

## FULBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

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### MINUTES OF MEETING

**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

7.00pm

**Venue** The Parish Church of St James

**Present:** Councillors Mr Malcolm Taylor (Chair) MT  
Mr Robert Warner RW  
Dr Filipa Hinton FH  
Dr Peter Burns PB

Parish Clerk Mrs Sarah Ebeling

Parishioners attending: None

**Apologies:**

OCC Councillor Mr N Field-Johnson  
WODC Councillor Hugo Ashton

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For convenience the following abbreviations may be used in some instances in these Minutes.

FPC	Fulbrook Parish Council
OCC	Oxfordshire County Council
POF	Parishioners Open Forum
WODC	West Oxfordshire District Council
OALC	Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils
NALC	National Association of Local Councils
CHA	Cottsway Housing Association
TVP	Thames Valley Police

**1 Public Participation**

No public participation

**2 Declaration of Interests**

Nothing new to declare.

**3 Minutes of the meeting held on the 11th May 2023**

Minutes of the last meeting were signed by the Chairman.

**4 Co-option of new council member**

All councillors agreed with the co-option of Toby Staveley to become a councillor of Fulbrook Parish Council.

**5 Matters arising**

- 5.1) 20MPH speed limit – see Road Safety
- 5.2) Speed Camera – see Road Safety

**6 Reports from County and District Councillors**

See reports from both Nicholas Field-Johnson and Hugo Ashton at the end of the minutes.

**7 Responsibilities of Fulbrook Parish Council**

7.1) Parish Clerk

MT ran through a brief description of the Clerks responsibilities and duties with the Clerk's Job Description, Procedure & guidance and Clerk to FPC duties documentation being handed out to all councillors before the meeting, MT advised that the Clerk should always call upon councillors when needed.

7.2) Parish Council

The Parish Council are responsible for the following:

- Meadow End Play Park
- Public Benches
- Parish Funds
- Fulbrook War Memorial
- Footpaths
- Fulbrook Garden

Footpaths were discussed further. What is the Parish Councils duties when it comes to the footpaths? What are the footpath warden's duties?

**Clerk to email OALC for further advice.**

## 8 Finance

### 8.1) Updated financial plan for 2023/24

MT explained the new set out of the financial statement which now includes the full year projection so that all councillors can compare the year-to-date figures which the projections and budgeted figures.

### 8.2) Financial Statement for April/May/June

Financial Statement agreed at the meeting.

### 8.3) Audit 2022/23

The financial statement and reconciliation has been agreed with the Internal Auditor. Clerk to meet with him to go through the original bank statements and then he can sign off the audit.

### 8.4) Donations including increase for Fulbrook Church

Clerk received an email from the Church Treasurer asking if we would discuss the possibility of increasing our yearly donation to £1,000 rather than the usual £500. All councillors agreed to keep the donation at £500 however it was also agreed to pay the church 'rent' of £15 for each meeting which is held at the church. The council meetings happen every two months and this would therefore be an extra payment of £90 a year to help towards the maintenance of the Church.

### 8.5) Bank Accounts

**NS&I:** The council currently have two NS&I accounts with one being originally for the War Memorial. MT has spoken to NS&I regarding changing the use of the account so we can access the money for the Play Park Project. NS&I have advised that it will take up to 13 weeks before they make the decision and we can move the funds. We do not foresee any issues with being able to move the money to the TSB account.

**Clerk to write to NS&I to change the address and to find out who has authority with regards to both the NS&I accounts.**

**TSB:** MT has spoken to TSB and updated the signatories on the account, removing old ones and adding the relevant people to it. MT has also started the process for online banking as currently the council pay their invoices through the payment of cheques rather than bank transfers.

## 9 Amenities

The current events that happen every year are as follows:

- Yearly Plant Sale
- 2 yearly village clean ups
- Carol singing

### Movie Night – August

A movie night has been planned for August, with the movie of choice being 'Mamma Mia'. As this is a free event for people in the village to enjoy the councillors discussed the possibility of asking villagers for donations which will then be used towards the play park renovations. It was also discussed as to whether a 'meet up' could be arranged before the movie starts for people who are unable to attend watching the movie to make the event more inclusive to everyone in the village. MT advised that this would need to be discussed with The Carpenters Arms as that is where the event is taking place.

## 10 Planning and Estates

**Footpaths:** The footpath from the roundabout at the bottom of Fulbrook Hill going up towards Westhall Hill is very overgrown. Fulbrook's Footpath Warden has advised us to speak to the landowners and ask them to keep the footpath trimmed so people can access them properly.

**Clerk to email OALC to clarify the council's responsibilities with regards to footpaths.**

**Trees by Orchard Row:** The councillors all agreed that no action would be taken with regards to the trees on the plot of land by Orchard Row and would advise residents to cut down any overhang that is encroaching on their properties if it is causing problems.

**Wall by the Memorial:** The wall on the right-hand side as you approach the memorial is increasingly pushing out and causing obstruction to the pathway and making it dangerous for pedestrians.

**Write a letter to highways to see if anything can be done.**

**Overgrown hedges causing obstructions:** There are a few overgrown hedges causing obstructions to footpaths and forcing pedestrians closer to the road when trying to get past them.

**MT to write to homeowners with regards to their responsibilities with trimming back any bushes that may be causing a problem.**

**Planning application process:** When the clerk is notified of any planning applications relevant to Fulbrook these are emailed over to councillors asking if anyone has any objections. If councillors decide the plans need to be discussed properly then a meeting will be arranged in order to accommodate this. Only strategic problems within the application should be noted by the Parish Council. Any concerns that are in need of greater consideration can be passed onto Hugo Ashton who can discuss these during District meetings.

## 11 Road Safety

### 11.1) Speed camera

PB has been in touch with Vish from Stock Signs who has advised that the camera is still under guarantee and he has asked us to complete some checks regarding the batteries before they come out to check the camera themselves.

**PB to follow up further with them.**

### 11.2) Burford Bridge

PB in correspondence with Peter Higgs and Hugo Ashton to keep conversation open regarding the progress of the bridge fixture. Currently the bridge is due to be fixed in October however 3 months' notice needs to be given before work can commence, which only leaves a couple of weeks before the 3-month mark.

### 11.3) Work vehicles causing obstruction.

Work vehicles are being parked next to the houses by the bridge and they are causing obstruction to pedestrians. Pedestrians are then forced to walk further into the road when trying to walk over the bridge. This is particular problematic when people are also trying to get past with pushchairs.

**PB to write to highways regarding this problem.**

**12**     **Play Park**

FH has submitted an application to the National Lottery Community Fund for funds up to £10,000 to go towards the Play Park renovations. The application process takes up to 13 weeks and she will report back to the councillors once she hears news on this.

Other funding options have been discussed such as crowd funding, which has been very successful with Burford Town Council, and easy fundraising.

FH and clerk to speak to local parents and children with regards to the current plans for the renovation and to discuss what improvements they would like to see and discuss the current plans with them.

**Final plans to be agreed so that the Clerk can speak to Sovereign Play to draw up final plans and get final costings.**

**By: mid-August so that funding levels can be assessed.**

**13**     **Climate Change**

Nothing new to report

**14**     **Future Meeting Dates**

The next meeting will take place on the 21st September 2023.

## **REPORT TO THE FULBROOK PC – August 2023 Edition FROM CLLR NICHOLAS FIELD-JOHNSON**

### **GENERAL OCC REPORT.**

#### **THAMES WATER IMPLODES.**

As you all know that I (and with the help of WASP) have continually campaigned against Thames Water dumping raw sewage into our rivers and have called on Thames Water to re-invest funds to improve the water quality of our rivers and upgrade their infrastructure. My last report commented: “if Thames Water continues to fail to make these capital investments, then serious consideration should be given to bring the water industry back under public control.” Sadly events have shown that this has become reality.

Crisis has now hit Thames Water. Since Privatisation, Water Companies have taken on £60bn of debt and instead of using the money to improve infrastructure, £50bn was paid either to overseas shareholders or parent companies. The Macquarie Group, who owned Thames Water until 2017 and then sold its stake for £1.3bn, was criticised for paying out more than £2.7bn in dividends, whilst taking on £2.2bn in extra debt. This was not only financially irresponsible but also morally indefensible.

Not only have we had to put up with sewage dumped into our rivers and offshore coastline but it was also reported that Thames Water discharged sewage overflow 8,014 times last year – the equivalent of 22 times per day !!

The company is also under financial pressure and has recently been seeking a cash injection of around £1bn from investors. It is time for the Government to bring our water back under public ownership as, unlike electricity, gas and telephone, where we have a choice of provider, and the market does decide on who is the most competitive, with our water we have no alternative: we have to use the provider in our area and there is no choice – it is a monopoly.

#### **REVIEW OF HGVs IN OXFORDSHIRE**

We had a further meeting with OCC to discuss the review of HGVs routes throughout Oxfordshire, but this continues at a slow pace. However there are commitments that by the Autumn some recommendations will be made and further HGV trials implemented.

#### **POTHOLE INNOVATION TRIAL**

After a winter that saw the number of potholes reported in Oxfordshire double compared to the same period last year and heavy criticism from the public, a trial has

taken place aimed at improving the repair process. On Monday and Tuesday, 26 - 27 June, OCC and its highways contractor Milestone Infrastructure used the road between Steventon and East Hanney as a test site to trial seven different methods of filling in potholes or repairing minor defects requiring 'patching'. Some of these methods are already used in Oxfordshire – including the Milestone [dragon patcher](#) – while the others were new ones sourced by Milestone. The Hanney/Steventon Road was closed and a 1km stretch was divided into sections. Each section had a different type of pothole or patch repair carried out to get a direct comparison of the various methods.

Last year, Milestone Infrastructure, repaired 31,413 road defects. This was against a backdrop of perfect pothole-forming weather conditions – a prolonged freeze over winter followed by a protracted period of wet weather, which led to an unprecedented increase in the number of emergency pothole repairs. The trial will allow comparisons of the type of repair, equipment, material, and labour used, and the time taken. This would include an understanding of the potential results, longevity of repairs, waste generated, carbon impact, use of recycled content and productivity that may be achievable. The next stage will involve contractors returning for at least four more days of work and additional testing and analysis to enable a longer-term review of the methods.

### **LTN IMPACT REPORT LEADS TO GROWING CALLS FOR RESIGNATIONS**

Leading OCC Cabinet members have faced calls to resign after a Council report revealed modelling which showed Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) lead to ambulances experiencing delays when responding to "life threatening" calls. The council report analysed the impact of LTNs in East Oxford and Cowley on South Central Ambulance Service's response times and found the traffic measures cause delays to response times for life threatening, emergency, and urgent calls in East Oxford. There have been calls for Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for highways management and Duncan Enright, Cabinet Member for travel, to resign for not releasing the information in an "open and transparent manner".

**[OCC Cllr Nicholas Field-Johnson, Burford & Windrush Valley](#)**

**[nick.fieldjohnson@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nick.fieldjohnson@oxfordshire.gov.uk) and [nfjuk3@gmail.com](mailto:nfjuk3@gmail.com)**

## Fulbrook Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023 – Report from District Councillor

### Planning

#### Botley Solar Farm

The developer has submitted their Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate. This is the first step in the first Pre-Application Stage of the process. WODC engages with the developer at this stage to inform the developer's Statement of Community Consultation and begins to prepare a Local Impact Report, informed by affected parishes. If the Inspector accepts the developer's application for Examination, they formally request WODC to submit a Local Impact Report. The Inspector is not expected to submit a recommendation to the Secretary of State until early 2025.

#### 2021-2041 Local Plan

This is proceeding slowly. It will be a long process! The next steps are:

- Focused consultation on plan objectives, spatial strategy and call for ideas and opportunities - summer 2023
- Consultation on preferred policy options/approaches - winter 2023
- Publication of draft Local Plan – summer 2024
- Submission for examination – autumn 2024
- Adoption – mid 2025

At a recent Scrutiny committee, I have asked that the plan be drafted in two stages: firstly, the general policies and overall housing requirements and secondly the spatial distribution.

### Community Funding

The Community Grant Scheme has been restructured. The relevant element for us is the 'Civic crowdfunding pledges' which are open to Towns/parishes, schools, charities, and informal groups. This will be run by Spacehive and details of how it will work in the next couple of months, and applications can be made in September and in Spring 2024. They will be assessed for Council funding within the following 6 weeks. Even if not approved for funding, projects can use Spacehive as a fund-raising platform. A total of £120,000 will be allocated to this initiative.

Projects should be submitted in one of 3 Lots:

- 1. Improving our natural environment and the access to it, so that we enable physical and mental wellbeing and cohesive, connected communities
- 2. Taking action towards the climate and ecological emergencies, so that we reduce carbon footprints and encourage nature recovery



- 3. Increasing community resilience and amplifying the voice of the seldom heard, so that we take action on issues most important to our residents and their needs, such as access to food, supporting young people and cultural provision.

### HGV Area restrictions

We had a summary presentation from OCC on the findings of their study which has been completed. It was very high level and does not get down to geographies apart from highlighting areas where consultees have identified issues. It was also very light on process issues such as good practice, permit management, legal framework, enforcement responsibilities etc. The full report may contain more on these aspects and should be available very soon. The next step is for OCC to select two areas to take forward for detailed investigation. BTC is keen that an area around Burford should be one of these and I have drafted a suggested structure of a scheme to put forward.

Hugo Ashton