

KIRTLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held in the Village Hall (Hazel Room) on Thursday 21st September 2023 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Mrs K Chacksfield, Ms J Conway (Chair), Dr B Enser, D Grimshaw, Ms J Harwell, Mrs R Powles (Clerk)

In attendance: Mrs A Banks, Mr J Collinge (Jake Collinge Planning Consultancy Ltd), , Mr J Draper, Mr J East, Cllr S Holland, Ms J Leeming, Mr D Moore (Manorwood Consultancy Ltd), Mrs A Mowat, Mrs M Scraggs

Cllr Nigel Simpson (Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council, from 6.14 p.m)

	Action
<p>1. Apologies</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>2. Declarations of pecuniary interests / other conflicts of interest</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>3. Approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 18th July 2023</p> <p>The Minutes were approved and signed.</p> <p>Cllr Conway introduced Cllr Simon Holland, who as a parishioner had expressed interest in joining the Parish Council.</p>	
<p>4. District & County Councillor Reports (see below) / Members of the public –</p> <p>Cllr Conway invited comments from members of the public and indicated there might be no further possibility for this; there were no requests to speak.</p> <p>Cllr Conway brought forward Agenda Item 5, Highways (including road safety, place-making and traffic calming)</p> <p>OCC 20mph Steering Group, KPC Traffic Subcommittee, update on traffic calming proposals for village: Cllr Conway reported that the Traffic Subcommittee’s proposals had been rejected by OCC Highways for safety reasons (soil from the build-outs might spill onto the road if impacted by a heavy vehicle), so further thought was needed. OCC Highways had suggested road-narrowing with white gates as alternatives. Cllr Conway would request that Kirtlington be used as a trial location and hoped OCC would discuss this the following week. Cllr Enser requested details be circulated when OCC had agreed the trial proposition. The 20mph repeater signs at the north end of the village would be replaced with larger ones. Cllr Conway had made further contact with OCC with regard to changing the VAS (vehicle activated sign) speed limit from 30mph to 20mph. The County’s 20mph project team was calling for the last submissions by the end of 2023 for implementation in 2024/5.</p> <p>Roadside grass verges and environment: Cllr Enser reported OCC Highways would not increase the annual S101 grant sum but were willing to take back responsibility for verges mowing. This would be a single cut without grass collection. Junctions and visibility splays would be cut in May, with the other areas cut from August onwards; additional cutting would only be done if there was a safety problem at junctions or visibility splays. OCC had agreed to waive the repayment of the current year’s grant. Resolved: to revert to OCC Highways for the verges mowing. The work done by Mr Hawes over the summer was very welcome and timely but the side flail had only been able to do a partial cut of the wide verges where there were no obstacles.</p>	<p>JC</p> <p>JC</p> <p>BE</p>
<p>6. Parish Council-owned assets and community assets</p> <p>Allotments: Cllr Enser advised the Allotment Committee had been granted £500 by the Fete Committee towards upgrading the water catchment areas and were seeking quotes.</p>	
<p>7. Maintenance (Parish Council and community assets): priority actions</p> <p>(a) Kirtlington Conservation Area and village centre (<i>protection of public amenity and heritage; protection of central village area from vehicle erosion of public grassed areas at North and South Greens</i>); survey of South Green</p>	

<p>residents, publication of survey overview (Village News) and survey summary (Village website); options for remedial action.</p> <p>Cllr Enser reported on the options and considerations arising from the South Green survey: resurfacing of tracks around South Green (would be a major investment requiring grants or other sources of funding); pot hole repairs around the Green (Mr Eeley willing to repair as needed); pot holes in Church Lane (OCC had been asked to repair); speeding and pedestrian safety (potentially install 10 mph signage; white lines at Church Lane junctions with South Green tracks OCC responsibility); required visibility of speed bumps (<i>ref Agenda Item 7 b</i>, Mr Pratt offer to paint, the Council to reimburse outlay); grass erosion (reseeding of the worst affected areas); installation of bollards or stones to protect vulnerable points (if used, would require careful siting and prior liaison with neighbouring residents); reduce erosion caused by parking (difficult to resolve as other parking options limited to village hall car park or A4095). Cllr Enser asked for feedback. Councillors noted that additional signage and white lines might be regarded as clutter; further feedback to be provided from Councillors in writing.</p>	
<p>(b) Replacement tree planting, tree health and safety survey, tree surgery, Boward's remedial work to Parish Council-owned trees, application 23/01192/TPO: Cllr Grimshaw reported on the ongoing work which had commenced 18th September. Bowards had agreed to remove gratis a partially recumbent, storm-damaged plum tree which had been exposed by the cutting back of the Leylandii screen (car park verge). Cllr Grimshaw had asked for a quote for additional work to a Sycamore which seemed to be in poor condition, and for minor uplifting of two Limes on South Green. Resolved: subject to the sum quoted, the work to the Limes should go ahead. Bowards would also inspect and scan a large oak near Molly Minns Lane with suspected honey fungus at the base, with a view to identifying the fungus and assessing whether the tree was damaged. The fencing alongside Molly Minns Lane had been damaged and Bowards had apologised, and Mr Draper and Mr Cherry would be able to repair it. Cllr Grimshaw would cut back as needed on an ongoing basis a Holm Oak in the car park verge which now formed a bush.</p> <p>(c) Mowing contracts 2023 (updates): the Clerk reported that the Greens contractor's fortnightly cuts were no longer regularly on Tuesdays but varied according to the weather and his other commitments. The interval between cuts was still roughly fortnightly.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>DG</p>
<p>(Cllr Simpson arrived at 6.14 p.m.)</p>	
<p>8. Village Hall, Sports Field and Play Areas</p>	
<p>(a) KVMHC Committee meeting, 4th September: Cllr Enser referred to the Committee's July minutes: the Committee was updating its website and a work party was planned to carry out internal decoration. There had been discussion of the utilities requirements of the proposed new Community Shop.</p>	
<p>Councillors noted the Council had received no payments in the current financial year for the footballers' use of the sports field, and that it was not clear that the agreed rate would cover the Council's increasing maintenance costs. Cllr Grimshaw would write to the Committee.</p>	<p>DG</p>
<p>(b) Sports field & outfield maintenance: Cllr Grimshaw noted the Sports field was now in good condition. Football matches were about to start and details would be given in an article in the forthcoming Village News. Regrettably dog fouling was still a problem, and the volunteer groundsmen recommended a complete ban. Resolved: Cllrs Grimshaw and Conway would inspect the area again, and additional or improved signage might be appropriate. Councillors and members of the public present noted that dog owners should be challenged, but this often resulted in verbal abuse. Cllr Simpson suggested the Council seek assistance from the Cherwell DC Dog Warden; Cllr Conway would follow this up.</p>	<p>DG, JC</p> <p>JC</p>
<p>Cllr Grimshaw reported the demolition of the Scout Hut had been delayed until the electricity supply was correctly disconnected.</p>	
<p>(c) Play Areas: (Sports field and Roman Close): Councillors noted RoSPA had issued its the annual safety inspection reports for both play areas. Cllr Grimshaw advised that although repairs had recently been undertaken to items provided by Playdale in the Sports field play area and Playdale timbers were still under guarantee, the report listed problems with more of these items. He and Cllr Conway would meet shortly at Roman Close and would revisit the Sports field play area. Banbury Turf had delivered a small quantity of play bark in the summer and would have more in stock from 20th October.</p>	<p>DG, JC</p> <p>DG</p>
<p>Cllr Simpson confirmed grants were available for sports fields and play areas. Cllr Conway thanked Mr Draper and Mr Cherry for their significant and ongoing help with the Sports field.</p>	

- (d) Churchyard extension: Cllr Conway advised the matter had been put on hold until spring 2024. The payment of the legal costs required further discussion. The survey could be done gratis.

9. Parish Services: Community Shop – see above.

Cllr Conway confirmed that the Shop Steering Group had forwarded the requested information on the Cherwell DC pre-app response to the proposals as submitted previously by the SSG; a schedule / timeline for the SSG's next steps; projected costs of the SSG's next steps. The SSG had proposed a meeting with Councillors and arrangements for this were not yet confirmed. Cllr Conway advised however the SSG would meet the following week. It appeared terms had been agreed for the Dashwood to operate as a café, restaurant, small exclusive retail element as well as a boutique spa hotel. Councillors noted this was likely to compete with the SSG's proposed shop and café.

10. Recent Parish Events, Correspondence

- (a) Lamb Ale 2023 (2nd – 5th June); Lamb Ale 2024: format, funfair provision, promotion of historic village event: Cllr Enser reported that she had written to the Showmen's Guild to request a new funfair provider for 2024; the Guild had confirmed they would discuss this with their Committee and Cllr Enser awaited their further response. BE
- (b) Kite Festival, Friday 9th to Sunday 11th June 2023: Councillors suggested the promoters, Kite, be invited to a Council meeting so that the plans 2024 could be discussed, including clarification of Kite's expectations for the future expansion of the event, and to raise again the possibility of the Festival making a donation to the village. Councillors noted the Festival was generally held to be enjoyable by the people who had attended and thus a positive contribution to the community. Noise levels in the village however were greater than the previous year and there had been more traffic exiting from the Festival through the village. JH

11. Planning

- (a) Monthly Parish planning application report: (other than as noted below) no Councillor comments on the applications listed.

Cllr Conway referred to a recent TCA application at Otters Pond; the application indicated the felling of a sycamore and spruce but the intention of the proposal was in fact a reduction of these trees. Councillors noted this was acceptable, however the consultation period had now closed.

- (b) **23/02338/OUT: Manorwood Consultancy Ltd**, Erection of 15 detached and semi-detached single and two-storey dwellings (including affordable housing) together with access, parking, amenity space and landscaping - Land West Of Oxford Close And North Of Corner Farm, Station Road, Kirtlington - resubmission of 22/03049/OUT: Notification of this application had been received on 30th August. Determination to be at a future Cherwell CD Planning Committee meeting, date to be confirmed.
- (c) Councillors had been informed of the submission of a full planning application, not yet validated, by Abbeymill Homes Ltd, for the proposed erection of 14 dwellings to include 6 affordable dwellings, at Land East of Heyford Road adjacent to Jersey Cottages; confirmation of validation and the planning application number awaited.
- (d) **23/02523/F** Erection of single storey detached community shop and café, at land adjacent to Kirtlington Village Hall, South Green, Kirtlington, OX5 3HJ: Notification of this application submitted on behalf of the Community Shop Steering Group had been received on 20th September.
- (e) **Consultation Draft Cherwell Local Plan 2040 Review**: Councillors noted the 6-week public consultation would commence on Friday 22nd September and would close on Friday 3rd November. Cllr Simpson confirmed the proposals included the construction of a further 500 new homes across the District's larger villages. Some villages would be recategorized, from Category A to Category C, because of their lack of facilities. Several thousands of new homes were proposed at the District's main settlement hubs, i.e. Banbury, Bicester and Heyford Park. Cllr Conway asked what provisions were in place which might reduce the villages' quota of 500; Cllr Simpson indicated this would require detailed consultation with individual parishes.
- (f) **Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan (MCNP) Policy Review; update**: Cllr Chacksfield advised there was a distinction between the Cherwell Local Plan 2040 Review and the MCNP Policy Review. The MCNP Policy Review included possible changes to the MCNP's policy for site allocation for housing development in Kirtlington and Steeple Aston. This followed the public meeting held by the Council on 2nd May, and the Council's agreement at its meeting of 15th May to formally engage in the MCNP's site assessment process. A small team of some Councillors and residents had commenced the process on behalf of the MCNP in June. Two key principles had been used to identify sites; these should be adjacent to the existing settlement area and there should be a realistic means of achieving vehicular access. Twelve sites had met these criteria. All possible sites meeting the criteria had been included that CDC, landowners or the local community might have proposed, even if there were factors that suggested they should be excluded or might not be available. In this way, the selection process should avoid any accusations of bias. The Kirtlington and Steeple Aston sites were now being assessed in the same way in order to

produce a shortlist; independent consultants working for MCNP would further analyse the sites. A public meeting lead by the MCNP Forum would be held on 5th October to set out the assessment process to date and seek comments from the village on the process, the assessment criteria and sites. Recommendations would then go to the Parish Council's October meeting. A public consultation period would be held by MCNP, to start in November, to be followed by a referendum in 2024.

A member of the public asked how to participate if it was not possible to attend meetings; Cllr Chacksfield advised the information would be published on the website and further information would be presented at the Council's October meeting.

Cllr Conway invited Cllr Simpson to report on District and County matters (*Agenda Item 4*).

Cllr Simpson said the report on OCC's provision of educational special had led to a cross party effort to improve matters, and recognition that substantial resources were required. He referred to his report to parishes and the development of the county-wide HGV strategy, commencing in the Henley and Windrush areas, and which would be completed in 2025. Cllr Conway would write to express dissatisfaction with the failure to address the HGV problems in the rural areas in Cherwell District.

JC

12. Parish Council priorities

Website and Facebook communications with the village: Cllr Enser reported the village website was improving as village societies were now beginning to update their pages.

13. Finance

- (a) **Monthly receipts & payments:** the Council *approved the proposed and anticipated payments* (schedule as presented to the meeting and published on the Village Website).
- (b) **AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return) for year ended 31 March 2023,** External Auditor Report and Conclusion of Audit: the Council **received and accepted** the Report and Conclusion of Audit.
- (c) Provision of two dog bins: Cllr Enser advised Cherwell DC would charge for the additional two bins from September.
- (d) **Payment options and bank mandate:** the mandate required authorisation by two signatories but Cllr Conway had been informed by Barclays it was possible for a single authorised signatory to effect a payment by BACS. Councillors noted that as a minimum a protocol should be set in place for this, to safeguard public funds. Cllr Holland advised District Council online banking payments requiring two authorisations were effected by a code being sent by the first signatory to a second; the second signatory had to complete the payment within a short window. **Resolved:** to adhere to the two-signatory requirement; for this, further steps were necessary to set up full online banking facilities.
- (e) **Assets, future costs and possible revenue sources:** Cllr Conway referred to the need for additional revenue sources for the maintenance of Council assets, particularly the car park and South Green tracks. Cllr Chacksfield referred to the potential use of S106 funding for improvements to the car park; Cllr Simpson would make enquiries.

Councillors and members of the public discussed the causes of wear and tear to the tracks and car park, also whether access could be limited in some way, and the option of signage indicating the tracks were private roads (as at Dashwood Mews).

14. Oxfordshire Councils' Councillor Code of Conduct 2022

Resolved nem con: to adopt the Code (Parish version November 2022). The Clerk would inform Cherwell DC.

RP

15. Date of the next Parish Council meeting

Next Parish Council meeting: provisionally Monday 23rd October, to be confirmed.

16. Other matters of information not elsewhere on the agenda (not for debate/decision)

- (a) Other matters:

Cllr Conway asked whether grant funding was available for improvements to village halls; Cllr Simpson advised that grant funding would be available imminently and he would forward details of a new grant scheme. Cllr Enser would alert the KVHMC Chairman.

NS
BE

Cllr Simpson advised the new County Councillor Priority Fund was now available, at a total of £15,000 for a two-year

period. This would allow him to authorise payments to parishes in his ward of about £2,000 each. Noted: Cllr Grimshaw would consider drafting an application for £2,500 for improvements to the Play Area.

DG

Cllr Chacksfield advised the Canal and River Trust would remove dog bins from their land. She reported also that the changes to the access to Tackley station were going ahead, residents' objections notwithstanding.

Cllr Enser had contacted Cherwell DC about resurfacing of the damaged tarmac section of Mill Lane beside the Quarry; Cherwell DC were investigating.

BE

Cllr Chacksfield enquired if there was progress with replacing the gate post at the footpath from Hatch Way to the Pound; Mr East advised this was in hand.

Mrs Mowat asked for clarification on the progress of the "Great Wolf" development at Chesterton. Cllr Simpson advised this had been delayed for about six months.

Cllr Conway advised that the Clerk would be stepping down after 17 years in post; Councillors and those present expressed their thanks to the Clerk for her service to the Council and the village over that time.

(b) Agenda items for future meetings:

October: Cherwell Local Plan 2040 Review; 6-week public consultation to 3rd November

October onwards: MCNP policy review in conjunction with Cherwell Local Plan 2040 Review

Ongoing: Parish Council assets – maintenance; replacement tree planting, tree surgery; Village website review

The meeting closed at 7.40 p.m.

Signed

Chair

Date



23/10/23