

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 3rd March 2025

Present:

Keith Hickson	(KH)	Chair
Jim Coleman	(JC)	Councillor
Joe Deane	(JD)	Councillor
Sandra Cosier	(SC)	Councillor

In Attendance:

10 Members of the public
Steve Cosier (SCo) District Councillor
Martha Holland (MH) WODC Healthy Communities Officer

MIN REF	ITEM
25/016	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Geoff Webster (GW) Vice-Chair Trudi Gasser (TG) Parish Clerk Dan Levy (DL) County Councillor Charlie Maynard (CM) MP
25/017	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST No Declarations made.
25/018	APPROVAL OF MINUTES Minutes Parish Council Meeting of the 3 rd February 2025 were approved for publication.
25/019	MATTERS ARISING Minutes approved Update from JD he talked about allotments, talked to Dani there may be some space, TG was talking to Savills, to provide update at the next meeting.
25/020	S106 PUBLIC ART PROGRAMME MH Presented the Section 106 – public art programme. There is an amount of £8403.11 from the Granaries development available for Stanton Harcourt Parish. Public artworks are usually site specific and may celebrate the distinctiveness of the environment, local heritage and/ or cultural identity. Artworks can be landmark works or integrated within the functional elements of street furniture, paving, fences, lighting, cycle racks, bollards, gate posts or signage. There is a deadline of Aug 2033. <i>Or the</i> fund could be reclaimed by the developer with interest. Members agreed SHPC to set-up a Working Group to write a specification for the Art Project and advertise for local artists to propose their ideas MH left information the PC can use to develop its specification and advertise for

	artists
25/021	<p>COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS</p> <p>See attached appendix for full reports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Levy, County Councillor, OCC. <p>WODC</p> <p>SCo – Has sent a letter to the Under-Secretary of Defra about flooding at Bablock Hythe. The flood banks and ditches overwhelmed average flood is 300mm above the ground. No remedial or prevention works have been done since 2007. Farmers want to clear the ditches are prevented from doing so. Permits are difficult to get and currently take 4-5 years to get. SC requesting that these ditches are de-designated so parish councils can specify the ditch clearing.</p> <p>Thames Water have informed SC that Santon Harcourt Sewage plant will not be updated until 2038</p> <p>Steadys Lane - SC has been working with OCC roads to improve drainage and surface of Steadys Lane. OCC will be clearing 10 drains in the next month and once the road has dried out carry out an inspection to come up with a plan for their contractors to fix</p> <p>Dix pit crushing, OCC enforcement officer advises the concrete is coming in from another site in Oxford to DM concrete crushing. That phase should have finished and there will be no more noise from the Hansen processing plant.</p> <p>OCC</p> <p>See appendix for report.</p>
25/022	<p>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</p> <p>Cycle Path – Parishioner had found that it will not currently be possible to upgrade the bridleway from Steadys Lane to Eynsham as the landowners object. He asked the PC to write to the highways officer through Dan to arrange a meeting to see if they can resolve the issues.</p> <p>The PC will contact Smiths to see if there may be an opportunity to work with them to put in a cycle path in the field they own alongside the B4449 as part of their Community Programme</p> <p>Speed Signs – Parishioner has sent email request about progress of speed signs this PC responded that this item is on the agenda to approve additional costs for installation (discussed later)</p> <p>Footpaths - Question raised about path between the Old Airfield and the Granaries could it be included in the public art project – WODC and PC view signage may be considered but installation of the Path may be outside the scope of S106 Art Fund</p>

	<p>Speedwatch – A couple of Parishioners Tom Elliott (TC) and Gary Purves (GP) expressed interest in reinstating the SpeedWatch Group in the village.</p> <p>KH undertook to retrieve the speedgun from the current holder. Progress will be reported at the next meeting.</p> <p>Once installed sign data will also be collected to build a picture of speeding at the monitoring points.</p> <p>Trees and Hedges Question raised about overgrown trees and hedges around the Village (don't know what the particular issue was. Ask Robin smith to look at any PC owned trees and hedges</p> <p>The Green – Request to plant additional hedging to fill the gap as children have been spotted running across the road. PC will look at planting further hedge in the next bare root hedge planting season (Nov to Feb)</p> <p>Roads – A question was raised about adoption of the Old Airfield and Granaries roads. So far these are not adopted SC will follow up with OCC</p>
25/023	<p>PLANNING</p> <p>No Applications to report.</p>
25/024	<p>PC VACANCY</p> <p>Vote to second a new member. Robin Morley's is the only application to be received the PC took a vote to accept this application, -</p> <p>JD proposed KH seconded, the PC voted in favour.</p> <p>Robin Morely is duly seconded to the PC. The Parish Clerk will send the required papers to sign.</p>
25/024	<p>PC WEBSITE</p> <p>Carried over to the next meeting.</p>
25/025	<p>SPEED SIGNS</p> <p>Costs to erect the signs were discussed and approved by the PC. JD proposed, JC seconded, all in favour.</p>
25/026	<p>ANNUAL MEETINGS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual Meeting of the Parish Council – The meeting is to be held before the May Ordinary meeting on Monday 12th May. 2. Annual Parish Meeting – set the date & discuss content <p>The PC agreed this will be held on 10th May alongside the Village Market</p> <p>The PC agreed the format will be the same as last year with invites to local groups and community enterprises</p>
25/027	<p>VILLAGE VOICE</p>

	Copy for next edition: SC volunteered to provide copy for the next issue.
25/028	GUARDROOM a. New sign has been fitted. Path has been fixed b. Outside light facing the carpark. Proposed, 2nded and passed Solar - JD is getting quotes for the panels and battery Another oil heater has broken. Heaters for the hall.
25/029	CORRESPONDENCE Nothing to report.
25/030	ANY OTHER BUSINESS Village hall The Village Hall Committee has provided minutes of their last meeting. The Hall is now 25 years old and the committee is updating facilities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new hot water tank and emersion heater. • Remote (App) controlled Underfloor heating. • 5-year electrical check completed and issues have been resolved
25/031	NEXT MEETING 7.30pm on Monday 7 th April 2025 in The Old Guardroom

Signed

Date

ACTIONS CARRIED FORWARD FROM EARLIER MEETINGS:

	ACTIONS CARRIED FORWARD	
Pre-June	<p>B4449 Reducing the noise and vibration BT OpenReach replaced the wrong manhole cover. The one by 10 Beaumont Green has been recorded as Urgent by both OCC Highways and BT OpenReach.</p> <p><i>The PC now has reference numbers to report issues.</i></p>	Actioned
CFW from July mtg	<p>21/092 All/PC to continue logging TW complaints with DL/OCC None received – Notice to be put on Village Voice (Hardcopy & Facebook) asking all issues to be sent to Parish Clerk with the Title ‘Water Issues’ PC will then progress with Thames Water. Action MJ</p>	Ongoing
CFW from June mtg	<p>22/026 Welcome Pack JD currently drafting a document</p>	Cfw
CFW from April mtg	<p>JD to produce a draft S106 submission for Guardroom Solar Heater for the next meeting. JD to continue to try to resolve the lighting issue, to enable the lights to be dimmable.</p>	<p>Cfw</p> <p>Cfw</p>
CFW Sept	<p>23/088 Planning ACTION: TG to check the Planning Application Tracker and report any decision notices issued at future meetings.</p>	Ongoing

Another busy month!

Budget

The County Council budget was passed on 11 February. Among other key things in the budget:

- £60m to roads maintenance
- £4m to flood measures (including a restoration of annual gulley cleaning, which was made once every 4 years in the last budget of the previous administration)
- Increases spending on Children's Services and Adult Social Care, including measures for early interventions and help preparing children coming up to starting school
- Puts more money into libraries and family hubs
- Provides additional money into rural active travel facilities.

Roads

A40 The work on the Shores Green junction in Witney has commenced. There will be some delays getting into Witney and occasional closures of the A40 overnight. When finished it will make the eastern Witney junction four way, and relieve pressure on the centre of Witney.

I suspect it will also reduce traffic on Lower Road and in Barnard Gate, and on the Eynsham section of the A40 as it will become better for HGVs and other traffic from north of Kidlington to join the dual carriageway A40 at Shores Green rather than at Eynsham. It may change the amount of traffic coming through Sutton via South Leigh.

Potholes

There has been a large investment in road maintenance, with £46m being put into road surface treatment, and £14m into other key maintenance after decades of under funding, the legacy of the previous county council administration of "managed decline", which was explicitly set out in a 2014 cabinet paper in response to government funding cuts

https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s27013/CA_SEP1614R18%20%20Highway%20Asset%20Management%20Plan.pdf

As the weather improves, you will see increased activity filling holes and resurfacing roads. I would expect the busier roads to be worked on first. We do still need increased funding from central government to get on top of the issue.

Local government reorganisation latest.

As expected, the complexities of Oxfordshire mean that the government didn't put us in the first wave of changes for either unitarization or devolution.

Unitarization

Unitarization will happen if the government sticks to its policy. There will be one or more unitary authorities in place of the current two-tier system of districts and county. We are required to put in an outline proposal by 31 March, with a full proposal by 30 November this year.

The wisest option is for a whole Oxfordshire unitary authority, which would exceed the

government's stated requirement for new unitary authorities to have at least 500,000 residents. It would avoid splitting up key services like social services. And would be financially stable.

Oxford City Council appear wedded to an inner and outer "doughnut", with the inner authority comprising Oxford and part of each of the other districts, which would almost certainly include Eynsham and Kidlington, and possibly Witney and Abingdon. It is hard to see how this would benefit residents of places like Stanton Harcourt, or be financially solvent.

"Devolution"

The current top tier authorities, including Oxfordshire, are in discussions about the other part of the reform, which is to set up a Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA). The MCA will have power over things like public transport and inward investment. It is likely that we will end up with a Thames Valley MCA, with the first mayoral election in May 27

Elections

The good news is that the government did not cancel County Council elections, so they will be going ahead on 1 May. These will be under the new boundaries agreed by the Electoral Commission. I will be standing again for the Eynsham Division, which includes Stanton Harcourt. There will also be a by-election for the Standlake, Aston and Stanton Harcourt ward of WODC, as Charlie Maynard fulfils his commitment to stand down following his election to Westminster.

Botley West

A quick reminder that applications to make further comments on the Botley West planning proposal to be considered by the Sec of State (Ed Miliband at the time of writing) had to be made by 27 Feb. WODC and OCC will be making representations which are strongly opposed to the developer's proposals. I have registered as the local county councillor and as a district councillor. I objected to the proposal submitted by the developer on lots of grounds, including its effect on local residents and the environment, and the frankly derisory level of funding the developer proposes passing to parish councils and local groups.

Other things

Among lots of other activity so far this year, I have had the pleasure of accompanying Calum Miller, the MP for Bicester and Woodstock, to meet the senior management team of the Eynsham Partnership Academy Trust, including the headteacher Mr Thomas, at Bartholomew School. We are fortunate to have such well-run schools in the area. Stanton Harcourt school is part of the EPA Trust, as is Standlake School and many others. I attended a crowded Stop Botley West meeting in Cassington, and communicated with our Oxfordshire MPs about the topic. And I met with our new local police colleague, Hannah Leggott, who is working alongside Helen Keen. They are both keen (sorry) to be seen around the village.