

HARWELL PARISH COUNCIL

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

Present: Mr D Marsh Mrs K Beswick OBE Mrs S Gaspar Ms K Hawthorne Mrs D Turner
 Mr S Davison Ms D Greenfield Mr G Buxton Mrs D Boughton-Waite
 Mr M Ricketts Mr M Fox-Davies Mr S Lilly (County Cllr) Mrs M Turner (Dist Cllr)
 Mr R Waite (Dist Cllr) Mrs S Taylor (Clerk)

Open Forum, including a) Reports from County & District Councillors & Police

Mr Lilly reported that a recent fire at Didcot Power Station, though complicated, was brought under control by fire crews in the course of several hours. All District Councils within OCC area now have a new Safety Partnership Annual Plan. Government has awarded OCC a grant of several million pounds, which is to be spent as a Local Sustainable Transport Fund. Improvements to Didcot rail station forecourt are to begin in August. OCC has agreed to deliver 1 tonne of salt to each parish for the winter, should parishes wish to receive it. The Bribery Act 2010 came into force on 1st July; it has implications for all local councillors. Money for bus shelters is available from some Section 106 funding; there is to be a meeting next month. The Secretary of State has approved the incinerator at Ardley, in spite of an appeal by residents. Because of ongoing budget constraints, street lighting may be an issue next year.

Mr Waite & Mrs Turner had provided a written report (attached to these Minutes). Mr Waite also reported that some stickers are available for dog bins in the parish, and that the owner of the thatched cottage on Reading Road has been given until the end of July to submit new plans for the site – if no plans are received, Mr Gilbert will submit a report to the Cabinet. Ms Hawthorne reported that large bin lorries are still making collections at North Drive, and damaging verges and kerbs. Mr Fox-Davies suggested that penalties could be introduced for any vehicle which causes damage.

No representative of the police was present.

b) Representations from members of the public

No member of the public was present.

1. Approve Minutes of the previous meeting PC/2011/06/14

The Minutes were approved and signed as a true record.

2. Declarations of Interest

Mr Ricketts had questioned whether he should declare a prejudicial interest in the allotments, preferring instead to declare a Personal interest. The Council felt he was in error, but Mr Ricketts declared a Personal interest in items 6 a i & 6 a ii as an allotment tenant. Mr Marsh declared a Personal interest in the planning application for Firbrook, The Cleave, as he is known to the applicants.

3. Matters Arising from previous Minutes

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

Mr Davison had begun to collate information relating to past donations, and will draft a Donations Policy in time for the next meeting. **ACTION: SD**

Mr Buxton did not attend the SSGB meeting, after having spoken to Mr Marsh.

Mr Ricketts attended a Village Hall Management Committee meeting on 5th July.

Mr Buxton attended the Affordable Rural Housing Conference; he reported briefly on the procedures involved. Mr Marsh explained what the Council had tried to do in the past concerning affordable housing sites. The Clerk had sent Mr Buxton details of past Minutes in which the Council's actions were recorded. Mr Marsh & Mr Ricketts attended a meeting re: the Didcot Community Building Provision.

Mr Marsh & Mrs Boughton-Waite attended a Harwell Stakeholder meeting, at which there was a tour of the liquid effluent treatment plant (shortly to be decommissioned). The old sewage works nearby is part of the site earmarked for housing, but it is not due to be decommissioned until 2019. Mr Marsh suggested this fact should be kept in mind when considering future housing allocation by VWHDC.

Mr Marsh attended the meeting with SSGB – report later in the meeting.

Mr Marsh attended meetings re: the village hall project – report later in the meeting.

Mr Buxton has met with the school headmaster and has agreed to become the Council's representative on the board of governors.

Many councillors attended the meeting in the village hall re: facilities in Great Western Park, at which were around 100 residents. There was some disappointment that the meeting was not tailored specifically to Harwell, and that consultation about sports facilities had taken place purely with Didcot clubs.

b) **Any other Matters Arising**

None.

4. **Planning Matters**, including

a) **Update on local development plans, including report following the open meeting with representatives of the GWP development**

3 applications have been or will shortly be submitted to SODC re: landscaping and a further 250 homes at Great Western Park. None of the homes are in Harwell parish, but RPS has offered to address the Council on the matter. Mr Marsh suggested that if necessary, an extraordinary meeting could be called in August.

- b) **Permissions** – HAR/8688/3 Proposed dormer windows to front elevation at Bladonstone, Winnaway, for Mr & Mrs Rowe
 HAR/20463/1 Demolition of garage roof. Erection of new garage roof with raised ridge height, dormer to front elevation & roof windows to rear elevation. Erection of new porch canopy to front elevation & single storey bay window to rear elevation (Amendment to planning permission HAR/20463) at Rose Cottage, Gaveston Road, for Mr & Mrs Purrott

Noted. VWHDC Conditions to be kept on file.

- c) **Applications** – HAR/21609 Proposed 1st floor extension at Talbots Way, Grove Rd, for Mr Houseman
 HAR/8688/4 Retrospective application for rear dormer windows at Bladonstone, Winnaway, for Mr & Mrs Rowe
 HAR/12464/13 & HAR/12464/14-LB Removal of bay window. Erection of new oak framed orangery at Willowbrook, Church Lane, for Mrs White.
 HAR/21625 Erection of 2 single storey extensions at Touchwood, The Barrow, for Mr Howes
 HAR/21612 Erection of 3 storage sheds for sports equipment at Land to northern end of sports field, First Street, for Harwell Science & Innovation Campus

Planning Committee members had submitted comments on the above applications. Planners were asked to consider neighbours' comments in each case.

HAR/2072/6 Demolition of garage, erection of 2 storey extension at Firbrook, The Cleave

Following discussion, the Council agreed that although no objection would be made, Planners should be asked to take into consideration the Council's concerns about the practicality of permitting vehicular access onto Jennings Lane at one of its narrowest points, with a high hedge adjacent to the access (not shown on plans) which could lead to restricted visibility on the highway, thereby increasing the danger to motorists and pedestrians, and possible loss of light for neighbours from the 2-storey extension.

- d) **Notice of Refusal** – HAR/5456/2 Erection of 2-bed bungalow at rear of Yewsley with extended vehicular access & car parking. Reconfiguration of existing parking/access to Yewsley, Didcot Road

Noted.

- e) **Notice of Appeal** – Demolition of garage & erection of replacement garage at Bladonstone, Winnaway

Noted.

- f) **Work to Trees** – Yew Tree Cottage, High Street – reduce crown of yew tree

No comments.

g) **VWHDC Planning training events**

Places for councillors are available on planning training events starting in October. Clerk to let councillors know dates and venues.

ACTION: Clk

5. **Financial Matters-**a) **Approve Receipts & Payments cashbook for June 2011**

Deferred as Mrs Boughton-Waite had not seen bank statements.

b) **Note quarterly budget report**

Noted; the budget is broadly on target, except that the donation from the Tennis Club was received during the last financial year, which will have a bearing on the current budget.

c) **Note reminder invoices sent to members of the Sports Development Consortium re: reimbursement of funds owed to the Council**

Noted. No replies have been received as yet.

d) **Internal Audit review**

The Council was satisfied that the Internal Audit was carried out efficiently and correctly.

e) **VWHDC bin stickers –report & update re: invoice produced by VWHDC**

Further requests for payment have been received from VWHDC, in spite of responses from the Clerk reiterating that the amount payable is nil, and asking for clarification of the reason behind production of an invoice. Mr Marsh reported that Mr Waite has now spoken to VWHDC explaining the situation, and that the invoice has now been withdrawn. Stickers and covering letters are to be delivered as soon as possible. Mr Marsh to liaise with Mr Waite.

ACTION: DM

f) **Schedule of payments for approval (attached to this Agenda) & agree that former councillors who are still bank signatories may sign cheques for the Council's bank accounts until confirmation is received that new signatories have been added to the accounts; retrospectively approve the signing of cheques from May 5th to July 11th by former councillors who are still bank signatories until confirmation is received that bank details are updated.**

The Council approved the payments schedule; Clerk to check whether any payments to UKAEA are duplicates.

Mr Marsh proposed that the Council approve the resolution “Agree that former councillors who are still bank signatories may sign cheques for the Council’s bank accounts until confirmation is received that new signatories have been added to the accounts; retrospectively approve the signing of cheques from May 5th to July 11th by former councillors who are still bank signatories until confirmation is received that bank details are updated.”; seconded by Ms Greenfield; carried by 10 in favour, with 1 abstention.

g) **Note OCC grass cutting grant received**

Noted.

6. **Matters relating to Council-Owned Lands**a) **Recommendations from Lands Committee –**

- i) Allotment rent - *that rent for the year (previously agreed at £25 per plot) be set at 13 pence per square metre, with rent for larger plots capped at £25; and that rent for 2012 should remain at 13 pence per square metre, but that the capped upper limit should be removed*
- ii) New allotment plots - *that the area set out for possible new plots, as unsuitable for a growing area, be used instead for burning and composting*
- iii) Recreation ground surface management plan - *that the Clerk liaises with Mr East to draw up a timetable of treatments etc.*

- iv) Woodland walk proposals - *that inquiries as to renting the area of land at the rear of Orchard Way and adjacent to the recreation ground, as well as part of or the whole of the field immediately to the rear of this area of land, currently owned and rented out by a local farmer, continue.*
- v) Recreation ground - stile next to Reading Road - *that the Clerk obtains quotes for lowering the stile, and for removing the stile & installing a gate.*
- vi) Play area gate for tractor - *that the Clerk obtains quotes for widening the gate and for mending all the gates to the play area*

Mrs Beswick gave a brief resume of proceedings at the Lands Committee meeting. Since the meeting, allotment plots have been re-measured by Mr Ricketts & Mr Davies. Mr Ricketts is still to query 2 measurements, but based on those most recently supplied, Mrs Beswick had calculated rents using a split between a charge for water and a charge for rent. She reported that it was being established as to whether there is a water leak at the site; Mr Ricketts reported that after testing overnight there was no leak between the meter and the stopcock by plot 13. Mrs Beswick hoped that the Council and Tenants' Committee could work together to carry out investigations. Mr Ricketts reported that not all tenants were co-operating over the Tenants' Committee.

Mrs Beswick proposed that resolutions 6 a i, 6 a ii, 6 a iii, 6 a iv, 6 a v & 6 a vi as set out on the agenda be approved by the Council; seconded by Mr Buxton, carried unanimously.

b) Cemetery – update

Mr Ricketts reported that the seeding will be done later this week. He will write a short article for Harwell News to update residents on work done so far.

Mr Ricketts reported that the cemetery groundsman had said that, as there was little grass cutting needed at present, he could demolish the now empty waste area. It was agreed that this would need further discussion before a decision

ACTION: MR

c) Play area – update

Mrs Beswick reported that the Working Group has been formed, with some residents coming forward to offer their help after the article in the last Harwell News. After a number of site meetings and collation of ideas, the group hopes to put more definite plans together. A representative of OCC is to talk to the Group shortly re: funding options. Any grants awarded will be payable to the Council, and all grant applications will be copied to the Council. The Clerk advised that Terms of Reference or powers of delegation will be desirable, so that the Group has a recognized function and approval from the Council. Clerk to look for draft documents; Mrs Beswick to ask OCC for advice on the subject.

ACTION: KB, Clk

d) Sports Development Project/Village Hall Project –note outcome of meeting with SSGB; update

Mr Marsh had circulated an email from the Village Hall Trustees, with the briefing notes for four architects, asking them to quote for the preparation of outline drawings for two options: an extension to the village hall, and a new building on the recreation ground.

SSGB has done several pieces of work on behalf of the Sports Development Project Consortium, including feasibility studies, valuation of land, and funding reviews. Unfortunately reports from SSGB had not reached the Council, so that when SSGB's last invoice was sent to the Council, it was queried, and has not yet been paid. Percentage amounts still owing to the Council since payment of the original invoices remain outstanding for now. SSGB has indicated that the total maximum amount of likely funding for the Sports Development Project available from outside sources will be around £200,000. Mr Marsh stated that this figure is far below what was originally expected. The Council will need to make a decision on the future of the Sports Development Project at a later stage.

He now has copies of all reports, and will send them to the Clerk & other councillors as necessary. **DM**

7. Environment

a) Discuss overgrown hedges

A reminder to residents to cut back any hedges which overhang roads and footpaths will appear in the August Harwell News.

b) Parking problems – residents' concerns

A resident has complained about obstructive parking along Jennings Lane; police have been advised. Mrs Gaspar suggested that little or nothing can be done in the matter, but offered to help if necessary.

c) **OCC bus stop funding & site meeting – discuss; agree representative to attend**

Mr Marsh & Ms Greenfield suggested that the footpath from the end of The Winnaway on the A4185, be extended to the pedestrian crossing & the bus stop if funding is available. The Clerk pointed out that a similar scheme had been suggested some time ago, but it had not progressed further. Other suggestions included the hardstanding proposed for the Didcot Road bus stop. Mr Lilly has indicated that funding may be available for installing Real Time Information displays on 1 existing or 1 new bus stop; the Council agreed it would be a useful idea unless funds could be better used elsewhere. Mrs Beswick agreed to attend the meeting if it takes place before 23rd August; Mr Marsh agreed to go if the meeting is later than this. Clerk to collate comments in time for the meeting. **ACTION: Clk**

8. **Correspondence & circulars received by the Clerk**

The Council has been invited to a civic service at St Frideswide's, Oxford; Clerk to send details to all councillors. **ACTION: Clk**

Mason's funfair has applied to hold a fair in the parish. The Council declined on this occasion.

Clerk to check on storage possibilities in the parish for the tonne of salt offered by OCC. **ACTION: Clk**

Ms Greenfield asked about the Council's Emergency Plan, and offered to review it. **ACTION: DG**

9. **Any Other Business**

Mr Marsh reported that a car had been vandalized twice outside the hairdresser's; police have been advised.

With no further business, the meeting closed at 10.10 pm.

ACTIONS FROM MEETING:

**DM: Obtain copies of SSGB reports
Liaise with RW re: bin stickers**

KB: Ask OCC re: TOR for play area

SD: Draft donations policy

MR: Article for HN re: cemetery upgrade

DG: Review Emergency Plan

ALL: Bus shelter comments to Clerk

**Clerk: Advise councillors of VWH training dates
“ “ “ date of St Frideswide's service
Look up draft TOR
Collate comments re: bus shelters
Check on storage re: salt**

**Harwell Parish Council
Notes for Councillors at meeting
on Tuesday, 12th July 2011
from Cllr Reg Waite & Cllr Mrs Margaret Turner**

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Small businesses get an extra helping hand

Small businesses in southern Oxfordshire can now get extra support following the launch of a new charity hub.

Fredericks Oxfordshire is the latest Fredericks Hub to open in the south of England offering loans, mentoring and advice to those businesses whose applications for finance have been turned down by banks and other lenders. For further information please visit www.fredericksoxfordshire.org.

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Dog waste bins:

Some additional bin stickers are available and requests should be passed through Cllr Reg Waite. Your feedback on the siting of these bins, and the regularity of them being emptied would be appreciated.

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Brown Bin Garden Waste Collections:

Residents with small gardens have commented they would like a smaller bin to enable them to contribute to the garden waste.

Smaller bins are not available but it is in order for two or more dwellings to share a brown bin for garden waste. However, it can only be registered in the name of one dwelling and the sharing of the cost is left to the residents involved.

Cllr Reg Waite will be pleased to discuss this with any parties interested.

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Planning Training:

All Parish Councillors will be offered free training by the Vale for Planning matters later in the year. Reg and Margaret have attended several sessions with two more arranged in the next three weeks.

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The Thatched Cottage, Reading Road, Harwell:

Latest news will be conveyed to the meeting.

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Trees and bushes alongside Reading Road affecting pedestrians:

Cllr Reg Waite has requested urgent cutting back of trees and bushes along Reading Road from Wantage Road t-junction to the houses approaching Rowstock roundabout to remove the dangers to pedestrians and cyclists travelling on the pavement.

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