

**MINUTES OF ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 3RD APRIL 2014 IN THE
MEETING ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, ASTON AT 7.30 PM**

1. Members **Roy Williams (Chairman)**

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

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu – Clerk
 Hilary Fenton, West Oxfordshire District Councillor
 Steve Good, West Oxfordshire District Councillor
 Charles Mathew, Oxfordshire County Councillor, arriving at item
 20 members of the public

Apologies: None

- 2. Minutes of previous meeting** – on 6 March 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
Proposed by Richard Haines, seconded by Paul Sparrowhawk.

3. Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

John Ordish, as a Trustee of Aston Parish Minibus, the application for a donation (Agenda Item 8b)

John Ordish, as Treasurer of St James' Church, the application for a donation towards the cost of grass cutting in 2013 (Agenda Item 8c)

4. Open session for public debate

Several members of the public present made representations about the proposed development on Cote Road (planning application 13/1494/P/OP).

The concerns expressed included:

- Ability of Aston & Cote Primary School to accommodate the additional pupils who would be living in the development
- Flooding risk – particularly as the Lowlands Planning Committee appears to have been told that the field does not flood
- Potential restrictions on the use of the village hall if people in the new housing were to lodge complaints about noise disturbance
- Concerns about the adequacy of the habitat survey carried out by the developer
- Concerns that the application could change significantly between the outline planning stage and final planning permission, particularly in relation to the potential need to widen the main road through the development to enable effective access for waste collection and emergency vehicles
- Increase in traffic and safety concerns for pedestrians crossing Cote Road, particularly near the school

Roy Williams informed the members of the public present that the Parish Council had already objected formally to the planning application due to it being an extension of the village and concerns about potential increased flooding risk. He further advised that the

Open session for public debate (continued)

Parish Council has now agreed that Richard Haines will attend the Lowlands Planning Committee meeting on 14 April and will speak on the Parish Council's behalf.

Steve Good informed the meeting that both he and Hilary Fenton sit on the Lowlands Planning Committee and have been closely following this planning application. Hilary Fenton had proposed that the Planning Committee undertakes a site visit before making a final decision on the application, and this will take place on 10 April. Hilary Fenton said that she had been surprised by how few people had to date raised concerns or objections in relation to the planning application.

Mr Good and Mrs Fenton were asked whether they will be representing the community at the Lowlands Planning Committee meeting. They confirmed that they will be representing the parish views as well as expressing their own opinion on the application and listening to all sides of the argument.

Mr Good and Mrs Fenton were then asked whether the members of the Planning Committee receive the full detail of responses to the application provided by members of the public. Mrs Fenton stated that the Committee members receive a précis of the concerns raised if the responses have been sent to the Planning Officers. Some people present at the meeting expressed concern that the précis prepared for the Planning Committee meeting on 17 March was not completely representative of what had been contained in the objections. Mrs Fenton and Mr Good advised that members of the public can email or write to the members of the Planning Committee direct.

Charles Mathew made several observations to the meeting. In relation to the concerns about the ability of the school to accommodate additional pupils, he advised that Oxfordshire County Council has a responsibility for making sure that every child in the county receives an education, and if an extension at the primary school is required, this would have to be built. Mr Mathew then raised his own concerns regarding sewerage and the ability of the sewer system across the broader area to cope with additional housing. He expressed the view that Thames Water has not been responding adequately to these concerns.

A member of the public present asked whether the Parish Council would consider contacting David Cameron as the local Member of Parliament. Charles Mathew advised that Mr Cameron will not get involved in an individual planning application, but would be prepared to be involved if he considered that the process leading to the decision had been flawed.

Another member of the public present asked what the appeals procedure is if the District Council approves the planning application. Mr Mathew informed the meeting that if permission is refused a developer can appeal, but the public has no right of appeal if permission is granted, apart from a judicial review, and that only looks at allegations of flaws in the process, not the decision itself.

The members of the public present who had attended to discuss the planning application then left the meeting.

5. OCC/WODC Items

Steve Good informed the Parish Council that members of the District Council have recently been supplied with a detailed report on the issue of the 5 year land supply and its link to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Charles Mathew provided an update on his views on the County Council Minerals Strategy Policy. He expressed concerns about the proposal within the Strategy that individual applications for minerals extraction should be dealt with through the planning system, because this would mean that they would be considered on a "first come first served" basis. This would make it difficult to deliver the commitments to even distribution of extraction sites between the south and west of the county contained within the strategy.

Mr Mathew then spoke about the proposed Western Conveyance Channel and expressed the view that there is no real proof that the channel would work, and that it would be difficult to prove what impact it had had if it is in fact built. Mr Mathew further expressed doubt on whether it would be the right answer to the flooding problems in Oxford and whether it would deliver value for money, given the very high cost.

Finally Mr Mathew informed the Parish Council that he had recently met with Thames Water to discuss problems with the sewerage system in various parts of Oxfordshire, and he expressed the view that Thames Water does not appear to be prepared to properly listen to the very significant ongoing issues.

6. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) *Signage for Aston Pottery*

The signs have been installed and Aston Pottery has paid their share of the cost.

b) *Aston website*

Ben Lings told the Parish Council that he is continuing to work on the development of the new website. Roy Williams informed the meeting that he plans to withdraw the funding from the existing website provider at the end of April.

c) *s106 developer funding if the Cote Road planning application is granted*

WODC has now prepared its requested s106 funding from the development, should permission be granted. The total includes £47,704 for improvements to leisure and play facilities within Aston, including £20,000 towards the facilities specifically requested by the Parish Council (all of the £47,704 will come direct to the parish).

d) *Draft Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Core Strategy*

It was resolved that the Parish Council would submit a response to this strategy, raising similar concerns to those expressed in previous consultations, and expressing support for the better recognition of the need to dig where the minerals are needed and to achieve a 50/50 split in extraction between the south and the west of the county.

e) *Oxfordshire County Council consultation on its draft Rights of Way Management Plan (RoWMP)*

It was resolved to respond with the view that the Parish Council does not believe that it is acceptable to expect parishes to contribute to the maintenance of rights of way within their parish from their own precepts when all residents of the county, no matter, where they live, can benefit from those rights of way. The Parish Council considers that the County Council should continue to meet the cost of all work on rights of way from its council tax so that all residents of the county contribute equally.

7. Correspondence sent

Listed in the Clerk's Briefing Notes previously circulated to all Councillors.

8. New Business

a) *Parish Council election – 22 May 2014*

The Clerk advised the members that the deadline for nominations is 4pm on Thursday 24 April 2014.

b) *Donation to Aston Parish Community Minibus*

John Ordish spoke on behalf of the Minibus trustees. The minibus needs to be replaced, and any donation provided will be put towards the cost of the annual insurance, which will release funds to go into the replacement minibus reserve. It was resolved to give a donation of £210 – proposed by Jane West, seconded by Richard Haines.

c) *Donation request for cost of grass cutting from St James' Church, Aston*

It was resolved to pay the requested donation of £600 – proposed by Ben Lings, seconded by Paul Sparrowhawk.

d) *Half yearly review of external Parish Council assets*

John Ordish volunteered to carry out the review.

e) *Renewal of membership of OALC*

It was resolved to renew the Parish Council's membership of OALC at a cost of £192.78. Proposed by John Ordish, seconded by Jane West.

f) *Renewal of membership of ORCC*

It was resolved to renew the Parish Council's membership of ORCC at a cost of £65.00. Proposed by Richard Haines, seconded by Paul Sparrowhawk.

g) *Renewal of LCR magazine subscription*

It was resolved to renew the Parish Council's subscription to LCR at a cost of £17.00. Proposed by John Ordish, seconded by Jane West.

h) *Ride of Respect 2014 – for information*

The Royal British Legion Riders Branch has again organised a Ride of Respect which will pass through Cote and Aston. The Ride will take place on Sunday 1 June 2014.

9. Parish Infrastructure

a) *Weedkilling*

The Clerk was asked to instruct Lynick Gardens to weedspray (and subsequently remove the weeds when dead) on North Street, Bampton Road, Cote Road and Bull Street, including alongside the drystone wall at St James' Church. The Clerk was given delegated authority to order the work provided the cost would be below £250.

b) *Block work and kerbing around the war memorial*

- Southern Construction has still not responded to the letter advising that a two year warranty is required by Oxfordshire Highways
- The Clerk has requested a suggested specification for remedial work at the site and associated quotation from Oxfordshire Highways

Parish Infrastructure (continued)

c) *Cote village information sign*

The Clerk will check the measurements on the artwork prepared by Oxfordshire County Council to ensure that the stickers will fit in the 'phone box windows. A proforma invoice will then be presented for approval and payment at the May meeting, after which the order will be placed.

d) *Road closure signs (for flooding) Great Brook Road*

The Clerk has asked Highways whether it would be possible to install signs stating "road liable to flooding" – response awaited.

e) *Grass cutting of playing field*

John Ordish informed the Parish Council that he has sent the contractor a list of dates for the year's cuts. The first cut was carried out in the week beginning 17th March, the second is due on 10th April.

10. PLANNING

WODC Local Development Framework

The new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has now been published. The assessment for West Oxfordshire suggests a significant increase in the number of homes the district will need in the future. The draft Local Plan identified a target of 306 homes per year; the SHMA suggests that a target in the order of 635-685 homes per annum is needed. The SHMA is only one piece of evidence which the District Council will use to inform its Local Development Framework, which will be published for consultation later in the year.

New Planning Applications

14/0366/P/FP Shifford Manor Farmhouse, Old Shifford
Erection of porch to rear entrance and new dormer window to south elevation
No comments

Follow-up to previous planning applications

13/1494/P/OP Land between Saxel Close and Village Hall, Cote Road, Aston

The application was considered at the Lowlands Planning Committee meeting on 17 March. The Committee members resolved to defer the application in order to carry out a visit to the site, which will take place on 10 April 2014.

The application will now be considered further at the Lowlands Planning Committee meeting on 14 April 2014.

It had previously been agreed that Richard Haines will attend the meeting and speak on the Parish Council's behalf. It was agreed that the key points he would include in his presentation would be:

- The Parish Council's main objection to the application is that it would be an extension of the village boundary
- Concern that this may make the land on the opposite side of the road vulnerable to development
- There is other land available within Aston better suited for development
- Inability of sewerage system to cope
- Concerns about potential exacerbation of flooding risk

- Awareness that the adequacy of the 5 year land supply is under review and a request that weight is given to the existing policies within the Local Plan as it is not certain that there isn't a 5 year land supply
- Field looks different now that it has been ploughed, and more clearly showed its susceptibility to standing water before it was ploughed

Richard Haines agreed to circulate his draft statement to Councillors for their comment in advance of the meeting.

Planning application in neighbouring parish with potential impact on our parish

13/1465/P/OP Land to north of New Road, Bampton
Erection of residential development of up to 160 dwellings

The Lowlands Planning Committee resolved at its meeting on 17 March to grant provisional approval for this application.

11. Finance

a) Account Balances – circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes

Balance on Current Account at 31 March 2014	£ 1,528.81
Balance on Deposit Account at 31 March 2014	£16,652.86

b) Repeal of requirement for Parish Council payments to be made by a physical money order (cheque)

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that on 12 March 2014 the Government published an order repealing s150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 which had the effect of restricting parish council payments to cheques.

Parish councils will now be able to set up online banking, making payments by direct bank transfer, subject to them ensuring that they have robust financial procedures and controls in place to protect their funds.

The Clerk advised that she will be recommending that the Parish Council opens a new account which will facilitate online banking with dual online signatories after the May election.

c) March invoices presented for approval and payment

		Statute
Clerk's salary and working from home allowance	346.00	LGA 1972, s112
Clerk's expenses – printing – 135 sheets @ 5p	6.75	LGA 1972 s111
OALC – 4 copies of Good Councillors Guide	12.80	LGA 1972 s111
Margaret Johnson Ltd – printing & stationery	7.16	LGA 1972 s111
West Oxfordshire District Council – emptying of dog bin in March	19.91	Litter Act 1983
Aston Parish Community Minibus - donation	210.00	LGRA 1997, s27
St James' Community Church Council – donation for grass cutting	600.00	LGA 1972, s214
OALC - subscription	231.34	LGA 1972 s111
ORCC – subscription	65.00	LGA 1972 s137
NALC – LCR magazine subscription	17.00	LGA 1972 s111
Total	£1,515.96	

Finance (continued)

March invoices presented for approval and payment (continued)

It was resolved to make the above payments, proposed by John Ordish, seconded by Jane West. The cheques were signed by Roy Williams and Richard Haines.

12. Matters arising since publication of agenda/

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

a) Better Broadband

Roy Williams informed the Parish Council that he has contacted Better Broadband for Oxfordshire at the County Council to ask for up to date detailed information about how the project will affect the parish. It appears that they are only going to run high speed cabling to one box at the top of Cote Road in Aston, and have not provided any detailed information on how this will feed out into the village. Mr Williams advised that he is still trying to get more information.

b) Highways matters

- The handrails on the bridge over the Great Brook from the path which runs into Ham Lane continue to deteriorate. The Clerk will contact the Countryside Service about this again.
- The deep hole on the Great Brook Road has still not been repaired – there seems to be some lack of clarity at Oxfordshire Highways on who is responsible for the repair as the hole continues cabling/pipework. The Clerk will contact Oxfordshire Highways about this matter again.
- The wooden fence round the culvert of the Brook at Chimney Bridge has been further damaged. The Clerk will send photographs to Oxfordshire Highways.

c) Street nameplates in Aston

John Ordish said that some of the older nameplates are looking tatty – he will assess which would benefit from replacing during his review of the Parish Council assets. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council may be required to pay for any replacements if they are not damaged.

13. Date of next meeting: Thursday 1 May 2014, 7.30pm
Monthly Parish Council meeting

Signeddated.....