

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024

**Present:**

Keith Hickson	(KH)	Chair
Joe Deane	(JD)	Councillor
Jim Coleman	(JC)	Councillor
Sandra Cosier	(SC)	Councillor
Trudi Gasser	(TG)	Parish Clerk

**In Attendance:**

10 Members of the public  
 Dan Levy (DL) County Councillor  
 Steve Cosier (SCo) District Councillor

MIN REF	ITEM
24/071	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> Geoff Webster (GW) Vice-Chair Ellen Judson (EJ) Councillor Charlie Maynard (CM) District Councillor
24/072	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> No Declarations made.
24/073	<b>APPROVAL of MINUTES</b> Minutes Parish Council Meeting of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2024 were approved for publication.
24/074	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b> Minutes approved  <b>Guardroom Broadband:</b> JD provided broadband quotes – the best value was Vodafone, at £22 per month. As this cost is within the budgeted amount it was agreed to go ahead with Vodafone – TG/JD to progress the order.  <b>Waste Bins:</b> The cost to provide a further litter bin at the cemetery is £8.37 per week and a green bin is £50 per year. TG to place the order for the bins.  <b>Sutton Hedge:</b> The hedge had been trimmed.  <b>Pot Hole Super User:</b> It is possible to have a 2 <sup>nd</sup> super user – an appeal for a volunteer to be published in VV.  The list of outstanding actions was discussed – see appendix.
24/075	<b>COUNTY &amp; DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS</b> See attached appendix.
24/076	<b>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guardroom Lights: It was suggested to use plug in lights at the Guardroom.</li> <li>• Noise from Industrial Estate: A complaint was received regarding noise from the industrial site at unsociable hours. SCo will contact the contractor.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potholes: It was mentioned that the roads in the parish are in a poor state with an increasing number of potholes.</li> <li>• Speeding: It was reported that despite the reduction of speed limit in the village, many drivers were not slowing down accordingly.</li> <li>• Field on The Granary: It was questioned what will happen to the field on The Granary, which is now full of weeds? The PC confirmed that it would be landscaped by the maintenance company, which is due to be set up by the developers.</li> <li>• 20mph Sign: A 20mph sign by Beaumont Green is now not pointing the right way, having possibly been hit by a vehicle. To be reported on Fix My Street.</li> </ul>
<b>24/077</b>	<p><b>PLANNING</b></p> <p>3 applications had been received for comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning application by Oxfordshire County Council, for planning permission: Change of use from C3 dwelling to C2 small children's home and side extension together with associated internal and external works including an extended parking area with five additional on-site parking spaces with two EV charging points and two cycle spaces, the replacement of some external windows and doors, the installation of PV panels, the removal of the oil tank, the covering of the well and pond, a new soil vent drainage pipe, additional fencing and screening where required and soft landscaping works at Willow Bank House, Sutton Lane, Sutton, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX29 5RY.</li> <li>• APPLICATION NO: 24/02469/LBC PROPOSAL: External alterations to include replacing an existing wooden Lean-to glasshouse with a powder coated aluminium Lean-to glasshouse sited on dwarf stone wall in keeping with existing stonework within the property. Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act LOCATION: Blackditch Farm Blackditch Stanton Harcourt</li> <li>• REFERENCE NO: 23/03220/S73 PROPOSAL: Variation of Conditions 2, 24, 25 and 26 to Planning Permission 18/01611/FUL to allow changes to the landscape proposal and to include additional pedestrian footpath (amended description and plans) Town and Country Planning Act LOCATION: Land At Former Stanton Harcourt Airfield Main Road Stanton Harcourt</li> </ul> <p>All applications were circulated to Councillors for comment. TG asked the councillors to submit comments promptly.</p>
<b>24/078</b>	<p><b>VILLAGE HALL</b></p> <p><b>Car Park</b></p> <p>The developer of the Village Hall Car Park had asked whether the PC would like the Salt Bin returned to its original location in the car park, as it is currently at the entrance. The PC agreed that it should stay where it is, closer to the entrance.</p> <p>The School had asked whether they could display banners on the VH fence to publicise the school. It was agreed that the school should seek approval from the PC for each banner they would like displayed.</p>

	Concern was raised regarding the speed on vehicles in the car park, which could result in damage to the surface – SC to look at appropriate available signage and report back to the PC.
<b>24/079</b>	<b>SPEED SIGNS (VAS)</b>
	The PC were presented with 3 quotes for VAS. The quotes range from £4178.98 plus VAT to £8353 plus VAT. KH proposed that PC go with the cheapest quote from ElanCity. JD seconded, all voted in favour – it was RESOLVED to purchase the 2 units from ElanCity. KH to ask OCC for a quote to install the units.
<b>24/080</b>	<b>PC WEBSITE</b>
	Due to the absence of GW, this was carried over to the next meeting.
<b>24/081</b>	<b>VILLAGE VOICE</b>
	<p>Payment for Deliverers: The PC had received a request to increase the payment to deliverers by 50% - it was felt this was too large an increase, KH proposed an increase of 25% to 12.5p/copy, with a view to review annually. JD seconded, all voted in favour. It was RESOLVED to increase the delivery payment to 12.5p/copy.</p> <p>Copy for next edition: KH asked for a member of the PC to supply copy for the next edition of Village Voice. SC volunteered.</p>
<b>24/082</b>	<b>FINANCE</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Clerk requested items for inclusion in the 2025/6 budget with costings prior to the next meeting. The budget would be discussed at the November meeting and approved at the December meeting.</li> <li>The revised mandate was signed by the councillors present at the meeting. TG to obtain signatures of the EJ and GW asap.</li> </ul>
<b>24/083</b>	<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b>
	<p>Grass area:</p> <p>An area in Bury Mean is contaminated with building rubble and stones exposed by the tree removals and the construction of the new properties on Blackditch.</p> <p>The builders visited and 'cleared' the area and seeded with grass, but John is still unable to mow it without causing extensive damage to his mower.</p> <p>KH proposed making the area a 'wild flower' area and asking Mr Bury for a contribution towards the cost of seeding. The members of the PC are to review the area and decide at the next meeting.</p>
<b>24/084</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>
	<p>Community Broadband: JD suggested the PC consider providing 'Community Broadband' to the village. JD to explore options for the PC to consider within the budget for 2025/6.</p> <p>Remembrance Sunday: Wreath Laying: KH to lay the wreaths on behalf of the PC. TG to look up what donation was made to the RBL last year to agree a donation for this year at the next meeting.</p> <p>Laying up &amp; Dedication Service: On 26th October at 3pm in St Michael's Church there will be a laying up service for the current Stanton Harcourt RBL Standard and the dedication of the new Standard. All were invited to attend.</p>

<b>24/085</b>	<b>NEXT MEETING</b> 7.30pm on Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> November in the Old Guardroom.

Signed .....

Date .....

## ACTIONS CARRIED FORWARD FROM EARLIER MEETINGS:

	<b>ACTIONS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	
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>	Ongoing – to be reported on Fix MY Street
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 &amp; 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
CFW Sept	<p>23/090 Guardroom ACTION: JD To continue progressing the Guardroom Solar Heating project.</p>	Cfw

## County Councillor Report:

Stanton Harcourt PC

October 2024. County Councillor Report.

I hope everyone had a good summer, or what passed for summer this year. Please find a report from me on some of the current County Council related issues

### Roads

#### Oxford

You will I am sure have read that Network Rail have failed to meet the timetable they committed to as Oxford Station is rebuilt. That is, to put it mildly, extremely disappointing. Botley Road remains closed to motor vehicles at the railway bridge, and we await NR telling us the new expected opening date. In the meantime, the current bus arrangements, which work well, are continuing to be in operation.

#### A40

Discussions with Homes England continue relating to the A40 improvement project. Once Homes England release the money promised, the Park and Ride junctions and bus lanes can be completed.

The P&R itself is financed by a different government agency, as part of the Science Corridor project which is largely paying for the junctions at Oxford North and at Shores Green. The new government has promised a more joined-up way of funding projects, and that is to be welcomed. It is worth stressing that the P&R was built prior to the other funding being released in order to ensure that it wasn't affected by inflation, and to ensure that no Oxfordshire Council Taxpayer money has been used on the project. That includes the current maintenance costs, which are bundled into the government funding.

The fundamental issue has been that the project used two unconnected pots of money, and neither government pot was inflation indexed. That is what was inherited by the current administration, and although the situation is frustrating, it is the best that could be done with what we were left.

As well as quicker bus services there will be an improved bike lane, and significant improvements to the Eynsham roundabout and the lights at Cassington, and an additional bus stop for Cassington. I appreciate that people in Stanton Harcourt often already use Eynsham as a park and ride if they want to get the bus via Botley, so the new facility won't necessarily be used directly by residents.

### Flooding

There has been, and continues to be, substantial flooding throughout the county following the recent weather. There was a month's rain in one day, and there was flooding in places that normally avoid it, and in places where gullies had recently been cleared. However, it clearly is important to keep gullies clear, which is the County Council's responsibility on the highway network, and for riparian landlords to keep their ditches maintained. I believe that WODC provided some sandbags although this isn't its responsibility. The Fire Service is the contact when a flood event is happening. There is much more information on the county council web pages and at Oxfordshire County Council – Flood Toolkit ([oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com](http://oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com))

The recent flooding also demonstrates why housing should be built only where it won't make matters worse.

### Buses

#### Reliability measures

As Botley Road is one of the key routes into Oxford, the knock-on effect of the closure is that the

bus improvement schemes which were due to commence have had to be postponed. It is vital that bus movement in Oxford is prioritised, along with active travel, and it is a shame that there will be a delay in being able to put the filter scheme in place. The filters will permit people to drive to anywhere that they currently can drive to, but will create cleared key routes for buses.

#### New capped multi-company fares

With support from the County Council, the bus companies in Oxfordshire have agreed to combined ticketing, with a maximum daily or weekly fare. The daily cap is £6.50 for adults and £3.50 for under 18s. A weekly ticket is £25.00 and £14.50 .

That includes local buses from more rural areas, as well as routes in the city, and between the major towns. The First and Last Bus services from Standlake through Stanton Harcourt to Eynsham and to Hanborough Station is included, as is the improved service between Abingdon and Witney.

The H2 service from Witney to Headington, which goes through Eynsham (Spareacre Lane) is now doubled in frequency. It is a good way to get to the JR and avoid the hassle of parking there.

Find out about MyBus Oxfordshire tickets at [www.mybusoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.mybusoxfordshire.org.uk)

#### Franchising

The government will be announcing that local authorities will be able to franchise buses services in their areas. They seem unlikely to provide funding that would enable this to make a substantive difference to local services, but we will keep the situation under review.

#### Children's Home

The property in Sutton bought by the County Council for use as a Children's Home now requires planning permission for its change of use. This can be found at

<https://myeplanning.oxfordshire.gov.uk/Planning/Display/R3.0111/24>

The home will, if approved, be for a small number of children who require residential care in a rural setting, and the home will be staffed 24 hours a day. This will give the children the care they need, within the county they come from, and at a lower price than if the County Council had to purchase the care from out of county.

#### Democracy

The Electoral Commission has completed its final report on Electoral arrangements for the County Council, which Parliament will approve in time for the May 2025 elections.

This has redrawn the county divisions, to reflect population movements since the last review. There will be a new Carterton South and Bampton division, which will contain Aston, Yelford and Standlake, while Northmoor and Stanton Harcourt will be part of the new Eynsham Division.

This of course follows closely after the first parliamentary election under the new boundaries, and will be followed by an Electoral Commission review of the district boundaries in the next year or so.

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

## District Councillor Reports:

**Stanton Harcourt parish council meeting,  
District Councillor update - Charlie Maynard  
7<sup>th</sup> October, 2024**

**Winter Fuel Allowance** – my 71 Liberal Democrat MP colleagues and I all voted against Labour’s plans to cut the Winter Fuel Allowance. We believe that their plan to cut the means test back to only those who receive pension credit represents a very mean means test. West Oxfordshire District Council unanimously passed a motion last week asking the national government to reconsider and mitigate its approach. The council has been allocated £131,730 to support residents, as part of the recently launched Household Support Fund, in which Oxfordshire County Council has been allocated £3.4m.

In West Oxfordshire the funding will be available through a number of different services to make sure the right support reaches those who need it:

- Individual support through Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire who will provide emergency vouchers and financial help towards food, fuel and other essential household costs.
- Support for those in temporary accommodation and housing need through housing services.
- Support for community food projects and voluntary sector groups where they are working directly with residents in need

Please do get in touch if you have need or know others who need helping.

**Thames Water** – it’s hard to see any good news here. As I write this, Witney’s Sewage Treatment Works is currently dumping sewage, and both Standlake’s and Stanton Harcourt’s have dumped sewage in the last 48 hours. The new Labour government is deferring taking material action, allowing Thames Water to continue to operate despite the company being in breach of its operating licence, given it now lacks two investment grade credit ratings. The company is headed for bankruptcy, also known as Special Administration. My colleagues and I are pushing hard for a wholesale reworking of the regulations governing the water sector. I believe it is unlikely that we are going to see material improvements in our local treatment works and networks until the government properly addresses the problem.

**Housing and the Local Plan** – the new government has ramped house building targets, with West Oxfordshire’s slated to be increased by 62%. Given the absolutely dire state of the A40 this is a huge mistake. Our district cannot take this level of housing without greatly improved transport and social infrastructure. To date, there has been minimal information regarding this and we will have to wait and see to learn more information. I met with the head of Strategic Planning and the Councillor responsible for Planning tomorrow to discuss this in more detail. I think they are every bit as concerned that I am that there could well be a developer free-for-all, nationwide, from the end of the year.



I hope this report finds everyone well. Please find a report on some of the current WODC issues.

#### FULL COUNCIL:

Considering the Government's resolution to end the Winter-fuel allowance, the alliance resolved to expedite a solution and quickly identify those in this district who are eligible for the Winter Fuel Allowance pension credit but do not claim it.

A motion was put to the council and subsequently passed in relation to the Government's decision to remove the Winter Fuel Allowance. The council has resolved to try and maximise the take-up of pension credit and bring forward the administration and sign up of housing benefit and pension credit to help and reassure susceptible pensioners that they will be able to afford to heat their homes in winter.

The motion reads as follows:

This Council notes the government's decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments (WFPs). Age UK estimates that the government's changes to WFPs could hit 2 million people across the country, some of whom badly need the money to stay warm this winter. This Council also notes the parlous state of the Public Finances that the new Government has inherited.

This Council resolves to:

1. Request that the Executive considers a report from officers with proposals for promoting a District awareness campaign working with our local NHS partners, Parish Councils and charitable, civic and religious groups, to encourage elderly residents who are eligible for means- tested benefits such as Pension Credit to register and claim them to ensure that they continue to receive WFPs this Winter and to ensure that those in need are sign-posted to the continuing Household Support Fund;
2. Request that the Leader of the Council writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, urging an impact assessment of the government's decision to means test WFPs and asking HM Treasury to examine transitional measures to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who are eligible for, but who do not – or cannot – claim, other benefits under current thresholds are protected from fuel poverty.

#### NOTICE OF REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

West Oxfordshire District Council is conducting a review of polling district and polling places within West Oxfordshire. Written comments and representations are invited from any electors and other interested persons and bodies, including elected representatives and those with expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for disabled people.

Although the review is of polling districts and polling places it is accepted that polling stations are linked to the review and representations and comments are invited regarding those polling stations currently used. The council has asked that persons or bodies making representations should, if possible, give alternative buildings/venues that may be used as polling places. In conducting the review, the Council is requesting submissions from the (Acting) Returning Officer for the parliamentary constituency of Witney and the part of the Banbury, Bicester and Woodstock Constituencies within the West Oxfordshire District Council authority area. The deadline for submissions is Monday 4 November 2024

#### INFORMATION:

Comments and representations may be submitted as follows:

By post:

By email: Online:

Electoral Services, West Oxfordshire District Council, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxon  
OX28 1NB

[elections@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:elections@westoxon.gov.uk)

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/about-the-council/elections-and-voting/polling-districts-and-places/>

## FLOODING

Following the recent rainfall many rivers remain at a high level. There are several flood alerts in place in the district. I have included a link to the areas with alerts in place:

<https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/alerts-and...>

Who can help and who do you need to contact in a flood:

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/environment/flooding/>

WODC have supplied a list of useful telephone numbers for residents. I have attached them to this report and a leaflet which the parish council might want to add to.

Roads, blocked gullies, gratings and drains Oxfordshire County Council 0845 3101111 (24 hrs)

Website: Oxfordshire County Council

Main rivers Environment Agency General enquiries: 08708 506 506

Incident hotline: 0800 807 060

Website: Environment Agency

Other watercourses such as a stream or ditches      Land owner      Contact the riparian owner  
Call 01993 861000

Thank you

Steve

Please do get in touch with any queries, comments and, or requests. The best way is via email at:  
[steve.cosier@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:steve.cosier@westoxon.gov.uk) or mobile: 07584356301