

The Parish Council of St. Helen Without

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 14th December 2015 at 7.30pm
At Dry Sandford Primary School**

Present: Cllrs. G. Fitzgerald (in the Chair), M. Page, C. Parkin, M. Russell, K. Houlden, M. Gilbert, V. Talbot, C. Priestley, C Webber and R Webber

In attendance: Anna Clarke (Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Brenda Rogers

2. Declarations of Personal or Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Cllr Gilbert declared an interest as a landowner in discussions re development.

3. Matters raised by

a)members of the public

b) Attending Councillors and MOD

Cllr Richard Webber

At the moment, the County's main focus is the budget and where savings can be made. The Autumn Statement was not particularly clear and County will not know until February exactly what they will receive from central government. Cllr Webber commented that, if the budget isn't balanced, some Councillors are legally at risk of being deemed to have not performed their duty and potentially the council can be taken over by central government, meaning everything has to be done their way.

County are still planning on closing Children's Centres but it is hoped some will still stay open as they offer a base for child care provision. During the consultation, the public response was heavily in favour of them staying open. Cllr Fitzgerald raised the issue that children, who are already vulnerable and not ready for school are affected by the removal of these centres, starting school with no prior input. It will push some children in to having needs that, with this provision, would not have.

Cllr Russell questioned how Oxford came out on child protection issues? Cllr Webber responded that, since the prominent child protection case of 2 years ago, Oxford had been praised for learning from the case, admitting the issues that are faced and putting a plan together to deal with them.

Cllr Webber stated that it would be preferable not to make any irreversible decisions. If everything is closed, in years to come, when the financial climate may have improved, it would be too expensive to try and open them all again. Potentially 50% could be saved, however, those saved won't necessarily make the most geographical sense, leaving people isolated, particularly in conjunction with reduced bus services. Cllr Webber commented that he feels the most important thing to save at the moment are bus services as the reduction in those will isolate vulnerable people more.

Cllr Houlden asked who awards the licence to the Oxford Bus Company as they need to have competition to challenge the cherry picking of profitable routes, thus excluding the isolated areas. Cllr Page stated that, there is a link on the website for each route and who bids for it. Cllr Webber commented that there would be an argument for Oxon CC employing a hard ball negotiator for services. Cllr Parkin noted that they are asking for more housing to be built in rural areas but then reducing bus services to those areas.

Cllr Parkin suggested that free bus passes for pensioners should be means tested. Cllr Catherine Webber countered that this may lead to more people using their cars resulting in pollution. Cllr Houlden stated that free bus passes actually function as a free subsidy to the bus company as, some people, if they didn't have a pass, would use the car.

Recycling centres – all current centres will likely remain open.

Cllr Catherine Webber

Local Plan – likely to be passed with an enormous number of strings attached, the most prominent one being the Green Belt. Part 1 will continue for at least another year. Part 2 cannot begin until part 1 is complete.

There is a strong likelihood that more money from New Homes will go to County as County is carrying so many of the infrastructure charges being made and they are expected to do a lot of things that they simply do not have the money for.

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CIL – This is likely to be a much lower amount than thought, of which we will get a %.

As part of the Local Plan, the Vale deemed that if we charge developers too much that they will reject it, but by keeping it low, the result is that there is not enough money for the necessary infrastructure of the locality such as schools.

The issue in Oxfordshire is that there is such a lot of growth here that the road system is already clogged up and if we add in another 100,000 odd houses, we need the roads and everything else to be increased/improved.

Transfer of Services to Parish Councils

The County have a cap of 2% on Council Tax, whereas Parishes aren't capped at all, so in theory, could raise their precept to take on services. It was agreed that there had not been sufficient information as yet from the County in order to be able to assess the viability of taking on new services within the Parish and that further discussion needed to take place on the possibility of a cluster approach with neighbouring parishes.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd November 2015

The minutes of the meeting on 2nd November 2015 were approved and signed by the Chair.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes

a) Highways matters; Road Safety; Barrow Road and Cholswell Road

Cllr Russell confirmed that the Bluetooth system had been ordered but that it would not be possible to turn it round. It is guaranteed for 7 years. It was agreed that SHWPC will insure it from the start.

b) Transport including No 4 Bus

Cllr Fitzgerald met with the Managing Director of Oxford Bus Company, who stated that they would be extending the trial on the extra services until the middle of 2016. It was agreed with the MD that there needed to be continued and extended promotion of the service. Cllr Fitzgerald will be meeting with him again in early January. Numbers of people in Wootton using the services are up by 25%. Cllr Houlden commented that he thinks more people have been using them because of the half hourly service. Numbers from Dalton Barracks however, are very low.

c) Hitchcose Cothill, Footpath Closures

The landowner has stated that he is happy to make it a proper footpath but would like to move part of the path.

d) Vortal

David Heron has requested feedback on the PC's position following his presentation. Cllr Houlden commented that it appeared that the PC were being rushed on this before the Local Plan comes out. It was agreed that the site would likely be too big for an exception site.

Cllr Fitzgerald raised the concern that the developer could just go ahead anyway and that would result in a lost opportunity. Cllr Russell stated that if we really disagree, it is possible to go to appeal. Cllr Parkin commented that Mr Heron said in his presentation that everything the PC wanted could be included in the design of the site but that this was unlikely to be so and that we need something tangible from Vortal, an actual application, before we can agree or disagree.

It was agreed that it would be necessary to look at a Community Plan and ideally await the outcome of the Local Plan before an informed response could be made.

e) Abingdon Town Council Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Fitzgerald noted that SHWPC, along with neighbouring parishes Sunningwell and Radley had been approached by Abingdon TC about including some of our parishes (Abingdon Common) in their Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Houlden commented that he thought Abingdon Common was on a flood plain. Nigel Warner is arranging a meeting with SHW, Sunningwell and Radley Parish Councils to look at this further. The Clerk to check if there is any further news on when this will take place. AC

f) 2016/17 Budget

We have until 22nd January to submit the Precept Form. The sub committee will consist of Cllrs Fitzgerald, Russell, Page, Talbot and Houlden and will take place week commencing 11th January 2016.

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g) Overhanging Vegetation

Cllr Russell spoke to John Binning, who has cleared a huge amount of overgrowth. Mr Binning has raised concern about overgrowth at another property, which has caused damage to two of his tractors. Cllr Russell to speak to Andrew Duncan. Cllr Parkin has also had positive results from the residents that she approached. Thank you letters to be sent to all residents who responded to the approach. Cllr Talbot reported that there was still an issue of overgrowth around the post box and field on Barrow Road.

h) Parking on Pavements

Cllr Russell reported that there is still issues with parking on pavements and that there had, so far, been no successful outcome with the PCSO. Cllr Page to invite the PCSO to attend the next meeting to discuss these issues. MP

i) Community website and newsletter

It was agreed that there would be one newsletter to cover 2015/2016 to go out early in the New Year.

6. Finance and Administrative Matters

a) Accounts for payment

Payee	Purpose	Total	VAT
ST Grounds Maintenance	Bin emptying October	£20	
Shippon Church Hall	Room rental	£16	
Parish Clerk	Salary November	£332.44	
Parish Clerk	Expenses November	£44	

Payee	Purpose	Total	VAT
ROSPA	Report	£78	
Cllr Talbot	Brackets for Jubilee Bench	£39.12	£6.53
Cllr Talbot	Ink Cartridge	£26.95	

a) Grants

Tax Aid

There was a unanimous vote that this was not currently a priority for spend and therefore the request would be turned down.

7. Matters raised by members of the Council

Adult Exercise Equipment: Cllr Houlden was asked to provide a second quote, having been originally told only one quote would be required for a small project. He provided this but the application has now been pushed into the next batch due to be processed in March 2016. The first quote still stands.

Cllr Houlden submitted another quote, which at approximately £21,000, was hugely more expensive than the first. Cllr Houlden to follow up with Oxford Spires School on the details of maintenance for this type of equipment.

Enforcement

Cllr Russell reported that at the Town & Parish Forum, the issue of enforcement was raised. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Enforcement Dept to follow up on the issue of the car seller on Barrow Road. Their original response was that if it didn't impede on others, it was ok, however, Cllr Parkin stated that it does, as people park on the pavement causing an obstruction. A letter also to be sent with regards to the replacement of the plastic windows at 62 Barrow Road, a Grade II listed property.

AC

Planning 80 Barrow Road

Cllr Russell requested in the comments submitted from SHWPC that the Parish council would like to see the building materials before building begins as it does not appear to be sympathetic with neighbouring properties.

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Transparency Code

On the Community website, it is now required that more information be displayed in Parish Council business, such as internal audit reports etc.

ORCC, (now named Community First Oxfordshire), have sent a request for signatures for a petition so that appeals go the planning inspectorate, which would give the PC more weight in appeals. There need to be 10,000 signature across the country for it to be taken further. Cllr Fitzgerald to forward the link. GF

Recycling

Vale are going to be taking a wider range for recycling now but will be leaving bins if tins and other recycling waste, etc. are unwashed.

High Sheriff Award. Cllr Fitzgerald to approach Wootton Cllrs re nominating George Edmonds-Brown.

8. Planning

a) Decision Notices

It was resolved to note the Planning Authority's decisions

Ref:	P15/V2231/HH
Date	2 nd October 2015
Description	Side and rear extensions and internal alterations
Address	Ibstocks, Faringdon Road, Shippon, Abingdon, OX13 6LW
St Helen Without PC's comments	No objections
Decision	Approved 14 th November 2015

Ref:	P15/V2368/T56
Date	14 th October 2015
Description	Replacement of a 12m monopole with a 12.5m phase 5 monopole and 1 no. additional equipment cabinet.
Address	Telecom Mast, Junction of Faringdon Road and Cholswell Road, Shippon, OX13 6LR
St Helen Without PC's comments	No objections
Decision	Prior approval not required

Ref:	P15/V2158/HH
Date	8th September 2015
Description:	Two storey rear extension to enlarge existing bedrooms on first floor and kitchen/dining area on ground floor. First floor side extension to create new en-suite/conversion/extension of garage into habitable accommodation and construct a new pitched roof over. Internal remodelling to suit.
Address	Casadeva Faringdon Road Shippon Abingdon OX13 6LT
St Helen Without PC's comments	Helen Without Parish Council have no objection to this proposal as long as the volume increase is within that allowed under the VWHDC Local Plan 2011 which is at present still the official plan. Would the Vale please confirm the percentage increase in volume of this planning application.
Decision	Permission granted 2 nd December 2015

b) Applications dealt with between meetings

Ref:	P15/V2489/FUL
Date	30th October 2015
Description	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling
Address	80 Barrow Road, Shippon
St Helen Without PC's Comments	The Parish Council of St Helen Without has no objection to this replacement dwelling for one property on the site which is in line with the house next door. However, the Parish

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	Council would like to be consulted on the choice of bricks/materials for the building to ensure they are in keeping with surrounding properties. This property is situated in the older part of the Village and should therefore be sympathetic with all the properties on Barrow Road.
Decision	

Ref:	P15/V2283/PDH
Date	
Description	Proposed single storey rear extension
Address	168 Cothill Road, Dry Sandford, OX13 6JW
St Helen Without PC's comments	Prior Notification. Copy of application held for neighbours to access. Only neighbouring properties can comment on plans.

9. Sandleigh Road Recreation Ground

Cllr Rogers

Sandleigh Road inspection – Cllr Rogers commented that the bench needs to be replaced. Cllr Parkin proposed procurement of a new bench. Cllr Russell seconded. Unanimous vote to get a new bench. The Clerk to get quotes for a new bench. AC

The Inspection roster for 2015/2016 is below: Any requests for amendments should be sent to the Clerk.

All

June 2015	Cllr Martin Gilbert	November	Cllr Geoff Fitzgerald
July	Cllr Vicki Talbot	December	Cllr Caroline Parkin
August	Cllr Ken Houlden	January 2016	Brenda Rogers
September	Cllr Carole Priestley	February	Cllr Michael Page
October	Cllr Madeleine Russell		

Correspondence – Dec 2015

OALC update

VofWH

Vale news

Other

Acting Bishop of Oxford

Tax Aid

Setter Ltd

Brochure – Wicksteed Playgrounds

High Sherriff's Award

a) Correspondence

Cllr Fitzgerald went through the correspondence and it was resolved to note it and his comments.

b) Cllrs reports and items for future agendas

Nothing raised

c) Date of next meeting

It was confirmed that the next meeting would be held at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 18th January 2016 at Shippon Church Hall.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05p.m.

Signed.....Date.....