



MINSTER LOVELL PARISH COUNCIL

www.minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Parish Clerk: Sharon Palmer

2 Charterville Close, Minster Lovell, Witney, Oxon OX29 0SL

Email: info@minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 07712 705865

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 21st November 2022 at 7.00pm in St Kenelm's Hall, Brize Norton Road, Minster Lovell

Present: Cllr David Haley (Chairman), Cllr Jean King, Cllr Brian Layt, Cllr Hannah Leach, Cllr Jonathan Stowell, Cllr Ann Williams and Sharon Palmer (Clerk)

Cllr Colin Dingwall, (WODC), Cllr Liam Walker (OCC)

Apologies: Cllr Sue Bicker and Cllr Gill Hill, (WODC)

Parishioners present: 20

The meeting started at 7.00pm.

1. Welcome / Members present and apologies for absence

Cllr Haley welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that apologies had been received from Cllr Sue Bicker and Cllr Gill Hill.

At Cllr Haley's request the Councillors and Clerk introduced themselves to the audience.

2. Declaration of interest in agenda items

Cllr King noted that for item 8b the applicant was a neighbour. There were no other declarations of interest.

3. Parishioner's Public Participation (for questions and comments on agenda items)

Cllr Haley noted there would now be 10 minutes for parishioner questions

Mrs Johnson expressed her concerns for the large scale development (Park Gate) being consulted on by Catesby Estates. She noted that of the 5 Chartist developments, Minster Lovell was the only one without Conservation Status.

Mrs Doughty commented on traffic along Brize Norton Road and noted that her 2 cats had been killed on the road and wanted to address the meeting regarding the speed limit on the road. Cllr. Haley confirmed that this could be raised under agenda item 14.

4. To receive the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17th October 2022

A copy of the minutes had been posted to the Council website. The Clerk confirmed one comment had been received and she had responded to the comment.

Cllr Williams proposed accepting the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting; seconded by Cllr Leach and agreed unanimously with one abstention from Cllr Stowell because he had not attended the meeting.

5. To receive an update from District Councillor Gill Hill – Cllr Hill did not attend the meeting

Cllr Haley explained that a number of other Parish Council meetings also took place on the third Monday of the month and Cllrs Dingwall, Hill and Walker were not able to attend all the meetings.

6. To receive an update from District Councillor Colin Dingwall



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Cllr Dingwall reminded the Council of discretionary funds available from WODC on behalf of OCC for help with heating and financial difficulties. If anyone knew of someone who was experiencing difficult times he encouraged them to apply for funds via the WODC website or to contact Cllr Dingwall directly. He noted there were also discretionary payments available for council tax reduction. The Clerk confirmed she had circulated the details to Councillors and placed details on the Council's website.

7. To receive an update from County Councillor Liam Walker

Cllr Walker reiterated the offer of £1,000 from Mr and Mrs Brain of the Horse & Radish towards the cost of a low-level fence on the grass verge opposite the Horse & Radish.

Cllr Walker noted that Witney had adopted a 20mph speed limit and that residents of Minster Lovell had been broadly in favour of adopting a 20mph speed limit which he felt was appropriate for the core of the Village.

He noted that the new speed limit in Witney had resulted in some car drivers making dangerous manoeuvres and he was working with Hailey Parish Council to consider options to ensure a smoother transition for other areas adopting the reduction in speed limit.

Cllr Williams noted there had been confusing and contradictory road signs on the Burford Road between Minster Lovell and Witney. Cllr King noted that the speed limit signs had now been updated and outlined the different speed limits along that route.

Cllr Layt noted that the lower speed limit would result in increased levels of pollution.

Cllr Haley summarised the discussion stating that the reduction in speed limit in the Village would be taken forward in the New Year and residents would be encouraged to comment on the options available.

8. To review planning applications, decisions, appeals

a) 22/02856/FUL - 117 Brize Norton Road, Minster Lovell, Witney, Oxfordshire OX29 0SQ - Conversion of attached garage and store into self-contained annex

Cllr Haley invited Councillors comments. Cllr Stowell said he had no issue with the application and noted the conversion would occupy the same footprint and he thought it would improve the appearance of the existing building.

Cllr Haley summarised the comments and that the Council did not wish to comment on the application.

He explained to the audience that a decision to make no comment on the application meant that the Council had no grounds for objection.

ACTION: Clerk to write to the Planning Department to confirm the Council's comment of no objection

b) 22/02860/HHD - 43 Ripley Avenue, Minster Lovell, Witney, Oxfordshire OX29 0RP - Erection of a two storey rear and side extension

Cllr Haley noted that WODC no longer provide paper copies of planning applications and all plans are in electronic format. Details of the applications had been circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting to enable informed comments to be made at the meeting.

Cllr Haley invited Councillors comments.

Cllr King noted that the applicant had talked to the neighbouring properties before submitting their application.

There were no further comments.



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ACTION: Clerk to write to the Planning Department to confirm the Council's comment of no objection.

- c) 22/03089/Screen - Land South Of Burford Road, Minster Lovell, Oxfordshire - Screening opinion request for development of up to 140 dwellings

Cllr Haley noted that a consultation had been undertaken by Catesby Estates regarding the development of land South of Burford Road. The current proposal for feedback is for a smaller area for 140 new homes on 25.9 acres with the development to be called Park Gate. A larger area of 181.7 acres from Burford Road to the A40 is also set out in documents published by Catesby Estates.

Cllr Haley read out the latest update from Catesby's website and noted that the Council would not submit a formal response to WODC until a planning application had been made.

Cllr Williams sought clarification on the number of properties and it was confirmed as 140 houses of mixed size at this time. Cllr Layt referred to the planning training course he had attended that day which gave advice to engage as early as possible with developers to try and get the best possible deal for the Village on the basis that the application may be approved. He noted the consultation said there was no 5 year land supply. Cllr Stowell felt that the Council should raise objection.

Cllr Haley noted a representative from Catesby had attended the Parish Council meeting on the 3rd October and invited further general comments before moving to discussing engagement.

Cllr King was aware of a lot of interest for the Society for the Protection of Minster Lovell to be re-established and the Council should try and work with that group. Cllr Haley noted the Council would treat any formal application in the same way as any other application.

Cllr King confirmed she would write to Catesby with her own objections and encouraged others to do so too to make Catesby aware that the Villagers have strong feelings about the development. She said the Council need to find out how to get protection for the upper Village, noting that the lower Village has protection as part of the AONB.

Cllr Haley said the Society would be separate from Council and should have its own terms of reference to ensure clear parameters between them.

Cllr Williams noted the difficulty in the past to get villagers to put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard, or submit online formal objections despite the former Society setting up meetings and supporting those without access to the internet. She noted that people talked about being unhappy with the previous development, but it was difficult to translate those feelings into actual objections.

Cllr Leach added that social media is a good way to get the message across.

Cllr Haley said the consultation and the website were opportunities for villagers to take the opportunity to give feedback, currently to Catesby, and in future to WODC when a formal application has been submitted.

Cllr Williams made a comment regarding the way developers summarise feedback they receive eg they may say "only 25% of the villagers objected to the plans" instead of "only 25% of villagers responded to the plans".

Cllr Layt noted the original date of 31st October 2022 for feedback had been extended by Catesby and wanted to encourage villagers to continue to offer feedback.

Cllr Stowell asked Cllr Dingwall if a reply to the screening to WODC planning was a legitimate response. Cllr Dingwall referred to two instances in 2016 where his objections were successful in stopping developments.



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However he cautioned that that any objections raised now, would be noted and addressed by Catesby's agents at the time of the planning application.

Cllr King asked that all Council discussions with speculative developers or builders must be minuted, with a copy sent to the developers.

Cllr Dingwall noted in recent years the region had met its housing targets of c1,000 houses per year and there are sufficient approved sites to meet ongoing targets. However, the Covid lockdown resulted in supply issues and the numbers of new houses had fallen to 1,008 short of the local plan. He noted that if only one strategic site were to commence building then the gap would be closed and the planners would be in a stronger position to reject other developments. WODC are working with developers to encourage developments to be started. Cllr Dingwall noted that around 30% of Councils in the UK are facing the same situation.

Cllr Williams asked for clarification on sustainability. Cllr Dingwall said developers would have to factor in the capacity of the local infrastructure such as schools, not just for the present but for the next 5 years.

Mrs Bentley said we should be careful how we engage with developers. As they address the objections in their formal application. Mrs Bentley also requested that the Council write to WODC to ask them to take actions to meet the targets in the local plan - to avoid having to accept speculative applications.

Mrs McAleer asked would a petition count as objections. Cllr Haley said whilst it would show a strength of feeling, individual feedback carried more weight than a petition, as petitions would be counted as only one objection regardless of how many signatures it contained.

Cllr Dingwall noted that the time to object would be at the time of a formal application and the Council could send a letter of objection which included valid reasons for objecting, and individuals could pick out items from the letter for their own letters, as it would be better not to duplicate the Council's letter.

Cllr King had also attended a planning training course that day and it was noted that it was helpful if comments and objections were added straight onto the planning application details on WODC's website, otherwise the planning staff have to re-type letters sent to the Council.

Cllr Haley asked Councillors what response they wanted to make at this time.

Cllr Stowell suggested that no comment be made. Cllr Haley noted the Council were being guided against making a list of specific objections and Cllr Dingwall advised that feedback be generic, not specific at this time.

Cllr Haley suggested the Council submit comments that the Council is strongly against the proposal and Cllr Stowell stated the application was opportunistic and the land was never designated for development and was outside of the curtilage and the linear heritage of the Village.

Cllr Williams proposed that Cllrs Haley and Stowell and the Clerk send a letter of objection to WODC; seconded by Cllr King and agreed unanimously.

Following a question about residents engagement it was stated that as this was a screening opinion request for a potential development there was little for residents to do at this stage except to meet to consider their course of action should a formal application be made.

Following further discussion Cllr Layt reiterated that the way information is presented by Catesby may suggest that Villagers do not care.

Cllr Haley noted the Upper Village was a non-designated Heritage Asset which had been stated when objecting to previous planning applications. He asked Cllrs King and Stowell to seek advice from WODC on how the Council could strengthen the Village's conservation status as a Chartist, linear settlement from development.



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Cllr Dingwall noted that archaeology can be a powerful weapon and could delay developments as the developers have to do a physical dig. Cllr Stowell thought there are a few small archaeological features around the Village. Cllr Haley noted Minster Lovell was an ancient development and the Archaeology Officer at OCC may hold further information to support an objection to any further developments.

Cllr Stowell proposed making contact with the OCC and WODC archivists to request information which may support an objection to planning applications; seconded by Cllr King and agreed unanimously.

Action: Clerk to make contact with the OCC and WODC archivist to request information.

- d) Receive an update regarding enforcement action:
Lavender Cottage, Minster Lovell – Non-compliance with conditions attached to 17/03978/HHD

There had been no further progress since the last meeting.

- e) Discuss the adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Haley asked if the Council wished to reconsider the adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr King noted careful consideration should be given as it would be extremely time consuming, difficult, expensive and previous advice suggested having a Plan may backfire on the Village.

Cllr Stowell said that the few plans he had seen provide for the future development of the neighbourhood and apart from not being worth the considerable effort it would take, it could backfire. His impression of the purpose of such a plan would be a 5 or 10 year plan to outline the development of an area.

Cllr Williams had researched this previously and felt that the Neighbourhood Plan would not be worth the cost. She gave an example of the Chipping Norton plan and Cllr Stowell added that a Plan would not guarantee protection for the Village.

Cllr King suggested the Council explore the protection of the AONB, which may mean the Village did not need Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Haley suggested the Council have a discussion with the WODC regarding the conservation of the area and the efficacy of having a Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr King suggested that the discussion include advice for the short, medium and long term protection of the Village.

Cllr Bicker suggested the Council should ask the Villagers for feedback and Cllr Haley suggested it would be beneficial to gather more information initially and then take this to the residents.

9. Matters and actions arising from the previous meeting which are not covered by other agenda items

The Clerk noted that the minutes for the meeting held on 3rd October had been signed outside of the meeting.

10. To review the action log

This had been available for review on the Councillor section of the website and a copy had been circulated to the Councillors at the meeting.

Regarding action 74 Cllr Williams asked the Clerk to write to Mr Collett with an update on progress.

Action: Clerk to write to Mr Collett

11. Village Bins – Update



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It was noted that a bin has now been installed in Bushey Ground and a bin moved from its previous position and re-sited towards the Dovecote Park entrance on Ripley Avenue play area.

12. To receive and discuss the allotment report

Cllr Layt had taken a meter reading and the reading had been submitted to Castle Water by the Clerk. He said there had been no change since the last report. He had visited the allotments the day before the meeting and noted the fence on allotment 14 had not yet been repaired and there were still bags of salt available.

13. Ripley Avenue Amenity Area

- a) Amenity Area inspection report. A report would be provided outside the meeting.
- b) Waste bins. This had been covered in agenda item 12.
- c) Deed of Easement. The Clerk noted that the Council's solicitor had reported Bovis had requested an amendment to the Deed to state that the Council would be responsible for future maintenance of the path. It was noted that previous discussions had concluded that Bovis would be responsible for maintenance of the path and the Clerk was asked to review previous minutes to locate the relevant information.

Action: Clerk to locate minute regarding maintenance of the path and confirm this to Bovis via the Council's solicitors

14. Traffic – Parking and Speed

In response to a question from Mrs Doughty, Cllr Walker confirmed there were no plans for a speed survey to be carried out along Brize Norton Road. Mrs Doughty confirmed her support for a 20mph speed limit on the Brize Norton Road.

15. To receive the monthly dog fouling report

The Clerk read the Dog Warden's report and noted Mr Woodley would provide reports while Mrs Holloway was recovering from an operation.

16. Jubilee Committee benches

Two benches have been purchased and delivered to Cooper Builders premises, pending installation. One of the benches was to be situated at Wash Meadow with the other location yet to be decided. Cllr Haley asked for Mrs Jeffery to be invited to the December meeting so a decision could be made regarding siting of the second bench.

Action: Clerk to invite Mrs Jeffery to the December meeting.

17. To discuss correspondence received that requires action

No items were raised.

18. Around the Village' – Matters not covered by other agenda items that need addressing or noting

a) Playground Inspections

The Clerk noted the annual playground inspections had been delayed due to being short staffed at the inspection company.

b) Member of the public reported damage to fencing at old memorial



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The Clerk reported the damage to Linda Shelley, Cotswold Warden. Mrs Shelley confirmed that the Cotswolds Wardens have now re-registered the issues on this Minster path (OCC path 6a) on the OCC CAMS (Countryside Access Management System) website.

Mrs Shelley recommended the Parish Council press the OCC to meet with them onsite and review the length of the path from the War Memorial through to the bottom of the steps. A decision could then be made on a course of action to take, who would fund the actions and who might be involved in the physical repairs. Mrs Shelley offered to attend such a meeting.

Cllrs Stowell and Layt were nominated to attend a meeting with OCC.

Action: Clerk to arrange a meeting with OCC

- c) A resident emailed regarding a broken street lamp on the bridge in Old Minster and the Clerk advised them to report this on FixMyStreet
- d) The broken road sign for directions to 'The Church' in Old Minster remained broken and the Clerk had written to OCC to request an update on repair. Cllr Stowell outlined the background to the decision to repair the signpost rather than replace it. Cllr Walker asked the Clerk to forward the email trail with OCC to him.

Action: Clerk to forward emails to Cllr Walker

Cllr King noted the cutting of the Laurels in Ripley Avenue went well and the debris satisfactorily cleared up. Cllr Williams added that residents had made positive comments regarding the clearing of weeds along the path from Cotswold Close into Ripley Avenue.

19. Councillors generic email addresses

To be discussed at the January meeting.

20. Clerk payment during notice period

It was noted the Clerk had agreed to extend her notice period and had requested payment for any hours worked over and above the contracted 10 hours per week. Cllr Haley proposed the Council pre-approve payment of any additional hours worked by the Clerk, and delegate approval to Cllr Haley; seconded by Cllr King and carried unanimously.

Cllr Williams asked when the Clerk's role had last been formally reviewed. Cllr Haley had reviewed the role prior to the current Clerk's appointment. Cllr Williams noted there were some large projects coming along and it would be a good opportunity to have a professional review of the role. Cllr King noted that the Council were not obliged to adopt the results of a review and proposed a consultant be engaged to carry out a formal review for a fee of £100 plus VAT; seconded by Cllr Stowell and carried unanimously.

Action: Clerk to engage a consultant to review the role of the Parish Clerk at Minster Lovell

Cllr Haley noted the result may have an impact on the current recruitment for a new Clerk and that the expectations for the role would not change.

Cllr Haley would provide dates to the Clerk for a meeting to decide a shortlist for interview from the applications received.

21. Finance:



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The Clerk presented an application form for a debit card for Cllr King and Cllrs King, Haley and Stowell signed the form. The new card would enable the Council to continue to pay certain bills following the departure of the current Clerk and until the new Clerk had received a debit card.

- a) 2021/2 Audit: Confirmed audit has been published as per statutory guidelines.

Councillors had no further comments and the Clerk was asked to ensure a copy of the auditors report was displayed on the village noticeboards.

- b) To consider and approve payments due (Schedule of Payments & Receipts included)

Cllr King noted the new pay rate for the Clerks salary had been confirmed and there would be an element of back pay in the December salary payment.

Cllr Williams proposed signing the cheques as set out in the agenda; seconded by Cllr Leach and agreed by all. The Council RESOLVED unanimously to sign the cheques as set out.

Cheque Number	Spending powers	Payee	Invoice No	Details	Expense
200992	Ref 143 (Parish properties: maintenance of)	Multi Hands	619	November bus shelter cleaning	£50.00
200993	Ref 115 (Grass cutting)	Mr R Hubbard	PC14	Grass cutting September	£250.00
200994	Ref 106 (Salaries and Allowance)	Sharon Palmer	11 / 2022	November Clerk salary and office allowance	Private
200995	Ref 102 (Audit fees)	Moore	313692	External audit charges	£240.00
200996	Ref 115 (Grass cutting)	Ubico	60056106	Grass cutting and weedkilling	£210.84
200997	Ref 101 (Allotments)	C R Strainge	24042	Rent for Allotments	£300.00
200998	Ref 116 (Hall hire)	Minster Lovell Methodist Church	Letter 20.10.2022	Rental of meeting room between December 2021 and October 2022	£117.50
200999	N/A contingency	Mr J Stowell	43785	Official memorial photographs of Queen Elizabeth	£108.00
201000	Ref 144 (Village News)	Graham Kew Prints	96	Village News article	£90.00
201001	Ref 107 (Domain Name)	Evergreen Computing Ltd	16941	Domain name minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk	£66.00
201002	Ref 132 (Ripley Avenue Maintenance)	McCracken & Sons Ltd	14482	Hedge cutting in Ripley Avenue	£1,092.00

- c) To report payments made with the Council Debit Card DH noted information provided as set out on Agenda.

Transaction No	Spending Power	Payee	Invoice No	Details	Expense £
1	138	Giffgaff	1667919125539	Clerk Mobile phone credit	£10.00
2	N/A Contingency	Tudor Environmental	IN0216336	Litter pickers, hoops and gloves	£527.66
3	N/A Contingency	Newsquest Media Group Ltd	GSU3156899	Advertisement for Clerk vacancy	£609.60



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- d) To report payments received

No payments received

- e) To receive monthly bank reconciliation for October 2022. Cllr Haley noted the figures were correct as detailed from the bank and the summary produced from the Council's financial system.

Current balances	£
Community Bank Account	54,388.30
WODC Deposit	29,959.20
Active Saver Account	21,540.48
Total	£ 105,887.98

Cllr Haley concluded the main Parish Council meeting over and the Council would commence the precept planning

22. Precept Planning:

- a) Declaration of interest in agenda items

Cllr Haley noted an interest as a Trustee regarding the grant received from Minster Lovell Playing Field Trust.

- b) To discuss and draft the Precept for 2023/24

During a discussion the Clerk was asked to transfer £4,000 towards the upgrading of the play area, from the Council's Community Account to the Council's Saver Account and confirm this at the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to move £4,000 from the Parish Council's Community Account to the Parish Council's Saver Account and confirm this at the next meeting

The Clerk noted she had requested funds from the temporary loan held with WODC be returned and deposited in the Parish Council's Saver Account.

- c) To discuss grant payments

Only one grant request had been received, from Minster Lovell Playing Field Trustees for £1,850.00. The Council were expecting grant requests from other organisations and this item would be brought forward for approval at the December meeting.

The Clerk had obtained three quotes for grass cutting in St Kenelms Churchyard which would also be discussed at the next meeting.

Mrs Doughty asked the Council if Mr Hubber had provided proof of having £10 million insurance as required for Council contractors.

Action Clerk to ask Mr Hubber to confirm his level of public liability insurance

- d) To discuss and confirm an annual village maintenance budget

Cllr King had circulated a draft budget plan for discussion. The Council reviewed the individual items and Cllr King clarified the items on the document.

Action: The Clerk was asked to invite Ubico to quote for a 3 year contract for grass cutting in the village for 2023/4/5.



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The Council agreed a draft precept of £42,009.00 which would be proposed for approval at the December Parish Council meeting. It was noted that further consideration of the grant applications will take place at the December Meeting to confirm the precept.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10 pm.

Date of next Parish Council Meeting - Monday 19th December 2022 at 7:00pm in St. Kenelm's Hall.

Signed.....
Chairman

DRAFT