

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Present:**

Rachel Arnold	(RA)	Vice Chair
Gill Sellars	(GS)	Councillor
Joe Deane	(JD)	Councillor
Keith Hickson	(KH)	Councillor
Andy Hayden	(AH)	Councillor
Trudi Gasser	(TG)	Parish Clerk

**In Attendance:**

3 Members of the public  
 Lysette Nicholls (LN) District Councillor  
 Charlie Maynard (CM) District Councillor  
 Dan Levy (DL) County Councillor

MIN REF	ITEM
24/013	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> Matthew Judson (MJ) Chair
24/014	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> Gil Sellars is a trustee member of the Village Hall Committee with regards to item 24/021 below - Village Hall Car Park.
24/015	<b>APPROVAL of MINUTES</b> Minutes Parish Council Meeting of the 4 <sup>th</sup> December 2023 were approved for publication following amendment of 23/141.
24/016	<b>APPROVAL of MINUTES</b> Minutes Parish Council Meeting of the 5 <sup>th</sup> February 2024 were approved for publication subject to amendment of 24/002.
24/017	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b> ACTION: TG to include carried forward actions in minutes
24/018	<b>REPORTS FROM DISTRICT and COUNTY COUNCIL</b> <b>County Council:</b> Full report attached  In addition to the report, it was discussed where the 20mph should start before Evergreen Cottage on b4448 and that the 20mph road markings had not been installed (but they have now) and by Lena Cottage there is still a 30mph sign - DL said he would support these changes. DL reported that the flashing sign on the entry to Sutton was still set at 30. ACTION: TG to request the removal of the sign.  <b>District Council:</b> In summary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DC budget passed last week</li> <li>• Still campaigning for a Police front desk to be available in the district. Two rural crime officers had been recruited.</li> <li>• Work with Thames Water continuing, no information available on any improvements being made by TW on water works.</li> <li>• Recent burglary in neighbouring village – LN to request posters for the PC to display to highlight the issue to the parish.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reminder for all to register to photo ID to enable people to vote in upcoming elections.</li> </ul>
24/019	<p><b>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b></p> <p>Playground sign is pointing the wrong way. ACTION: PC to review the signs and adjust if necessary</p> <p>An Old Airfield resident reported that following an objection to the application on Hayfield Green, the Biodiversity Officer of WODC had the following comments on the application:</p> <p>3220/S73, Land at Former Stanton Harcourt Airfield Main Road Stanton Harcourt Comments relate to the following document: Variation of conditions 24 and 25 to planning permission 18/01611/FUL to allow changes to the landscape proposal and to include additional pedestrian footpath.</p> <p>Before development takes place, details of the provision of integrated bat roosting features (e.g. bat boxes/tubes/bricks on south or southeast-facing elevations) and integrated nesting opportunities for birds (e.g. house sparrow terrace, starling box, swift brick or house martin nest cup on the north or east-facing elevations) within the walls of the new buildings shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval. The details shall include a drawing/s showing the types of features, their locations within the site and their positions on the elevations of the buildings, and a timetable for their provision. The approved details shall be implemented before the dwelling/s hereby approved is/are first occupied and thereafter permanently retained.</p> <p><i>Reason: To provide additional roosting for bats and nesting birds as a biodiversity enhancement, in accordance with paragraphs 170 and 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy NE13 of the West Oxfordshire District Local Plan 2011, policy EH2 of the emerging Local Plan 2031 and Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006."</i></p> <p><i>Original submitted plans illustrate the locations of artificial boxes on site. The Variation plans appear to have removed all artificial boxes from the plans. We would therefore recommend that the condition is not varied and the original plans are kept and plans illustrate the inclusion as per the original condition above.</i></p> <p>The approved landscaping scheme shall be implemented as approved within 12 months of the commencement of the approved development or as otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter be maintained in accordance with the approved scheme. In the event of any of the trees or shrubs so planted dying or being seriously damaged or destroyed within 5 years of the completion of the development, a new tree or shrub of equivalent number and species, shall be planted as a replacement and thereafter properly maintained.</p> <p><i>Reason: To ensure the safeguarding of the character and landscape of the area during and post development.</i></p> <p><i>Original submitted plans include proposed shrub planting; proposed grass areas to receive good quality amenity grass turves laid in line with good horticultural practices; proposed hedge planting to; proposed decorative mix shrub planting;</i></p>

	<p><i>proposed grassland areas, to be seeded with EM10 Tussock grass seed mix or similar; proposed grassland areas, to be seeded with A4 Low Maintenance Grass seed mix or similar; proposed grassland areas, to be seeded with A4 Low Maintenance Grass seed mix or similar.</i></p> <p><i>The varied plans include proposed grass areas to receive good quality amenity grass turves laid; proposed tree planting; proposed decorative mix shrub planting; proposed grassland areas, to be seeded with EM10 Tussock grass seed mix or similar; proposed grassland areas, to be seeded with fescue grass seed mix; proposed grassland areas, to be seeded with EG8</i></p>
<b>24/020</b>	<p><b>07 PLANNING</b></p> <p>Planning application by FCC Environment, for planning permission: Section 73 application to continue development approved under 13/1062/P/CM (MW.0097/13) (Proposed development and operation of a Waste Transfer Station including ancillary development) without complying with conditions 1 and 5, to extend the end date of the existing Waste Transfer Facility from 31st March 2029 to 31st March 2050 and restoration from 31st December 2030 to 31st December 2051 at Dix Pit Waste Transfer Station, Dix Pit Quarry and Landfill Site/ Former Con Bloc Works, Linch Hill, Stanton Harcourt, OX29 5BB</p> <p>The Parish Council met with a Planning Officer of OCC to clarify the application. In summary, the application is for FCC to extend their use of the site. A routeing agreement is in place to prevent vehicles turning right from the site on the B4449 via Sutton. Any issues with vehicles not following the routeing agreement should be reported to OCC Monitoring and Enforcement at <a href="mailto:TellPlanning@Oxfordshire.gov.uk">TellPlanning@Oxfordshire.gov.uk</a>. The PC are to submit comments to the application.</p> <p>Further Applications are expected for the site, for the waste management centre and for continued use of the site.</p>
<b>24/021</b>	<p><b>VILLAGE HALL</b></p> <p><b>Car Park</b></p> <p>106 Application has been submitted, with a decision due in a couple of weeks. The Planning Application has also been submitted.</p> <p>The PC thanked GS for her determined efforts on the project.</p>
<b>24/022</b>	<p><b>ANNUAL PARISH MEETING</b></p> <p>It was suggested to hold the Annual Parish Meeting in conjunction with the Village Market on 13<sup>th</sup> April. GS volunteered to organise. It is hoped that other councillors will assist with the organisation.</p>
<b>24/023</b>	<p><b>POLICY REVIEW</b></p> <p>The policy review was carried over to the next meeting.</p>
<b>24/024</b>	<p><b>FINANCE UPDATE</b></p> <p>A finance update and draft year end accounts will be provided at the next meeting, when it is hoped that there will be a decision on the 106 application.</p>
<b>24/025</b>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <p>An amended list of responsibilities to be circulated following the discussions at the previous meeting.</p> <p>JD: Contact has been made regarding supplying a bus stop as per First &amp; Last Mile's request. Further information to follow at the next meeting.</p> <p>AH/KH: a review of the Asset Register has been undertaken. A report will be</p>

	circulated to the PC very soon.
<b>24/026</b>	<p><b>CORRESPONDENCE</b></p> <p><b>DOG CONTROL</b> A report of a dog being out of control on The Leys Footpath was received. RA to include an article in the next issue of Village Voice.</p> <p><b>HEDGE CUTTING/FLY TIPPING</b> Correspondence was received regarding the trimming of the hedge on the bend beyond the cricket pitch and fly tipping on land owned by All Souls. TG to write the All Souls to raise the issues.</p> <p><b>CHILDREN'S HOME</b> A complaint was received regarding the lack of information provided to the parish regarding the proposed Children's Home in Sutton. The Parish Council has replied to the concerns raised and confirmed that the PC has no further information than is already in the public domain</p>
<b>24/027</b>	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>AH raised the light pollution from the Industrial Estate affecting residents on The Granaries. It was agreed that this is a matter for the PC and WODC, and that a specific evidence form would be produced for parishioners to log timelines the lighting is on. Lysette Nichols advised that this matter had previously been raised with occupants on the Industrial Estate and that the dates of the last intervention would be provided. Lysette also stated that noise nuisance had also previously been raised.</p>
<b>24/028</b>	<p><b>NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 19:30 in The Old Guardroom.</p>

Signed .....

Date .....

Tuesday 20 Feb was the Full Council meeting of the County Council at which we set a budget for the next financial year. The administration at County Hall, of which I am the Cabinet member with responsibility for finance, does not have an overall majority, after the departure of Labour from the Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance. We therefore ended up with a very long meeting, trying to get agreement across the parties. And finally ended up adopting a slightly more expansive budget than I had thought ideal, but still well within the parameters of what is safe.

We agreed above inflation increases in spending on Adult Social Care and Children's services, and additional money going into flood defences and roads. We are offsetting this with a set of savings in areas such as reducing the layers of management and putting effort into ensuring that our children can be looked after in Oxfordshire rather than elsewhere. The County Council remains financially robust, but there are limits to what can be done within the funding available.

It has been a complex path to get to this point, involving really useful consultation exercises, and grappling with the government producing its "final" settlement, in two parts, so that we only discovered our final expected income earlier this month. It is a ridiculous process, and I hope that any incoming government, at the very least, commits to multiyear settlements so we can plan our spending and delivery and increase our ability to provide the services residents rightly demand, and the end to bidding in competition with other authorities for individual time limited pots of money for specific projects.

#### Flooding

As we have all noticed, the wet weather has continued for the past few months, and demonstrated the vulnerability of many places to flooding. The County Council is the lead flood authority, and works closely with the Emergency Services and WODC to respond to floods and try to prevent them. There will be a full cross-agency debriefing in the spring, and I would expect the input of parish councils will be sought.

#### A40 update.

No further progress to report. Discussions with Homes England continue. The public enquiry on the other HIF scheme, based in Didcot, commenced on 20 Feb. You may have seen that the A40 cycle route is being scraped, to restore it to its original width after decades of neglect. It makes a huge difference.

The section near Cassington and the Barnard Gate to Witney section has now been completed.

#### Children's Home

As residents will be aware, the County Council is looking to acquire a property in Sutton, to house two children at a time, who need to be in a safe and rural environment, looked after 24 hours a day by the professional support team. This is more effective in helping these children than large homes, often outside Oxfordshire. It is also much more cost-effective for council tax payers of the county. I am sure that, as in other places which have children's homes, residents will barely notice that the home is there, and be supportive.

In the meantime, people have understandably raised concerns, and either I or officers would be pleased to hear and respond to these. Officers came to the last Parish Council meeting, and addressed a large number of residents, and have subsequently been in communication with other Sutton and SH residents. Once the property is acquired, it will require planning permission for a change of use from WODC.

As ever, please contact me on [dan.levy@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:dan.levy@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

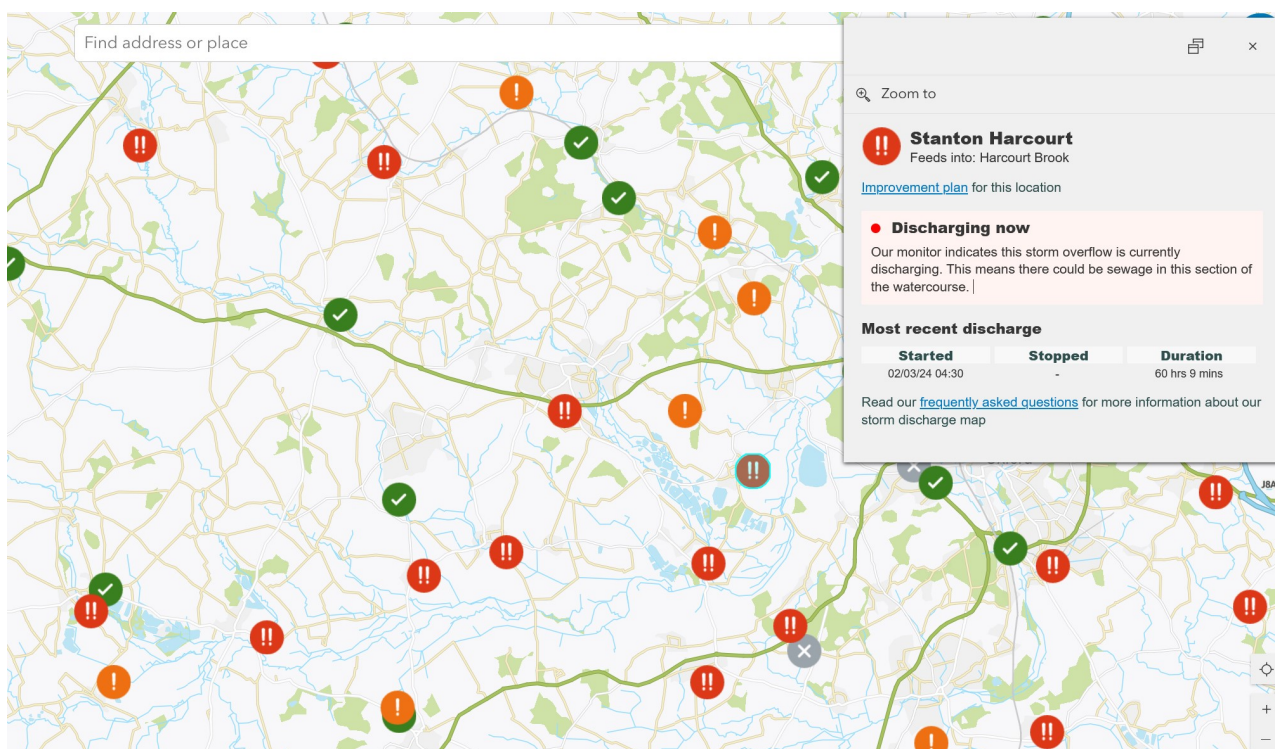
**Stanton Harcourt parish council meeting, 4<sup>th</sup> March**  
**District councillor update, Charlie Maynard**

### Police front desks

The local Lib Dems are launching a campaign to bring back the front desk at Witney's police station. The police front desk was closed during Covid and has not re-opened since. This means that if a resident wants to go and meet a police officer, they need to travel to either Oxford or Abingdon to do this. While some people are comfortable discussing issues either by phone or online, many people are not and do want to be able to meet face to face. We understand that the police force has a deep commitment to serving and protecting the public. Part of this commitment is about ensuring that the public has direct, physical access to the police, which is both practically useful and helps maintain and build trust. Police front desks have re-opened in Covid in various places around the country, such as Devon and Hampshire, and we are keen that Thames Valley Police chart a course towards re-opening Witney's front desk.

### Sewage

The overall picture remains dire. Water bills have been increased. This will likely prevent the water companies from going bust until at least after the general election and helps out shareholders and their bankers, but residents are taking the hit. Operationally, there is no sign that Thames Water is grasping the enormity of the challenge to get our sewage network and works up to scratch. As I write this, Stanton Harcourt's sewage treatment works has been dumping sewage for 60 hours non-stop and Standlake's has been dumping for 636 hours straight. Thames Water currently states that "an upgrade is planned for Stanton Harcourt STW. We plan to complete this work in our next asset planning period (2025 - 2030)". No further information on the works upgrade is currently available. Moving on to the network, I hope to receive a map of the Stanton Harcourt sewage treatment catchment area covering the network of pipes and pumping stations linking to the sewage treatment works. With that in hand, the next step (which is entirely dependent on Thames Water's goodwill) would be to install flow and depth meters so that the worst infiltration sections can be identified and then fixed. However, I am not optimistic that Thames Water will carry out this monitoring and repair work in the near or medium term.



<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/edm-map>

## ACTIONS CARRIED FORWARD FROM EARLIER MEETINGS:

	<b>ACTIONS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	
Pre-June	GS – 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	Cfw
CFW from June mtg	21/064 TG to create and circulate a list of current policies (a PC Policy Register) ready for review.	Cfw
CFW from July mtg	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 TG to report on issue type statistics at future meetings (standard agenda point)	Cfw
	21/097 S106 MJ to obtain quotes for additional Play Equipment	Cfw
CFW from Nov mtg	JD to look at sensors for electric lights once transferred to the PC	Cfw
	21/122 Public Session Archive in the Guard Room? GS to see if we can install sufficient storage	Cfw
	22/009 Village Hall GS to circulate the original Car Park refurbish plan to the VHC for review for completeness GS to return to Parish Council with quotations for Car Park refurb	Cfw
	22/010 RECREATION AREAS GS to identify whether the VHC would like the equipment moved from the Bury Mead play park to the Leys to provide additional options for the Village Hall long term strategy	Cfw
CFW from June Meeting	22/026 Welcome Pack JD currently drafting a document	
CFW from April Meeting	23/040 Guardroom MJ to obtain a quote for a replacement door. MJ to ensure the guttering at the front of the building fixed. JD to produce a draft S106 submission for Guardroom Solar Heater for the next meeting. GS to continue to try to resolve the lighting issue, to enable the lights to be dimmable.	
	23/041 Councillor Responsibilities KH to arrange a training session with Dragon IT on Google workspace to enable all members of the PC to view bookings, etc KH to arrange for Dragon It to install the defined file store	
CFW Sept	23/088 Planning ACTION: TG to check the Planning Application Tracker and report any decision notices issued at future meetings.	
CFW Sept	23/090 Guardroom ACTION: RA to purchases dishes when next in IKEA ACTION: GS to progress rate relief for a 'not for profit' community building ACTION: JD To continue progressing the Guardroom Solar Heating project.	