

**DUE TO THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS IN PLACE FOR THE CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY, HORSPATH PARISH COUNCIL CANCELLED THE MARCH MEETING AND HELD THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING REMOTELY.**

**HORSPATH PARISH COUNCIL  
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021  
At 8.00pm.**

**Present:** Mr D Burgess, Mr P Dobson (Chair), Mr J Dobson, Mrs J Dobson, Mr P Ewart, Mrs L Hofen, Mrs J Horne, Mrs B Oakley, Mr M Timbs, Mrs L Yendole, Mrs H Kogel (Clerk).  
Mr T Bearder (County Councillor), Mrs E Gillespie (District Councillor).

**Apologies**

**Absent:**

**Public:** 16

**37/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** – There were no apologies to be made.

**38/21 DECLARATION OF INTEREST.** – None.

**39/21 EMERGENCY BUSINESS – Horspath Bridge.**

Mr Peter Dobson reported that on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2021 he was advised that there had been a road closure set up to carry out emergency demolition of Horspath Railway Bridge. Mr Dobson contacted Hammond Ltd, who stated that due its condition worsening the rate of inspections had increased to monthly. A decision was made on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February to carry out emergency work to remove the two parapets and reduce the risk to public safety. Hammond Ltd also forwarded the scope of work to be being carried out. Mr Dobson contacted Historic Railways Estate, who manage bridges for the Secretary of State for Transport, who replied that following visual and detailed examinations they requested a scheme to carry out full refurbishment. Oxford County Council were unhappy about the duration of the road closure (10-12 weeks) and asked HRE to look into demolition as this required a shorter road closure. HRE then asked their consultant to prepare a planning application for demolition, which would go to SODC for consideration. In the meantime HRE prepared an emergency scheme to demolish the parapets and replace with timber. This option was chosen as HRE believed it would remove the risk whilst keeping open the option to refurbish the bridge. An ecological survey was carried out before removal of the parapets.

Mr Peter Dobson asked in terms of moving forward, should Oxfordshire County Council agree to a longer road closure, the refurbishment of the bridge could again be on the agenda. However, it would not be possible to piggy back the full refurbishment on to the current works as only the parapets were checked by ecologists and there is a high likelihood of roosting locations for bats due to numerous open joints. As such, the structure will likely need a summer and winter survey and depending on the results of a European Protected Species license. The Parish Council will investigate all options in order that the bridge remains in place and continues to provide a wildlife corridor and a much needed HGV deterrent.

Mr Tim Bearder stated that it is great that so many people have taken an interest in the future of the bridge. Mr Bearder stated that he has met with OCC today and there has been a mis-step in communications and mis-gaging public opinion with regards to the bridge. Mr Bearder stated at the meeting, that if a road closure is the only option, then residents would go with it to save the bridge. Highways England have a plan to refurbish the bridge and are looking for approval from OCC Highways. OCC has now agreed to this and will liaise with Highways England. Mrs Hofen stated that we are much further forward tonight and thanked Highways England and OCC, however, if an ecological survey and license is required, it may be 12 months until the work can be carried out. Mr Bearder also stated that Highways England do not want the upkeep of the bridge, which could mean that Horspath Parish Council could purchase the bridge, but this would need to be underwritten by OCC, who are reluctant to take on further assets at this time that would need

maintenance funding over the short, medium and long term. It may be an option for SODC to take on the bridge but this has not yet been looked into. Mrs Sue Cooper, Leader of SODC supports keeping the bridge and has said that she would like to see it as a cycle route in the future.

Mr Peter Dobson stated that OCC Cllr. Eddie Reeves has said that OCC can help the Parish realise its aspiration to preserve what is, no doubt, a well-loved and beautiful structure within the existing legal framework, so there is an expectation that OCC will ensure that the bridge remains intact and there is no need at the moment to look into HPC purchasing the bridge. Mr Peter Dobson stated that after all of the repairs have been carried out, the bridge will be ok for 30-40 years.

Mrs Gillespie stated that the bridge is a very important feature in the village, and if the owners want to demolish the bridge they will have to submit a planning application to SODC, who will refuse it. SODC has all of the documents from the Inspector from the Appeal which stated that there are green belt issues involved as well. Mrs Gillespie stated that HPC should ensure that the repairs are carried out to a good quality. Mr Peter Dobson stated that HPC will continue to work alongside Highways England.

Mr Ewart stated that maintenance on the parapets has not been carried out for years. Mr Peter Dobson stated that Highways England will be carrying out work on the parapets with options to look at a further refurbishment. Mr Peter Dobson stated that the contractors have agreed for a resident to retain all of the bricks from the parapets and store them at his property, so if the bridge is refurbished in the future, the bricks can be reinstated. Mr Dobson thanked all of the volunteers who offered to help with the bricks.

Mr James Dobson asked how HPC can maintain dialogue moving forward when there has been a lack of communication with HPC which has led to a panic in the village. Residents should be kept updated. Mr Peter Dobson asked who authorized the road closure. Mr Bearder stated that Highways England can request it as an emergency which is then authorized by OCC. Mr Bearder agreed that there has been a massive breakdown in communication, and he would have expected OCC to consult with HPC and also with himself.

Mr Peter Dobson explained that a representative from Highways England was due to attend the meeting tonight to discuss the bridge, but was unable to do so due to illness. Highways England are keen to refurbish the bridge and bring it back up to standard.

Mr Peter Dobson stated information and updates relating to the bridge have been posted on Facebook, the village website and village noticeboards. Mrs Southall asked what will be the method of ongoing communication with residents. Mr Peter Dobson stated that HPC has updated residents as soon as possible with accurate information, and will continue to do so. Mr Bearder and Mrs Gillespie will update HPC if there are any further developments.

Mrs Oakley raised her concerns with regards to the lack of road signs and diversion signs which is causing confusion with motorists. Mr Peter Dobson spoke with Hammonds and Highways England with regards to the road signs, who stated that as it is an emergency there is no need for road signs. However, Mr Keith Stenning will be speaking with Highways England tomorrow to arrange for signage to be in place before the schools return next week. Mr Burgess stated that there are diversion signs in place taking motorists to the bypass, Garsington and Watlington Road. Mr Peter Dobson stated that diversion signs are required to stop cars from going to Manor Farm Road. Mr Tim Burgess will liaise with Highways England, however, work is expected to be completed in a couple of days. Mrs Legg stated that the issue with the signage is from BMW coming into the village which will cause chaos when the schools return as Butts Road is already very busy.

#### **40/21 MINUTES FOR APPROVAL.**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021, were agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

**41/21 MATTERS ARISING.** – There were no matters arising.

**42/21 PLANNING APPLICATIONS.**

**P21/S0579/ 19 Gidley Way, Horspath (Householder)**  
**HH** Single storey extension at the rear. - **Councillors fully support this planning application and recommend approval.**

**P21/S0518/ Brookside, 183 Cuddesdon Road, Horspath**  
**PDH** Single storey rear extension to original footprint of house.  
**\*\*For information only – Permitted development rights for householders\*\***

**PLANNING PERMISSIONS/REFUSALS/APPEALS.**

**P20/S4660/ 23 Cuddesdon Road, Horspath (Householder)**  
**HH** Attic conversion with dormers to front and rear and ground floor kitchen extension.  
**- Granted.**

**P21/S0228/ Brookside, 183 Cuddesdon Road, Horspath**  
**LDP** New porch and new rear dormer window. Roof lights to front elevation. – **Granted.**

**43/21 CLERK'S UPDATE.**

**Rospa Playground Inspection** – The repairs to the play area have started this week.

**Recycling Bin** – The Clerk has requested that SODC put a green recycling bin outside the village shop for a trial period.

**Children's Air Ambulance** – They have now secured a venue to hold the fundraising event. They have asked that if we would help to publicise the event to help them achieve their target of recruiting 100 participants to take part in the fire walk – (email circulated).

**Cancellation of Cheque** – The Clerk has cancelled a cheque that was issued to Arrow Accounting as the cheque has gone missing as Mr Hood does not live at the same address. The charge for this is £12.50. A bac payment for the invoice value will be made directly to Mr Hood.

**Request for a burial** – Mr Peter Dobson has received a request from a resident to purchase plots in the burial ground for 5 family members. The resident who has been in the village for 21 years has also asked for permission to bury a family member who lived in Headington but has been staying with them in Horspath for a number of years. Mrs Hofen asked if it was usual for residents to purchase family plots as the wording in the burial ground rules is not clear. Councillors agreed that the family member can be buried in Horspath Burial Ground, but further information and discussions are required with regards to purchasing additional plots. Councillors also agreed to review the burial ground rules at the next meeting.

**44/21 CYCLE SPEEDWAY LEASE – Update.**

Mr Peter Dobson reported that Cycle Speedway has been in the village for a long time and they have asked HPC to re-new their lease which will help with the Club obtaining grants. Mr Burgess has prepared a draft lease for 50 years, at £10.00 p/a which will fall in line with the Village Hall lease. If Councillors agree, the draft lease will be sent on to Blake Morgan Solicitors to finalise. Mrs Oakley proposed the lease is renewed, seconded by Mr Burgess. In favour – Unanimous. Mr James Dobson stated that Councillors will want to see the new lease before it is signed.

**45/21 PLAY AREA – Update.**

Mr Peter Dobson reported that the sub-committee have met and discussed the options for the new play area. Mrs Oakley stated that she started this project in March 2020, but the sub-committee cannot agree on the location of the play area. Mr Timbs suggested that the new play area is located where the existing play area is but extend it up to the Scout Hut. Mrs Oakley stated that this location would encroach on the Cricket

Club who hold teas there on a weekly basis, and this will cause bad public relations if we take over an area historically used by the Cricket Club. Mrs Oakley also stated that the existing location is not big enough for all of the equipment that is needed. Mrs Oakley stated that she cannot see a way forward with the existing sub-committee as they cannot agree on location.

Mr Peter Dobson stated that at the last meeting, it was said that the proposed new location of the play area was too close to the village hall, and now it has been suggested that it is next to the village hall in a very small area. Horspath Cricket Club lease the Scout Hut, so part of that area is for them to use. Mr Peter Dobson stated that there is potential for work to be carried out on the village hall in the future, so to move the new play area away from the village hall would be an advantage.

Mr Timbs stated that three of the sub-committee members agreed that the location of the existing play area works well, so why move it. The same members didn't agree with creating a garden as the flowers will be damaged by the toddlers. Mr Timbs asked if there is any scope for the new play area being part of a bigger development. Mr Timbs asked if Councillors are open to discuss alternative locations, and asked where the funding for the play area is coming from. Mr Timbs also suggested that there are only two plans/quotes for the play area, one of which doesn't have much of a foothold in the country, therefore, further quotes should be obtained, and Councillors should consider his proposed location. Mr Peter Dobson stated that the Cricket Club do have a lease for the Scout Hut which runs for another 13 years. Mr Timbs stated that he could negotiate with the Cricket Club and arrange for the teas to be held at another location. Mr Peter Dobson stated that the sub-committee should not negotiate with the Cricket Club, he will make the enquiries with the Cricket Club, but can go ahead and obtain another quotation and look into funding of the play area. Mr Peter Dobson stated that another meeting of the sub-committee meeting is required, and he will also attend the meeting to discuss all options. Mrs Hofen stated that the sub-committee need to be clear on what ground is available before any further work is carried out. Mrs Hofen stated that the existing location of the play area works, along with the older years play area, could both areas just been refurbished and update the goal posts. Mrs Hofen suggested that a gym type facility for adults at the bottom end of the Bowley Field would be an idea and then all play areas would be in the same place.

Mr Peter Dobson stated that he doesn't see why we can't use a company that is new in the area as long as references are obtained. Mr Timbs asked for documented evidence for the funding of this project to be available at the next sub-committee meeting. Mrs Oakley stated that funding for the play area is available from at least 7 different companies.

Mr James Dobson stated that we need to agree as a Parish Council and work through the pros and cons. Mr James Dobson stated that he would like to see what impact the play area would have being so close to the village hall and the Scout Hut with regards to maintenance. Mrs Hofen stated that in terms of rental for the village hall, children will have a secure access to the play area. Mr Peter Dobson stated that there is a possibility that in the next 5 years that the village hall maybe refurbished, and if an extension is part of the refurbishment, the play area equipment may have to be moved if it stays at the existing location.

Mr Peter Dobson stated that the sub-committee will re-group and look at the options and report back at the next HPC meeting in April 2021. Mr Timbs asked if he is able to invite Mr Burgess to attend the next meeting. Ms Natalie Oakley stated that there is no need for additional sub-committee members. Mr Peter Dobson stated that the sub-committee needs to elect a Chairman.

#### **46/21 NEW WEBSITE. – Update.**

Mr Burgess circulated a link to the new website to all Councillors. He was hoping for Councillors to submit photographs of the village to be included. Mr Burgess stated that the new website includes the names of all Councillors, and asked if Councillors would like their photograph next to their name. Mr Peter Dobson stated that he has asked several people in the village for photographs but has not yet received any. Mr Rob Judges has provided some photographs. Mrs Hofen suggested that HPC pay for a professional photographer to take photographs of the village. Mr James Dobson agreed that paying for photographs is one option, or

we could run a competition for residents to enter their photographs. Mr Timbs stated that the website will only need a few good images, and suggested that drone footage would be good. Mr Peter Dobson informed Councillors that Mrs Palmer is looking to retire from managing the website, so we do need this completed as soon as possible. Mr Burgess stated that if Mrs Palmer wants to retire immediately, we could manage the village website until the new PC website is up and running. Mrs Hofen thanked Mrs Palmer for managing the website over the years for HPC. Mr James Dobson stated that there needs to be a degree of notice to other village organisation with regards to the village website, and encourage them to manage their own websites with a link included to the new PC website. Mr Peter Dobson stated that HPC website will be completely separate from HSPC website. It will embrace the Village Hall, but not any other village organisations.

Mrs Oakley suggested that another option would be to post on Facebook asking residents to forward on their photographs. Councillors agreed for a competition to be advertised. Mr Burgess will liaise with Mr Timbs, Mrs Dobson, Mr James Dobson and Ms Oakley to arrange for the competition to be advertised and Mrs Oakley will post a link on Facebook.

Mr Burgess stated that Mr Brendon Mills, Lemoneye, has asked for a Zoom meeting with the sub-committee to discuss details of the new website. Mr Peter Dobson stated that he would like to be included in this meeting. Mr Peter Dobson stated that the new website looks very good, and when it is finished, we will look at a website for HSPC.

#### **47/21 REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS.**

Councillors agreed that there are no changes to be made to the standing orders and financial regulations. Mr Peter Dobson stated that these can be reviewed at any time.

#### **48/21 MRS VICKY SHEPPARD – Village Event Proposal.**

Mr Peter Dobson informed Councillors that Ms Sheppard is looking to hold a village event on the Village Green in the summer, subject to Covid-19. Ms Sheppard will give a presentation to Councillors at the next meeting in April 2021. Mrs Horne asked if would be possible to close the road during the event. Mr Peter Dobson stated that we could request a road closure, but he is not sure that we would get it. Mr Burgess stated that he has consulted with OCC on a 2 hour road closure to put stalls on the road like Wheatley does at Christmas. Mr Timbs stated that he supports the idea of the event, but suggested that it is held on the cricket field. Councillors agreed to wait for more information from Ms Sheppard at the meeting in April 2021.

#### **49/21 DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS.**

**Mr Tim Bearder (County Councillor)** – Mr Bearder didn't have anything further to report.

**Mrs Elizabeth Gillespie (District Councillor)** – Mrs Gillespie reported that she is no on the Planning Committee and she is hopeful for the Northfield and Grenoble Road sites. Mrs Gillespie wants a community woodland included at these sites, and also she wants to make sure that the quality of the buildings is as best as possible. Mrs Gillespie stated that she is busy fighting behind the scenes for all sorts of Green Belt issues etc., but the most important is are the community woodlands.

Mrs Gillespie stated that by law, a full planning application will need to be submitted to SODC for the bridge to be demolished. If this happens Mrs Gillespie will speak to the Planning Officers who will be aware of the previous appeal. Mr Burgess stated that there are plans to look at the Cowley Bridge by the sewerage site in the field by Unipart. If they demolish it, it will enable Unipart to expand. Mrs Gillespie has not spoken to anyone about this, she will find out the information and report back at the next meeting. Mr Peter Dobson stated that no decision has been made on this bridge at the moment, and they would need to consult with HPC before doing so.

Mrs Gillespie reported that SODC offices are still closed and SODC say that in the future, most meetings should still be held remotely. Most villages that Mrs Gillespie represents, would prefer to meet in public as it is far more personal.

## 50/21 CORRESPONDENCE.

- a. Oxfordshire Plan 2050. – Your thoughts needed for the next phase of Oxfordshire Open Thought. – (circulated via email).
- b. NALC – Chief Executive’s Bulletin. 5/2/21, 12/2/21, 19/2/21. – (Circulated via email).
- c. SODC. – South Town & Parish Council update 29/1/21, 5/2/21, 12/2/21, 18/2/21, 25/2/21. – (Circulated via email).
- d. NALC. – Coronavirus Update 5/2/21, 23/2/21. – (Circulated via email).
- e. Citizens Advice Oxfordshire South & Vale. – Winter Support Grant South & Vale – A request to refer eligible households. – (Circulated via email).
- f. Mrs Tilling. – Request for a noticeboard on Gidley Way. – (Circulated via email). – **Noted.**
- g. RSN – Rural Funding Digest February 2021. – (Circulated via email).
- h. OALC. – Trust for Oxfordshire’s Environment seeking a new Chair. – (Circulated via email).
- i. RSN. - The Rural Bulletin. – 2/2/21, 9/2/21, 16/2/21, 23/2/21. – (Circulated via email).
- j. OCC. – Home Library service delivers over 8,000 during the pandemic. – (Circulated via email).
- k. NALC. – Online events. – (Circulated via email).
- l. OALC. – Census Communications Toolkit. – (Circulated via email).#
- m. OCC. – Consultation launched on Oxfordshire’s draft transport blueprint. – (Circulated via email).
- n. Externiture UK. – Navigating the world of bus shelters. – (Circulated via email).
- o. SODC. – Please let us know what you think of our proposed new Licensing Policy for taxis and minicabs. – (circulated via email).
- p. SODC. – Proposed changes could improve taxi safety and help tackle the climate emergency – have your say. – (Circulated via email).
- q. Wheatley Parish Council. – Feb/March 2021 Newsletter. – (Circulated via email).
- r. NALC. – How are local Councils vital to community recovery 10/2/21, 17/2/21. – (circulated via email).
- s. OALC. – Elections, face to face meetings, ACRE and Handforth PC. – (Circulated via email).
- t. OCC. – Local Transport and Connectivity Plan Vision Consultation. – (Circulated via email).
- u. SODC. – South & Vale Business Support 18/2/21. – (Circulated via email).
- v. SODC. – “Ecological Emergency” declared by SODC. – (Circulated via email).
- w. SODC. – Two District Councils join Oxfordshire Greentech to help local businesses to tackle the climate emergency. – (Circulated via email).
- x. Community First Oxfordshire. – Supporting communities through Covid-19 – Funding available. – (Circulated via email).
- y. The Bioabundance Team. – Support for Bioabundance Community Interest Company. – (Circulated via email).
- z. OALC. – Covid Community Outbreak Management Fund – Short application window. – (Circulated via email).
- aa. SODC. – The Beacon in Wantage becomes location for Covid-19 symptom-free testing programme. – (Circulated via email).
- bb. NALC. – Why representation in Local Council matters. – (Circulated via email).
- cc. OALC. – Latest edition Oxfordshire Protocol for death of a senior figure. – (Circulated via email). – **Mr Burgess stated that this is more for larger Councils. Mrs Legg, Wheatley Parish Clerk stated that Wheatley has their own protocol in place, which has recently been amended with regards to Covid-**

**19, as members of the community do like to mark such an even. Mrs Legg will email the details to the Clerk. Mr James Dobson suggested that this should be linked with the new website.**

- dd. Community First Oxfordshire. – New services and funding available from Community First Oxfordshire. – (Circulated via email).
- ee. SODC. - £240,000.00 for newt conservation. – (Circulated via email).
- ff. NALC. – Launches Star Council Awards 2021. – (Circulated via email).
- gg. Ms Christine Southall. – Copy of email sent to Highways England, Mr Bearder and Mrs Gillespie. – (Circulated via email). – **Noted.**
- hh. Ms Clare Riddle. – Email regarding the bridge. – (Circulated via email). – **Noted.**
- ii. OALC. – Further guidance on death of a senior figure. – (Circulated via email).
- jj. Mr Stephens. – Littleworth Nature Reserve. – (Circulated via email).
- kk. SODC. – The Beacon in Wantage becomes location for Covid-19 symptom free testing programme. – (Circulated via email).
- ll. Children’s Air Ambulance. – Fundraising Fire Walk 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021. – (Circulated via email).  
*\* original held by the Clerk, copy available on request.*  
*# displayed on Village Hall & village noticeboards.*

**51/21 PAYMENTS.**

Chq	To Whom Paid	Details	Vat	Total £
BACS	Mrs Hayley Kogel	Home Office February 2021 Stationery Zoom Monthly Subscription		30.00 30.89 14.39
BACS	Mrs Hayley Kogel	Salary 24/1/21 – 24/2/21		570.15
BACS	Alan Stone Engineers	New belts to grass topper and sharpen blades	21.45	128.69
BACS	SODC	Emptying Dog Bins October – December	62.79	376.74
BACS	Moore	External Audit Fees 19/20	40.00	240.00
BACS	OALC	Finance for Councillors Course – Mr James Dobson	10.00	60.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>134.24</b>	<b>1450.86</b>

**HORSPATH RECREATION CHARITY**

Chq	To Whom Paid	Details	Vat	Total £
BACS	SSE	Power supply on Village Green		25.69
		<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>25.69</b>

**52/21 RECEIPTS.**

Date	Received from	Details	Total £
7.12.20	Barclays Bank	Interest Business Premium Acct 7/9/ - 6/12/20	0.46
29.1.21	Reeves Memorials	1 x Monument	125.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>125.46</b>

**53/21 AOB.**

- a. Mr Ewart reported that OCC’s LTCP (Local Transport and Connectivity Plan) is proposing to make villages into LTN’s (Low Traffic Neighbourhoods). Mr Ewart asked Mr Bearder and Mrs Gillespie to ensure that Horspath is included. Mrs Gillespie stated that this is County Council not SODC.

- b. Mrs Oakley reported that pink dots have been marked on to a tree by the village memorial, which indicates the tree is going to be cut down. Mr Peter Dobson he has spoken with James Prior and checked on the internet, and the dots indicate that work is going to be carried out on that particular tree. Mr Peter Dobson has tried to contact SODC to clarify its meaning. The trees on the Village Green are all covered by TPO's and are the responsibility of HPC., so we should have been notified if any work is being carried out on the tree. Mr Burgess stated that the drain in front of that tree is blocked with tree roots and is due to have work carried out on it. Mrs Gillespie agreed to speak with the Tree Officer at SODC and find out the details.
- c. Mrs Oakley reported that Ms Helen Morgan is looking for an area in the village to plant bulbs and wild flowers and asked if she could do so on the Village Green. Mr Peter Dobson stated that it would be more suitable around the war memorial.  
Mrs Oakley reported that John Madden has recently cut down a tree in the Conservation Area that had fallen. Mrs Oakley passed thanks to Mr Madden.  
Mrs Oakley reported that there is not a designated bus stop along Gidley Way and the bus only stops if you put your hand out. Mr Oakley stated that an official bus stop is required.
- d. Mrs Hofen reported that speeding is still an issue along Cuddesdon Road. Mr Peter Dobson stated that this will be discussed again the in the near future.  
Mrs Hofen asked for an update on the 10 year plan. Mr Peter Dobson stated that this will be discussed at a HSPC meeting in March 2021.  
Mrs Hofen suggested that Horspath needs a village warden to carry out some jobs around the village.

**54/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS.**

Parish Council Planning Meeting – Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021. (To be confirmed).  
Horspath Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Signed..... Date.....