

KIDMORE END PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held at the Church Room, Kidmore End on Wednesday 15 December 2010 at 8.00pm and concluded at 9.55pm.

Present: A K Martin (Chairman), R S Young (Vice-Chairman), Mrs S M Biggs, R C Gutteridge, Mrs S Hall, R G McQuillan, J A Swift QC, N J M Topham.

Apologies for absence were received from Dr B J Knapp, Dr J D M McNie, Mrs J E O'Sullivan, Mrs C Y Viney (county councillor).

7.01 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2010 were taken as read, confirmed and signed as a correct record, subject to the correction to the word "in" in the third paragraph of Minute 6.03 and the insertion of the symbol "£" before the figure "700" in Minute 6.19.

7.02 REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR

The Clerk read a report from Mrs C Y Viney, the county councillor for the Sonning Common division, covering the County Council's proposal to withdraw funding from the Sonning Common Library and the youth club at Chiltern Edge School. She was discussing with the headteachers of the Sonning Common Primary and Chiltern Edge Schools how the facilities might be preserved. In the meantime, her Council awaited the "fine print" relating to grant funding from the Government in 2011/12.

7.03 OPEN SESSION

During the open session,

- Mr T Perchard of Rokeby Drive, Tokers Green indicated that he might be interested in serving as a parish councillor;
- Ms M Toomey of Chalkhouse Green advised that she was a prospective tenant for an allotment at Cane End, representing a group of potential tenants, and urged the Council to proceed to bring the allotments in Cane End back into use, so that cultivation could start in the Spring of 2011, to site the entrance to the allotments at the south of the plot and to arrange for a water supply to be installed;
- Mrs A D Thiam of The Hamlet, Gallowstree Common observed again that the train play equipment at the Gallowstree Common Recreation Ground still awaited repair and enquired about the salt/grit bin which had appeared on the north side of Horsepond Road, Gallowstree Common.

Mrs S Hall, the Allotments Manager, confirmed that there remained strong interest in the re-opening of the allotments at Cane End, with 9 potential tenants. The Chairman advised that neither he nor the Clerk had any knowledge of the provenance of the salt/grit bin mentioned by Mrs Thiam.

7.04 RECREATION GROUND, GALLOWSTREE COMMON - PAVILION

(cf 6.04(i)/10) It was reported that

- the following works had been completed on the replacement Pavilion at the Gallowstree Common Recreation – underground drainage (foul and surface water) had been installed, the walls were up to dpc level, the beam and block floor laid, some brick and block walls erected and the heating ground boreholes drilled: the work was about 3 weeks behind schedule;
- the Council's insurers had refunded £357.15 of premium, as the former pavilion had been demolished;

- the loan of £200,000 less the arrangement fee had been credited to the Council's bank account on 10 December 2010;
- following the supply of yet more information, the final approval of the England & Wales Cricket Board to the promised grant was expected.

7.05 REVIEW OF SUBSIDISED BUS SERVICES

(cf 6.07/10) By letter, an Assistant Public Transport Officer of the County Council acknowledged receipt of the Council's comments about the retention of subsidy for the Motts Travel service M1, which linked Gallowstree Common, Kidmore End and Chalkhouse Green with Reading. The officer explained when the data had been collected regarding use of the service, and suggested that his Council might be open to providing support for a regular dial-a-ride service possibly serving Gallowstree Common and/or Kidmore End. Other possibilities might be a reduction in frequency of the service to say 2 or 3 days per week, or an adjustment to the route so that bus merely served Gallowstree Common and Kidmore End. The Assistant Public Transport Officer enquired whether the Council had any views on the suggestions.

7.06 MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL

(cf 6.11/10) The print of an e-mail from Mr T Bloch of Rokeby Drive, Tokers Green, expressing interest in serving as parish councillor, was circulated at the meeting.

In the light of the potential interest of Mr T Perchard, mentioned during the open session (see Minute 7.03), it was

RESOLVED: That consideration of co-opting a person to fill the vacancy for parish councillor caused by the resignation of Mrs M S Rowland be deferred to the next meeting.

7.07 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

(cf 6.13/10) The Council considered a draft document, compiled by the Transport Sub-Committee and circulated prior to the meeting, setting out comments of the County Council's draft Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2030. Members present commented favourably on the draft document.

RESOLVED: That, subject to any further comments from Members, the circulated draft document be adopted as the Council's response to the draft Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2030.

[The response as submitted to the County Council is attached as the Appendix hereto.]

7.08 HIGH SPEED BROADBAND

(cf 6.16/10) In a letter, the Deputy Leader of the County Council advised that his Council, working with partners, wished to ensure that all residents of the County had access to broadband of 2mbs, by 2015. He urged that residents "voted" in British Telecomms' "Race to Infinity".

7.09 CONCESSIONARY FARES SCHEME

(cf 6.20/10) In a letter, the Deputy Director of Environment & Economy at the County Council acknowledged the Council's comments in response to the consultation on the concessionary fares' scheme.

7.10 FOOTPATH 11

(cf 6.27/10) The Chairman referred to his exchange of e-mails (copies of which he had supplied to each Member) with the Area Secretary of the Rights of Way Group of the Chiltern Society, concerning the work to replace styles with gates on the line of footpath 11. It seemed from this exchange that the Area Secretary had already submitted an application for a grant to the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment

in the name of the Society and the Council, although no formal approach had been made to the Council to join in the application. The grant had been approved and the works were now to proceed. The Chairman had suggested to the Area Secretary that the Council could reconsider its decision, taken at its last meeting, not to act as client for the works and pay for the gates, and retrospectively join the Society in its application for a grant. However, the Area Secretary had indicated that he did not wish to proceed in this way.

7.11 ALLOTMENTS, CANE END

(cf 6.29/10) The Council considered whether to order the works necessary to re-open the allotments in Cane End, a matter deferred at the last meeting.

Mr S France of Acorn Services submitted a quotation in the sum of £400 for supplying and erecting a 12ft galvanised gate on 7 x 7 posts, set in concrete, and closing with an auto latch.

In the light of the information about demand provided during the Open Session (see Minute 7.03), and following full discussion, it was:

RESOLVED: 1 That the decision of July 2009 (resolution 3 in Minutes 3.08) be confirmed and that a target of Lady Day 2011 be set for the allotments at Cane End to be available for cultivation.

2 That a surveyor be retained to submit the necessary planning application for the access from Park Lane into the site.

3 That the Allotments Manager advises the occupier of the neighbouring dwelling of the Council's intentions.

4 That, notwithstanding Financial Regulation 11.1(h), the quotations of Acorn Services for felling the 3 fir trees on the site, and removal of the roots, and the installation of a gate, be accepted, subject to the latter works being delayed until planning permission has been obtained.

5 That quotations be sought for the execution of other required works, eg spraying and ploughing the individual plots.

7.12 FINANCE

(i) Balances

The Clerk reported that balances at the bank totalled £222,283.50.

(ii) Accounts for payment

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

South & Vale Carers Centre – Grant	£40.00
Royal British Legion – Wreath	£40.00
Hale Building Contractors Ltd – Pavilion: stage payments	£43,814.09
R F Penfold – Clerk's salary	£654.25
Acorn Services – Rehangng chains at Kidmore End pond	£260.00
Acorn Services – Supply and installation of noticeboard at Cane End	£200.00

7.13 ESTIMATES, 2011/12

(cf 6.14 (iii)/10) The Council considered a report (10/11 - 7) of the Clerk, being draft estimates for the financial year 2011/12.

RESOLVED: 1 That the base estimates for 2011/12 be adopted.

2 That a precept be issued for the sum of £27,000 in 2010/11.

3 That the base estimates be confirmed as the Council's budget for 2011/12 for the purposes of Financial Regulation 3.2.

4 That, notwithstanding Financial Regulation 3.5, budgetary provision for specific projects not spent as at 31 March 2011 be "rolled forward" into the budget for 2011/12.

7.14 CONSULTATION ON PLANNING MATTERS

(i) Action of Plans Sub-Committee

The Council noted a letter from Mr D G Saunders of Tokers Green Lane, Tokers Green, expressing his objections to the application for development at Cherry Trees, Tokers Green Lane, Tokers Green. The Clerk indicated that he would send a copy of the letter to the District Council, in case Mr Saunders had not submitted his observation direct to the planning authority.

RESOLVED: That the action of the Plans Sub-Committee in respect of the following applications, as set out in the register of action, be approved:

single storey timber outbuilding at Field View Barn, Tanners LANE, Chalkhouse Green;
erection of garage with private gym above at 7 Craysleaze, Kidmore End;
extensions to the south and east at ground level to enlarge living room, create study and provide integral garage, alterations to first floor to provide 2 additional bedrooms at Cherry Trees, Tokers Green Lane, Tokers Green.

(ii) Planning appeals

(cf 4.11(iv)/10) A copy letter from the Planning Inspectorate indicated that the inspector, appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, had dismissed the appeal against the refusal of planning permission for the demolition of The Bungalow and outbuildings and construction of a replacement dwelling and detached garage and demolition of 2 storey extension to the rear of Hillside and garage and the construction of a 3 storey extension with integral garage at Hillside and The Bungalow, Horsepond Road, Gallowstree Common.

(iii) District Council's Local Development Framework

(cf 5.11(ii)/10) With a letter, the Head of Planning Services of the District Council enclosed a copy of his Council's proposed submission core strategy in connection with its Local Development Framework, the main purpose of which was to set out the spatial strategy for the district, including identifying directions of growth for new development to 2027. The document was open for consultation until 21 January 2011, and comments had to conform to the response form specified by the Council.

RESOLVED: That the District Council's proposed submission core strategy be referred to Mr J A Swift for consideration and report.

7.15 HIGHWAYS

(i) Clearance of snow and ice

Cane & Co, the Council's insurance brokers, gave advice, in an e-mail, about the clearance of snow and ice, by parish councils, from public spaces. The note indicated if a council was deemed legally liable for a claim for a slip on snow or ice, having attempted to clear it, the council would be covered by its

public liability insurance. The note went on to suggest actions which could be taken to limit the risk of negligence being proven, including seeking approval from the highways authority if it was decided to arrange to clear snow and ice from the public highway.

(ii) Area Highways Representative

In a letter, Mr B Burgess introduced himself as the Local Highways Representative from the County Council's Highways and Transport Department. The representatives had been appointed as part of newly introduced area stewardship arrangements, designed to provide a more responsive, efficient and informative way of delivering his Council's highway maintenance activities. Mr Burgess would be the primary contact for southern South Oxfordshire, and, while based at Drayton, was best contacted via his Council's headquarters.

7.16 COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLANS

The Council noted an invitation from the County Emergency Planning Officer of the County Council to a community resilience exercise to be held in Oxford on 12 March 2010, aimed at community groups currently engaged in flooding or community emergency planning activities.

7.17 ADULT SOCIAL CARE

By e-mail, the County Council's Deputy Director, Adult Social Care, advised of the new structure for his Council's adult social care teams, with effect from 5 December 2010. The South Adult Social Care Team, which covered the locality including Parish, was based in Abingdon, and would provide support to persons over 18 years of age requiring social care, excluding those with a significant mental health problem or learning disability.

7.18 HEATING OIL

In an e-mail, the Chief Executive of ORCC Trading Ltd gave details of the Company's scheme for the bulk buying of domestic heating oil for residents of, primarily, rural areas. The Company was looking for local co-ordinators, and, indeed, potential customers.

RESOLVED: That details of the bulk buying domestic heating oil scheme from ORCC Trading Ltd be publicised in the Parish Newsletter.

7.19 OXFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

The Council noted updates for members published by the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils in November/December 2010:

7.20 HENLEY & DISTRICT CITIZENS' ADVICE BUREAU

The Manager of the Henley & District Citizens' Advice Bureau, in a letter, requested the Council to consider making a grant to the Bureau. The Council noted that the budget for 2010/11 contained provision for a grant of £90.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £90 be made to the Henley & District Citizens Advice Bureau in the financial year 2010/11.

7.21 PLAYING FIELDS COMMITTEE

It was noted that the Playing Fields Committee had not met since that the last meeting of the Council.

7.22 AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUB-COMMITTEE

It was reported that, following receipt, from the Oxfordshire Rural Housing Partnership, of answers to certain questions, the Affordable Housing Sub-Committee had asked the Partnership to provide some outline sketches as to how the units of affordable housing suggested by the Housing Needs Survey might be laid out on the land, in the ownership of the Phillimore Estate, on the north side of Horsepond Road, Gallowstree Common, and how access might be achieved from the present public highway. It was expected that the sketches would be available in the Spring of 2011.

7.23 QUESTIONS TO CHAIRMAN

In answer to questions, the Chairman

- a indicated that he would ask the Clerk to alert the County Council to the trenches dug outside Oakridge Farm, Wood Lane, Kidmore End, in case there was any encroachment onto the highway;
- b proposed that tenders be invited for the mowing contract for the years 2011, 2012 and 2013.

7.24 SEASON'S GREETINGS

The Chairman wished all Members a merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

IEWS AND COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2011-2030 (LTP 3)

SUMMARY

Kidmore End Parish Council ("KEPC") welcomes the opportunity to give its views and comments on the draft LTP 3. It agrees with the "focus on attracting and supporting economic investment, growth and delivering transport infrastructure and services to tackle congestion and improve the quality of life" within the County as a whole. But the draft LTP3 is deficient in barely recognising the existence of parishes, such as Kidmore End, which lie close to the borders with the county of Berkshire and thus adjacent to the major conurbation of the town of Reading. Thus, there is no reference in the voluminous documentation forming the draft LTP 3 to any of the parishes and villages that lie within the boundaries formed by the A 4074 to the West and the B 481 to the East or between the B 481 and the A 4155 (Henley to Reading) roads. That is a serious error and should be addressed in any future iteration of LTP 3

The concerns of residents of these parishes, on which they need the support of the County Council, were expressed in 2009 on the occasion of Reading BC's bid for funds to develop transport infrastructure. Indeed, a group of parishes, including Kidmore End, combined to form the South Oxfordshire Parishes Transport Infrastructure Group (SOTIG) for such a purpose.

The main focus of the KEPC's comments is, therefore, to draw the attention of the OCC to issues of public interest and concern in so far as they relate to the geographical area of and surrounding this parish. Some of those issues, affecting the quality of life, are of general application. Some are specific to the area, in the recognition that transport, especially road transport, can if inefficiently controlled impose major amenity costs on small communities such as ours.

LTP 3 Objective - To improve air quality, reduce other environmental impacts and enhance the street environment

KEPC Comment - LTP 3 has to provide policies for boundary issues with other counties

In the South of the County, a number of parishes near the border with Reading work together through SOTIG to seek to ensure that transport policies developed by Reading BC, unilaterally or in cooperation with neighbouring County or District Councils, do not impose amenity costs on the residents of these parishes or more generally have adverse effects on the AONBs, which are a feature of this area. KEPC would like to see incorporated in LTP3 a policy reflective of the needs of SOTIG for County Council support: indeed a recognition that parishes including Kidmore End, Sonning Common, Eye and Dunsden, Binfield Heath, Shiplake and Mapledurham - which formed SOTIG - have sufficient interests in common to be considered as separate geographic area within the LTP 3. Transport policies have huge impact and range from increasing the use of public transport, to park and ride and road development. LTP3 should give express recognition to the effect that in any such development there has to be a proper cost benefit appraisal including the possible loss of amenity within the AONBs affected by any such schemes

LTP Objective - To reduce casualties and the dangers associated with travel

KEPC Comment - LTP 3 must have a specific policy for improving safety on the A 4074

As the Council is fully aware, the A 4074, in particular the stretch between Mapledurham and Ipsden, has one of the worst records for accidents in the United Kingdom, especially when compared with roads that carry a similar volume of traffic. KEPC can find nowhere in the draft LTP3 any policy for improving safety on this road, other than through the possible use of speed limits. That is not considered to be acceptable in any circumstances and wholly unacceptable for a policy which looks ahead to 2030. LTP3 should consider not simply new civil engineering works to improve safety but also ensure measures are in place to discourage large /haulage vehicles from using this road as an alternative to the A34 which is not currently occurring.

LTP Objective - To develop and increase cycling and walking for local journeys, recreation and health.

KEPC Comment - LTP 3 needs to be more radical in lowering speed limits on minor roads, encouraging quiet lanes and promoting their safe use by foot and bicycle

The concept of the Quiet Lane is excellent and much supported by KEPC. In our view, it can, and should, be developed so as to include many more minor roads in rural areas such as those that are found within this parish and those adjoining it on the edge of the Chilterns. This should be combined with a general policy that the speed limits on minor roads - many of which were the former tracks which connected small hamlets - should have a maximum of 20 mph save only in exceptional cases where retention of 30 mph would produce no realistic prospect of reduction in safety or use by pedestrians or cyclists. The burden should be on the Council to establish why 30 mph should be tolerated. In cases where the schools are on minor roads the maximum of 20 mph should never be exceeded and probably reduced to 10 mph in the most vulnerable areas. Every road in rural areas should be assessed for this purpose and the policies implemented urgently.

LTP Objective - To improve air quality, reduce other environmental impacts and enhance the street environment

KEPC Comment - LTP 3 must be more prescriptive in its controls over navigation paths adopted through satellite navigation

LTP 3 policy to leave navigation issues to be sorted out by those who benefit from the "quickest route" is unacceptable. There is now substantial evidence that, in any cost benefit appraisal of sat nav use in rural areas, the result is one of adverse effects - imposing significant adverse costs on amenity. Those who control the highways - namely the Council and Highway Authorities, must sort this out. The problem is already significant within the parish area - as commercial and other transport misuse the minor roads so as to avoid delays on the major roads through the southern part of the County.

LTP 3 can only deliver through investment which is dependent on Central Government allocation of funds or local taxation

The KEPC view is that there has to be a connection between available finance and the type of investment to be undertaken - which requires prioritisation. LTP 3 is not sufficiently clear on this point and should clarify it in the next policy statement. Otherwise it is no more than a wish list. If, as KEPC believes must be the outcome, the policy is to enhance the AONBs and quality of life, these policies can not be pursued simply by affirmation that they are good things but by clear and consistent policies applied through available finance and with clear goals.

LTP 3 Objective - To develop and increase the use of high quality, welcoming public transport

KEPC Comment

Within the plan there is no discussion on how this will be implemented with regard to rural public transport. Praise is given to the buses on A4074 as serving this area. There needs to be investment in encouraging young people to use buses, possibly by reduced fares for those under 18. There should be consideration given to using smaller vehicles making public transport for smaller numbers of passengers economically viable. Public transport for the elderly population within villages is an important part of ensuring that these members of our communities are supported to remain independent. If the Council wants to see behaviour change in the population to use cars less frequently, there needs to be some investment.

LTP 3 Objective - To improve the condition of local roads, footways and cycleways, including resilience to climate change; To develop and increase cycling and walking for local journeys, recreation and health.

KEPC Comment

Freezing weather conditions in the last 2 years has caused considerable deterioration in the road surfaces that were already in a poor state with many large potholes. To encourage safe cycling for adults and children there needs to be an improvement in road condition.

LTP 3 Objective -To reduce casualties and the dangers associated with travel; To improve accessibility to work, education and services;

KEPC Comment

Many of the roads within the Parish are not gritted. This has caused issues relating to both these objectives. It would be helpful if OCC could review the gritting policy within the South of the County and work with Parish Councils to come to an agreement to get the roads cleared during snow and ice conditions. This would reduce the risk for everyone, but in particular the most vulnerable in our communities and increase access to those going to work and to keep schools open.

CONCLUSION

KEPC is grateful for the opportunity to comment. Our expectation is not simply that our comments are taken into account but provide the basis for amendment and clarification of the objectives to be pursued and, in particular, in this geographical area of Oxfordshire. We intend to place this response on the KEPC website