

The Parish Council of St. Helen Without

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 23rd May 2016 at 7.30pm Dry Sandford Primary School

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

In attendance: Mr Derek Kelso (MOD), Anna Clarke (Clerk), Cllr R. Webber

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr C. Webber

2. Declarations of Personal or Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Cllr Parkin declared an interest in the Manor planning application

Cllr Talbot declared an interest in the renewal of windows at 62b Barrow Road

3. Election of the Chair

Cllr Parkin proposed Cllr Russell to take over the office of Chair. Cllr Fitzgerald seconded the proposal. The vote was unanimous. Cllr Russell accepted Office.

4. New Members Vacancies

There are vacancies for 2 Councillors for the Dry Sandford ward. Vacancies will be posted in the newsletter and noticeboards.

5. Election of a Vice Chair

Cllr Talbot nominated Cllr Fitzgerald to take over the office of Vice Chair. Cllr Page seconded the nomination. The vote was unanimous. Cllr Fitzgerald accepted office.

6. Matters raised by

a) members of the public

Jan Elliott attended the meeting to raise an objection to the development at Manor Road Prep School. Firstly, Mrs Elliott was appalled that, although the consultation process began on 12th May, no case officer was allocated until 17th. Cllr Webber reported that Cllr Catherine Webber contacted the Vale to convey disappointment about this.

Mrs Elliott commented that the information provided on the application by the Vale had taken in excess of 70 hours so far to look over and the allotted consultation period (to end 15th June) would not be sufficient for what is a complicated and sometimes contradictory document. The information gathering for this document has obviously taken a long time and therefore Mrs Elliott felt that a longer period should be given in order to gather information to formulate a response.

The main and most concerning issues raised are:

a) **Erosion of Greenbelt land** - Cllr Fitzgerald commented that 28 greenbelt areas have already been earmarked; is this now counted as the 29th? Mrs Elliott pointed out that when they had asked to build a bungalow in their back garden for her elderly parents they were not allowed to due to it being in the greenbelt.

Cllr Russell commented that, until the local plan part 2 is out, it will not be known if the brown line is to be maintained. Our objections centre on the present planned position of the sports hall, swimming pool and one classroom block, which would be in the greenbelt, outside the brown line. Cllr Webber reported that the school have stated that they are unable to expand in the same way as their competitors because of the greenbelt and it may well get in the way of the application. It will likely go to the Inspector. Cllr Russell responded that the huge concern is that Tilsley Park may be seen as a precedent in terms of outdoor facilities.

Cllr Talbot questioned whether there would be exception for the greenbelt build as they were indoor sports facilities. Cllr Webber said that the rules appeared to be flexible and this is about a bigger issue of the greenbelt that will likely go to the Inspector who is flooding the vale with questions, part of which is Tilsley Park and the contentious floodlights. This is currently with the Ombudsman. The Greenbelt is a huge issue for the District, so the more people that approach the Vale with concerns, the better.

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b) **Lighting** - A Leisure complex which will be open from 8am -10pm every day, with huge floodlights.
c) **Increased volumes of traffic.** Cllr Webber commented that the likely traffic problems it would cause would be a Highways issue rather than a Planning issue and the Planners will have to take in to account the Highways report. Cllr Russell commented that the school is currently 28 pupils down, so there would actually be 85 more pupils with the expansion, which will increase the traffic volume hugely. Mrs Elliott asked if the bit in the outline at the end about change of circulation of traffic would automatically be passed if everything else was? Cllr Webber said that, once a planning outline decision had been made, there may be toing an froing on detail but generally it goes through in the end.

Cllr Webber stated that it is a difficult position for Cllr Catherine Webber as a former teacher at the school and a member of the Planning Committee, however the PC needs to advise her how they want her to act on this.

Cllr Russell to send information re the Manor plans to Heather Preston, Infrastructure Manager at the Barracks. MR

Cllr Russell announced that the plans would be made available to the public between 3 and 8p.m. at the Prince of Wales pub on Thursday 10th May. Cllr Webber commented that the applicant would usually make the plans available, however Cllr Russell responded that they did but failed to not widely advertise the event. The Parish Council has now put a flyer through every door. Cllr Webber commented that they the school will be obliged to say who they have contacted. Cllr Webber to chase with the Vale. RW

Any comments for the response to the Vale to be passed to the Clerk or Parish Councillors.

b) Attending Councillors

Cllr Webber reported that the only way to get the budget to work was to make massive cuts to eg bus subsidies etc leaving lots of places in danger of being rurally isolated. The County believe that the only way to save money for Children's services etc is to create a Unitary Council. Each unitary area would be smaller, which would reduce costs over the county by approximately a third, which equates to approx £35million.

The District Councils do not agree with this approach and have put forward a contrary scheme. The Government has stated that their 4 proposed unitary authorities will not work as it will cut across the NHS, Policing etc boundaries. The original bid was withdrawn and they are now looking at 1,2 or 3.

Cllr Webber informed the meeting that Wiltshire managed to become a unitary Council smoothly and without acrimony in 2 years, however discovered that Salisbury had different needs to rural Wiltshire so created a Town Council just for Salisbury which is working well. Cllr Webber totally supports a unitary authority. Cllr Webber said that the big argument against a single unitary is that you lose contact with the authority and Councillors. Cllr Webber feels it would be better then to save £25 instead of £35 million and give £10million to Parishes to take on more powers.

Cllr Fitzgerald commented that the study which is being carried out to find the best way forward for the authority was carried out 2 years ago by Ernst and Young. A lot of money is being wasted on management consultants.

c) MOD

Mr Kelso confirmed that if the September SXS event goes ahead, the exhausts will be quieter and EH will be in attendance.

The Air Show was a success. Cllr Talbot reported some confusion with locked gates meaning that people had to walk a long way to the next entrance.

At the last meeting, the issue was raised of an aircraft regularly doing acrobatics over the residential areas in the parish. Cllr Page has since discovered that it is registered to RAF Benson. Mr Kelso check with RAF Benson. DK

7. Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th March 2016

Mr Kelso asked for a correction to the minutes to clarify that SXS and Mission Sports are 2 separate companies.

8. Matters arising from the Minutes

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

Cllr Russell reported that Geoff Barrell is on holiday until the 7th June, so the issue of insuring it is still ongoing. Westlock would maintain it, the £7,000 is for accidental damage.

b) Transport including No 4 Bus

A meeting will be taking place with Oxford Bus Company MD in early June. Cllr Holden noted that they they were often running double deckers when there were only a few people on.

c) Hitch copse Cothill, Footpath Closures

Although the landowner has been open to the principle of the creation of a public footpath, discussions with Marcham PC have been delayed due to unforeseen circumstances.

d) Abingdon Town Council Neighbourhood Plan

Ongoing.

e) Overhanging Vegetation

There is still some by the phone box and the field in the north side of Barrow Road. The Clerk to write to them. AC

f) Parking on Pavements

Cllr Talbot spoke to Nick Johnson who has been waiting for 4 years to find somewhere else to store his cars. It fell through but he has now found somewhere near Radley to store 20 cars. The cars, other than his personal ones, should be moved by the end of June.

Cllr Page saw the PCSO who stated that they will only fine if the cars are deemed to be an obstruction, not merely for parking on the pavement.

g) Adult Exercise Equipment

It has now been fitted and is getting lots of use. Cllr Talbot spoke to someone who was concerned about possible vandalism to them.

h) Enforcement

No further update on 62 Barrow Road.

Stones Farm

Cllr Parkin raised concern that the boarded up windows at Stones Farm, a listed building owned by Manor School, need replacing. Cllr Russell has previously raised the issue with them but nothing has been done. The Clerk to write to Enforcement and copy to the Manor about the window panes which need to be replaced. AC

i) Transparency Code

Ongoing.

j) Oxfordshire Together

Cllr Page to look at the Aspire quote and the information from Tim Shickle. It was agreed that we cannot vote on it until there is more information available. MP

9. Finance and Administrative Matters

a) 2015/16 Accounts and Audit

The Clerk reported that the accounts had been sent to the internal auditor. Details of the audit have been circulated to Councillors for comment. Part 2 of the external audit form shows that the account was in balance. The Chair went through the questions on part 1, the Annual Governance Statement, which were approved unanimously. The accounts were approved, including the Asset Register and Risk Assessment. The Chair and Responsible Finance Officer signed Parts 1 and 2 of the Audit Form and the Annual Bank Reconciliation to be sent to BDO for external audit.

a) Insurance Policy

It was a unanimous vote to renew the policy with Came Insurance for 3 years, fixed at £705.16 per annum. The Clerk to contact the Insurance company in order that the new insurance is in place by 1st June. AC

b) Contribution to Speed Survey

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Marcham Parish Council has made enquiries of the County Council regarding a speed limit reduction for traffic from Marcham village to the A34. Half of that stretch of road lies within St. Helen Without Parish Council, although it is Marcham village that is mostly affected by the traffic. Marcham PC have asked if SHW PC would like to contribute to the speed survey (£100). Councillors agreed to politely decline as the affected area was Marcham.

e) Accounts for payment

Payee	Purpose	Total	VAT
Dry Sandford Primary School	Room rental	£10	
Parish Clerk	Salary April	£332.44	
Parish Clerk	Salary May	£332.44	
Parish Clerk	Expenses April	£44	
Parish Clerk	Expenses May	£44	
ST Maintenance	Bin emptying April	£20	
BGG	Grass cutting April	£120	£20
Saloo	Exercise Equipment	£11,994	£1,999
Came and Company	Annual Insurance	£705.15	
Friends of Shippon	Electric piano & microphone for FoS Meetings	£400	

e) Grants

Friends of Shippon requested a contribution of £400 for an electronic piano and head microphone for their meetings. There was a unanimous vote to fund.

Matters raised by members of the Council

Exception Site

Sovereign contacted George Edmonds-Brown about a possible Exception site. It was referred to the SHW Clerk as thought to be in the SHW parish. The Clerk awaits to hear from Sovereign.

Volunteer Path Clearers

Jim Parke, the Coordinator of the Vale of White Horse Rambler Group's path clearance team called the Vale Path Volunteers contacted the PC to inform us about the work that they are carrying out. It has approximately 15 members who volunteer to trim back any vegetation encroaching on footpaths in the Vale of White Horse District area, working in close cooperation with the County Council's Countryside Access Team who have the responsibility for maintaining paths in the County. Recently they were advised that a path in St.Helen Without parish which links Arthur Evans Close and Lashford Lane needed attention as the vegetation was beginning to overgrow the path and proceeded to tackle it.

SHW Parish Path Warden is resigning so they are now looking to recruit a person to take over from Peter as PPW for St Helen Without. The Clerk to ask if Mr Parke would like to attend the next meeting.
AC

Sandleigh Road Recreation Ground Pathway

Monica Littleboy, a resident of Dry Sandford, contacted the Clerk to ask if St Helen Without Parish Council would consider tarmacking the entrance lane to the recreation ground as, because of all the recent rain, the entrance lane to the ground is very muddy and deep puddles have formed at either side of the entrance gate. Cllr Page to get hold of a landscaper in order to look at the various options. MP

Cllr Houlden to give the Clerk details of a new wall installed on Church Lane in order that the Clerk can write to Planning.
KH/AC

Need Not Greed

The Clerk to ask them if they would like to attend the next meeting to talk about the motion they would like to be carried by the PC.
AC

Prince of Wales Pub

Cllr Priestley asked for support to go ahead with the application to make the village pub a Community Asset. If it went ahead, it would mean, if the pub closed, the community would have a chance to purchase

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it for continued use as a pub. Cllr Talbot abstained from the vote as she is a neighbour of the pub. There was a unanimous vote amongst remaining Cllrs to go ahead. Cllr Priestley to make the application.

CPr

St Helen Without PCC

Cllr Fitzgerald was invited to a meeting of the PCC. They are concerned where they will get land needed for the graveyard and have had lots of expenses this year, so are looking for a contribution.

Wootton Business Park

Wootton Business Park was all due to be rental properties but Wootton Parish Council has asked for it to be mixed to avoid a transient population of residents.

10.Planning

a) Decision Notices

It was resolved to note the Planning Authority's decisions

a) Applications dealt with between meetings

Ref:	P16/V0416/FUL
Date	2 nd March 2016
Description	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of two dwellings, closing of existing two vehicular accesses and opening of new access and all associated works.
Address	80 Barrow Road, Shippon, Abingdon, OX13 6JQ
St Helen Without PC's comments	The Parish Council of St Helen Without has no objection to the erection of 2 dwellings on this site, but before approval can be given the following points need to be resolved:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The choice of building materials should be in keeping with this part of the Village and therefore cotswold stone would be more appropriate. 2. The relocated entrance drive at the front of the site, goes across the pond which the current owner has tried to infill without success. This is a pond which naturally originates here from an underground water resource and therefore needs to be treated correctly to prevent any future flooding issues. 3. Would the Vale District Council please check if there are any trees on this site that have TPO's assigned to them. 4. The second house proposed is close to the boundary with Cotswold House and will reduce daylight to the house and garden of this property. The Vale should check this does not contravene the National Planning Policy Framework, as this is a site with considerable depth and the houses could be positioned in other locations on the site.
Decision	Due 14.4.16

Ref:	P16/V0839/FUL
Date	12 th April 2016
Description	Refurbishment of existing Dental and Medical Centre including proposed flat to pitch roof conversion, vertical cladding and replacement windows.
Address	Dalton Barracks, Abingdon, OX13 6HA
St Helen Without PC's comments	No Objections
Decision	7 th June 2016

Ref:	P16/V0905/PDO
Date	14 th April 2016
Description	Change of use of joinery workshop to residential
Address	Rushwood, Cothill Road, Dry Sandford, OX13 6JW
St Helen Without PC's comments	20 th May
Decision	9 th June 2016

Ref:	P16/V0975/FUL
Date	28 th April 2016

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Description	Proposed single storey extension to existing commercial storage unit and ancillary works.
Address	Dunmore Court, Wootton Road, Abingdon, OX13 6BH
St Helen Without PC's comments	31 st May 2016
Decision	23 rd June 2016

Ref:	P16/V1088/FUL
Date	12 th May 2016
Description	Hybrid Application comprising a detailed application for a sports hall, AstroTurf pitch and pavilion, relocated netball and tennis courts, new canopy to lower school building, car park extension to rear and rearranged access, car park and drop off at front of school; an outline application for erection of a swimming pool, two classroom buildings and extension to dining room (all matters reserved except access).
Address	The Manor Preparatory School, Faringdon Road, Shippon, OX13 6LN
St Helen Without PC's comments	15 th June 2016
Decision	11 th August 2016

11. Sandleigh Road Recreation Ground

Sandleigh Road inspection – Cllr Gilbert carried out the inspection.

The Inspection roster for 2016/17 is below: Any requests for amendments should be sent to the Clerk.

All

2016			
January 2016	Cllr Geoff Fitzgerald	July	Cllr Madeleine Russell
February	Cllr Michael Page	August	Cllr Caroline Parkin
March	Cllr Martin Gilbert	September	Cllr Brenda Rogers
April	Cllr Vicki Talbot	October	Cllr Geoff Fitzgerald
May	Cllr Ken Houlden	November	Cllr Michael Page
June	Cllr Carole Priestley	December	Cllr Martin Gilbert
2017			
January 2017	Cllr Vicki Talbot	April	Cllr Madeleine Russell
February	Cllr Ken Houlden	May	Cllr Caroline Parkin
March	Cllr Carole Priestley	June	Cllr Brenda Rogers

12. Other

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

11. Correspondence

Oxfordshire County Council

- OALC April update
- OALC May update
- Workshop to look at possibility of Parishes taking on more decision making powers
- Update Public Service Reorganisation
- OxLEP consultation

VofWHDC

- Summer Town and Parish Forum 2016, Thursday 7 July 6:00– 9:00pm, Oxford Abingdon Hotel
- Vale News from Cllr Matthew Barber April
- Vale News from Cllr Matthew Barber May
- Cllr Matthew Barber update on the devolution debate
- NALC survey parish councils
- VofWH new contact numbers
- Planning – Sunningwell Area Designation

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Other

- Kopman Ltd – outdoor fitness equipment
- Music and Sounds – Internet and wifi installation
- Martin Slade – computer support
- Playforce – Outdoor spaces
- Entrust Care Partnership
- Joseph – Untold Theatre
- NHS - The Townlands Stakeholder Reference Group wishes to recruit an independent chair
- Jim Parke – Vale Path Volunteers
- Community First Oxfordshire Spring Newsletter
- Need Not Greed
- Entrust Care Partnership

Other

a) Cllrs reports and items for future agendas

Nothing raised

b) Date of next meeting

It was confirmed that the Parish Meeting would be held at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 4th July 2016 at Shippon Church Hall.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.35 p.m.

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