect fees on the Committee's behalf.

The Council is happy to host further discussions with the Committee on the subject of future maintenance.

Rent from September 2011 has already been set at £25 per plot, but further discussions will take place once final water bills have been checked; previous discussions have taken place re: changing the rental system to one based on plot size, but these have not yet been finalised.

The County Council is responsible for the maintenance of Green Road surface, but as has previously been advised, it will only maintain the surface to an acceptable standard for a bridleway, and any drivers take vehicles along it at their own risk. The Clerk to write to householders on either side of Green Road to ask that overhanging branches be cut back.

The Council wished to thank the Committee for the repair to the water pipe, and for forming a Committee.

- f) **Little Pippins**: discuss response to letter from Little Pippins and authorise a short term loan to them of up to £11,000, subject to satisfactory agreement to terms.

Mr Marsh reported that Little Pippins has now made arrangements for obtaining the necessary funds, and no longer needs a loan from the Council, but thanked the Council for considering its request.

The remaining member of the public left at 9.10 pm.

Item 5d was discussed at this point.

New employment contracts drawn up by the Clerk were obsolete as Mr Cadman does not wish to take the full-time position, and Mr Woods has expressed a wish to increase his working hours to 4 days per week. Mr Taylor had discussed the matter with Mr Marsh, with comment as necessary from Mr Fisher, and both felt that the matter was urgent because of the grass growth. Persons interviewed for the grounds staff position had been interested in a full time position, and one of them is now ill. One person who made the short list was not interviewed as he wished to take a part-time position; this person has been approached with a view to offering him a 2-days per week

temporary contract for 4 weeks. Panel members (ie Mr Marsh, Mr Fisher & Mr Taylor) agreed to meet the person as soon as possible to discuss the matter further. The Council agreed that no re-advertisement of the job was required at this stage, and that the decision of the panel members would be final. Formal offer of employment would not be made until after the May meeting.

ACTION: DM,JF,GT

The Council wished to record thanks to Mr Taylor for his efforts.

6. **Environment**

a) **Discuss complaints received re: parking near the school and church hall**

The Council acknowledged the difficulties of residents who were affected by inconsiderate parking. Mr Fisher to contact the school headmaster as it is possible the school has already tried to combat this problem. As Little Pippins' new building is almost complete, it is hoped there will be fewer parking problems near the church hall. A notice to be prepared for Harwell News if necessary.

ACTION: JF

b) **Note Sovereign Vale's "My Community" initiative for Westfield**

Noted. Mrs Gaspar intends to write to Sovereign Vale as a resident.

Mr Taylor arrived at 9.30 pm.

7. **County/District Council Matters;**

a) **OCC consultation on funding for Didcot Volunteer Centre car scheme – note response sent**

The Council supported the proposals. Several residents of Harwell were clients or drivers in the scheme.

b) **OCC Review of Subsidised Bus Services – discuss response**

Deferred to the May meeting.

8. **Set date for APM 2012**

A date after 16th April 2012 to be agreed with the village hall secretary.

9. **Any Other Business**

Mr Marsh thanked the 4 councillors who will be standing down after the elections - Mr Hayter, Mr Thomas, Mr Fisher & Mr Taylor – and expressed appreciation for their efforts on the Council's behalf.

One resident had just missed the deadline for submitting nomination papers; she will be contacted and asked whether she is interested in co-option after the election.

With no further business, the meeting closed on 9.40 pm.

ACTIONS: DM:	Panel member re: groundsperson job
JF:	“ , contact Mr Cansell
GT:	“
MR:	Seeding in cemetery
Clk:	Contact Grace, Ayres re: work in cemetery

Minutes of a meeting with Mr M Gilbert (VWHDC) held on Tuesday 22nd March 2011 at 7.30pm in the Recreation Ground Pavilion, to discuss facilities management at Boundary Park, GWP

Mr Marsh welcomed Mr Gilbert, who thanked the Council for allowing the meeting to take place. A similar meeting took place with Didcot Town Council last week, which was also attended by C Scotting & E Hamilton, both SODC Officers; they had sent apologies this evening.

Mr Gilbert explained that as part of Outline Planning Permission, developers of GWP had to comply with certain conditions, including the production of a phasing strategy for the whole development, which in turn includes framework plans for the northern & southern districts. Mr Gilbert had already sent 3 documents via email, namely a plan showing facilities proposed for Boundary Park, proposals for the pavilion, and proposals for the Northern District Community Building Reserve Land. A new draft framework for the District neighbourhood is to be sent out in the next few days by developers, for comment by local councils; Mr Gilbert had a copy of this document but councillors had not seen it. Taylor Wimpey has now included an office building in the southern part of the Northern Neighbourhood District Square, on land which was originally planned for housing.

1. Design & layout of local facilities – ie sports pitches & temporary community centre

Proposals include 3 options for the use of 0.2ha of land, the “Northern Community Building Reserve Land”, which is sited on the north-west corner of the Northern Neighbourhood Square. Mr Marsh pointed out that original S106 agreements stipulated that 2 community areas would be allocated. One for a temporary community centre and the other to be set aside in case of need (Sites 2 and 6 from the Phasing Plan). *Mr Gilbert was not sure of the changes to S106 agreements, but agreed to find out any new details.* The 3 options propose either a temporary community centre prior to occupation of the 150th dwelling, a permanent community centre building, or a residential development of 9 houses.

The plan of Boundary Park, drawn up by developers following consultations at Didcot Community Forum meetings, but not so far mentioned at any Didcot Community Forum meeting, showed sports pitches for the first time (previous plans have indicated an area of open space, according to previous agreement). The plan has been revised following consultation with sports clubs (not Harwell clubs), and includes provision of pitches specified in S106 agreements, as well as fencing, gates & parking.

The Council felt that the layout as shown would not work because of the parish & district boundary running through the middle.

2. Ownership/management of community facilities

Mr Gilbert explained that commuted sums are available from developers for initial management of the facilities shown in the plan. Policy in the Vale is to first ask the Parish Councils if they wish to run a facility, and the district council would manage facilities if parish councils did not wish to. (Policy in SODC is different). The Council pointed out that one council, whether district or parish, cannot run another council’s facilities, and that the problem of the boundary had been raised consistently throughout the planning stages for GWP, but had been largely ignored by developers and planners. Mr Gilbert commented that Didcot Town Council had similar concerns but that the problem was not insurmountable, and comments from HPC and DTC will be reported back to shared management at VWHDC/SODC.

Mr Waite raised the concern that now rather than at a later date is the time to be finding solutions to the boundary-related problems. Mr Marsh asked whether planners could refuse permission for the facilities until such issues have been resolved. Mr Taylor pointed out that the parking provision in Boundary Park was inadequate.

The Council was emphatic that any facilities located within Harwell parish would be managed by Harwell Parish Council, but was concerned at how it would work (eg some of the pitches are in Didcot but the pavilion was in Harwell).

3. Local Area Brief for Northern Neighbourhood Centre

Discussed during the introduction.

4. District Framework Plan (draft)

In addition to discussions earlier in the meeting, Mr Taylor asked why there was no provision for a cemetery in any of the plans for GWP (this was another issue raised frequently by the parish council during the planning of GWP). *Mr Gilbert* said that proposed open space within Harwell could be used as cemetery space if the parish council wished it; he *will let Mr Marsh know the location of this open space land.* [After the meeting Mr Gilbert referred to page 13 of the S106 under the definition of "Public Open Space" which enables the use of part of the public open space as a burial ground (subject to planning permission being granted), but it is not yet clarified whether space has been allocated.]

Mr Marsh asked what the current estimate is for the number of houses falling within Harwell parish; Mr Gilbert thought it was 600-700, but that the final figure may be higher as it is not yet clear how many flats will be included above shops etc. He also thought that no houses are to be built as Growth Point housing, but Mr Marsh pointed out that Growth Point housing still features in SODC's Core Strategy, and that 750 Growth Point homes were specified in the South East Plan for Harwell. Mr Gilbert reported that around £450,000 has been allocated provisionally for VWHDC under the "New homes bonus" Government scheme, which is to replace Growth Point funding. [After the meeting Mr Gilbert reported that the current estimate is that 800 dwellings will be built in Harwell] Mr Gilbert confirmed that final administrative decisions would be made by the Chief Executive, Mr D Buckle.

5. Current application for the Main Road (HAR/17774/12)

Mr Gilbert asked whether the Council intended to comment on this application.

The Council had discussed the application but had felt that no comments were necessary as the drawings related mostly to drainage layouts, and stopped short of the B4493 Didcot Road. It was noted that walkers may complain at the diversion of footpaths, but that there were no objections to be sent by the 10 March deadline. Mr Marsh had looked at the plans online but found them very confusing as the numbering was random, seemingly dependent on the order in which the plans had been scanned, and that the lack of an executive summary made it difficult to relate each plan to the application.

Mr Gilbert thought that the deadline was wrong and that as this is a major application, there is a 13 week turnaround for comments, instead of the usual 8. He also thought that one drawing showed part of the junction with the B4493.

The Council felt that this conflicting information only exacerbated confusion. Mr Marsh agreed to look at the plans again and draft comments if necessary. Mr Gilbert explained that any comments sent to VWHDC would be passed on to SODC, but Mr Marsh questioned whether this was the case in the past with similar boundary applications.

Other matters;

RPS has still not confirmed attendance at the Harwell APM; *Mr Gilbert to ask Mr N Laister whether any representative will be attending.*

Mr Gilbert promised to report back to the Council shortly; he left following thanks from the Council.

The Council felt it would be useful to contact Didcot Town Council to discuss the boundary issues further, with a view to holding an informal meeting after the elections.