

**Minutes of the meeting of South Hinksey Parish Council
held at South Hinksey Village Hall on Monday 7th October 2019**

Present: Christine Chater, Michael Cochrane (Chairman), Linda Goodhead, Christine Madsen, Catherine Powell
Cllr Bob Johnston (OxonCC), Cllr Emily Smith (VoWHDC),
Geoffrey Ferres (Clerk).

Other attendees: None.

Time commenced: 7.30pm

19/124. Apologies

Patricia Jones (Vice-Chair), Cllr Debby Hallett (VoWHDC).

19/125. Declarations of interest

All members declared an interest in relation to the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme and the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway.

19/126. Public questions, comments or representations

None.

19/127. Minutes of the last ordinary meeting

The Council **resolved** to agree the minutes of the September 2019 meeting. The Chairman then signed each page.

19/128. Finance – payments and receipts

The Clerk introduced a bank reconciliation and a budget monitoring report up to the end of September.

Payments

Payee	Reason	Amount	Power to act
OALC	Planning training for Clerk	£54.00	s111 LGA 1972
Oxford Direct Services	Inspect/make safe memorials	£350.00	s214 LGA 1972
James Watts Gardening	Finishing hay cut	£140.00	s214 LGA 1972
Geoffrey Ferres	Clerk pay and expenses Q2	£1,040.95	s112 LGA 1972
HMRC	PAYE Income Tax deducted Q2	£260.20	s112 LGA 1972

The Council **resolved unanimously** to approve all five payments. The Chairman and CC signed the payments and initialled the supporting paperwork.

The Chairman and CC signed another copy of the instruction to the Council's bank, which had been approved at the last meeting, to pay the Clerk's salary for the remainder of the financial year by means of a monthly standing order as the Clerk reported that the Council's bank had rejected the first instruction because it felt the signatures on the standing order did not match the specimen signatures on the bank mandate.

Signed: _____

Mike Cochrane

Date: _____

4 Nov '19

The Clerk said he had not put two other invoices before the Council for payment as he was still questioning their validity: one for £200 was from VoWHDC for uncontested elections in both parish wards in May and the other for £290.40 was from Oxford Direct Services for mowing the strips in the field behind the Village Hall for the fête.

Receipts

Payer	Reason	Amount
SSE	Wayleaves (re pylon at woodland)	£21.01

19/129. County Councillor's report

BJ reported on the condition of the bridge that carries the Oxford ring road over the railway line at Kennington. Temporary measures can support the bridge for two years.

BJ said discussions are taking place between a number of organisations on funding the replacement of the bridge. It is likely one result of replacing the bridge will be a reduction in the cost of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme.

A new bridge is intended to have a life of 100 years and it is envisaged that there will be just two weekend closures of the railway line during the work.

BJ also reported that from February 2020 companies which wish to dig up a road will require OxonCC's permission in advance except in emergencies. The fees paid will enable OxonCC to employ four full-time additional inspectors to check the work, very little of which is currently inspected.

19/130. District Councillors' report

DH and ES had kindly circulated a report which ES introduced. ES then answered questions on the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme and the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway.

19/131. Planning applications

- a) **Siskins, Spring Copse: change of use to convert existing garage bays 1, 2 and 3 into a summer house and convert bay 4 into a changing room/toilet for the increased enjoyment of the garden and swimming pool [P19/V2262/FUL] [Consultation deadline: Tuesday 22nd October 2019].**

The Council **agreed** to instruct the Clerk to inform VoWHDC it had no objection to this application but wished there to be a condition that the building must not be permitted to become a separate dwelling-house. **Action: Clerk**

b) Updates

- **Westwood Country Hotel, Hinksey Hill [P18/V2482/O - KEN]** – The Clerk had responded to this application on the Council's behalf as it had arisen after the last meeting and the consultation period ended on 19th September 2019.

19/132. Correspondence

a) Echo

The Clerk informed the Council that the deadline for articles for the next issue of Echo is 14th October and expressed the hope that members would contribute articles about the Council's work. The Clerk said he had drafted an article about

Signed: _____



Date: _____

4.11.19

the measures taken to make safe memorials in the burial ground as he continued to receive questions about these.

b) Trees of Remembrance

The Clerk suggested that with November including both Remembrance Day and Tree Charter Day (on 30th November) there might be an opportunity for the Council to plant the saplings it had ordered last year from OxonCC under the Trees for Remembrance scheme. **Actions:**

- **Clerk to contact OxonCC about the saplings**
- **CC to speak to a parishioner who, it was thought, might be happy to be involved.**

19/133. Council priorities

The Council briefly considered the Action List and the first analysis of the time monitoring started by the Clerk on 1st July as one of the changes to working practices that had been agreed following his appraisal with the Chairman.

CM said she has investigated websites and has obtained three quotations from companies that appear to have particular experience of designing and hosting parish council websites.

CM again expressed her interest in the development of a Neighbourhood Plan as a way of influencing future planning decisions in the parish.

ES said eight Neighbourhood Plans have been made already in the Vale of White Horse. ES said funding is still available from Government for the development of Neighbourhood Plans.

The Council **instructed** the Clerk to include an item on Neighbourhood Plans on the agenda of the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

19/134. Recording of Council meetings

The Clerk had circulated Oxford City Council's protocol and notice, as requested by the Vice-Chair. In her absence, the Council **agreed** to defer this item to the next meeting.

ES informed the Council that at meetings of VoWHDC and North Hinksey Parish Council, where recording of meetings is not uncommon, there is an announcement from the Chair at the beginning of each meeting.

19/135. Hinksey Hill speed limit

CC said she feels so frustrated about the lack of any action from OxonCC or even any response to her messages that she almost felt like resigning. BJ offered to contact OxonCC's Lorna Baxter. The Chairman suggested writing to OxonCC's Chief Executive, Yvonne Rees, demanding a meeting and threatening to submit a formal complaint.

The Council **agreed** to wait two weeks to see what BJ may be able to achieve.

ES suggested one of BJ's options might be to ask a public question to Cllr Yvonne Constance, the relevant OxonCC Cabinet member.

Signed: _____



Date: _____

4.11.19

19/136. Flood Alleviation Scheme

The Vice-Chair had forwarded the last response she had received from the Environment Agency's Jo Emberson Wines, Project Director for the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, and the Clerk had published it on the website.

ES has approached Jo Emberson Wines and had been told that the issue of the Council being given a place on the sponsorship group will be on the agenda of the next meeting of that group.

The Chairman confirmed that he and the Vice-Chair are still due to meet Peter Rawcliffe and Adrian Porter on 18th October.

19/137. Litter pick

Nothing further to report.

19/138. Woodland

The Clerk had arranged for a message to be circulated via Shinfo advertising the working party due to take place next Saturday afternoon, 12th October. The next quarterly site meeting is due to take place on Thursday 17th October.

The Clerk reported that an alert from the Forestry Commission had prompted him to ask Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust's Andy Gunn whether the Council should invoke the force majeure clause in its contract.

Andy Gunn had contacted the Forestry Commission's Sam Gunn who had advised him that it was too late to do this. The Chairman said he thought the force majeure clause could still be invoked. **Action: Clerk to seek clarification**

19/139. Oxford to Cambridge Expressway

LG had attended the North and West Parishes Expressway Group meeting on 9th September. ES said she is speaking at the group's next meeting.

ES reported that Highways England has briefed her that it has narrowed its options down to six possible routes and has prepared 40 public exhibitions but is still awaiting ministerial approval before it can proceed.

19/140. Burial ground

a) Trees

The Clerk had re-tabled the report of the tree inspection conducted by Oxford Direct Services. The Council **instructed** the Clerk to appoint a contractor to carry out the recommended work in line with the Financial Regulations. **Action: Clerk**

b) Waste

The Clerk had selected Oxford Direct Services to provide a commercial waste service and a new bin had been delivered on 13th September but Biffa had yet to remove VoWHDC's bins.

Although he had received two cheaper quotations, both were from companies used to providing bins to conventional business customers where a company expects a bin to be kept locked, for the public to have no access to it and for someone to put out and take in the bin for them on the day it is emptied.

Signed: _____



Date: _____

4.11.19

One of those two companies had also wanted to tie customers into a three-year contract under which it had the right to increase the price by up to 45% in any year, which the Clerk had considered a completely unacceptable risk.

c) Memorials enquiries

The Clerk said that since the last meeting he had replied to the letter mentioned there and, within the past seven days, he had received another telephone call and an email, both from people concerned about the banding and staking of a memorial to a loved one. He had not yet received anything about any of the memorials that had been laid flat.

d) Additional burial plots

The Clerk reported that he had a site meeting with Dr Richard Earl of TGMS on 25th September. This is one of three companies that had been suggested to him by Julie Dunk, Chief Executive of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management.

19/141. Grass cutting

Nothing to report regarding the new agreement with OxonCC.

19/142. Maintenance issues

a) Former pub car park

The Council's contractors have tried three times without success to gain access to the former pub car park but found the gate blocked by parked cars in spite of requests to parishioners circulated via Shinfo for them not to block the gate.

b) Cycling sign

The Clerk reported that Oxford Direct Services had replaced the sign at the City end of the Devil's Backbone asking cyclists to give way to pedestrians but he has noticed the licence permitting the sign required it have white lettering on a blue background whereas the new sign has black lettering on a white background. The Clerk would therefore be contacting the other parties to the agreement asking whether they would insist on the removal and replacement of the new sign. **Action: Clerk**

c) Rough sleeping debris close to Devil's Backbone

The Clerk reported that Kevin Keen, Oxford City Council's Green Spaces Officer, had tried without success to find the location and had then offered to meet him but they had yet to agree a date and time. **Action: Clerk**

d) Winter salt

Members had checked the five salt bins in the parish and instructed the Clerk to inform OxonCC that none of them needs refilling. **Action: Clerk**

e) Devil's Backbone

The Clerk had noticed that bushes and weeds were encroaching on the Devil's Backbone and had asked the contractors to deal with this, which they had done on 30th September.

f) Rubbish near Hinksey Hill noticeboard

LG said she had noticed a large item apparently dumped near the Council noticeboard at the top of Hinksey Hill. She was advised to ring Biffa and agreed to do so. **Action: LG**

Signed: _____



Date: _____

4. 11. 19

19/143. Traffic issues

LG had attended the meeting in the Village Hall on 30th September organised by Highways England regarding the forthcoming closures of the A34. Like many of those present, she was unable to understand why Highways England was unwilling to allow access to the village during the closures.

The Council **instructed** the Clerk to send Highways England a letter to be drafted by LG and the Vice-Chair. **Action: Vice-Chair, LG and Clerk**

19/144. Feedback from members of the public

None.

Time concluded: 9.19pm

MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Date of the next Parish Council meeting: Monday 4th November 2019 at 7.30pm at South Hinksey Village Hall – LG gave her apologies

Signed: _____



Date: _____

4.11.19