

East Hagbourne Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting duly convened and held on Thursday 17th March 2016 at East Hagbourne Pavilion, East Hagbourne

1) Attendance, apologies, declarations of pecuniary interest and vacancies.

Present were Cllrs I. Duff(Chair), C. Topping, D. Button and C. Gover.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs D. Rickeard and J. Elliott, County Cllr P. Greene and District Cllr J. Murphy.

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

2) Public Forum and Questions.

There were none.

3) Reports from County Councillor and District Councillor.

The reports from County Cllr Greene (See Appendix 2) and District Cllr Murphy (See Appendix 3) were discussed.

4) Confirmation of the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11th February 2016.

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th February were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

5) Actions from previous meetings.

2015-09-03 Pavilion and Bakers Lane signs – Clerk to follow up.

2015-10-06 New Dog Bins – Clerk to follow up.

2015-11-04 Reposition Defibrillator – Clerk to follow up.

2015-01-06 Pavilion Electrical Work – Complete

2016-01-08 Cheque Signatories – Complete

2016-02-01 New Rd Development letter – Complete

2016-02-03 OCVA Volunteers Day Response – Complete

6) Items for Discussion/Decision.

a) Pavilion Car Park Plans and funding

Details of the proposed improvements to the Pavilion car park had already been circulated to Councillors for their review.

Tony Grover's design incorporates a cast in-situ concrete mesh which will be stronger and is generally cheaper than pre-cast blocks.

The proposed additional drainage has a large capacity so should be able to cope with any water that may flow in from adjoining Recreation Ground areas.

The proposals also include closing the gaps in the fencing on the N and E sides to prevent vehicles driving across, and extending up to the Pavilion to stop (particularly the grass cutter) crossing and damaging the path.

Costs:

Mr Grover has already put out the work to tender and expects a response by 25th March. He is also working on a cost estimate as a comparator.

Funding:

SODC can provide grants up to 50% of the project cost and there is no cap on the amount.

To meet the next funding round, we need to get our submission in by 1st April. Cllr Rickeard has registered on the web site to be prepared.

Resolution - It was agreed to apply to SODC for a grant of 50% of the project cost subject to the quotes for the work.

Planning Permission

SODC have set a target date of 8th April for determination of our planning application. We need to have planning permission at the time we apply for our SODC Grant, so we will need to ask (via Tony Grover) whether this can be expedited - the time to do this is at the end of the comment period which ends 15th March.

Construction

The decision date for this round of SODC grants is 8th July. We would aim to put a contract in place shortly afterwards with a view to construction during the August/September time frame.

We discussed whether the land levels should be adjusted to remove the current 'bowl' in the car park area. Tony's advice is that we should avoid making the car park higher than the surrounding land,

because this could cause pooling of water in the adjacent areas. Instead, the surface will be constructed to be the same level as the surrounding land.

b) Recreation ground Grass Cutting

A meeting of the management Committee (EHSRC) was held on Tuesday 8th March to discuss football matters. HUFC are experiencing financial problems in a number of areas.

The Parish Council provides regular grass cutting of the whole Recreation Ground, but only throughout the warmer months.

Hagbourne United provide additional cutting to the playing field area as well as line-marking of the pitch.

The grass is sometimes too long for an effective cut either by the contractors or by HUFC's small ride-on mower which has suffered regular breakdowns.

Actions:

Now that the Pavilion is established, EHSRC ask that Council review the terms of the grass-cutting contract

(i) to provide more regular visits (fortnightly?) over a longer season including through the winter months if needed.

(ii) To include the area recently cleared in the NE corner of the site. This area is not completely flat and so will need a different machine than the one used for the main area.

(iii) To include the new car park after the resurfacing later this year. The contractors are already handling the current car park, but some discussion would be worthwhile to understand both their and our needs.

It was agreed to increase the frequency of grass cutting subject to the cost. The Clerk will arrange a meeting with the contractors.

c) Bus Subsidy Withdrawal

OCC confirmed withdrawal of all bus subsidies at their budget meeting in February. The effective date has been moved back a little, to 20th July.

A 'Downland Transport Users Group' has been formed between the villages served (Moretons, Astons, Blewbury, Upton & the Hagbournes) under the leadership of Maranda St-John Nicholls (Blewbury).

Mary Harrison and Cllr Rickeard represent East Hagbourne.

94/95 Service

For the 94/95, this means that the future of the service is in the hands of Thames Travel, who are working on how to retain some service on a commercial basis. They have to give 56 days notice of starting or stopping a service, so we would expect some news around mid-May or before.

131 Service

The 131 runs twice weekly (once per day, Wednesday and Friday) starting at East Hagbourne and linking the villages to Wallingford with enough time for shopping and business.

In our discussions in the Downland group it is clear that many people have business needs in Wallingford, so the 94/95, connecting to Didcot, does not meet their needs.

The bus is currently provided by OCC and there is no fare payable - it is a small 12 seater vehicle, with trained drivers able to help less mobile passengers.

There is the possibility for local councils to fund the service (and in principle to recoup costs from users, although the mechanism to do this may involve some work).

This is clearly a minority market, but does serve a number of people who may have limited transport options.

We have a rough estimate of the cost from our discussions with OCC: to operate one service per week should cost about £2340 per annum, which could be shared between the villages.

It was agreed that the council would in principle be prepared to contribute towards the cost of the 131 Service subject to the final proposal and cost.

d) Queen's Birthday Celebrations

It was agreed to apply for the grant available from SODC and offer the money to planned events in the parish.

e) Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on 14th April at 7.30pm in The Village Hall. The Green Gap and Neighbourhood Plan will be the main topics for discussion.

7) Items for Report

a) Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Topping reported that he attended a training session provided by Community First Oxfordshire(CFO). CFO can offer two packages to help with the Neighbourhood Plan - £6000 to support the Steering Group or £12000 for a more complete package.

The Steering Group have a meeting next week to plan the launch on 5th May.

The Steering Group will apply to SODC and Locality for grants to complete the plan.

b) New Road Development Application

The application will go before the SODC Planning Committee on 27th April. The Parish Council will have the opportunity to speak at the meeting.

c) Parish Website

A meeting has been arranged with the webmaster to discuss finding a new webhost and how other volunteers can add information to the website.

d) Cemetery Committee Status

The Cemetery Report (Appendix 4) was noted. Two Parish Councillors will have to be appointed to the Cemetery Committee at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May.

e) Allotment Report

The Allotment Report (Appendix 5) was noted.

8) Correspondence.

a) Didcot Garden Town Meeting – Cllrs Topping and Duff to attend.

b) Oxfordshire Together

c) OALC Training

9) Finance.

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

l) Payments for approval:-

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---------|
| EHSRC | Room hire | 27.50 |
| L. Dalby | Clerk's salary | 413.20 |
| Thames water | Water supply | 26.60 |
| OPFA | Subscription | 50.00 |
| Zurich municipal | Insurance | 2093.13 |
| Hagbourne Village Hall | Room hire and car park electricity | 292.14 |
| OALC | Subscription | 223.24 |
| Dentons UKMEA LLP | Services re Grainger planning proposal | 4200.00 |
| SODC | Dog bins | 276.28 |
| Community First Oxfordshire | Subscription | 55.00 |
| Church Restoration Fund | Donation | 2000.00 |
| Hagbourne Charities | Allotment lease | 500.00 |

10) Receipts

| | | |
|--|---|--------|
| East and West Hagbourne Cemetery Committee | Reimbursement of clerk's salary | 375.00 |
| Slade Legal | Reimbursement of sum held in client account | 4.00 |

11) The account balances are:-

| | |
|---|------------|
| Community a/c – 26 th February 2016 | £35,945.93 |
| Base RateTracker a/c – 31 st December 2015 | £2,101.61 |

| | |
|---|----------|
| East and West Hagbourne cemetery | |
| Community a/c – 23 rd November 2015 | £2796.62 |
| Business saver a/c – 31 st December 2015 | £841.98 |

a) Appointment of Internal Auditor

Cllr Button reported that he and Cllr Duff had met with Trish Ingam to discuss the Internal Audit. Cllrs Button and Duff recommended that Mrs Ingam was appointed as Internal Auditor the Parish Council. The appointment was approved.

b) Status of Cheque Signatories

The bank have confirmed that Cllr Elliot can now sign cheques.

12) Items for report and inclusion on the May agenda.

- Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
- EHPC Mission Statement

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 9.50pm.

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

ATTACHMENT: Actions from previous meetings

| ACTION NO | WHAT | WHO | STATUS |
|------------------|--|------------|---------------|
| 2015-09-03 | Pavilion and Bakers Lane Signs | LD | Requested |
| 2015-10-04 | Highways – lines and signs | LD | On Hold |
| 2015-10-05 | Highways Services | LD | On Hold |
| 2015-10-06 | New Dog Bins | LD | Requested |
| 2015-11-04 | Reposition Defibrillator | LD | Letter sent |
| 2015-11-05 | Web Hosting Service | CG/DR | Ongoing |
| 2016-01-01 | Kingsholme Close support email | LD | |
| 2016-01-05 | Car Park Drainage | DR | |
| 2016-01-07 | Queen's 90 th Birthday Celebrations | All | |
| 2016-03-01 | Car Park Funding Application | DR | |
| 2016-03-02 | Grass Cutting Review | LD | |
| 2016-03-03 | Appointment Internal Auditor | DB | |

Appendix 2

County Councillors Report March 2016

BUDGET

Prior to Christmas, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) went out to consultation on possible additional budget cuts totalling £51m, at the time believed to be the worst-case scenario. However, due to a change in the funding formula, which penalised shire counties, the settlement was even worse than expected and the additional savings required now total £69m. In response to protests from shire counties, on 11th February the Government announced transitional funding and OCC will receive £9m across two financial years in respect of this.

The Council met on Tuesday 16th February to debate the budget measures necessary to achieve the savings. Although most of the savings will still go ahead, a cross-party agreement was made on the day incorporating the following changes:

- A total of £2m of savings relating to Early Intervention Hubs and Children's Centres will now not take place. An original £6m saving on Early Intervention Hubs and Children's Centres - agreed by the council at its annual budget meeting in February 2015 - will still take place. No decisions have been taken at this stage on how this £2m will be spent.
- A total of £3m of savings relating to day centres (including transport to day centres) will now not take place. Instead they will be replaced by a saving of £1m from 2017/18 resulting from a full review of all day services for older people.
- There will be a further £300,000 contribution to the budget from reserves.

The net result of this is that the council will be able to set a balanced budget in 2016/17 but over the medium term now has £15.2m of unidentified savings to make as opposed to the previous figure of £11.2m. The new £4m of unidentified savings all fall in 2017/18.

A number of other important decisions were made during the debate:

- A cross-party board of county councillors will be created to consider how best to use the transitional funds.

- The council will consider workplace parking with a view to early implementation.
- There will be a review of the number of Cabinet members.
- The benefits of a Unitary Council will be discussed on a cross-party basis and full and timetabled consultation will be prepared. This will be subject a free vote for all councillors.

PROPOSALS FOR DISTRICT UNITARY COUNCILS

On Thursday 25th February a surprise announcement was made by Oxfordshire's District Councils and Oxford City Council. (This may have been in response to OCC's call for a debate on a single Unitary Council for the county.) It called for the abolition of OCC and the establishment of four district unitaries:

- A new Southern Oxfordshire Unitary Authority would cover the area currently administered by Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils.
- An Oxford City Unitary Authority would be formed in the centre of the county, covering the area currently administered by Oxford City Council.
- A West Oxfordshire-Cotswold Unitary Authority covering the area currently administered by West Oxfordshire District Council and Cotswold District Council.
- A Cherwell-South Northants Unitary Authority covering the area currently administered by Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council.

OCC welcomes the District Councils' engagement in the Unitary debate and will shortly be putting forward its own proposals.

MAJOR INCIDENT AT DIDCOT POWER STATION

There was a partial building collapse of Didcot A Power Station on Tuesday 23rd February and a major incident was declared. The multi-agency rescue operation continued over the weekend of 27th/28th February with emergency services cooperating with structural engineers and demolition experts. The partially collapsed building remained unstable making it a complex operation. At the time of writing (February 29th), there was one fatality, three people missing and five injured. Updates are posted regularly on the OCC website.

VILLAGE RESILIENCE FUND

Oxfordshire communities are being urged to tap into a special 'resilience' fund to help them to cope better with emergencies. The SSE (Scottish and Southern Energy) Resilient Communities Fund offers up to £20,000 to help communities to:

- Protect the welfare of vulnerable people during a major power cut or emergency due to severe weather.
- Enhance community facilities and services that may be needed during a major power cut or emergency due to severe weather.
- Improve communication during an emergency situation, to keep communities informed or to aid contact between local groups and response services

Further information at <https://www.ssepd.co.uk/Resiliencefund/> or call 0141 224 7191

THIRD READING BRIDGE

Various Berkshire councils and enterprise groups have been campaigning vigorously in recent years for a new Thames crossing known as the 'Third Reading Bridge'. The bridge would link the end of the A329(M) in Berkshire to Playhatch in Oxfordshire. The enthusiasm of the scheme promoters is not shared by many Oxfordshire residents who are concerned about the large amount of extra traffic that would be deposited on to already congested rural roads. Historically, both OCC and South Oxfordshire District Council have shared residents' concerns, but both councils recently agreed to contribute funds to a 'Strategic Outline Business Case' in order to remain part of the process. OCC has made it clear to the other partners in this piece of work, that the council, by helping to fund this work, is not inherently supporting the scheme and will await the results of this work before taking a position on whether to support a full business case submission for funding. This decision process will also involve further consultation with the communities the scheme could impact upon. An initial report is due this autumn.

Appendix 3
District Councillors Report March 2016

The thing foremost in our minds is the terrible event at Didcot Power Station. All of us have those hurt or lost and their families in our thoughts and prays at this time. Anything that we can do to help will be done.

This month has seen a number of important events, all of which affect our residents one way or another.

Council Tax

Firstly, when Council met on the 18th February it approved the budget for 2016/2017, which means that, whilst OCC have increased their bill by 3.99% and with a 1.99% rise for the Police and Crime Commissioner, SODC has kept its element of the Council Tax frozen. This has been achieved without cuts to any of our services, which will be maintained at or above their present standards.

Corporate Services Project

This financial 'win' is due, in no small part, to the pioneering work done by SODC in linking with the Vale of the White Horse in commissioning the original outsourcing of services some years ago. Without the experience gained, it would not have been possible for SODC to come to agreement with the four other councils now to sign up to the new Corporate Services Agreement. For SODC there is a saving of around £1 Million for each year of the new contract. Now that all parties have formally agreed, the work of recruiting the Contract Manager has begun. By now you will have probably heard that our Chief Executive, David Buckle, has decided that this is a good time for him to take retirement. David has worked hard to make SODC the success story it is today, and will be very active in recruiting our new Chief Executive as well before he leaves us.

Oxfordshire Vision

The third announcement is that the five district councils in Oxfordshire - including Oxford City Council - have announced their bid for devolution by the formation of three unitary authorities. This would mean the abolition of Oxfordshire County Council. If agreed, for us this will mean that SODC will merge with the Vale of the White Horse, taking on many responsibilities presently with the County Council and

gaining new powers from Westminster. At the same time, we will manage others such as transport planning and waste disposal, through a combined authority formed by the new unitary councils. Crucially, and possibly uniquely in the country, the plan proposes the transfer of adult social care to the NHS. The needs of rural and city communities are very different and the Oxfordshire Vision proposal will ensure that the new councils replacing the existing two tiers with one, are the best match for those needs. This proposal has cross-party support from all of the MPs within our county - including the Prime Minister - and we hope that everyone will join us in supporting this exciting evolution of local government. More information, and news as it develops can be found on our website <http://www.oxfordshire.vision/>

Team News

Our Food and Safety Team won Team of the Year at an independent Employee of the Year Awards in Oxford. The awards are open to organisations from both the public and private sector, so it's a great prize to pick up. In addition to this the council's legal team has passed their annual Lexcel assessment. This is the Law Society's mark for excellence in management and customer care.

Planning and Development

A public inquiry into **89 homes near Icknield Way** in Chinnor was held at Thame Town Hall. We refused permission for this development as the site is not in our development plan and in our view would be harmful to the local area. It was heard at a public inquiry due to the level of interest in the case and because of the similarities with two other cases which we are challenging in the High Court this May. The council's Officers and witnesses and Chinnor's Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Team put up a strong defence of the Council's position. We must now wait for the Inspector's decision later this year.

This year, one of our housing associations, Soha Housing is celebrating the building of its 2,000th home.

Didcot Gateway Update

The Planning Committee unanimously approved outline plans to develop the 'Didcot Gateway' area opposite the station.

This is big news as it means we can move forward with exciting plans to breathe new life into this important area of the town. We'll keep you up to date with progress as it occurs.

Rubbish And Waste

We're holding a focus group with residents to help us improve our waste collection service. It is happening on Wednesday 23 March.

If you know of any residents who might want to take part, ask them to email haveyoursay@southandvale.gov.uk with a brief note telling us why they want to get involved. Everyone who attends the group will receive £20 to cover travel and any other expenses.

Bin stickers

We've started putting stickers on bins in Abingdon and Didcot to try and address the ongoing problem we're having with recycling being contaminated with food waste and nappies. This is a trial run, and the stickers have our recycling website address on. If people visit the site they'll see a short message explaining why we're doing it. It's worth having a quick read of the message yourself, so you can respond to any questions you get about the stickers - visit www.morerecycling.co.uk.

Grants

The window for grants is still open, running until 1 April 2016 for decisions by 10 July 2016 and as previously reported, we have made changes to this process to make it easier to apply so we hope that our communities will make full use of this opportunity. The Working Group's first recommendation regarding the Council Tax Reduction Scheme funding has been agreed by the Cabinet, so Town and Parish Council's should soon receive our letter explaining that a Grant is being made available to help support celebrations to mark our Queen's 90th Birthday. Plans for the remaining funds are still being worked on and we expect to announce these shortly.

Forum for community groups

Our annual event to get local community and voluntary groups together so they can share ideas and advice is coming up soon.

The South and Vale Voluntary and Community Sector Forum will take place on Wednesday 23 March at Cornerstone from 9am to 4.30pm. Please invite community and voluntary groups in your area to come along.

For more details about the day's programme please see [OCVA's forum page](#). If you have any questions about the event please email OCVA or call them on 01865 251946.

Air quality consultation

We want to know what everybody thinks of some ideas that could reduce harmful vehicle emissions in South Oxfordshire, in particular in Wallingford, Watlington and Henley.

We employed some air quality experts to look into the problem, and they've made some suggestions, including a couple of ideas that would make a big difference in Wallingford and Watlington.

You can find out more and comment on what the air quality experts have recommended at

www.southoxon.gov.uk/lowemissions until 25 March.

PCSO report

We part fund six PCSOs in South Oxfordshire. Between July and December 2015 the work they carried out included:

Providing support for 491 victims of crime, an under age test purchase operation in Wallingford, a drink and drug driving awareness event in Wheatley and a pre-Halloween awareness crime reduction event in Didcot.

For more about what our PCSOs have been up to see the [Q2 and Q3 neighbourhood policing report](#).

Appendix 4

REPORT ON THE EAST & WEST HAGBOURNE CEMETERY

The E&WHC Management Committee met on 9th March 2016 to review current progress within the New Cemetery.

The overbearing nature of the line of trees separating the New from the Old cemeteries was discussed and the results of the visits of three separate tree surgeons. The remedies suggested seemed to offer conflicting actions. It was agreed that a further view was to be obtained from a contact suggested by the Chairman. In all events the work will most probably have to be deferred until October when the official bird nesting season has ended. Discussions with the PCC were ongoing with regard to the financial liability arising from the need to have these trees made safe.

It was reported that the level of Fees being charged seemed to be quite low in comparison with other nearby Cemeteries and it was agreed to address this matter at the next meeting of the Cemetery Committee.

It was also reported that the Parish Councils from both East and West Hagbourne had now agreed to the change in future status of the Cemetery Committee with effect from 1st April 2016. From that date full responsibility for the physical and financial management of the New Cemetery would be vested with East Hagbourne Parish Council through a Committee set up for this specific purpose. The membership of the Committee would have two representatives from EHPC and one from WHPC. The Chair of the Committee would rotate between those three persons for each ensuing year. The Clerk of EHPC would also have direct responsibility for the bookings and maintenance of the Cemetery. Up to two lay members from each Parish were also to be recruited to the Committee but would have no vote.

Derek Button
16th March 2016

Appendix 5

ALLOTMENT REPORT

The 2015/6 Season has seen all 38 plots being let and worked, although some to a lesser degree than is deemed to be acceptable. 32 plots are let to Villagers, 1 is let to a person living in Upton and the remaining 5 are let to people living in Didcot.

At the time of writing there is only one person on the waiting list but there is thought to be another strong enquiry on its way. There were two others on the waiting list from earlier in the year but there was no response from them when they were contacted in February to ascertain their continued interest

Rent demands for 2016/7 will be being sent out shortly for renewal with effect from 1st April next. To date there have been notifications from 3 plot holders that they will not be renewing their plot for the coming year. The Allotment Management Committee are considering not allowing 2 plot holders to renew their agreements owing to the lack of cultivation on their plots during the year.

A notice is being placed in the April Parish Magazine and other notices are being posted on the village notice boards to advertise the current vacancies.

The compost toilet continues to be well patronised and plans are afoot to create a rockery-come-flower bed around the base of the telegraph pole in the middle of the site.

The muntjac problem has been less noticeable this year but the moles seem to have returned with a vengeance.

Cllr Derek Button
16th March 2016