

**MINUTES OF ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 4TH FEBRUARY 2016 IN THE
VILLAGE HALL, ASTON AT 7.30 PM**

1. Members **Richard Haines (Chairman)**

Present: **Jane Everex**
 Ben Lings
 John Ordish
 Paul Sparrowhawk
 Jane West
 Phil West

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu – Clerk
 Hilary Fenton – West Oxfordshire District Councillor
 Charles Mathew – Oxfordshire County Councillor

Members’

Apologies: None

- 2. Minutes of previous meeting** – on 7 January 2016 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. County and District Council matters

Charles Mathew informed the Parish Council that the County Council Cabinet approved the proposed budget, including the full £51.6 million budget cuts/expenditure reallocations which were included in the public consultation in December 2015. Additional savings of nearly £20 million have had to be identified to balance the budget following the publication of the Government’s Revenue Support Grant for 2016/17, and the County Council will use over £3 million of its reserves in order to balance the budget. Mr Mathew said that the Oxfordshire County Councillors do not want to vote in support of the budget at the full Council meeting on 16 February, but have no alternative. Mr Mathew expressed the opinion that the County Council needs to make better use of its property assets to generate income and needs to think of new money generating options, possibly including a congestion charge for Oxford; he estimates that a £2.50 charge would generate income of £17 million per year.

If the budget and current proposals are approved, the County Council will cease running most of the existing children’s centres at the end of September. The impact on the children’s centres should be mitigated by them being run on a commercial basis by other organisations. This won’t work for the subsidised buses; the situation for these services is bleak. The mobile library service will be cancelled if the budget is voted through.

The independent inspection of the Core Strategy for Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2031 has started.

Hilary Fenton told the Parish Council that the Inspector has put further examination of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan back to December 2016. Richard Haines asked Mrs Fenton how she thinks the situation with the Local Plan will unfold. Mrs Fenton replied that she

has been assured that the outlook is positive as developers are now submitting further speculative applications which will help the District Council meet its housing need. One of the issues is the Oxford City unmet housing requirement – it is not clear how this will be shared around the districts.

Mrs Fenton informed the Parish Council that Bampton Parish Council is hoping to take on the running of the Bampton Children's Centre.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) Future of bus services in Aston and Cote

Richard Haines attended the meetings between Stagecoach and the parishes along routes 18 and 19 on 20 January 2016. Notes from the meeting prepared by Mr Haines had already been circulated, but the outlook for the bus service is not hopeful. Mr Haines told the meeting that he has not yet heard anything further from the MD of Stagecoach who was at the meeting.

OALC has now shared NALC advice that local councils could use the financial powers under s137 of the LGA 1972 to pay a subsidy of their own to commercial bus providers. The maximum expenditure under this legal power is limited; Aston has uncommitted s137 potential funds for 2016/17 of £3.7k. Richard Haines told the meeting that it was evident at the meeting in Northmoor which took place in advance of the Stagecoach meeting that there is no appetite from local parish councils to contribute their own funds into a commercial bus service. The parish council money which could be used would probably be better spent locally.

b) Anti-social behaviour

The defibrillator cabinet on the wall at the village hall has been damaged. The Community Trust is looking into whether it needs to be repaired or replaced.

Richard Haines told the meeting that he had been contacted by a resident complaining about contractors' vehicles parking on the pavement opposite the North Street farm development. Mr Haines said that he had contacted the PCSO and asked the police team to check this area when they are in Aston. The resident had also contacted the developers and parking at the site has been less of a problem recently.

6. New Business

a) Annual Parish Meeting 2016

It was resolved that this will take place on Wednesday 25th May.

The Clerk will ask the Allotment trustees whether they are happy for the banner to be put on the allotment fence in Aston again. The Clerk will organise updated date stickers for the banner.

It was agreed that Sport Aston would be asked if they want to give a presentation – John Ordish to issue the invite.

It was agreed that Volunteer Link-Up will also be invited to give a presentation – Clerk to contact.

b) Annual Review of the Parish Council's risk assessment

The draft risk assessment and a report thereon by the Clerk had been circulated in the Briefing Notes. It was resolved to approve the assessment as presented – proposed by Jane West, seconded by John Ordish.

c) Half yearly review of external Parish Council assets

John Ordish volunteered to carry out this review.

New Business (continued)

d) 90th Birthday of Her Majesty the Queen

A volunteer litter-pick has already been organised for March.

It is hoped that the Red Lion will organise something similar to the Diamond Jubilee event. Richard Haines to speak to the landlord.

Jane Everex said that there may be a picnic and beacon lighting in Cote (on private land).

The idea of purchasing a bench with a commemorative plaque was discussed; this could be put on the new patio proposed for the village hall. John Ordish will speak to the Community Trust committee.

e) Suggestion from WODC Councillor Steve Good for creation of car park on part of the Aston allotment site

Richard Haines informed the Parish Council that the Allotment trustees have written to Steve Good to advise that they oppose the idea. Mr Haines said that the Parish Council recognises that the Allotment trustees own the land and that they are the body responsible for making a decision on whether to progress this idea. The Parish Council will not consider the suggestion nor come to a formal view at this point, but will become involved as appropriate if the idea is progressed.

f) External audit arrangements from 2017/18

It was resolved that the Parish Council will not opt out of the scheme being developed by Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd.

7. Community Trust

The damage to the defibrillator cabinet at the village hall had been discussed earlier in the meeting. Mr Ordish informed the Parish council that the arrangements for inspecting the defibrillator and replacing the consumables are being reviewed by the Community Trust. It was agreed that the Parish Council would consider contributing to the cost of the consumables (pads) if/when asked.

The Community Trust is planning to replace the windows at the end of the meeting room with French doors and to install a new patio outside them. This work should be completed before the fête. After this the changing rooms will be improved, and the possibility of a future extension/small pavilion could be considered at a later stage.

8. Parish Infrastructure

a) Village maintenance

The WODC road sweeper has visited the village since the last meeting, and the road edges are now much cleaner.

It was noted that there is a deep dip in the verge as you approach Chimney bridge from Aston. This causes problems for drivers who have to pull off the road to allow vehicles to pass. It was not clear how this could be remedied.

b) Access to Cote Road postbox (at junction with Bull Street)

The new paving slabs have now been installed.

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

No response has been received from the County Council on the Parish Council proposals for removal/amendments of the chicanes. The Clerk continues to chase.

9. PLANNING

New planning applications

- 16/04419/S73 Chimney Farm Barns, Chimney
Removal of condition 4 of planning permission W2001/0924 to allow unrestricted use of C3 dwellings
- It was resolved that the Parish Council would object to this application for the following reasons:
- Non compliance with Policy H2 d) unacceptable impact on living conditions for existing residents
 - Would not enhance immediate setting, contrary to paragraph 55 of NPPF
 - No demonstrated local need for the housing, particularly for large houses;
 - Loss of holiday lets would be detrimental to rural economy;
 - WOLP stresses importance of sequential use consideration when considering the conversion of buildings in rural areas, with business/tourist use to be considered before residential use – the buildings are successfully being used as holiday lets, so conversion to dwellings would fail the sequential test
 - Detriment to rural economy
 - Non compliance with Policy H2 e) creation of unsafe conditions for the movement of people and vehicles
 - Non compliance with Policy H10 – sustainability objectives
 - Adverse impacts of granting this application would outweigh the benefits, giving grounds for refusal of this application under NPPF
 - The Parish Council requests that the application is decided by the Lowlands Planning Committee rather than under delegated powers

- 16/00190/HHD Old Dairy Barn, Cote
Erection of two storey rear extension
- It was resolved that the Parish Council would object to this application on the following grounds:
- overlooking from the upper windows on the proposed extension would have an adverse impact on the neighbouring property (Cote House), contrary to Policy H2 of the WOLP 2011 and emerging Plan 2031;
 - the proposal would adversely affect the setting of the neighbouring listed building (Cote House), contrary to policy BE8 of the WOLP 2011 and policy EH7 of the emerging WOLP 2031.

- 15/04512/FUL 8 Foxwood Close, Aston
New build chalet bungalow to existing brownfield site as infill
- It was resolved that the Parish Council would object to this application on the following grounds:
- the scale and design of the proposed dwelling are not in keeping with the neighbouring properties, which will be detrimental to the appearance and character of Foxwood Close generally and will not preserve or enhance the Conservation Area, contrary to policies BE5 of the existing Local Plan 2011 and EH7 of the emerging Plan 2031.
- The Parish Council is not opposed, however, to the principle of building on this site, provided the dwelling is in keeping with the area.

Planning applications granted

15/04151/HHD 3 Chimney Farm Cottages, Chimney, Bampton

15/04156/LBC Erection of porch extension

10. FINANCE

a) *Account Balances at 31 January* - noted.

b) *Transfer from Santander current account to Unity Trust*

It was resolved to transfer the balance on the Santander account into the Unity Trust account in advance of the Santander account being closed.

c) *January invoices presented for approval and payment*

		Statute
Clerk's salary and working from home allowance	364.20	LGA 1972, s112
Clerk's expenses – printing – 102 sheets @ 5p	5.10	LGA 1972 s111
Oddjobs – removing and replacing pinboards on PC notice board	45.00	LGA 1972 s111
Oddjobs – supply and lay paving slabs in front of postbox	60.00	LGA 1972 s137
Greenbarnes Ltd – supply of two new pinboards for Parish Council noticeboard	147.98	LGA 1972 s111
Richard Haines – travel expenses for attending Stagecoach meeting	18.30	LGA 1972 s111
West Oxfordshire District Council – emptying of dog bin in February	21.04	Litter Act 1983
Total	£661.62	

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

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

Richard Haines attended a meeting of the RAF Brize Norton Local Councils Working Group on 18 January. The full minutes will be published on the RAF website. Mr Haines highlighted two points; the Working Group has previously been told that all 24 Hercules aircraft would be replaced with the new A400 Atlas, however, 14 of the Hercules will now be extended to continue in use for a further 13 years, to 2035. The engine ground runs associated with the Hercules are more frequent and take three times longer than the A400 Atlas. Richard Haines said that he had asked at the meeting whether this will mean that there will be further consideration of constructing a hangar in which the engine running could take place; this had previously been discounted on the basis that the Hercules would be out of use by 2022. The RAF is carrying out a "Disturbance Attitude Survey." The survey was put in the folder and councillors were asked to feed comments back to Mr Haines so that he could complete it.

Jane Everex told the Parish Council that she attended a meeting at Cote Chapel on 3 February 2016. It is intended that the whole churchyard (front and back) will be cut by a contractor three times during the season. The Historic Chapels Trust (HCT) has asked whether the Parish Council will consider paying a donation towards the cost of the grass cutting in 2016, and whether any donation could be paid direct to the local group rather than to HCT centrally. It was agreed that this was acceptable in principle, and that HCT should submit a donation request at the end of the year with supporting evidence showing the actual cost for the Parish Council to consider in the same way as previous years. Jane Everex will feed this information back to HCT.

Jane Everex also told the meeting that fundraising events for the Chapel may be held in other venues to increase their accessibility to a wider audience.

Signeddated.....