

East Hagbourne Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting duly convened and held virtually using the ZOOM platform on Thursday 18th February 2021

1) ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES, DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND VACANCIES:

Present were Chairman I. Duff, Vice Chairman D. Button, Councillors D. Rickeard, C. Shaikh, J. Elliott and P. Dixon.

In attendance: L. Lloyd (Parish Clerk)

Apologies were received from Cllr C Gover.

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

2) PUBLIC FORUM AND QUESTIONS: NONE

3) Confirmation of the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21st January 2021:

The minutes of the meeting on 21st January were approved and signed on screen. Following recent communication with the internal auditor, L. Lloyd confirmed that all minutes must be signed prior to submission for audit. Councillors agreed that all verbally approved minutes should therefore be signed at the earliest opportunity.

4) REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS: NONE

5) ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

2019-04-03 Main Road 20mph speed limit: L. Lloyd confirmed that following contact with Aston Tirrold and Aston Upthorpe Parish Council, she has received an informative email from Jon Beale of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) with details on costings and potential queries to raise with the developers. I. Duff confirmed that he will be speaking with the developers and will ask them about their S38/S278 application. This may have an impact on the proposal before discussing how to progress this further.

2019-04-04 Village Gateways: C. Shaikh confirmed she has not made any further progress with this, and it was agreed that she would forward the existing email thread to L. Lloyd for her to try and make progress with Jon Beale.

2020-10-01 Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) Application: L. Lloyd confirmed that the witness statement has now been sent to volunteers, as well as this information being made available to the Parish email list subscribers, on Facebook and on the village website. A number of responses have already been received.

2020-11-01 Dangerous Trees on Footpath 197/8: L. Lloyd confirmed that there has been no response to her emails this month. A chase email has revealed that A. Lederer is on annual leave and his automated email recommends using FixMyStreet to report dangerous trees in his absence. The issue has been ongoing on FixMyStreet since August 2020. BGG garden and tree care have also spoken to OCC on the Parish Council's behalf this week to try and move things along.

6) ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION:

a) Planning Applications including updates on Millennium Woods change of use and 34 Main Road appeal:

P20/S4343/FUL Millennium Wood paddocks - This application is on hold again due to the case officer needing a revised location plan.

P19/S4558/HH - The 34 Main Road appeal is still pending decision.

P19/S0357/RM site adjacent to the village hall – I. Duff reported that C. Ormond of MacTaggart & Mickel has confirmed that evidence of ownership of the strip of land between the site and Main Road has been sent to the planning department. There has been no further feedback regarding the

drainage survey. I. Duff and MacTaggart and Mickel have both had problems in communicating with the Case Officer.

P21/S0135/LB Tudor House, Main Road – No objection posted

P21/S0121/FUL 59 New Road – Following discussion with the planning officer regarding the proposed change of use, a response has been submitted with comments regarding parking and ensuring the carer: occupant ratio is suitable.

- b) County and District Councillor Grants:** Following the Parish Council's successful application for the Art Benches project funding last month, there is nothing further to report. The grants are now closed.
- c) Community Projects including**
- i) Art Benches:** D. Rickeard reported that all three parish councils now have funding in place for the project. Sustrans are planning to co-ordinate the project with J. Capone-Taylor with a potential start date in April. D. Rickeard has spoken with J. Capone-Taylor to clarify some details.
- ii) Butts Piece picnic benches:** I. Duff suggested that councillors consider the picnic bench proposal ahead of Spring/Summer 2021. C. Shaikh queried whether Hagbourne Parochial Charities (HPC) had suggested a number of benches for the area at their AGM – I. Duff confirmed that HPC had not discussed any limit of the number so that this should be decided by the Parish Council. D. Button noted that the benches would need to be secured to the ground, and spaced far enough apart to allow the tractor mower to cut the grass. D. Rickeard raised concerns over litter and potential damage to the benches from barbeques. The issue of a bin at Butts Piece is still ongoing due to South Oxfordshire District Council's (SODC) existing procedures to determine whether a bin is justified. D. Button confirmed that himself and D. Rickeard both regularly collect litter at the recreation ground and feel that litter is a serious issue. If the volunteer litter pickers in the village ceased their efforts there would be an evident litter problem, but it seems counter-productive to have to allow this to happen to prove the need for a litter bin. It was agreed that, in the first instance, C. Shaikh would contact the local carpenter who made the pub benches to obtain a quote.
- d) Hagbournes & Upton Group for Sustainability (HUGS)**
- i) Activity Report:** D. Rickeard reported that HUGS have made good progress along FP18 since the last meeting, planting c. 45 hawthorns and trimming back brambles as the start of ongoing work. HUGS have their first AGM on 27th February and have circulated a program of planned works ahead of this. The grass areas around Butts Piece have also been roped off to allow wildlife to flourish. HUGS have also recently received a district councillor grant for their owl project.
- ii) To consider HUGS request for a donation of £100 towards costs associated with ongoing project work:** D. Rickeard proposed, D. Button seconded and all councillors agreed to the donation of £100.00 in accordance with its powers under the Highways Act 1980 s.43 and s.96. D. Rickeard confirmed that he is on the HUGS Committee, currently offering secretarial support.
- e) Approval of the review of the Neighbourhood Plan versus the SODC Local Plan 2035:** D. Rickeard circulated the review to councillors prior to the meeting. The review concluded that there was no conflict between the Neighbourhood Plan and the SODC Local Plan 2035. The council approved the review at the meeting.
- f) Approval of the final sum of £174.71 payable to Didcot Town Council covering 50% of the legal expenses for the transfer of St Anne's Court:** All councillors approved the payment.

7) ITEMS FOR REPORT:

- a) East Hagbourne Sport and Recreation Committee:** D. Rickeard reported that L. Lloyd has confirmed the insurers' unoccupied property clause in light of the current COVID situation. In response to this, monthly inspections have been moved to fortnightly and the water has been switched off. D. Button reported that a further grant of £6744 from SODC has been awarded to EHS&RC this month. He noted that the ground is saturated along the eastern side of the recreation ground right up to the football pitch. This will need to dry out prior to any matches taking place.
- b) Cemetery Committee:** D. Button referred to a report circulated prior to the meeting (see attachment 2). Following discussion of the matters in the report, I. Duff suggested that he could speak to Andrew Kaye about the matter to try and clarify the Church's insurance provisions. It was agreed that D. Button would forward his correspondence to I. Duff to facilitate this. D. Button suggested that a possible course of action would be for the Parish Council to commission a survey on the trees, to allow an informed discussion to take place. BGG could provide a quote, but there may be a cost associated with an in-depth assessment of all the trees. D. Button also confirmed that the mysterious shifting of the Lych Gate back

into position after it was knocked 5 years ago has in fact been the work of Terry Taylor, for which the Parish Council is most grateful.

c) Employment Committee: D. Button confirmed that the employment committee are working on a potential amendment to the clerk's contract to incorporate qualification-based pay increases should the situation arise in the future.

d) Butts Piece Allotments: P. Dixon confirmed that the renewal letters would be sent out next month by L. Lloyd. There are currently 11 people on the waiting list for an allotment.

e) Community Speedwatch: No update this month.

f) East Hagbourne Community Support Group (Coronavirus): I. Duff reported that following a flurry of activity at the beginning of the current lockdown this has now eased off again.

g) Didcot Garden Town: P. Dixon confirmed that the advisory board met on 25th January and a new business sounding board was launched on 8th February, but he had nothing significant to report to council.

h) Flood Group: I. Duff reported that a number of areas in the village including the cemetery, Parsonage Lane and the bridge along the Grange footpath had flooded in the recent heavy rains, but there was no damage to property. D. Rickeard confirmed that a fallen branch in Hakka's Brook to the east of Blewbury Road has been reported by L. Lloyd to the riparian owner for action.

i) District and County Plans: Nothing to report.

j) Oxfordshire Growth Board: P. Dixon attended the recent meeting on 26th January and circulated a short report to councillors prior to the meeting.

k) Neighbourhood Plan: D. Rickeard confirmed that nothing further is required until the 5-year review. I. Duff thanked D. Rickeard and the steering group for their efforts.

8) Correspondence:

L. Lloyd confirmed that OALC had sent a questionnaire today about banking following a high number of complaints from clerks about inefficiencies. She confirmed that she has already responded to this with views on Barclays bank. D. Button confirmed that he has spent the best part of 5 hours over the last 2 days trying to communicate with Barclays online, however their reply communications are anonymous and have no details as to which account they are referring to so any progress is still on hold.

L. Lloyd confirmed that A-M Simpson was unable to help with funding for the Coscote Cottages resident as it is OCC's responsibility, so L. Lloyd has contacted S. Clarke to ask for support with this.

I. Duff commented on the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan Vision Consultation recently circulated. He noted that it would be useful to speak to A-M Simpson about SODC's views on the consultation before completing our response.

Census on 21st March – This was highlighted in the district council's update today. I. Duff suggested that it would be good to clarify with SODC whether or not the Parish Council can help.

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 No	Amount	VAT	Total	Date
Oxfordshire South & Vale Citizens Advice	S137 Donation	102802	£200.00		£200.00	21/01/2021
Grundon Waste Management	Cemetery Bins December 2020	DD	£66.37	£13.27	£79.64	21/01/2021
Castle Water Ltd	Allotment water	DD	£3.33	£0.67	£4.00	28/01/2021
A. Barmer	web domain renewal Jan 2019 (reissued due to lost cheque no 102614 which is now VOID)	102803	£59.88	£11.98	£71.86	08/02/2021
A. Leigh	travel expenses Feb 2019 (reissued due to lost cheque no 102621 which is now VOID)	102804	£27.00	£0.00	£27.00	08/02/2021
Scoop Dotty Dog Ltd	January dog bin emptying	102805	£160.80	£0.00	£160.80	08/02/2021

Dark White Digital	February web hosting	102806	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	08/02/2021
L. Lloyd	expenses (domain renewal for easthagbourne.net - 2 yrs.)	102807	£31.98	£6.40	£38.38	15/02/2021
Didcot Town Council	Legal Fees contribution for St Anne's Court transfer	102808	£174.71	£0.00	£174.71	18/02/2021
Laura Lloyd	February Salary	102809	£673.24	£0.00	£673.24	28/02/2021

b) Receipts since last meeting

From	Item	Amount	Date
M J Didcock	full burial and ashes interments BG and B Osborne E145	£340.00	28/01/2021
MJ Didcock	full burial Bailey A14	£170.00	05/02/2021

c) Accumulated Account Balances (reconciled as of last bank statement through 31/01/2021)

Barclays Bank Accounts (2) £57,115.00

d) The Special Project Balances (as of 18/02/2021) are:

Planned Development Support Fund	£5,303.15	
Cemetery	£10,810.52	
Community Infrastructure Levy Fund 2	£1,905.97	Received 24/04/19 so requires spending by 23/04/24
Community Projects Reserve Fund	<u>£10,619.89</u>	
Total	<u>£28,639.53</u>	

The council approved all pending payments.

- b) Bank Progress:** D. Button reported that he is trying to facilitate progress via online form filling and hopes to make some progress via this route. He has also submitted a complaint which he is hoping to receive a response to soon.

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

Nothing noted.

The meeting closed at 21.10pm. The next Parish Council meeting will be on 18th March 2021 using the ZOOM platform.

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

ATTACHMENT 1: ACTION LIST

Action No	What	Who	Status
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
2020-10-01	Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) Application	LL	In progress
2020-11-01	Dangerous Trees on FP197/8	DB/LL	In progress

ATTACHMENT 2: CEMETERY COMMITTEE REPORT

EAST HAGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL CEMETERY COMMITTEE

The recent spell of bad weather has highlighted a number of areas of concern in the management of the Cemetery.

The recent rains have caused a large pool to form between the full graves and the ashes plots. The grassed areas have become extremely water-logged and soft and the water also pooled on the surface of several of the graves that had been excavated below the grass levels. At this time there was a full interment so the mini-digger used by the gravedigger caused quite bad rutting in the central area of grass. Subsequently the excess water has drained away but the later frosts caused the rutted area to become frozen hard and dangerous to walk on. Now that the frosts have gone all that remains is very soggy grass. The gravedigger has been asked to come back and make the areas safe for walking over as soon as the sogginess has gone!

Since the PCC tap became inoperable much more use has been made of our tap. This, coupled with the fact that most of the visitors to the PCC graves go through our Lych Gate and then through a gap in the trees between the two cemeteries, is causing wear on the grass being used as a pathway which in turn becomes very slippery when wet. Thus it has been decided to construct a formal pathway here to prevent accidents in the future.

It has also been decided to make a larger and more solid base on which to site the Grundon Bin, just inside the hedge to the right of the Lych Gate.

The trees in the PCC cemetery continue to give cause for concern. There are 36 trees along the boundary from the front hedge to the Rosa Munda hedge in the middle of our cemetery. Most of the trees are probably some 50ft in height and the lower branches are overbearing the first full row of full graves. Many of the trees appear to have one trunk splitting into two at a height of about 5ft. Our insurers advise us that damage to graves and tombstones caused by the falling of these trees would be a liability on the PCC and would not be a liability for EHPC but it would surely become a huge cause for embarrassment in the Parish if EHPC were to deny responsibility. Any fallen trees would have to be removed at our cost in the first instance which would then have to be reclaimed from the PCC via their Insurers. To this end I wrote to the PCC Chair on 16th November but have not yet had a response. I have sent a reminder today. I did, however, hear unofficially that the PCC did discuss this matter sometime before last Christmas and it was reported that acceptance of the liability for damages caused by the trees was understood. I do not yet know whether this is an insured matter though.

Derek Button – 17/2/21