

# WESTON ON THE GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

For the meeting of Parish Council, held in Village Hall on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Meeting Number 24.410

*Note for information: Cherwell District Council – CDC, Oxfordshire County Council - OCC*

### Public Participation

There was nothing to note.

#### 24.410.1 To Receive: Apologies for non-attendance

Councillors Bohm (DB), Lanham (BL), Davis (SD), Miller (JM) and Rowan (TR) were all present.

Councillor Nigel Simpson (Oxfordshire County Council) was in attendance for the second half of the meeting.

Councillor Coton (Cherwell District Council) sent her apologies.

3 members of the public were in attendance. James Henderson sent his apologies.

#### 24.410.2 To Receive: Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest relevant to this meeting.

#### 24.410.3 To Receive & Approve: Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 (DB)

The minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 were discussed with no changes required.

DB confirmed that James Henderson has kindly agreed to continue as technical advisor to the council.

The resolution to approve the minutes for the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 was then proposed by DB and seconded by BL. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

**Action:** Clerk to present minutes to Chair to sign, then file and upload to the web.

#### 24.410.4 To Receive & Approve: Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 (DB)

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 were discussed with no changes required.

The resolution to approve the minutes for the Parish Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 was then proposed by DB and seconded by SD. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

**Action:** Clerk to present minutes to Chair to sign, then file and upload to the web.

#### 24.410.5 For Information: Chairs Comment (DB)

DB began with discussing the Oxfordshire Councils Charter which is a powerful document put together through consultation. The fundamental aim is to have an impact on how we work together at the County, District, and

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Parish level. This item will be added to the July agenda for discussion as this could be the way forward to more decisive action based on agreed principles.

Secondly, another parish, Wendlebury, has been in touch to discuss their concerns about a commercial parachute and glider enterprise potentially operating out of RAF Weston shortly. DB asked Jon Kirk, a villager and RAF Squadron Leader who has contacts at Brize Norton to help with this issue. To date, he has identified the new commander at RAF Weston and we have an appointment to meet with him on Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The issue for all the villages is noise of flights on the weekends and of course, safety. To date I've involved Kirtlington and Middleton Stoney who would also find this a concern. Our Parish Council needs to be aware that there are residents around the airfield including the recently developed equestrian centre, Kemsley Farm, that has many horses in paddocks and is just across the road.

Thirdly, there is concern that the timing of our bus could be affected by the road development for Siemens. This was a side conversation with the Chair of Wendlebury who says their village will be impacted greatly by traffic being diverted through.

Fourthly, the Traffic Advisory Group has a meeting tomorrow evening, there has been a lot of background work being done this month and hopefully we'll see some action on reducing the speed on the B430.

DB ended with a note that the elections will occur shortly and we will have a new MP. It is always important to have a working relationship with our MP and there are already a number of issues that we need support in working through.

**Action:** Clerk to add Oxfordshire Councils Charter as discussion item onto July PC meeting agenda.

**24.410.6 For Information:** Clerk report (Clerk)

The clerks report to the Council was noted which confirmed payments from the Parish Council bank account comprising the usual monthly clerk salary payment and the latest instalment of the Public Works Loan Board repayment (£922.37), for the purchase of the playing field and spinney, on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024. The Council also received payment from Oxfordshire County Council for the annual grass cutting contract (£2,206.82), on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2024.

The clerk has submitted a VAT claim covering FY 2023-2024 to HMRC for £1,256.52.

The clerk has met the OCC Highways engagement officer and discussed outstanding highway issues in the village. The meeting was very productive and has already actioned a number of concerns.

DB commented that a summer works day had been discussed with the works team and a list started of key jobs to be undertaken. Dalcour Maclaren would be asked if they were interested in supporting work activities again.

**Action:** Clerk to enquire of Dalcour Maclaren if they wish to undertake any volunteer work activities in the village this year.

**24.410.7 For Information:** Update on Gigaclear (DB)

James Henderson sent a letter to the Director of Operations for Gigaclear who responded very quickly with a series of actions to address our concerns.

A senior manager has been tasked to address the concerns raised and will undertake a walk round of the village with James Henderson, BL and DB on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2024. He will look to address individual resident issues, the community hub site, outstanding defects and the outstanding build areas.

**Action:** DB to circulate information to residents so they are aware of the visit if they wish to raise a concern.

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**24.410.8 For Discussion:** Discuss recommendations from the Planning Group on planning applications (SD)

Key planning applications on the planning report were discussed by the Council.

## **Building Applications**

### **Decisions Received – Permitted**

**24/00645/LB** – Manor Hotel - Application to remove existing defective tanking system in coach house basement and replace with new.

**24/00522/LB** – Manor Hotel - Works to repair and replace boundary fencing and gates on the southern and western perimeter of the site.

**24/00567/LB** – Manor Hotel - RETROSPECTIVE - Works to internal staircase

**24/00497/F** – Cruck Cottage, Northampton Road – Resubmission of 23/02717/F

**24/00498/LB** – Cruck Cottage, Northampton Road – Resubmission of 23/02717/F

**24/00816/F** – Quick Fit Garage, A34 North - Construction of 4 no EV charging bays with vehicular access and associated crossover from services exit road.

### **Decisions Received – Refused**

**24/00745/CLUE** – North View, North Lane - Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use for Change of Use of existing double width hardstanding on verge directly to front of property to domestic use - hardstanding straddling highways land.

### **Withdrawn**

None

### **Awaiting Decision**

**23/03383/F** – 2 Church Close (discussed Dec 23)

Two storey side and rear extensions (re-submission of 23/01872/F).

**Commented**

**24/00804/OUT** – Reynards Lodge, North Lane - Outline Planning Approval for the demolition of workshops, stables and tennis court and erection of three dwellings and conversion of existing building to form a dwelling (renewal of 21/02146/OUT).

**Commented**

**24/00935/CLUE** – Summer Court, North Lane – Certificate of Lawfulness – excavated hard standing for parking on the grass verge (now missing from the register).

**Commented**

**24/00893/F** – Kelberg, Northampton Road - Proposed erection of 8-bay workshop and associated works.

**Commented**

**24/011202/F** – North View, North Lane – RETROSPECTIVE – Upgrade of existing verge hardstanding.

**Commented**

### **New Applications**

**24/01136/F** - The Old Vicarage, Mill Lane - Renovation of existing detached garage to incorporate first floor home office space.

**24/01137/LB** - The Old Vicarage, Mill Lane - Renovation of existing detached garage to incorporate first floor home office space.

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**Tree Applications**

**24/00722/TCA – Manor Hotel** - T1 x Multi stem Sycamore - (BLUE) overhanging power station/room, to fell;  
T2 x Poplar - (PINK) damaging wall of moat, to fell. **Commented**

**24/01363/TCA – Land at Ben Jonson** – 2 x sycamore (by the stocks). Remove low branches to allow lawn mowing.

**Action:** SD/Clerk to send appropriate planning replies to Cherwell District Council.

**Stoneyfield update:**

DB and SD have had a further meeting with the Stoneyfield owner and developer. At the last presentation meeting in the village hall 5-7 houses were proposed on the land and concerns were outlined by residents on North Lane. One in particular related to access for works via North Lane. They have already explored the possibility of an alternative temporary access road into the building site via land at the rear, owned by Mr Wilcox. This land is under a DEFRA category and is to be set aside for wildflowers/biodiversity around the edge. They have put in an application to see if it could be removed and establish an access through there temporarily, however it was felt that it is unlikely to be approved.

The developer was also considering possibly reducing the build time by changing the method of building using structurally insulated panels. There could also be the option of only building x3/4 houses on the site, however in order for the site to be cost effective the houses may have to be larger. Assurances were also made that the time of deliveries would be managed and the road would be regularly swept.

DB has been tasked to investigate the drainage situation in Stoneyfield and is discussing the work with consultants.

**Westlands Avenue:**

SD noted that the son of Julia and Ian White, Tim White, had phoned to discuss the future sale of Julia White’s house in Westlands Avenue. As part of the will settlement he would like to propose gifting a ransom strip to the Parish Council through the property to protect access into the Schoolfield and to services, at no cost to the Parish Council. It was agreed that the Parish Council would be interested to explore this further.

**24.410.9 For Information:** Update on Schoolfield (DB)

DB confirmed that the Parish Council sent a letter to the auction house dealing with the Schoolfield (with content aided by Roger Evans). It resulted in some changes in the description of the field i.e. that it is agricultural land and has no services. However, they did not put in all the points provided. The property has been removed from the Right Move auction site and DB has heard the auction had been moved to July 2024. There is no further indication over what will happen to the site in the future.

Graham Barnett, footpath warden, confirmed that a meeting had been arranged with OCC for July to discuss alleviating flooding of the footpaths in the Schoolfield.

**24.410.10 For Information:** Update on Southfield development (DB)

DB highlighted that resurfacing on Milestone Lane is expected to start with the pavements on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2024 and the full road tarmacking is due to commence on 14<sup>th</sup> June.

There is also still outstanding work to be done which involves removing all construction material from the second field. CDC enforcement confirmed to Councillor Coton in an email on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2024 that the developer had confirmed that the outstanding works would be completed within the next two months. That deadline has since past and this will be followed up with CDC enforcement either at the parish liaison meeting to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> June or directly.

**Action:** Enforcement to be contacted regarding the deadline for outstanding works required at the Southfield development.

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**24.410.11 For Information:** Review of Internal Audit Report 2023-2024 (TR)

The processes of financial and governance scrutiny were summarised and the Annual Internal Audit Report discussed. The report analyses and evaluates the processes and internal controls of the Parish Council against a list of set objectives, the Council met all of the required objectives in financial year 2023-24.

**Action:** Clerk to place all documents relating to the internal audit report onto the Parish Council website.

**24.410.12 Resolution: To Approve** Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023-2024: Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023-2024 (TR)

The Parish Council's combined precept and other income for 2023/24 exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5million and therefore Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 has been completed at the end of the financial year and was discussed by the Council.

The Clerk, as the Parish Council's Responsible Finance Officer, confirmed to the chair that she had signed Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 prior to the meeting on behalf of Weston on the Green Parish Council.

The resolution to approve Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 of the AGAR form was proposed by TR and seconded by BL. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

The Chairman signed Section 1 of the AGAR form.

**24.410.13 Resolution: To Approve** Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023-2024: Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023-2024 including explanations of variances and reserves (TR)

Section 2 of the AGAR report – Accounting Statements 2023/24 was discussed, with reference to the variances and reserves spreadsheets.

The resolution to approve Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 of the AGAR form was proposed by TR and seconded by SD. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

The Chairman signed Section 2 of the AGAR form.

It was confirmed that the Responsible Financial Officer had set the Period of Exercise of Public Rights to run from Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024 to Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024 and the public notice for advertising the Period of Exercise of Public Rights would be placed on the Parish Council noticeboard on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

The signed AGAR form and required documents will be sent by email to the external auditor, Moore, no later than 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 and will also be published on the Parish Council website by that time.

**Action:** Clerk to send off signed AGAR form and documents to the external auditors no later than 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

**Action:** Clerk to ensure notice for the exercise of public rights is placed on village noticeboards and on the website.

**Action:** Clerk to upload all required finance documents to the website by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

**24.410.14 Resolution: To Approve** Appointment of Fair Account as Internal Auditor for FY 2024-2025 (TR)

The resolution to approve the appointment of Fair Account as Internal Auditor for FY 2024-2025 was proposed by TR and seconded by BL. It was supported unanimously by the Council.

**Action:** Clerk to provide formal notification to Fair Account of appointment as internal auditor for FY 2024-25.

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**24.410.15 For Information:** Playing field, playground & works update (BL/JM)

BL noted that Ardley had been in contact to see if they could use the playing field next season, a meeting will be arranged. A reserve team has also requested use of the field over the summer and a discussion will also be held with them.

JM informed the Council that four new tyres are needed for the playing field mower, JM will obtain a quote and provide it to the Council, along with an invoice for fuel. A combination lock is also to be purchased for the playing field car park to provide easy access for all required users.

The community van passed its MOT, an invoice (£280 +VAT) will be provided.

Graham Barnett passed on the volunteer drivers thanks to JM for helping to fix the van and noted that 100 visit milestone had been made with the van since its inception.

**Action:** JM to obtain a quote for new tyres for the playing field mower.

**24.410.16 Resolution: To Approve** the following invoices for payment (DB)

BL requested approval of the following invoices detailed in the table below.

PC Ref	Payee	Purpose	Total (incl VAT)	Budget Line	Amount Remaining in 2024-25 Budget
416*	Slade Estate Services Limited	Monthly maintenance of playing field – April	£334.28	Village Works/Playing Field Maintenance	£2,665.72
417	WotG Memorial Village Hall	Village Hall hire for PC meetings (July-Sept 24)	£45.00	Meeting Costs/Hire of Village Hall	£255.00
418	Fair Account	Internal audit services end of year review (01/24-03/24) & AGAR	£115.00	Insurance & Auditing/Audit Fees	£650.00
419	123 Connect Limited	SSL Website Certificate	£62.40	IT/Website, Domain Hosting, SSL Website Certificate	£350.00
420	123 Connect Limited	Website Hosting	£140.16	IT/Website, Domain Hosting, SSL Website Certificate	£287.60
421	Graham Barnett	Fuel for community van (Tesco)	£74.95	Village Works/Community Bus Scheme	£1,913.74
422*	Clear Councils	Parish Council Insurance 2024-25	£573.57	Insurance & Auditing/Insurance	£600.00
423*	Oxford Edens	Grass cutting 13/05/24 (playground, stocks/Ben Jonson, bollards, gates)	£655.62	Village Works/Village Contractor Grass Cutting	£3,426.70
424	Oxford Edens	Grass cutting 29/05/24 (playground, stocks)	£286.65	Village Works/Village Contractor Grass Cutting	£2,771.08
425	Slade Estate Services Limited	Monthly maintenance of playing field – May	£334.28	Village Works/Playing Field Maintenance	£2,331.44

\*invoices already paid

It was noted that invoices PC Ref 416, 422 and 423 have already been paid. The resolution to approve the invoices detailed in the table was proposed by BL and seconded by TR. The motion was supported unanimously by the Council.

**Action:** Clerk to update invoice log with approvals.

**Action:** Clerk to initiative request for payments from Councillors and ensure payments authorised.

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**24.410.17 For Information:** Update on oak tree footpath (OCC/CDC Councillors)

Councillor Simpson has followed up the oak tree footpath issue again with the Chief Executives of both OCC and CDC. An email from Iain Osenton, CDC arboricultural team leader, was received highlighting that a method statement was submitted by Milestone through OCC on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024. Iain Osenton returned comments highlighting that ‘the statement did not capture the required information expected in a site/operation specific method statement, leaving far too much open to contractor interpretation, whilst ultimately failing to outline key processes/operations’. The statement was returned to Milestone and indicated amendments required, this was supported by OCC’s arboricultural service team and a response is awaited.

The Chief Executives have requested to be kept informed so there is hope that this can be driven forward.

The Council thanked Councillor Simpson’s help in pursuing this issue on behalf of Weston on the Green.

**24.410.18 For Information:** Oxfordshire County & Cherwell District Councillor updates (OCC/CDC Councillors)

Councillor Simpson, OCC, highlighted that OCC is currently sitting on £278m of S106 money relating to infrastructure, £140m is for locations between Kidlington and Bicester, and it was noted that infrastructure needs to be in place first before further housing is built. OCC need to employ a couple of officers dedicated to spending the S106 money.

DB raised concern over the lack of big topics on the agenda for the next parish liaison meeting, noting there was nothing on planning/local plan and requested that Councillor Simpson highlight this to CDC.

DB commented that OCC are going to go more commercial, what does this entail and why can’t do their proper job first?

Councillor Simpson agreed they need to get the basics right first which is their core responsibility. Long term stability in departments is required and then the focus can shift to commercial elements.

DB also suggested an MP hustings for the new candidates to be held in the villages rather than just focussing on main towns. Councillor Simpson would take that suggestion forward and see if it were possible.

Councillor Coton, CDC, provided a report in her absence covering:

- At Full Council on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May, a Liberal Democrat, Green and Independent administration was voted in with Cllr David Hingley becoming the new Leader of the Council and Cllr Lesley Mclean as Deputy Leader. It is still early days of the new administration and the CDC Councillors will keep the Council updated about any decisions made.
- With regards to the general election on the 4<sup>th</sup> July, Weston on the Green has moved into the new Bicester and Woodstock constituency. ID will be required to vote and key dates for the election are:
  - Deadline to register to vote - 18<sup>th</sup> June
  - Deadline for a postal vote - 19<sup>th</sup> June
  - Deadline to apply for a proxy vote - 26<sup>th</sup> June

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**24.410.19 For Information:** Update from latest East Cherwell Rural Community Forum meeting (P Parsons)

Patsy Parsons provided an update from the latest East Cherwell Rural Community Forum, chaired by Councillor Simpson:

**1. Domestic Abuse:** there was a talk from Emma Teasdale from Friends of Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse.

Information posters have been given to the Village Hall committee to be laminated and placed in the Village Hall conveniences cubicles.

All can be a Friend of Reducing the Risk. Friends:

- Listen without judgement
- Listen to make others feel valued and build confidence
- Listen to direct them to help at the right time
  - signpost to organisations who can help
  - be aware that leaving is the most dangerous time
  - never try to encourage someone to leave without advice
  - never try to mediate or confront the abuser
  - never speak to family without permission

**2. Vehicle Crime:** there were 9 stolen motor vehicles in February in Bicester: 3 on 01/02/24, 3 on 06/02/24 from Bure Park and 3 on 15/02/24 in Hamwell Fields, Banbury. These were believed to have been taken by organised crime groups and stolen to order.

It was suggested that if you have keyless entry, keep fobs in a Faraday bag, or deep in the interior of the house so they can't be cloned. If you buy a new car, especially if it comes with only one key, a good idea would be to get the key reprogrammed.

There was a van theft in Kingsmere, mentioned on social media, but not reported to police. All cases should be reported to ensure evidence is collected to help prevent future crimes.

www.soldsecure.com grades security products and was recommended.

**3. 20mph Speed Limits:** Concern expressed that speed watch statistics are not being fed back to the police for review. However, Sergeant Gavin Stanniland said that if there was cause for concern over speeding levels or other issues, he could be contacted and a PCSO could be dispatched to attend a session. It was noted that roads policing would not proactively go out to a 20mph area.

Graham Barnett, lead of the Speedwatch scheme commented that they have been undertaking community speed checks for two years and have carried out 130 sessions, reporting 2,462 speeders to the Police.

**24.410.20 Next Parish Council Meeting Date:** Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024, 7.30pm (DB)

**Meeting Closed:** 21.39

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