

CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

(DRAFT) MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY 14th NOVEMBER 2018

Present: Mr D Roberts, Chairman
Mr D Nellist, Vice-Chairman
Mr I McGregor
Mrs K Adamson
Mr T Brown, Clerk

10 members of the public were also in attendance.

18/87 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for Absence were made by Mrs M Castle: no Declarations of Interest were received.

18/88 Approval of the Minutes of the last meeting

The draft minutes (V2 - as previously circulated) were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and a proper copy duly signed by the Chairman.

18/89 Matters arising on the minutes of the last meeting

Matters arising from the previous minutes and not appearing on this agenda were:

- 18/73 (18/56 and 18/45): the damage to the Village Green had been repaired on 24th October. The work was very good but there was already signs of damage from vehicles over-riding the kerb. There was no evidence that this had been caused by Biffa. The Chairman referred to the Vale's kerbside refuse collection policy and suggested that for now the position be monitored;
- 18/73 (18/65): GDPR. The Clerk had discovered that the Parish Council was required to register with the Information Commissioner's Office. This is a legal requirement and an annual fee of £40 is payable. He had completed the registration and it was agreed that the fee of £40 be paid;
- 18/77(d): Old School. The Oxfordshire Buildings Trust has asked to be kept informed of the result of the Parish Council's research;
- 18/80: Peter Davies Memorial Bench. CHAFT had been advised that the Parish Council would provide £150 toward the cost of a replacement. CHAFT were discussing this with the family;
- 18/81: the Footpaths Group was happy with the Terms of Reference as drafted and these were duly approved without further alteration;
- 18/83: the Charney Mill Project Group had met and the Clerk had submitted a scheme of essential maintenance work to the District Council. It had been confirmed the work could be done without the need for formal consent and Messrs Champion and Hawkins were doing the work. Application would be made next year for consent to stabilise the roadside lean-to. The Chairman expressed his appreciation for the fact the building was being so well cared for;
- 18/84(a): Armistice Centenary Tree. The Chairman had collected two trees (oak and silver birch) and a commemorative plaque and was in discussion with the Chair of CHAFT as to a location for their planting.
- 18/84(b): Good Neighbour Scheme. The Clerk had received no feedback on the possibility of setting up a scheme and it was agreed this not be pursued further;

- 18/85: the Clerk had discussed with Mr P Busby (Charney Army) the future maintenance of the areas currently set aside for wild flower growth. The Army does not currently have the necessary expertise to realise the objectives that have been set. There was discussion on the difficulty of establishing and maintaining a wild flower area and it was suggested that Mike Gooding be approached for advice before any final decisions were taken on the future maintenance of the areas.

18/90 Information Exchange

The Chairman suggested, and it was agreed, that this item be brought forward.

- Mr P Hawkins asked why the act of remembrance at the War Memorial did not take place at 11.00 am. Mrs L Gildersleeves advised that the bugler could not attend until later;
- Mrs Adamson drew attention to the condition of the road between Denchworth rail bridge and Grove. This now appeared to be in a dangerous condition and was heavily used by construction traffic accessing the new housing development at Grove. Several agreed and the County Councillor agreed to take this up and report back;
- Mrs P Edwards remarked on the much improved state of the village roads and thanked all those concerned in helping to bring this about.

18/91 County Councillor's News

Mrs Anda Fitzgerald O'Connor reported as follows:

- Yvonne Reece was the new Chief Executive at OCC;
- OCC had submitted a holding objection to TWA's plans to a new reservoir at Steventon/Hanney;
- She was being briefed shortly on the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway and would report back (there were mixed views on this - see also minute 18/96c);
- OCC was consulting on a further streamlining under its 'Fit for the Future' programme;
- Full Council had recently adopted a policy aimed at encouraging cycling (there was a comment that this was to be welcomed provided it was to be adequately funded).

The Chair thanked Mrs Fitzgerald-O'Connor for her contribution to the meeting.

18/92 District Councillor's News

Mr Eric Batts reported as follows:

- The Oxford-Cambridge Expressway included a proposal for additional housing, but the Vale would not accept further housing in its area over and above that specified in its Local Plan;
- The Inspector examining the Vale Local Plan Part 2 had expressed serious concerns about the Dalton Barrack's allocation. He had so far made no comment on the Southmoor allocation;
- Buckinghamshire was to go from 2-tier to Unitary local government and there were now rumours that Oxfordshire would follow suit;
- The Vale was now working up its budget for 2019-20. Applications for capital grants can be made in January 2019 and could provide match funding for the replacement of public seating;
- The Vale objects to the Steventon/Hanney reservoir as it believes there are better alternatives;
- Kitchen oil can now be included in food waste bins.

The Chair thanked Mr Batts for his contribution to the meeting.

18/93 Appointments to Groups and Organisations

An updated list of appointments had been circulated with the agenda. The Clerk advised that Mr Sibbert should be added as lead for the Communications and History Groups.

Resolved: that the alterations be agreed and the list included on the Parish Council website.

18/94 News from Parish Council representatives to other Groups and Organisations

Mrs Joss Baath had sent apologies for not being to attend but hoped to be at the next meeting. It was noted that a report on CHAFT was separately included on this agenda (minute 18/98).

18/95 Clerk's Financial Report

The Clerk reported on payments and receipts in the period 1st September – 31st October (see report circulated with the agenda) and confirmed that the closing balance for the period stood at £13,703.50. This was higher than at the close of the previous period as the second half of the precept payment had been received (£2,250.00) and very few payments had been made (£790.55).

Amended Financial Regulations had also been circulated with the agenda. These took account of the National Association of Local Councils latest model and allow for payments to be made by Direct Debit if appropriate (e.g. payments to Npower for the Charney Mill electricity supply).

The Clerk also reported on a 3-year financial plan. The draft budget for 2019-20 amounted to £12,151.00 of which £5,481.00 was non-discretionary expenditure. £600 had been identified for spending by various groups, but this had yet to be discussed with the relevant leads. Discretionary spending included £2,000 for replacing our public benches, £3,500 for road safety and £500 for possible tree work.

No comments were made, but the Chairman encouraged Councillors to notify the Clerk of any concerns (by 31st November) so they could be taken on board when the final budget is set at the next meeting.

Resolved:

- that the update for the period be noted;
- that the revised Financial Regulations be adopted;
- that the Clerk be authorised to set up a Direct Debit mandate with Npower for the supply of electricity to Charney Mill;
- comments on the draft budget be submitted to the Clerk by 31st November.

18/96 Planning Matters

The following planning matters were considered:

- (a) P18/V2409/NRB: conversion of barn to dwelling at New Manor Farm, Longworth Road. This was a notification, not a consultation, and it was agreed that no comment be made;
- (b) P18/V2683/AG: erection of grain store at Bushy Barn, Pusey Estate. It was noted the site was in Pusey Parish. It was agreed that no comment be made;
- (c) Petition against plans developed by Oxfordshire Growth Board for future development: the Clerk had circulated a note from a residents group in Garsington (this did not appear to have a name). There were currently 582 signatories to the petition. The Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust was already taking the Government to the High Court because it believed the expressway proposals were being developed without proper Environmental Impact Assessment. Mrs Adamson proposed that the Council should sign the Garsington petition. This was not seconded, the feeling being that not enough was known at this stage about the expressway. The District Councillor had also confirmed there would be a consultation on route options. The Clerk would inform the residents' group accordingly.

18/97 Road Safety

The Chairman, Clerk and Mr I Graham had met Ms Buckley and Mr Francis (OCC Highways Officers) on 29th October to further discuss the costs of various highway safety measures. The officers believe that white entrance gates are likely to have more effect in reducing traffic speeds than MVAS. OCC quotes the cost of installing a set of entrance gates as £3,965.59 – so some £16,000 would be required if installed at all four village entrances. However, this is a 'worse case' scenario; reductions could be

achieved through VAT reclaim and (possibly) the highway maintenance budget. We have also been advised that a grant should be available from the County Councillor's Priority Fund.

OCC is prepared to erect poles to support 'pedestrians in the carriageway' signs and which can also support a MVAS. It appears that the cost would be less than that quoted by SWARCO, but from the information currently provided it is not clear exactly how much these would cost.

It is clear the village cannot afford entrance gates and a MVAS, and OCC needs to know where our priority lies before it can advise on a final cost. We have previously favoured MVAS but in discussion it was felt that the views expressed by OCC about entrance gates should not be ignored. Several felt the on-going costs associated with MVAS to be a disadvantage (battery replacement and an annual servicing contract). Willing manpower would also be required on a regular basis to move the equipment. The general view was that entrance gates should now be preferred, provided they were affordable. The other measures that had emerged from the RSG's work¹ need not be abandoned as a result of this decision - they could still be re-visited if a suitable opportunity arose at a future date (e.g. as a result of planning gain).

Mr S Champion felt it important that something be done now: he had witnessed several 'near misses' whilst undertaking maintenance work on the Mill recently.

Resolved: that OCC be advised the Parish Council wishes to focus efforts on installing white entrance gates (with associated road markings) at the village entries.

18/98 CHAFT MoU

A written report (sent with the agenda) provided an update on progress and set out reasons for considering a proposal for the aspen trees bordering bridleway no.5 at the south end of the playing field to be removed. CHAFT had offered to make up to £3,000 available to meet the cost of the work. Two quotations had been obtained. Discussion had taken place with a further contractor but had not resulted in a written quote. Any contract was better let by the Parish Council as, unlike CHAFT, it would be possible to reclaim VAT.

In discussion, it was agreed that the aspens had become a difficult problem and noted that contractors had advised that they represented a potential danger. Replanting was essential and the wider community should be involved as far as possible in a plan. Mrs Gildersleeves (for CHAFT) suggested that a public meeting might be sensible and that the chosen contractor be asked to attend. Mrs Adamson pointed out that the trees' root system affects the bridleway, but the Chairman advised that it should be possible to avoid uprooting the stumps – one of the contractors having indicated that they could be plugged to prevent regeneration. She was also concerned about noise from the operation, but accepted this should only be short-term.

The Clerk believed that nothing would now be gained in pursuing a further written quote and that a decision on a preferred contractor could be taken on the basis of the information already obtained. (It was also pointed out that any work would need to take place before 15th March to avoid bird nesting.) After due deliberation it was agreed that the quote submitted by contractor A was preferred: it was the cheaper and offered a guaranteed return on the timber.

Resolved: that the Parish Council,

- Supports the proposal to clear fell all the aspen trees at the southern end of Charney Field;
- Advises CHAFT that it will share the costs of the work;
- That the cost to the Parish Council be met from the sum set aside for flood alleviation work in the Council's budget;

¹ Including MVAS, Pedestrians in the Carriageway signs, a bell curb at New Road/Buckland Road junction, a pavement connection from the Old School frontage to the green footpath in New Road, a 20 is Plenty campaign and moving the 30 mph limit on Buckland Road.

- Authorises the Clerk to conclude a contract with Contractor A based on the quote received;
- Authorises the Chairman to act on its behalf in any decisions that may be required during the course of the work.

18/99 Silent Soldier Installation

The Chairman advised that Mr A Graham had created a silent soldier and poppy wreath from discarded horseshoes and had offered to donate both to the village. Mrs Gildersleeves had undertaken an opinion survey on the day of the armistice centenary, where both pieces were on display. She reported mixed views on the question of whether the silent soldier should be permanently installed on the village green – those opposed feeling that the desired impact would be greater if displayed there only in November. Several had commented that a better location for the silent soldier for the majority of the year would be either in or close to the church. There was to be a Parochial Parish Council meeting on 27th November where this could be discussed.

The Clerk advised that if acquired by the Parish Council the pieces would need to be included on the Asset Register and adequate measures taken to ‘look after them’ for insurance purposes. Those present felt that it would be appropriate for the Parish Council to accept the pieces on behalf of the village. It was agreed that Mr Graham should be so notified and involved in further discussion as to a ‘hand over’ and the way in which the pieces would be best used.

18/100 Clerk’s Correspondence

The Clerk had received the following:

- (a) Email of 8th November from Charney Manor’s Manager regarding Ruth Gerring’s Village Map.
Resolved: to authorise the Parish Clerk to submit an application to the County Councillor’s Priority Fund for a sum of £300 to help finance the installation of the Village Map and to await a further report on final costings and design;
- (b) Emailed Press Notice of 15th October from the District Council inviting participation in a consultation on an amendment to its Social Housing Allocations Policy.
Resolved: participation in the survey would not prove beneficial.
- (c) Email of 15th October from the Secretary of CHAFT concerning a possible dog waste bin. Mrs Adamson was concerned about the possible impact of a bin at the head of Bridle Path. Alternative locations were raised, including at the junction of Bridle Path/Main Street; the head of the footpath connecting the playing field to New Road; the head of the footpath connecting the playing field to Buckland Road.
Resolved: the Clerk notify CHAFT of the discussion and invite comment on the way forward.

18/101 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 9th January 2019 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.10 pm.

Signed.....Date.....
Chairman