

East Hagbourne Parish Council

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting duly convened and held
virtually using the ZOOM platform on
Thursday 17th September 2020**

- 1) ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES, DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND VACANCIES:** Present were Chairman I. Duff, Vice Chairman D. Button, Councillors D. Rickeard, C. Gover, C. Shaikh, J. Elliott, P. Dixon and District Councillor A-M Simpson.

In attendance: L. Lloyd (Parish Clerk)

No apologies were received.

I. Duff confirmed there is currently one vacancy for a Parish Councillor.

- 2) PUBLIC FORUM AND QUESTIONS: NONE**

- 3) REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS:** A-M Simpson highlighted aspects of her circulated report (please see attachment 2) in particular the COVID testing facilities and reiterated how important it is to book an appointment rather than just turn up at a testing facility as they are all under pressure at the moment.

The consultation on the Proposed Main Modifications of the Local Plan starts on Monday 21st September and A-M Simpson encouraged the council to respond. The inspector's Main Modifications are the only things that are able to be discussed at this stage.

A-M Simpson has read the Government White Paper and is keen to hear the views of the council. She feels that the Neighbourhood Planning aspect has been overlooked and is encouraging NP groups to respond. There are other areas of concern so it is important to highlight these in the responses.

It was agreed that some agenda points would be dealt with out of sequence for A-M Simpson's benefit.

- 6) e) Responses to consultations on changes to the current planning system (closing date 1st October) and the Government White Paper "Planning for the Future" (closing date 29th October):** An additional consultation of interest was raised by D. Rickeard who referenced his circulated email concerning the Heart of England Transport Strategy Consultation. This is an ambitious strategy which does not reference the OXCAM expressway and is led by the 'net zero carbon emissions by 2050' principle. It was felt that a response largely in support of this should be submitted ahead of the 6th October deadline.

I. Duff confirmed that he has been in discussion with Nick Wright and D. Rickeard and has drafted a response to the Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future'. This will be circulated in the next few days to the rest of the councillors for comment and it was agreed that A-M Simpson would be copied into the planned response. This is an 86-page document and there are some good points within it that could be highlighted in the hope that EHPC is able to influence positive decisions in some way. D. Rickeard expressed concern that the proposals have been prepared without really considering local areas, so it is important to respond to this.

In unitary authority news – A-M Simpson confirmed that the government has determined that 300-500,000 residents is the ideal size for a unitary authority, and Oxfordshire would be closer to 800,000. South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse together, on the other hand, may be a little on the small side.

- 5) ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**

2019-04-04: C. Shaikh confirmed that she has forwarded her communications between herself and OCC regarding gateways to A-M Simpson for assistance.

- 6) c) Dog Waste:** The councillors considered proposed signage circulated prior to the meeting. After some discussion the council approved the signage for dog waste bins and general waste bins. There is a real issue with dog waste on the footpaths and in verges. It was agreed that anything that could improve the current situation without requiring investment in larger bins is worth a try. If the situation continues, then larger bins in the problem locations may need to be considered.

6) **f) Future Community Projects:** I. Duff summarised the progress so far of the Future Community Projects plan for A-M Simpson. D. Rickeard confirmed that this covers the community needs noted in the Neighbourhood Plan as well as other projects that could benefit the village, prioritising the projects and considering how they can move forward. A-M Simpson was advised that the document is available for scrutiny on the website. I. Duff proposed that the newly-revised version should be uploaded to the website, and D. Rickeard asked that the accompanying Wildlife Habitats and Landscape document should also be uploaded. The council approved this proposal.

7) **a) Planning Applications:**

P20/S0171/LB 34 Main Road appeal – I. Duff confirmed that L. Lloyd has spoken with Neil Davies to clarify whether any information on this appeal has been forthcoming, as the target decision date was the 9th September. Nothing has been seen yet. A-M Simpson suspected this may be due to a backlog caused by COVID-19.

MacTaggart & Mickel I. Duff confirmed that a further revised plan has been submitted to Penny Silverwood which she should soon upload to the SODC planning site. I. Duff also confirmed that he has spoken with the Managing Director of M&M, who clarified that East Hagbourne is their 4th development in Oxfordshire at the moment. They are planning to commence building at their 3rd development site in January next year. I. Duff anticipated that this would mean a start date in late Spring at the earliest for East Hagbourne. He also said that the Managing Director has said he is happy to provide regular updates on this.

P20/S3136/FUL Millennium Wood Field - Change of Use application: This has now been submitted but the application does not cover certain important aspects that could affect the decision, such as right of way for vehicle access and land ownership. D. Button and D. Rickeard agreed to discuss the application and write a draft objection for circulation. It was agreed that A-M Simpson would be included in the correspondence as her support would be required should the application go to planning committee.

5) **ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**

2018-04-10 Traffic Signs at the War Memorial: I. Duff outlined the issue we had with the fingerpost sign for A-M Simpson. Unfortunately, when L. Lloyd contacted 101 this did not prove to be helpful as the only option available to the parish council is to request a collision report online. As noted previously, we lack the reference details required to do so. Although this has been a contentious issue, it was agreed that the matter is closed.

8) **Correspondence:** D. Rickeard noted the recent communication from Charlotte Cottingham of SODC regarding the GWP Area X public amenity space which includes allotments. A portion of the GWP Area X site was transferred to Didcot Town Council from East Hagbourne Parish in 2015, but part of the site is still within East Hagbourne Parish. It is clear that the site will be serving Didcot residents as part of the GWP development rather than residents of East Hagbourne. SODC appear to be keen to ask EHPC to share the management responsibility of this area with Didcot Town Council, but this is not a welcome proposal for a number of reasons. Cost and inconvenience aside, East Hagbourne already has Butts Piece Allotments in the village which are well-used and managed with the help of the Parish Council. It was agreed that times for a Zoom call between SODC, Didcot Town Council and EHPC to clarify the parish council's position would be agreed after the meeting.

5) **ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**

2019-04-03 20mph Speed Limit: I. Duff confirmed that there has been no progress on this matter in the last month, but reiterated that the speed limit progress is dependent on the M&M developments and these are still unfolding. A-M Simpson suggested that she would speak to Mark Gray of Benson & Cholsey District as she has spoken with him previously about the OCC/government initiative concerning footpaths and cycle routes and it is possible that this may also support the 20mph speed limit proposal.

A-M Simpson left the meeting at 8.39pm.

4) **Confirmation of the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20th August 2020:** The minutes were verbally agreed. L. Lloyd confirmed that she will post the minutes on the website as a DRAFT, and the hard copy will be signed at the next physical meeting.

6) **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION:**

a) **Employment Committee:**

i) **To authorise payment of 74.5 hours at £12.89/h for extra time spent by the clerk over the contracted work hours during the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020.** The council unanimously supported this proposal.

ii) **To agree revised contracted hours for the clerk at 11.5 hours per week from 1st April 2020:** The council unanimously supported this proposal.

b) **Website Accessibility - Approval for spending £70.00 for the minor amendments required to fully comply with the accessibility requirements that come into force on 23rd September:** C. Gover confirmed that these minor changes will ensure the website is fully compliant. The council approved the cost.

d) **Government White Paper:** See discussion of 6) e) above

g) **To consider whether to send a letter to the Hagbourne Parochial Charities (HPC) concerning the possible installation of picnic benches or other items on Butts Piece so that they can discuss it at their AGM on October 5th:** I. Duff suggested that now would be a good time to contact HPC about possible picnic table installation. D. Rickeard confirmed that there are four items relating to Butts Piece in the Future Community Projects document: Picnic tables, opening up the wildlife area, allotment improvements and the long-term future of Butts Piece. It was agreed that extracting the relevant details and opening a discussion with Max Beran of HPC would be a good idea prior to their AGM, and that L. Lloyd will send the email.

h) **Approval for the purchase of a new Parish Council laptop to the value of £429.00:**

The £429.00 cost was approved. C. Shaikh and D. Rickeard noted that it is definitely worth considering the longevity of the laptop in particular regarding processing speeds and memory, as this will have an impact on productivity (particularly with planning applications and other large documents). It was agreed that L. Lloyd would cross-check the specifications of the two proposed options and additionally consider other choices with better specification. This may involve additional cost but could prove to be a better option overall. Should this be the case, the additional cost will need approval from the council.

7) ITEMS FOR REPORT:

b) **East Hagbourne Sport and Recreation Committee:** D. Rickeard reported that the Pavilion is open and operating as a COVID secure venue. As such EHS&RC are not accepting bookings for ad-hoc social events, only regular groups who have undertaken risk assessments. Hagbourne United have started training again, and Didcot Under 17's will be using the pitch on Sunday afternoons. The changing rooms are currently not open. As the weather turns colder this may become an issue and will be dealt with in line with government guidance at the time. D. Button confirmed that there has been no income since April but some invoices will be written for September usage.

c) **Cemetery Committee:** D. Button confirmed that there is nothing major to report within the cemetery itself. The white layby lines have now been painted along with the rest of Main Road, so the Cemetery Committee is now able to consider appropriate signage.

d) **Employment Committee:** D. Button referenced a report circulated prior to the meeting, confirming that the clerk's salary will move up one increment on the current NJC pay scale (backdated to 1st April) as per the employment contract. The report also asked for councillors' views about qualification-based pay increases, and whether this should be considered. The council agreed that this should be looked into. It was agreed that L. Lloyd will make enquiries with SLCC and OALC to see if there is a standard practice for this situation and report back to D. Button in the first instance.

e) **Butts Piece Allotments:** P. Dixon confirmed that Arbocare are carrying out their hedge trimming and removal of the debris pile next Wednesday. A working party is planned afterwards to organise the area for use. L. Lloyd confirmed that SOHA have visited the site and accepted responsibility for some damaged fence panels. A contractor will be fixing these soon, and this should stop dogs from entering the allotment.

f) **Community Speedwatch:** Nothing to report.

g) **East Hagbourne Community Support Group (Coronavirus):** Nothing to report.

h) **Didcot Garden Town:** P. Dixon confirmed that there is a sounding board meeting next Tuesday, which he is planning to attend.

- i) **Flood Group:** D. Rickeard confirmed that the Barley Field by footpath 16 has now been harvested. L. Lloyd confirmed that she has emailed G. Gale and it has been agreed that he will remove the branches following the harvest, so hopefully this will be completed soon.
- j) **District and County Plans:** See comments under 3 relating to the local plan.
- k) **Oxfordshire Growth Board:** P. Dixon confirmed that he is planning to attend the meeting next Tuesday evening before the Didcot Garden Town meeting.
- l) **Neighbourhood Plan:** D. Rickeard asked that Crispin Topping be copied into relevant planning conversations to enable him to respond as Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

8) **Correspondence:** L. Lloyd confirmed that the residents of 14 Main Road have been in touch again about the dangerous trees along 197/8 which overhang and are now leaning on their property. There has been recent email communication with Vanessa Buckley (Area Operations) and D. Button resolved to contact her again next week (she is away until Monday) with the intention to arrange a meeting on site to discuss the trees and action required. C. Shaikh and D. Rickeard discussed the dead poplar that fell down over footpath 16 some time ago, resting at a height of around 8 feet. This has now been cut down. It was not an issue for pedestrians but did cause an obstruction for horse riders. The clearance of fallen branches along the same path on 22nd August by Laurie Stevenson and Caroline Hunt was also noted – thanks was given for this effort by the Parish Clerk via social media at the time.

9) Finance

a) Expenditure and receipts since the last meeting and account balances:

a) Payments since last meeting:

NB: Payments pending approval are shown in yellow and are not included in the account balance shown in c)

Payee	Item	Cheque Number	Amount	VAT	Total	Date
Grondon Waste Management	Cemetery Bin Emptying - July	DD	£59.38	£11.88	£71.26	20/08/2020
Castle Water	Monthly allotment Water payment	DD	£3.33	£0.67	£4.00	28/08/2020
L.Lloyd	August salary	102767	£558.54	£0.00	£558.54	31/08/2020
Dark White Digital	September Web Hosting	102768	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	01/01/2020
Scoop Dotty Dog Ltd	August Dog Bin Emptying (x3)	102769	£120.60	£0.00	£120.60	07/09/2020
L. Lloyd	September salary	102770	£558.54	£0.00	£558.54	30/09/2020

b) Receipts since last meeting

From	Item	Amount	Date
Highworth Memorials	Cox second inscription CM55	£25.00	21/08/2020

c) Accumulated Account Balances (reconciled as of last bank statement through 31/08/2020)

Barclays Bank Accounts (2) £56,131.78

d) The Special Project Balances (as of 17/09/2020) are:

Planned Development Support Fund	£5,303.15	
Cemetery	£9,590.65	
Community Infrastructure Levy Fund 2	£1,905.97	Received 24/04/19 so requires spending by 23/04/24
Community Projects Reserve Fund	<u>£11,279.89</u>	
Total	<u><u>£28,079.66</u></u>	

L. Lloyd confirmed a slight change in format of the Finance Report, which now has highlighted payments pending approval for clarity in line with the Financial Regulations. She also confirmed the details of a circulated document concerning Direct Debit Agreements and Regular Payments that has been set up to record these for reference. D. Rickeard noted that the annual cost of payroll management should be added to the regular payments list and that the PWLB loan agreement approved in 2013 ends in 2023. L. Lloyd will update accordingly.

b) Bank Mandate Progress: L. Lloyd confirmed that she has received a replacement form to complete as the original one sent in was missing a page.

10) Items for report and inclusion on the October agenda.

Employment Committee – Qualification related pay increase

The meeting closed at 9.37pm. The next Parish Council meeting will be on 15th October 2020 using the ZOOM platform.

Signed.....Dated.....

ATTACHMENT 1: ACTION LIST

Action No	What	Who	Status
2018-04-10	Traffic signs by War Memorial	LL	Matter Closed
2019-04-03	Main Road 20mph speed limit	LL	Follow Up
2019-04-04	Village Gateways	CS/A-M S	A-M S Follow Up

ATTACHMENT 2:

TITLE	DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT
AUTHOR	CLLR ANNE-MARIE SIMPSON
PARISH	EAST HAGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
DATE	17 SEPTEMBER 2020

COVID-19 TESTING

The rate of testing in Oxfordshire is currently the second highest in the south-east region. To supplement regional resources, a Local Testing Site (LTS) has been established in Oxford. Oxfordshire County Council are actively looking to secure an additional LTS in Oxford as well as further sites across the county.

Local Testing Sites are walk-through sites which people can access on foot or by bike. The Oxford site is in addition to existing regional and mobile testing units, and is designed to improve local access to testing.

The new facility, which is now fully operational, is located at the Oxford Brookes campus site in Headington (the Fuller Building Restaurant). It is open to the local community as well as to Brookes' students and staff. Advance bookings are strongly recommended – people showing coronavirus symptoms should call 119 to book a test or register online at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test.

We know there is an issue with rising demand and so **we are actively urging people not to order or book tests if they are not symptomatic.**

Booking slots are made available the evening before for morning appointments, and on the morning for afternoon appointments. There are times during the day where booking slots may not be available. However, slots are released continuously and so anyone who has not been able to make a booking should call back or visit the website later.

SO AS A REMINDER:

- The main symptoms of coronavirus are a high temperature, a new, continuous cough and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste. Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.
- If you have at least one of these symptoms, you should book a test by calling 119 or registering online at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test.
- If you do not have COVID-19 symptoms, please do not book a test - **you could be taking a test away from someone who really needs it.** This is increasingly important as we head into Autumn and Winter, when more people will get colds and the flu.
- Please do not stockpile home test kits – there is plenty of stock and, if you develop symptoms in the future, you will be able to book a test. There is no need to order a test in case of future use.
- If someone in your household starts to have symptoms, then that person must get tested and the rest of the household must self-isolate with them whilst they wait for the results.
- If you are self-isolating or in quarantine, then a negative test result does not mean you can end isolation early. The virus can take time to develop and so a test early on does not prove that you will not then go on to develop the virus. You could still be at risk of spreading the virus to other people.
- Further information is available at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stopthespread.

Local Plan Examination

We have now received a letter from the Inspector, Mr Jonathan Bore, with his preliminary findings set out. The Council is making the modifications the Inspector has requested for the soundness of the Plan. The Inspector is not inviting comments on his preliminary findings, although there will be an opportunity for the public to comment on the main modifications through the 6-week public consultation which I expect will launch next week.

We will encourage our residents to provide feedback on the main modifications – so many people have been involved in the process so far, and it's important that they continue to make their voices heard in such an important process for our communities.

The Inspector's letter is available on the council's website at www.southoxon.gov.uk/examination

SODC remain under the Legal Directive from the Secretary of State to progress the Conservative Local Plan 2034 (2035) to adoption by the end of the year.

Changes to “Use Class Order Groups” rushed through for 1st September

New legislation has been fast-tracked in order to permit changes to town centre use classes, allowing far greater flexibility to change uses within town centres without the need to obtain planning permission. They will make current shop frontage planning policies obsolete or toothless, restricting the ability of local planning authorities to control the mix of uses. The new approach aims to promote the vitality and viability of town centres by allowing more diversification in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure sectors. The increased flexibility will be welcomed by many landlords and fund managers with vacant premises, although there may be unintended consequences over which SODC will now have no control.

If you would like to read more this article gives a good summary <https://lichfields.uk/blog/2020/july/22/fundamental-changes-to-high-street-use-classes/>

Planning for the Future White Paper

We have previously reported that the Government is consulting on wide-ranging changes to the current planning system, and this issue has received much press coverage. SODC is preparing its response to the consultation, and all Parish Councils are encouraged to submit their responses too (closing date 29th October 2020).

The White Paper can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907273/Planning_for_the_Future_web_accessible_version.pdf

The website for more information and submissions can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>

Local Government Reorganisation (aka Devolution)

The Government is also shortly to be consulting on its Devolution White Paper, which essentially intends to restructure local government to impose unitary authorities with elected Mayors across the country. This could lead to the abolition of South Oxfordshire District Council completely, and the creation of a county-wide unitary (or possibly a smaller unitary authority as a merger between SODC and Vale of White Horse, which is obviously our preference). We expect the White Paper in October.

Cycling in September (and beyond!)

Some of the staff at SODC are taking part in Cycle September – a global event with a friendly competitive element, to help more people realise the benefits of riding a bike.

If you are a keen cyclist you may want to get involved as well, and encourage others to do the same.

Throughout the month you can earn points by riding and encouraging others to ride too by logging on to this website

<https://www.lovetoride.net/uk>

During September, we will also be encouraging residents to get out on their bikes via our social media platforms.

On the subject of cycling, here is a reminder of the Active Travel plans the County are working on across Oxfordshire that will benefit many cyclists in our districts:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/active-travel>