

Minutes of the South Hinksey Parish Council

at South Hinksey Village Hall

Monday 7th July 2010

Present: Sarah Balaam (Vice-Chair), Tom Barron (from item 4), Sheridan Edward (Clerk), Elizabeth Halcro, Liz LeFevre, Maggie Rawcliffe (Chair)

Arash Fatemian (Cllr, OxonCC) (from item 3)

Parishioners: Peter Rawcliffe

1. Apologies

Gareth Jennings (Cllr, VoWHDC)

2. Declarations of Interest

EH and MR – Village Hall

3. Parishioners' Comments

Burial Ground. PR reported that a post next to a tree needed removing and one of the fence rails needed repairing. Action: EH to obtain quote from David Cullen. EH also reported that the grass around cremated remains plaques needed closer cutting and that debris was collecting under the leylandii. **Action: SE to ask Matthew Ellett to maintain.** SE also reported that he had received a letter from a visitor to the burial ground, Mrs C Bennett of John Piers Lane, asking what rules and regulations were in place, including material for headstones and plastic flowers. SE was not aware of any formal regulation in place and none of the Council were aware of any pre-existing rules. The Council agreed that the tidiness and presentation of the burial ground needed to be monitored. **Action: SE to reply to letter and investigate rules and regulations for the burial ground.**

4. Minutes of May 2010 Meeting

Page 2 first line: Salt Bines should read 'Salt Bins'.

Page 4 – BTAC. LLF added that it had been agreed that SE would contact the Highways Agency to arrange a site visit of the A34 with a view to extending the 50mph speed limit to Hinksey Hill interchange. Action: SE to chase.

Read and agreed.

5. Matters Arising

Village Hall trusteeship. SE reported that ownership of the Village Hall had not yet been registered with Land Registry and that the fee to do so would be £50. However, Land Registry recommend that a conveyancer be used to make the application. SE had not yet received full accounts from VHMC. **Action: SE to contact a local conveyancer for a quote;**

obtain accounts from VHMC; and contact David Wilkins with regard to obtaining relevant documents from existing trustees.

Stile on Betty Lane. SE had not yet heard from the Highways and Transport. **Action: SE to chase.**

Church Close Barrier. EH had obtained a quote from David Cullen for the work. Action: SE to forward VoWH letter to EH. EH to contact VoWH to ask if they can pay / make a contribution to the work.

Grit Bins. SE had drafted a request to Highways and Transport, and this would be sent with the payment authorized in item 6.

Devil's Backbone fence. SE had spoken with Andrew Burchett from the City Council who informed SE that they would try to use the closure of the footpath as an opportunity to mend the fencing, install a grit bin for the footbridge over the railway and cut back the overgrowing vegetation.

Closure of Devil's Backbone. MR reported that Ewan Siret, bridge engineer from the County Council had said that although 3 weeks closure was applied for, they would hope to have the work completed in 1-2 weeks. Ewan also stated that an alternative footbridge would not be possible as it would double the cost of the work.

General Elliott. SE had written to the Brewery expressing the Council's wish to work with the brewery to make the pub a viable business and asking about the Brewery's future plans. The Brewery reported that they were looking to sell or lease the pub and were interested in offers from the parish. **Action: SE to reply expressing the Council's continued support for the pub and to work with the Brewery if possible.**

Field to the rear of Church Close. SB reported that her husband would be happy to put together a draft plan for the Council to submit to the VoWH for pre-planning advice.

Hinksey Hill traffic islands. LLF reported that Highways and Transport had now cut back the vegetation.

6. Finance – Payments and Receipts

Payments

Matthew Ellett	May / June Grass Cutting	£799.00
OxonCC	Two salt bins for Hinksey Hill	£376.00
A-ON	Insurance for 2010/11	£619.82

Receipts

Reeves & Pain	Burial Fee	£300.00
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7. Planning Applications

None.

8. Correspondence

Vale Brewery. SE had received a letter from the brewery informing the Council of their intention to sell or lease the General Elliott pub and inviting offers from parishioners. **Action: SE to forward contents of letter on SHInfo.**

Mrs C Bennett – John Piers Lane. Discussed during Parishioners Comments.

VOWHDC. SE received an email reporting the restructuring of the management team at VoWHDC, creating a joint management team for the Vale and South Oxfordshire DC. Details were circulated to Councillors.

9. County Councillor's Report

AF reported that the financial outlook was gloomy, with the central government expected to make in-year cuts for OxonCC funding of approx. £11m. There would be an emergency Council meeting on 27th July to discuss these cuts. AF also reported that capital spending was going to be very tight. OxonCC was spending £100m per year on capital schemes and they had instigated a comprehensive review of all capital spending schemes. Central government would also be conducting a comprehensive spending review later in the year which will determine the financial allocations for the next three years. AF assured the Parish Council that OxonCC was in a stronger position than many other authorities as they had taken early decisions to get ahead. He also assured the Parish Council that there would be considerable public consultation and would keep the PC informed of all developments. AF also reported that surgeries were being well attended and that he was due to meet with the Area Steward shortly.

10. District Councillor's Report

None.

11. Pavements on Manor Road and St Lawrence Road

EH reported that the paths in the village, especially on Manor Road and St Lawrence Road had become very overgrown and in need of urgent attention. SE clarified that he was still waiting on details from OxonCC as to what areas of maintenance were covered by the grass cutting grant. However, it was felt that work needed to be undertaken in the meantime. LLF also reported that there were several areas on Hinksey Hill in need of attention. **Action: EH and LLF to inform SE of areas in need of urgent attention and SE to contact Matthew Ellett to arrange. SE also to chase OxonCC regarding providing a plan of the verges covered by the grass cutting grant.**

12. Community Land / Garden review

Matthew Carlos had drawn up a proposal for a community garden in the former car park on Manor Road. However, it was felt that progress had been slow and the project needed the assistance of the Parish Council to move it forward. It was also felt that the area was now becoming overgrown and in need of attention. It was reported that there was a meeting of the gardening club the following evening at which the speaker would be one of the organizers of the Barracks Lane community garden in East Oxford. It was felt this would be an ideal opportunity to gather support and a committee to move the project forward. **Action: TB to discuss with MC and EH to raise at the gardening club meeting.**

13. Organization of Council and Council meetings

SE and MR had drafted proposals for changes to Council meetings. These were circulated to the Council prior to the meeting and presented to the Council for discussion and approval.

Proposal One: Disallow parishioners discussion/comment during the meeting

Parishioners' input is important to the Council, this should be regulated more closely. It was therefore felt that parishioners should retain their slot for comments at the beginning of the meeting, but then not be allowed to speak during the meeting. As an exception, parishioners would be allowed to raise points of information during the meeting.

Council agreed Proposal One.

Proposal Two: A slot be added at the end of the meeting for Parishioners' Feedback

To ensure they were able to feedback about issues raised during the meeting, a slot would be allocated at the end of the meeting for parishioners' feedback.

Council agreed Proposal Two.

Proposal Three: Insert timings into the agenda

It was felt that discussion tended to overrun on earlier agenda items often leaving insufficient time for later items. It was therefore proposed that timings be added to the agenda as a guide for the Chair.

Council agreed Proposal Three.

Proposal Four: Keep discussions during Matters Arising to a minimum

Often a lot of time was taken up by discussion on Matters Arising, leaving insufficient time for other agenda items. It was therefore proposed that Matters Arising should be used to feedback actions. Any substantial discussions should be added as additional agenda items before the meeting. AF suggested that a Clerk's Report be added to cover action items by the Clerk, Finance issues, etc. SE felt that these blanket terms could impede the ability to track the progress of issues through meetings and that separate agenda items was the simplest method, but that he would investigate what other Councils did.

Council agreed Proposal Four.

Proposal Five: Each active project be reported back at each Council meeting

It was felt that the Council was not active enough in pursuing its long-term projects. It was therefore recommended that each active project be added to the agenda of each meeting for a progress report.

Council agreed Proposal Five.

Proposal Six: Councillors choose a portfolio of duties and projects

It was felt that as there was often no individual responsibility for the delivery of specific project or the monitoring of maintenance issues and duties, progress could often be slow and confusion or duplication of work could occur. It was therefore suggested that Councillors adopt a portfolio containing a mixture of regular duties (flood prevention, litter, footpaths, A34, etc), and projects (Community Land, Wildflower Meadow, Village Hall ownership, Communications Strategy). The benefits being that councillors would build up specializations in particular areas, allowing work to be done more efficiently; fewer outstanding tasks would slip through the net; workloads would be more evenly spread; Councillors could take individual responsibility and pride in achieving results. A list of duties and projects would be drawn up in the next month and portfolios assigned at the September meeting.

Council agreed Proposal Six.

14. Overview of current and future projects

Incorporated into item 13.

15. AOB

Manor Road Ditch. SB reported that the ownership of the area covering the Manor Road ditch was not registered with Land Registry. The Council therefore felt that as the owner could not be located, gaining quotes for the work should proceed.
Action: SB to obtain quotes.

Graffiti. LLF reported graffiti on a road sign on Hinksey Hill approaching the interchange. **Action: LLF to contact AF with the details to follow-up with Highways and Transport and inform Adrian Wright, CSO.**

Communications with Hinksey Hill. Because of the large number of residents on Hinksey Hill not covered by SHInfo LLF and MR proposed that the next leaflet be sent by post; drawing up a flyer to be included with the next leaflet drop asking them to join the SHInfo mailing list if possible, Pointing out the expense of post Council agreed to this.

Date of next meeting: Monday 6th September at 7pm