

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held 14 November 2016

Venue: Norman Fraser Suite, Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Parish Councillors – C. Thornton, N. Lewis, D. Peat, H. Jenkins, R. Shepherd- Cross, P. Johnson & District Councillor I. Corkin.

Also Present: Madeleine Gilpin, Michael Stokes & Lynne Roberts

Parishioners' issues:-

- Mrs Gilpin raised the issue of replacing the War Memorial in the church yard which contained incomplete & inconsistent personal details. The Council considered it to be too difficult to find all the data & possibly contentious to attempt to make changes after so long.
- Mrs Roberts commented on the state of the footpath from Water Lane to the White Lion, where overhanging bushes made it difficult to walk. Councillor Shepherd-Cross agreed to establish who owned the footpath, to ensure action was taken.
- Mrs Gilpin also commented on the footpath by the post box, outside Wood Lane where leaves made the path slippery & dangerous under foot.
- Mrs Gilpin advised Carol Service to be held at Fewcott House on 14 December at 6.00pm.

Declaration of Interests: None

Apologies: County Councillor C. Fulljames.

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2016 were accepted & signed.

Matters Arising:

- Agreed 40mph speed sign by the Church was working correctly.
- Councillor Lewis had written to Viridor & litter on B430 had been cleaned up. However Viridor lighting was still considered an ongoing issue. It was noted that the waste disposal tip is expected to close in 2018, but it is possible CDC will discuss an extension to this date. With the increased activity the island outside the tip needs to have greater visibility.
- Confirmed one of the Village gates on Fritwell Road was broken but repairs were in hand. They have already been painted thanks to Peter & Dee from End Barn
- HM Queen's Birthday Celebrations – final accounts being issued
- Footpath estimates – cost details still ongoing
- Broadband upgrade – Chairman to establish cost estimate for cabinet work – ongoing
- Rural Housing – Awaiting details of date for survey distribution
- Remedial work required to barrier opposite Water Lane being followed up by C. Fulljames
- Emergency Plans to be developed in conjunction with Church & Village Hall is ongoing
- P. Johnson was confirmed as the Council representative on the Village Hall Committee.
- Readiness for Winter Plans need to consider if a new salt/sand bin is required

Co-option of new Parish Councillor

This was deferred until the next meeting when hopefully, prospective councillor could attend.

District Councillor Ian Corkin.

Councillor Corkin informed the meeting that Cath Steer had died on Friday 11th November. She was very well known in the local community & her cheerful contributions will be sadly missed. Devolution issue - Councillor Corkin advised that the situation still unclear but had not gone away. Horton hospital – Maternity operation was downgraded because of the lack of qualified staff & sustainability plans are being drawn up along with 44 other NHS Trusts. It was hoped to keep the Horton public profile high & CDC were providing £50,000 to maintain professional services.

Voter registration – Councillor Corkin advised that there is now a legal requirement for individuals to be registered to vote on an annual basis. A £1,000 fine could be charged for non-registration.

Dog Tags – Since April it has been a requirement for all dogs to be chipped & tagged. CDC has a database where dogs should be registered, which will be helpful in the event of a dog being lost.

Heyford Public Consultation – about whether to split Heyford into 2 separate parishes.

Planning – Councillor Corkin now on Planning Committee. McDonalds planning inquiry to consider more arguments put forward but any wider litter issues appears not to be their direct responsibility. The Cala Homes application for houses in Fritwell was withdrawn on the basis of sustainability. Much attention now focussing on the Iron Bridge development starting in North West Bicester. Bob Duxbury was keen to offer Councillors training on the planning process. Clerk to arrange.

Possibility of a railway station at Ardley being considered. Let CDC or Ian have any comments. Several Parishes were considering their grass cutting situation after disappointing OCC service. Precept due for reconsideration but a referendum must be held to increase by more than 2.5%. Sue Smith [CDC CEO] expected to leave office by 31st March 2017 & Catherine Fulljames expected to stand down at the 4th May 2017 Council elections

Grass Cutting; Woods Report & Lease and Tree Survey

Grass cutting. Much conversation took place about the merits & disadvantages of AwF Parish Council taking over full responsibility for the village grass cutting from Oxfordshire County Council [OCC]. A refund of £1,066 was being offered for the parish to maintain 2.5 acres, but much of this area is actually maintained by parishioners already. Chairman had obtained maps to confirm which areas were involved & those not locally maintained would require a professional contractor to service. The cost of this & the public liability involved, particularly along the dangerous main roads, made the OCC proposition look unattractive. The proposal: - to leave the current responsibilities in place with OCC; to obtain a schedule from OCC of their cutting timetable and any shortfall in cutting performance to be supplemented by AwF funded contractor was proposed by Councillor Lewis & seconded by Councillor Thornton. The proposal was carried unanimously.

Lease of Ardley Woods. The new 15 year Lease retained the same terms as previously, except that the rent review would take place “as & when” rather than every 5 years, which Councillor Shepherd-Cross was requested to review with CDC. Once the terms of the new lease were clarified it was agreed that the Chairman & Councillor R. Shepherd- Cross would be signatories. The title needs to be registered at the Land Registry via a solicitor which Councillor Shepherd-Cross agreed to complete. The fee was expected to be about £200.

Mike Stokes advised that a tree had fallen down in the woods & had blocked the footpath. A notice had been put up to warn the public but the obstruction was cleared by 17th November. The Chairman agreed to walk the woods with Mike Stokes to assess progress & outstanding issues.

Tree Survey. Detailed discussion took place about the poor state of some of the trees as reported in the Jake Williams survey & what a danger they posed to the public. It was considered imperative that immediate action was taken to minimise the perceived threat to the public. It was agreed that this liability was clearly the responsibility of the Parish Council.

Discussion also focussed on the time it had taken to commission the tree survey having considered several organisations to undertake the work. While the estimate of £8,300 to carry out the remedial work was expensive, the initial careful selection had been on the basis that the company doing the survey would also be commissioned to undertake the full project. The proposal to accept the Jake Williams estimate of £8,300 so that the work could start promptly was made by Councillor Thornton & seconded by Councillor Lewis. The proposal was carried unanimously with Councillor Johnson abstaining – having declared an interest.

Neighbourhood Plans.

Councillor Jenkins updated the meeting that there had been 10 pages of response from CDC on the local plans. Much discussion took place on which "Designate Green Spaces" were to be included in the plans. Councillors Thornton & Jenkins agreed to compile a definitive list of Green sites & Open Spaces for Neighbourhood planning purposes, which the Clerk would then forward to Oxfordshire County Council. The Council was reminded that MCNP subscription was due.

Planning Applications.

Items tabled & discussed:-

03 October 2016 – Viridor, MW.0123/16 – Non material amendment to existing Planning permission.

13 October 2016 – 16/01983F – Retrospective planning application from White Lion. Council had no objections.

Current – 31 October 2016 – 16/02060/F – Side Extension to 25 Ardley Road by Sam Dale.

Current - 8 November 2016 – BT advised that telephone box on main road will be removed unless AwF PC requests it to remain. Reply by 5 December 2016. Council minded to agree to removal.

Approved, 28 October 2016 – Application to convert 3 farm buildings into 5 dwellings at Ashgrove Farm

Approved, 10 October 2016 - Intent to undertake work to 9 trees in conservation area. Mrs Millson, The Old Rectory, Church Road, Ardley.

The actions on the planning applications were proposed by Councillor Peat & seconded by Councillor Jenkins.

Finance

The Clerk explained that a donation request had been received from Forget-me-Not which had been circulated to Council members prior to the meeting. While much discussion took place about the merits of this organisation & to assist the community whenever possible it was clear from earlier discussions that all of the current years' budget had been exhausted. Clerk to write to Denise Turner of Forget-me-Not to explain that unfortunately funds were not currently available.

A schedule of payments made in September & October plus those due for payment in November was presented. The payments were proposed by Councillor Thornton & seconded by Councillor Shepherd-Cross

The Clerk was requested to provide a proposed 2017/18 Budget for the next meeting

Any Other Business

Karen Grey had reported that Cars parking on grass verge at the entrance to the woods were churning up the grass. Plastic posts have disappeared. Highways to be informed.

Village Parish notice Boards – Clerk to get quotes for 2 new ones & suggest proposed locations

Councillor Lewis to follow up traffic calming possibilities on Fritwell Road with Highways Dept.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be at 7.30pm on 09 January 2017 in the Village Hall.

Signed.....

Date.....