

**MINUTES OF ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 1ST OCTOBER 2015 IN THE
VILLAGE HALL, ASTON AT 7.30 PM**

- 1. Members Present:** Richard Haines (Chairman)
Jane Everex
Ben Lings
John Ordish
Paul Sparrowhawk
Jane West
Phil West
- In Attendance:** Helen Sandhu – Clerk
Hilary Fenton – West Oxfordshire District Councillor (leaving at item 8)
Charles Mathew – Oxfordshire County Councillor (arriving at item 9)
- Members' Apologies:** None
- 2. Minutes of previous meeting** – on 3 September 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
Proposed by Paul Sparrowhawk, seconded by Ben Lings.
- 3. Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items**
None
- 4. District Council matters**
Hilary Fenton reported on matters relating to West Oxfordshire District Council. Mrs Fenton reminded the Parish Council that Oxfordshire County Council's consultation on the Household Waste Recycling Centres closes on 5 October 2015, and encouraged everyone to respond if they haven't yet done so. The District Council's contract for household waste collections (currently with Kier) comes to an end in 2017. The District Council has started reviewing the options for the new contract, and this may result in a reduction in the size of the residual bin (used for non-recyclables and non-food). The current green waste collection may be ended – this service is carried out on behalf of the County Council by the District Council, and the County Council may cease funding the service. Mrs Fenton was not sure if there is a possibility of the service being continued on a paid-for basis (as it was before the free service was rolled out several years ago).
Mrs Fenton said that as part of her role as a member of the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee she has recently been visiting the leisure facilities around the district and has been very impressed by the levels of cleanliness and service she has seen.
Richard Haines asked Mrs Fenton whether the County Council is officially consulting with West Oxfordshire District Council on the options for the A40 consultation. Mrs Fenton affirmed that WODC will be responding to this consultation.
- 5. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings**
a) *Proposed litter bin near Vicarage Close bus stop*
The litter bin has been received and will be fitted shortly.

Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

b) Potential Community Speed Watch Group

A report prepared by the Clerk had been circulated in the Briefing Notes. It was noted that the proposal had been initiated by PCSO Sandra Syphas at the Annual Parish Meeting in May. Following interest expressed by some residents, PCSO Syphas had then organised a meeting in August which was attended by North Leigh Speed Watch group chairman Richard Soper. It was further noted that the Parish Council had not been contacted by any residents about this issue, despite it having been tabled for discussion at both this and the September parish council meeting, and an article written by PCSO Syphas being included in the last edition of Voices. The view was expressed that the operation of a Speed Watch group is not necessarily a matter for the Parish Council, and that in order for a group to be set up and operated successfully, it would need to be driven forward by residents. It was therefore resolved that the Parish Council would not be discussing this further at the present time, but that if a group were to become established, then the Parish Council would be prepared to consider providing a donation for the cost of the required public liability insurance. The Clerk was asked to inform the Eynsham neighbourhood police team.

c) Anti-social Behaviour

None noted.

6. Parish Infrastructure

a) Remedial works on culvert on Great Brook Road

The work started in the week beginning 21 September and should shortly be completed.

The pedestrian bridge which crosses the Great Brook and which the Parish Council had been advised may be removed on health and safety grounds is still in situ. The Clerk was asked to enquire whether there is any way of retaining the bridge, as the closure of this pedestrian route would be a significant loss to the parish.

b) Metal chicanes/barriers at footpath ends – Woodbridge Close, Cote Road, Bull Street

Oxfordshire County Council has been asked to provide an estimate of the cost of making the four barriers compliant with disability access. OCC was informed of the frustration of the Parish Council at the County's unwillingness to fund this type of work whilst being able to fund individual disabled people's parking places. OCC has responded that "with budgets becoming tighter and tighter, we have had to look at the best place to spend limited resources" and that future funding for DPPPs is not certain. OCC has confirmed that they will consider the feasibility and acceptability of repositioning the cycle barriers or removing them altogether and will provide a cost for the amendments which are deemed acceptable.

c) Newbridge – joint meeting

Northmoor Parish Council has organised a meeting for 21 October 2015. Jane West volunteered to attend. The Clerk will RSVP to Northmoor Parish Clerk Michael Ryan.

7. PLANNING

New Planning applications

15/03185/HHD 32 Saxel Close, Aston
First floor extension over existing garage
No comments.

PLANNING (continued)

Updates to previous planning applications

14/01496/FUL Thistle Cottage, Ham Lane, Aston
Erection of 7 dwellings and associated works

Following the September Parish Council meeting the Clerk contacted Phil Shaw, the WODC Planning Officer responsible for this site with the Parish Council's concerns about the boundary which adjoins Southlands. Mr Shaw has contacted Builders Ede about this issue; they have responded that they would be happy to tidy up the area behind the newly installed close board fencing, but only when the building work has been completed. Mr Shaw has suggested that shrubs could be planted in the gap between the fencing and the Southlands stone wall to improve the aesthetics of the boundary.

The Parish Council discussed the above points and queried who would maintain the suggested shrubs? The Clerk asked whether the Parish Council would want to explore the possibility of removing the modern stone wall which would make it easier to maintain the boundary – Phil Shaw has said that this would probably not need planning permission, but the legal owner of the wall would need to be identified. The Clerk has asked Phil Shaw's advice on this – response awaited.

15/01550/OUT Land North of Cote Road, Cote Road, Aston
Proposed residential development for up to 41 dwellings

The District Council has been contacted to ask about the steps that need to be followed to protect the open space at the rear of the site from future development – WODC has been advised that the suggestion that the land could be used for allotments may not be viable – response awaited.

The WODC Conservation Officer has responded to the Parish Council's query about the possible extension of the Conservation Area (CA) to cover this site with an indication that "in respect of reviewing the CA boundary for Aston, for obvious reasons we are prioritising the larger settlements, and there is no current plan to review Aston's CA boundary in the near future. We are unable reactively to alter CA boundaries."

13/1494/P/OP Land between Saxel Close and Village Hall, Cote Road, Aston
Residential development of 38 dwellings

The District Council planning officer has been informed that the Parish Council would prefer the site to be connected to the mains system if/once Thames Water has upgraded the system (as indicated through the documents associated with the Gladman site). The Planning Officer has acknowledged this information and advises that the drainage condition of the outline planning permission will be finalised during the full planning application process, and that Thames Water will be consulted prior to any drainage requirements being agreed by WODC – "ultimately we will need to be guided by Thames Water as to what is best."

PLANNING (continued)

Planning applications refused

15/02692/PN56 Land at livestock buildings, South of Bampton Road, Aston
Change of use of agricultural building to dwelling
Prior notification application refused (on the grounds that there is not clear evidence that the building was recently part of an established agricultural holding and that too much demolition/construction would be required) – application does require formal planning permission

Planning applications granted

15/02669/HHD Tarpan Farmhouse, North Street, Aston
Erection of two storey rear extension

8. FINANCE (part one)

- a) *Account Balances at 30 September* - noted.
- b) *Receipts & Payments account to 30 September 2015* - noted.

9. County Council matters

County Councillor Charles Matew arrived.

Mr Matew said that he is aware that there is great concern across the county about the possibility of the closure of many of Oxfordshire's Children's Centres. Mr Matew expressed the personal view that he hopes that the majority of the centres which the County Council would no longer be able to operate direct could be out-sourced to independent groups who would then be able to run them by, for example, charging users for the services. Mr Matew said that the County Council is not able to charge people to use the children's centres it runs, in the same way that it cannot charge people to use its household waste recycling centres.

Mr Matew was told that the Parish Council has not had any official communication about Oxfordshire County Council's current consultation on options for the A40.

Mr Matew ended by saying that the budget for Oxfordshire County Council for 2016/17 will be extremely difficult, and that there is a real risk that the county will be constrained to providing only those services which it is required to do so by statute.

10. FINANCE (part two)

- c) *Review of Parish Council's banking arrangements*

The Clerk had prepared a report which had been circulated in the Briefing Notes. It was resolved to open a current account with Unity Trust Bank which can be operated online. It was resolved to close the Santander current account once the Unity Trust Bank account is in operation.

It was resolved to open a Nationwide Building Society Instant Access Deposit account to hold the bulk of the Parish Council's funds on deposit, with the Santander deposit account to be kept open as this account will earn interest on balances below £10,000 (the Nationwide account will only earn interest on balances above £10,000).

It was resolved that the signatories to the account will be Richard Haines, John Ordish, Jane West, Paul Sparrowhawk and the Clerk. The Clerk will act as a signatory for account management purposes, but will not authorise payments from the accounts. Resolution proposed by John Ordish and seconded by Jane West.

FINANCE (part two continued)

d) *Proposed revised Financial Regulations*

The Clerk had prepared a report and proposed revised Financial Regulations based on the revised NALC model which had been circulated in the Briefing Notes.

It was resolved to adopt the new Financial Regulations as circulated, proposed by Jane West, seconded by Phil West.

e) *September invoices presented for approval and payment*

		Statute
Clerk's salary and working from home allowance	364.20	LGA 1972, s112
Clerk's expenses – printing – 123 sheets @ 5p	6.15	LGA 1972 s111
Margaret Johnson Ltd – photocopying & stationery	7.49	LGA 1972 s111
Oddjobs – refurbishment of two benches	100.00	PCA 1957 s1
Glasdon UK Ltd – new litter bin	99.42	Litter Act 1983
West Oxfordshire District Council – emptying of dog bin in October	21.04	Litter Act 1983
Des Johnston – 2 cuts of playing field (13 invoiced in season to date)	112.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Total	710.30	

It was resolved to make the above payments – proposed by John Ordish, seconded by Paul Sparrowhawk.

11. Parish Councillors' reports from meetings attended since last meeting

Paul Sparrowhawk and Richard Haines visited the County Council A40 Options presentation in Witney on 26 September. A handout obtained at the meeting was put in the folder for circulation amongst the councillors.

Richard Haines put notes he had prepared from the RAF Brize Norton Local Consultation Working Group meeting on 7 September in the folder. The number of training flights has increased compared to the previous year, including night flights which have to be done for training on using the night vision goggles.

John Ordish attended the Bampton Surgery Patients' Participation Group meeting on 16 September – minutes from the meeting were put in the folder.

12. Matters arising since publication of agenda/

**Matters which Councillors wish to raise for inclusion on next agenda
(for discussion only)**

Ben Lings said that it appears that two of the barns on the North Street Farm development which the planning application said would be converted appear in fact to have been demolished, and new houses constructed where they stood. The Clerk was asked to query this with WODC.

Date of next meeting: **Thursday 5th November 2015, 7.30pm**

Signed dated