

KIDMORE END PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held at the Church Room, Kidmore End on Wednesday 18 January 2017 at 8.00pm and concluded at 9.00pm.

Present: Ms S M Biggs (Chairman), Dr C D Aldridge (Vice-Chairman), I G C Pearson, T M Perchard, H Thresher.

Apologies for absence were received from Ms S Forde, Mrs S Hall, Mrs S J Hunter, Ms A S O'Reilly, J A Swift QC, R Simister (district councillor).

8.01 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2016 were taken as read, confirmed and signed as a correct record.

8.02 REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR

The Council noted a written report by Mr K Bulmer, the county councillor for the Goring division, covering, inter alia:

- the transformation of adoption services across the Thames Valley;
- the launch of an on-line flooding "tool kit";
- the recruitment of volunteers for the Home Library Service;
- the report of Oxfordshire's Commission on Health Inequalities.

8.03 OPEN SESSION

During the Open Session, Mr D J Young, the Chairman of the Kidmore End Royal British Legion, pointed out that the war memorial, in the churchyard of St John the Baptist, was leaning out towards the highway. The British Legion had no idea of the ownership of the structure, but asked if the Council would be prepared to help make the memorial safe.

8.04 KIDMORE END WAR MEMORIAL

Arising from the request in Minute 8.03 above, the Clerk advised that the Council had the power to repair or maintain the memorial, under the provisions of the War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923. He further advised that the minutes of the annual parish meetings, in his custody, appeared to make no reference to the memorial. However, given that the memorial was sited in the churchyard, he felt that the records of the Parochial Church Council might help establish ownership of the structure.

RESOLVED: That enquiries be made of the Parochial Church Council as to its knowledge of the ownership of the war memorial.

8.05 PLAY AREAS

(cf 7.05/16) The Chairman advised that no grants, towards the project to refurbish the equipment at the play area in the Gallowstree Common Recreation Ground, had been forthcoming from the [Oxfordshire] High Sheriff's Community Integration Award and the Oxfordshire Community Foundation. She was now pursuing an application for a grant from a scheme arranged by Tesco plc. The LEADER organisation had advised that the Council's scheme did not qualify for a grant from that source. However, a donation of £100 had been received, from carol singers.

8.06 DELIVERING PUBLIC SERVICES

(cf 7.06/16) Members recalled that the Highways' Area Steward (South) of the County Council had offered to meet representatives of the Council to discuss further the proposed delegation agreement under which the Council could take on the County Council's responsibilities for highway verge cutting. This was in response to the Council's expressed concern, in the Autumn of 2016, that the grant offered by the County Council was significantly insufficient, compared the estimated cost. The Area Steward had met the Council's Transport Sub-Committee on 11 January 2017.

At the meeting, the Area Steward acknowledged that he had made an error in his original calculation of the grant likely to be paid to the Council, in the event of the Council taking on the verge mowing. He had forgotten the "urban" mowing in Gallowstree Common, which included the critical Wood Lane/Horsepond Road/Wyfold Lane crossroads. When the allowance for this was added, the grant would rise by £455 per annum, to £705.

Members were reminded that one of the County Council's present contractors had, during 2016, given a ball-park quote of £700 for the 2 cuts required under the delegation agreement. In the circumstances, the Transport Sub-Committee recommended that the Council proceed to enter into the Section 101 agreement for the financial year 2017/18, on the basis that the minimum requirement was effectively cost neutral. The Council had included net provision of £1,500 in the budget for 2017/18, which should be sufficient to meet the cost of any additional cuts which might be required, to meet local expectations, during the 2017/18 growing season.

RESOLVED: 1 That the Council enter into an agreement with the County Council, under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, to undertake highway verge cutting in the Parish, with effect from 1 April 2017.

2 That, in the anticipated absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and Mr J A Swift be authorised to sign the agreement on behalf of the Council.

8.07 TELEPHONE KIOSKS

(cf 7.08/16) Mr H Thresher advised that he had inspected the telephone kiosk at Cane End, which was on the list of public payphones which British Telecommunications plc intended to remove. Mr Thresher reported that the kiosk was in good condition. Given its reported low usage – 3 calls in preceding 12 months – Members felt that there was no case for the retention of the payphone facility. They felt, however, that the kiosk formed part of the visual infrastructure of Cane End and could be used, for instance, to house a public noticeboard.

It was reported that the County Council's Highways' Area Steward (South) had indicated how far forward the telephone kiosk in Kidmore End could be moved.

Mr Thresher referred to the deep puddle in the highway in front of the telephone kiosk at Chalkhouse Green.

RESOLVED: 1 That the District Council be advised that the Council wishes to acquire the telephone kiosk at Cane End, if British Telecommunications plc declare it to be redundant.

2 That, if acquired, the former telephone kiosk be used to house a public noticeboard.

8.08 BROADBAND

(cf 7.09/16) With an e-mail, the Better Broadband for Oxfordshire Team enclosed a flyer confirming that the Kidmore End Cabinet 5 (at Kidmore End pond) had "gone live" on 26 December 2016, enabling the occupiers of 128 addresses in Kidmore End, spread over 17 postcodes, to request an

upgrade to fibre-enabled broadband.

8.09 HOUSE NAMING

In an e-mail, the District Council's Data Monitoring Manager & Street Naming and Numbering Officer advised that the property known as Imberfield, Beech Road, Tokers Green had been renamed Clusters.

8.10 GRANTS

(cf 7.14/16) The Clerk reported receipt of e-mails from Citizens' Advice Oxfordshire South & Vale, South & Vale Young Carers and Sue Ryder-Nettlebed Hospice, each thanking the Council for its grant to organisation concerned.

8.11 PRECEPT

(cf 7.16/16) The Council noted an e-mail from the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils conveying a message from the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government that there would be no capping for parish and town council precepts for 2017/18. He had, however, expressed the hope that parish and town councils would "demonstrate restraint when setting increases that are not a direct result of taking on additional responsibilities".

8.12 KIDMORE END POND – WILLOW TREE

(cf 7.16/16) The Council considered inviting quotations for works to the golden weeping willow tree at Kidmore End pond, as suggested by an arboricultural officer of the County Council, for which work provision had been in the budget for 2017/18.

RESOLVED: That quotations be sought from Acorn Services, Henry Cottrell and John Williams for the work to the golden weeping willow tree at Kidmore End Pond.

8.13 FINANCE

(i) Balances

The Clerk reported that balances at the bank totalled £60,662.24.

(ii) Accounts for payment

RESOLVED: That the following accounts, listed in the schedule under Financial Regulation 5.2, be approved for payment:

South Oxfordshire District Council – Emptying dog hygiene bin	£12.56
R F Penfold – Salary net of Income Tax	£375.29
HM Revenue & Customs – Income tax deducted	£250.26
R F Penfold – Printing agenda etc	£8.80
Kidmore End Royal British Legion – Wreath	£40.00

(iii) Budget monitoring

The Council noted a report of the Clerk showing expenditure, up to 31 December 2016, against the approved budget for 2016/17. The report showed a predicted underspend at year end of £4,803, excluding capital payments and if the Council otherwise spent in accordance with the budget.

8.14 CONSULTATION ON PLANNING MATTERS

(i) Decisions

The Council noted that the application for alterations and extensions to dwelling to include an enlarged roof with new 2-storey gables to dormer to front following removal of front porch and rear conservatory and minor changes to fenestration details at Goodacres, Tokers Green Lane, Tokers Green had been permitted conditionally and that the application for extension and conversion of existing outbuilding to form a 2-bedroom dwelling with attached garage at Oldfield House, Horsepond Road, Gallowstree Common had been refused.

(ii) Applications

The Council considered an application referred to it since the last meeting .

RESOLVED: That no strong views be submitted on the application for residential development of 50 dwellings, access, public open space and landscaping, and provision of land for community sports/recreation facilities on land at Bishopswood Middle Field and Memorial Hall, Reades Lane, Sonning Common [Parish of Sonning Common] for Linden Ltd and Mrs P A Pelly, assuming the proposal conforms to the adopted Sonning Common Neighbourhood Development Plan.

(iii) Proposed development near Bryants Farm, Emmer Green

(cf 7.17(iv)/16) It was reported that Reading Borough Council's Planning Committee had considered the planning application for the erection of c245 houses near Bryant's Farm, Emmer Green [Parish of Eye & Dunsden] at a meeting on 12 January 2017. That Council had recommended to the District Council that the application be refused.

The Chairman reported on another meeting, on 5 January 2017, of representatives of parish councils and residents' associations, concerned about the proposed development. They had decided to form Campaign against Gladman in Eye and Dunsden (CAGE). The campaign had created a website – cagedunsden.org - and was putting up posters at strategic locations. Those directing the campaign hoped that each of the participating parish councils would contribute £40 towards the cost of the campaign.

RESOLVED: That, in principle, a contribution be made towards the costs incurred by the Campaign against Gladman in Eye and Dunsden.

(v) Land west of Kennylands Road, Sonning Common

Mrs A Adams of Vines Farm, Kidmore End had forwarded a copy of a letter she had received from the Head of Planning at the District Council, asking her if land she owned, to the west of Kennylands Road, Sonning Common, might be released for development. Mrs Adams had also forwarded a copy of her reply, in which she indicated, unequivocally, that she had no wish to develop the land.

Members observed that the land in question, which was within the Parish, had been included in the area of the Sonning Common Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) at the behest, it was believed, of officers of the District Council. The land formed the larger part of site SON4, but no development was envisaged thereon in the NDP. Members were concerned at the approach to Mrs Adams, which suggested that District Council officers were "prospecting" for potential development sites. The Chairman had raised the issue with Mr R Simister, the district councillor for the Kidmore End and Whitchurch Ward.

Mr Simister had taken the matter up with the Head of Planning, who had replied (copies had been circulated to the Council) that his exercise was to establish the suitability, availability and achievability of land for development. Enquiries had been made to the owners of a number of sites identified in

connection with a strategic housing land availability assessment undertaken in 2013. The Head of Planning stated that the present exercise – a housing and employment land availability assessment – did not determine whether a site should be allocated for development and did not constitute a land allocation.

(vi) Neighbourhood development plans

(cf 7.17(v)/16) The Council noted an invitation from John Howell MP to be represented at a conference on neighbourhood planning, to be held in Watlington on 20 January 2017.

RESOLVED: That the Vice-Chairman be appointed to represent the Council at the neighbourhood planning conference organised by John Howell MP and that her attendance be an approved duty for the purposes of expenses.

8.15 UNITARY LOCAL GOVERNMENT

(cf 6.06/16) The County Director of the County Council enclosed, with an e-mail, a short briefing note, giving an update on the debate on local government reorganisation in the County as well as the latest position on devolution of powers from Government. The County Council intended to publish proposals for a single county-wide unitary authority, for public feedback, early in 2017.

8.16 DOG FOULING

By e-mail, Mr & Mrs N Davies of Chalkhouse Green Road, Kidmore End complained of dog fouling on grass verges in that road, and the activities of one dog in particular, which was often seen roaming unaccompanied. Mr & Mrs Davies had taken the matter up with the owners of the dog, but the fouling issue persisted. They intended to erect a sign on the most affected verge but asked for further advice from the Council.

The Clerk advised that he had responded to Mr & Mrs Davies that it was an offence to allow a dog to foul a public place and not pick up the faeces, and that the primary enforcement agency was the District Council. Members concurred with the Clerk's response.

8.17 CANE END ALLOTMENTS – WATER SUPPLY

(cf 10.15/15) In a letter, a Director of Savills advised that the rectification of Vines Farm's title of the land at Cane End, under which the water supply pipe to the allotments was to run, ought now not to prevent the grant of easement for the proposed water pipe. Accordingly, the solicitors acting for Vines Farm would send a draft deed of easement, for a pipe at least 1.2m below the surface, to the solicitors acting for the Council. There would be a nominal consideration - £1 – and the Council would meet the professional fees incurred by Vines Farm, estimated at c£2,000.

8.18 PLAYING FIELDS COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Playing Fields Committee reported that the Committee had met on 11 January 2017. The Committee had

- arranged for the replacement of the room heating thermostats in the Diamond Jubilee Pavilion;
- authorised other outstanding plumbing works at the premises;
- hired a contractor to remove vegetation from the rear of the Pavilion;
- decided no longer to let the Pavilion for adolescent birthday parties, in light of damage to the premises during the last 3 such lettings.

8.19 PARISH NEWSLETTER

The Vice-Chairman reported that the Winter 2016/17 edition of the Parish Newsletter had been published and that, although of recent years the Newsletter had been printed free of charge, there was likely to be a charge, going forward.

8.20 QUESTIONS TO CHAIRMAN

In answer to a question, the Chairman advised that Members had undertaken to clear the vegetation from the footpath from Tokers Green Lane, Kidmore End to the cemetery.