

HORSPATH PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Horspath Village Hall
on 5th September 2023 at 7.30pm.

Present: Mrs B Oakley (Chairman), Mr R Burgess, Mrs P Cook, Mr L Coolman, Mr I Harris, Mr B Igoe, Mr P O'Brien, Mr E Parker, Mrs H Kogel (Clerk). Mr T Bearder (County Councillor), Mr S James-Lawrie (District Councillor)

Apologies Mrs C Riley.

Absent:

Public: 3

181/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were made on behalf of Mrs Riley. Mr Hamlet stated that Mr Bearder has not attended a meeting for 5 months.

182/23 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS. – None.

183/23 EMERGENCY BUSINESS. – None.

184/23 MINUTES FOR APPROVAL.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 1st August 2023 were agreed and signed as correct by the Chairman.

185/23 MATTERS ARISING. – None.

186/23 PLANNING APPLICATIONS.

- P23/S2608/ FUL** **Barn at Overview Stables, Sandy Lane, Horspath (Full Application)**
Conversion of barn to 1 x detached residential dwelling, including associated garden and parking provision. – **Councillors agreed that they have no objections and recommend approval.**
- P23/S1948/ HH** **95 Old Road, Wheatley**
Removal of the detached garage, rear conservatory, and side lean-to store and the erection of one and a half storey extension, a single storey rear extension and a rear facing window. – **Application has been withdrawn.**

PLANNING PERMISSIONS/REFUSALS/APPEALS. – None.

187/23 CLERK'S UPDATE.

Play Area Inspections – A copy of the report has been circulated to all Councillors. It was agreed that the Clerk will forward the report to ODS and obtain a quotation to carry out the repairs.

Data Protection Update – A meeting has now taken place and work will commence on data protection. An internal review has taken place on the FOI request and a final reply has been sent to the person who requested it.

Horspath Fair – Will take place on Monday 18th September 2023. Mr Pettigrove has asked permission for the Fair to run for two days. Councillors approved this request on condition that access is left for No's 1, 11 & 13 the Green and also that the bus stop is left clear. Councillors also agreed that the donation should be increased to £200.00. Mr Burgess will collect the donation.

Hedge Cutting – Will be carried out in September or early October.

188/23 UPDATE FROM VILLAGE BEAUTIFICATION TEAM - Mrs Oakley. – No update available.

189/23 BURIAL GROUND.

Councillors agreed unanimously to accept the quotation from A J Landscapes to clear the weeds/brambles from behind the gravestones. It was also agreed that this needs to be done on a regular basis.

190/23 BOWLEY FIELD. – Cut back the grass footpath.

It was agreed that Mr Burgess will ask Mr Hawes to cut back the walkway around the Bowley Field at the same time as cutting the hedges.

191/23 SILVER BIRCH TREE – VILLAGE GREEN. – 3 quotations received.

Mrs Oakley stated that the Tree Officer from SODC has reported that there has been further damaged to the Silver Birch Tree on the Village Green which has left it unsafe, so must be felled. Three quotations have been received. Mr Walker has offered to fell the tree at no cost to HPC. Councillors agreed for Mr Walker to carry out the work. The Clerk will apply for the emergency planning permission.

One of the contractors has stated that there is also a dead cherry tree that needs to be felled. Mrs Oakley stated that HPC does not have permission to fell that tree, so no further action will be taken at the moment.

192/23 GRANT SCHEME OPPORTUNITY FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGERS.

The Clerk has submitted an expression of interest form for electric vehicle chargers to be installed in the village hall car park.

193/23 BUS SHELTER REPAIRS & SEATING.

Mrs Oakley stated that that several repairs are needed on the bus shelter. There are cracks in the brickwork, no guttering and a leak in the roof. It was agreed that quotations will be sought to carry out the repairs and install a bench seat. Mr Aries stated that the brickwork has been cracked for 55 years.

194/23 FOOTPATH BETWEEN MANOR DRIVE AND THE CHURCHYARD.

Mrs Oakley has received a quotation to tarmac the footpath up to the gate. Councillors agreed to accept the quotation. The Clerk will contact the contractor to arrange a date. It was agreed that CIL money will be used to cover the cost. Mrs Oakley and Mr Coolman will clear the dog mess and weeds from the footpath before work commences.

195/23 PEDESTRIAN CROSSING.

Mrs Oakley stated that OCC has given an estimate of between £60 -£80k to install a zebra crossing in the village, and approximately £160k for a pedestrian crossing. The Clerk spoke with Jon Beale, OCC who has suggested that we wait until the 20mph speed limits have been introduced as this is likely to make a difference to the speed of vehicles. Mr Beale passed on the contact details for two consultants who would carry out a feasibility study and a design. The Clerk contacted the consultants who both provided a quotation for a feasibility study and a design, but one of them also included a quotation to install the zebra crossing, which was £9,500, but with contingencies an estimate would be between £12-15k, but allowing for resurfacing the road and upgrading the lighting could increase the cost by £10k. One consultant stated that the contractors used by OCC charge excessively high costs and that there are other contractors approved by OCC that HPC could use to install the crossing. The cost of a feasibility study is around £3k, the cost of a design is also around £3k and the construction costs with contingencies he would estimate to be between £12-£15k. Mr Jon Beale suggested that the Clerk contact Cllr Bearder for an update on Sustran and the Active Travel Group progress as it may be something that is being incorporated into their plans. Cllr Bearder stated that Sustran and the Active Travel Group have not yet formalised any plans, they are still looking at all options. Mr O'Brien stated to Cllr Bearder that OCC are being overcharged, therefore Parish Councils are being overcharged as it is being paid by the rate payers. Cllr Bearder stated that Mr

Beale is referring to a contractor called Milestone who are on a framework contract with other things bundled into a framework contract. Mr O'Brien stated that a contractor has stated that a zebra crossing can be installed for £9,500, but because OCC signed up a contractor on a framework contract, the cost will be £60-£80k. Cllr Bearder stated that it was the previous administration signed the framework contract which is a 5 year contract and expires in 2025. OCC do not own any machinery, therefore they outsourced all highway contracts to Milestone. Mr O'Brien stated that Parish Councils are being ripped off daily by OCC, and both Cllr Bearder and Cllr James-Lawrie who represent us, and who are paid for by us, are allowing it to happen. Cllr Bearder stated that this is hearsay and suggested a factual study is carried out on the average costs charged for crossings from Councils around the country. Mr O'Brien stated that the second biggest City Council in the country has gone bankrupt today and 14 other Councils ready to go bankrupt. Mr O'Brien stated that rate payers should stop paying as we are not receiving the service from OCC and SODC. Both OCC and SODC staff are all working at home.

Cllr Bearder stated that he is not putting up with this and left the meeting, along with Mr James-Lawrie. Mr O'Brien stated that he has no confidence in representatives from OCC and SODC as they are not providing a service. Councillors agreed that HPC will not pay £60-£80k for the installation of a zebra crossing. It was agreed that it will be reviewed after the 20mph speed limit has been installed in the village. Mr Parker suggested that HPC could look into the feasibility of installing a speed camera in the village.

196/23 RAGWORT.

Mrs Oakley reported that she has received complaints about the amount of ragwort in the Mutton Field and the over-flow car park which is dangerous to animals. Mrs Oakley has spoken with Defra and the Environment Agency and has met with a company to obtain a quotation to remove the ragwort. Mrs Oakley circulated the quotation received of £8750.00 for a 4 year programme to remove the ragwort. Mrs Oakley stated that the other option is to cut down the ragwort with the tractor and spray the plants in the spring. Mr Burgess stated that an animal friendly spray could be used to spray the plants. Mr Burgess stated that in previous years the ragwort has been removed by a team of volunteers. Mrs Oakley stated that this year there is a large amount of ragwort. Mrs Cook stated that the ragwort is particularly bad this year as the County Council is not cutting the grass verges, so the ragwort is spreading.

It was agreed that the ragwort will be cut down with HPC's mower and then arrange for a company to come in and spray the ragwort in the spring on a 4 year programme. Mrs Oakley will submit a grant application to HSPC to cover the costs of spraying. Mrs Oakley will speak with Mr Walker. Mr Mutton recommended a contractor who does a lot of work for Mr Walker who could spray the plants.

197/23 CYCLE SPEEDWAY.

Mrs Oakley confirmed that she has now received a copy of a utility bill from Cycle Speedway. The Clerk stated that Blake Morgan Solicitor has stated that Cycle Speedway will need to instruct a solicitor for post completion tasks with the lease. Mr Clarke will pass on the details of their solicitor. It was agreed that the Clerk purchase the OS map required by Blake Morgan solicitors.

198/23 DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS. – No reports available.

199/23 CORRESPONDENCE.

- a. RSN. – Rural Digest August 2023. – (Circulated via email).
- b. NALC. – Newsletter 1/8/23, 16/8/23, 24/8/23, 30/8/23. - (Circulated via email).
- c. NALC – Chief Executive's Bulletin. – 3/8/23, 10/8/23, 17/8/23, 24/8/23, 31/8/23. – (Circulated via email).
- d. NALC. – Events 1/8/23, 8/8/23, 15/8/23, 22/8/23, 29/8/23 (Circulated via email).
- e. RSN. - The Rural Bulletin. – 1/8/23, 8/8/23, 15/8/23, 22/8/23, 30/8/23. – (Circulated via email).
- f. CPRE. – Newsletter. – (Circulated via email).

- g. SODC. – South News July 2023. – (Circulated via email).
- h. Open Spaces Society. – July Updates. – (Circulated via email).
- i. SODC. – New grant scheme opportunity for electric vehicle chargers. – (Circulated via email).
- j. SODC. – Help shape the future of tourism in our Districts and be in with a chance to win a £75 voucher. – (Circulated via email).
- k. SODC. – Conversion of storage barn to be known as Apple Barn. – (Circulated via email).
- l. SODC. – South & Vale visitor economy surveys. – (Circulated via email).
- m. CPRE. – Championing our local countryside – Meeting invitation. – (Circulated via email).
- n. SODC. – South News August 2023. – (Circulated via email).
- o. OALC. – Finance Training. – (Circulated via email).
- p. OCC. – Community Transport Grants. – (Circulated via email).
- q. OCC. – NHT Public & Public Representatives Satisfaction Survey. – (Circulated via email).
- r. OALC. – Training Update. – (Circulated via email).
- s. SODC. – Tackling anti-social behaviour in Thame. – (Circulated via email).
- t. SODC. – Rural England Prosperity Fund – submit your expression of interest. – (Circulated via email).
- u. SODC. – Have your say on our landscapes and what’s changing them. – (Circulated via email).
- v. Richard Swann – Project Manager LUC. – Landscape evidence study now open for comments. – (circulated via email).
- w. Morland House Surgery. – August 2023 News. – (Circulated via email).
- x. Community First Oxfordshire. – New job opportunity – 2 year contract. – (Circulated via email).
- y. Wheatley Parish Council. – August & September 2023 Newsletter. – (Circulated via email).
- z. EWR. – Oxford City & Surrounding Areas Local Representatives Group. – (Circulated via email).
- aa. OCC. – Reminder:- Expression of Interest for EV Microhubs. – (Circulated via email).
- bb. Mr Cranston. – Email regarding planning application. – (Circulated via email). – **The decision on the planning application is now with SODC.**
- cc. OALC. – More training for Clerks & Councillors. – (Circulated via email).
- dd. OCC. – Highway maintenance open day invitation – 16th September 2023. – (Circulated via email).
- ee. OCC. – Winter Preparedness 2023. – (Circulated via email).
- ff. Ms Carter. – Email regarding dead farm animal on the road. – (Circulated via email). – **Noted.**
- gg. Bioabundance. – Meeting 7th September 2023. – (Circulated via email).
- hh. Geoff Stevens. – Access to Littleworth Nature Reserve from Horspath blocked. – (Circulated via email). – **Mrs Oakley stated that the gate had been padlocked but this has now been removed. Mr Burgess stated that the new tenant doesn’t want a footpath there.**
- ii. Community First Oxfordshire. – Summer 2023 Newsletter. – (Circulated via email).
- jj. TVP. – Police & Crime Bulletin August 2023. – (Circulated via email).
- kk. SODC. – A timely decision taking local views into account is needed on Didcot infrastructure. – (Circulated via email).
- ll. Oxford Hub. – We’re opening a new Community Hub. – (Circulated via email).
- mm. CPRE. – August Newsletter. – (Circulated via email).
- nn. Mr David Burson JPPC. – Email regarding planning application P23/S2195/FUL, Brookside, Cuddesdon Road, Horspath. – (Circulated via email). – **The decision on the planning application is now with SODC.**
- oo. OALC. – August 2023 Update. – (Circulated via email).
** original held by the Clerk, copy available on request.
displayed on Village Hall & village noticeboards.*

200/23 PAYMENTS.

Paid by	To Whom Paid	Details	Vat	Total £
BACS	Inty Ltd	Email Address Fee 8.8.23	1.18	5.88
BACS	Shield Maintenance	Emptying Dog Hygiene Bins	12.13	72.79
BACS	Nest 3.8.23	Pension contribution for Mrs Kogel		67.05
BACS	Nest 17.8.23	Pension contribution for Mrs Kogel		75.24
BACS	Mrs Hayley Kogel	Home Office August 2023		30.00
		Stationery		64.20
	Mrs Hayley Kogel	Salary 24/7/23 – 24/8/23		1389.53
BACS	Artisan Ltd	Signage	17.00	85.00
BACS	Breakthrough Communications	Data Protection Package	499.00	2994.00
BACS	SODC	Election Fees		200.00
BACS	Rospa Playsafety	Play Area Inspections	36.30	217.80
BACS	Mr Rob Gray	Grass cutting Burial Ground/Empty Bin		267.50
		Grass cutting Play Area		81.00
		TOTAL	565.61	5549.99

Bank balances as of 31.8.23 - £21,757.05

Payments were authorised by Mrs Oakley and Mr Burgess.

PAYMENTS – HORSPATH RECREATION GROUND

Paid by	To Whom Paid	Details	Vat	Total £
BACS	Mr Rob Gray	Grass cutting Village Green		1100.00
		Diesel		140.70
		TOTAL		1240.70

201/23 RECEIPTS. – None.**202/23 AOB.**

- a. Mr Igoe asked how much money is remaining with the meal voucher scheme. Mrs Oakley stated that the Clerk gave a balance of vouchers spent up to August, and the remaining vouchers available for September was 75. It has recently been reported that some vouchers issued in July were not used until August which were accepted by the Queens Head. The Clerk and Mrs Oakley will check the amounts spent to date. Mr Igoe suggested that another grant application for £5-7k is submitted to cover the winter period. Mrs Oakley stated that she doesn't want to operate the voucher scheme any longer. Although it has been enjoyed by many residents, the scheme is very time consuming and there has been occasions when people have taken advantage of the vouchers and of Mrs Oakley. Mrs Oakley suggested that we wait until January 2024 until submitting a grant application with rules in place of how to obtain a voucher without the need for Mrs Oakley having to deliver. Mr Igoe stated that it is the winter period when people will need the vouchers. Mr Parker stated that Mrs Oakley should not be expected to deliver the vouchers. It was agreed that an application will be submitted to HSPC to cover any over-spend of vouchers.
- b. Mrs Oakley stated that a resident who lives on Gidley Way who has requested double yellow lines are installed or a permit parking system all the way up Gidley Way. Mrs Oakley asked Councillors to give this request some thought and it can be discussed at the next meeting.

Public:

- a. Mr Mutton has recently written to the Oxford Mail regarding the chicane on Oxford Road. Mrs Oakley stated that Mark Eden, OCC, responded to the article stating that HPC had not agreed with his suggestion to install pillows on Oxford Road but HPC has not had any contact with Mark Eden. Mr Mutton stated that OCC has an attitude towards Horspath and has sent a further letter to the Oxford Mail with regards to the safety railings at the eastern bypass junction that has been propped up against the other safety railing. There are trees growing out of the central reservation. Horspath village hasn't had the streets cleaned or drains cleared for over 5 years. Mr Burgess stated that there was a street cleaner in the village last week who swept half of Manor Farm Road and outside of the school. Mr Mutton stated that residents of Horspath are not receiving any service from OCC, and he was disappointed with the reaction from Mr Bearder this evening.
Mr Mutton suggested that HPC makes contact with the Department of Transport with regards to the chicane.
- b. Mr Hamlet asked if there is any update from Sylo. Mr O'Brien stated that he hasn't received a reply from them. Mr O'Brien will contact the dept collection agency.
Mr Hamlet asked about the lease for the Poors Land. Mrs Oakley stated Mr Peter Dobson is in the process of registering the land but she has been informed that Mr Peter Dobson will be making contact with a view to transferring the land to HSPC. The Clerk will contact Mr Peter Dobson for an update on the grant received.
Mr Hamlet stated that with regards to the unacceptable outburst from Mr Bearder this evening, HPC should call for an extraordinary meeting for residents of Horspath to de-select Mr Bearder as County Councillor for Horspath. Mr Hamlet stated that Mr Bearder will not do anything for Horspath in the future.
Mr Hamlet stated that the trees are still over-hanging the footpath from the property on Oxford Road. The Clerk confirmed that a letter has been sent to the homeowner.
Mr Hamlet stated that Thames water have still not repaired the footpath which is now breaking up. Mrs Oakley will contact Thames Water.
- c. Mr Mutton asked why SODC Councillor Mr Sam James-Lawrie left with Mr Bearder, he should have stayed at the meeting. Mr Parker stated that there are no procedures in place at OCC to monitor the spending with private contractors, and they are not answerable to anyone.
Mr Mutton stated that yesterday there was a lady with two children using the footpath between Manor Farm Road and the Church who had stood in dogs mess. Owners are allowing their dogs to mess on the footpath at night time. Mr Parker suggested that a notice is put in the village newsletter.
- d. Councillors agreed that the HSPC meeting will take place on Tuesday 26th September 2023.

203/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS.

Parish Council Planning Meeting – Tuesday 19th September 2023 (To be confirmed).
Horspath Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 3rd October 2023.

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