

DRAFT

To be confirmed at the meeting to be held on 23 September 2020 KIDMORE END PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held remotely on Wednesday 22 July 2020 at 8.00pm and concluded at 9.15pm.

Present: Dr C D Aldridge (Chairman), Ms S M Biggs (Vice-Chairman), Mrs S G Hall, A P Harland, I G C Pearson, T M Perchard, J A Swift QC.

Also present: P H Dragonetti (district councillor).

Apologies for absence were received from Ms A S O'Reilly.

3.01 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2020 were taken as read, confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3.02 THE LATE REV CANON G FOULIS-BROWN

The Chairman referred to the death, on 26 June 2020, of the Rev Canon G Foulis-Brown, who had been Rector of the Parish of Kidmore End and Sonning Common from 1990 to 2015, and expressed the Council's condolences to the family and friends.

3.03 REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Mr P H Dragonetti, the district councillor for the Kidmore End & Whitchurch ward, spoke to his report, circulated in advance of the meeting, covering

- his Council's operations, with particular reference to its Planning Committee, on-line public speaking at the Committee's meetings and the reference of applications to the Committee;
- the examination in public of his Council's Local Plan;
- his Council's draft corporate plan;
- the River Thames;
- the Reading Transport Strategy.

3.04 OPEN SESSION

During the Open Session, Mr A McAslan of Tokers Green Lane, Kidmore End asked about the answer to his critique of the process to devise the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (see Minute 3.18).

3.05 SPEEDWATCH

(cf 2.03/20) It was reported that volunteers would be undertaking Speedwatch activities in Kidmore End and Gallowstree Common, later in July.

3.06 WATER SUPPLIES

- (i) Allotments, Gallowstree Common

(cf 2.04(i)/20) The Clerk reported that, since the meeting of the Finance Sub-Committee (see Minute 3.09 below), Castle Water Ltd had sent a further invoice, for a late payment fee in respect of the agreed charges for the water used at the allotments at Gallowstree Common from January 2017 to July 2020, paid on the authority of the Chairman on 26 June 2020 (see Minute 3.11(ii) below).

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RESOLVED: That the late payment charge instituted by Castle Water Ltd be challenged.

(ii) Diamond Jubilee Pavilion, Gallowstree Common

(cf 2.04(ii)/20) It was reported that the water supply to the Diamond Jubilee Pavilion had been reconnected on 20.06.20. Contractors, who had previously attended the site in connection with the detection of the now repaired leak, had visited on 27 June 2020, and had confirmed that there was now no leak between the meter and the Pavilion.

The Clerk advised that he was taking up with Castle Water Ltd discrepancies in the letter from the Company's Litigation Department in response to the challenge made by the Council about the Company billing for water whilst the service had been disconnected.

3.07 PLAY AREAS – EQUIPMENT

(cf 2.06(i)/20) Members were reminded of the report (20/21 - 8) by the Chairman, circulated following the last meeting, covering

- actions required arising from the inspections of the play equipment at the Gallowstree Common and Kidmore End Play Areas and
- addressing the guidance issued by the Government about the reopening of playgrounds and outdoor gyms.

Having completed the requisite risk assessments, the Chairman had authorised the re-opening of the Kidmore End Play Area on 4 July 2020, but not that at Gallowstree Common, pending completion of some of the works identified at the inspection. Appropriate notices had been posted at each facility. 2 complaints had been received that the Gallowstree Common Play Area remained closed. The Chairman had explained the rationale for her decision to each of the complainants.

Quotations had been received for some of the works identified at the inspections, as follows, and were considered by the Council later in the meeting, after the exclusion of the public (see Minute 3.22):

Works at Kidmore End Play Area
Ian Kendrick Ltd - £345.00+VAT
SAS Landscaping - £211.17+VAT

Works at Gallowstree Common Play Area
Ian Kendrick Ltd - £385.00+VAT
SAS Landscaping - £312.50+VAT (+£14.45 for fence pickets).

The Chairman had also obtained quotations from the suppliers of some of the equipment for spare parts, to enable the maintenance or repair of the equipment concerned. These were

- from Playdale Playgrounds nuts and washers for the main equipment item £19.80 + VAT
- from Wicksteed Leisure Ltd for items for the zipwire at Kidmore End and the basket swing at Gallowstree Common - £958.71 + VAT

RESOLVED: 1 That the action of the Chairman be approved and confirmed.

2 That the contracts for the identified works at Gallowstree Common and Kidmore End Play Areas be let to SAS Landscaping, on the basis of the quotations shown above.

3 That an order be placed with Playdale Playgrounds Ltd for the nuts and washers mentioned above.

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4 That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be authorised to consider the quotation from Wicksteed Leisure Ltd and to place orders for parts, if deemed appropriate.

3.08 CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, KIDMORE END

(i) Churchyard

(cf 2.11(iii)/20) By letter, the PCC Secretary of the Parish of Kidmore End & Sonning Common thanked the Council for its contribution towards the costs of maintaining the churchyard at St John the Baptist church.

(ii) Fabric of building

The Treasurer of the Parochial Church Council enquired, by e-mail, whether the Council might make a grant towards the cost of repair of the roof of the Church of St John the Baptist, which had been estimated at £10,000.

RESOLVED: That consideration of the request be deferred, pending advice from the Finance Sub-Committee.

3.09 READING TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2036

(cf 2.17/20) The Council noted the minutes of the meeting of representatives of parish councils held on 7 July 2020, to discuss the possibility of a joint response to the Reading Transport Strategy 2036, the Local Transport Plan of Reading Borough Council, and the request made to Reading Borough Council, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, about the proposed “northern orbital route” and associated park and ride sites. The request had been made, in the name of the Council, in accordance with the authority granted to the Transport Committee, and better to inform the response to the Local Transport Plan.

3.10 FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Council received the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Sub-Committee held on 24 June 2020.

As a matter of urgency, following informal consultation with Members, the Chairman had approved the adoption of the recommendations in Minutes 96 and 97.

RESOLVED: 1 That the action of the Chairman be approved and confirmed.

2 That the following grant be made in the financial year 2020/21:

Sue Ryder South Oxfordshire Palliative Care Hub - £300.

3 That Mapledurham Parish Council be permitted to use the Council's Zoom licence, free of charge.

3.11 FINANCE

(i) Balances

The Clerk reported that balances at the bank totalled £29,805.27.

(ii) Accounts paid

As reported in Minute 3.09 above, and notwithstanding Financial Regulation 5.2, the Chairman

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had approved the payment of the following accounts on 26 June 2020:

Came & Co – Insurance premium	£3048.48
Castle Water Ltd – Water for Gallowstree Common allotments	£238.65

(iii) Accounts for payment

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

Ian Kendrick Ltd – Grass cutting on highway verges	£954.00
Dr C D Aldridge – Cement for fixing goalpost at KE Play Area	£14.79
Mr I G C Pearson – Locks and fence pickets for Gallowstree Common Play Area	£65.93
South Oxfordshire District Council – Emptying dog hygiene bin	£53.82
The Terra Firma Consultancy Ltd – Landscape consultancy services (NDP)	£900.00
Sue Ryder South Oxfordshire Palliative Care Hub – Grant	£300.00
R F Penfold – Salary net of Income Tax	£142.10
HM Revenue & Customs – Income tax deducted	£94.73

(iv) Payment of accounts

As the Council was not due to meet in August 2020, it was

RESOLVED: That, notwithstanding Financial Regulations 5.2 and 6.3, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be authorised to approve accounts received before 19 August 2020, for payment out of meeting.

(v) Budget monitoring

The Council noted a report of the Clerk showing expenditure, up to 30 June 2020, against the approved budget for 2020/21. The report showed a predicted underspend at year end of £3,579, excluding capital payments and if the Council otherwise spent in accordance with the budget.

3.12 CONSULTATION ON PLANNING MATTERS

(i) Decisions

The Council noted that the applications for

variation of condition (amendments to design) single storey rear extension, new porch, garage extension and stable building at Kidmore Lane, Sonning Common [Parish of Sonning Common]; single storey rear extension at The Old Orchard, Wood Lane, Kidmore End; single storey side extension at Combe Norton, Wood Lane, Kidmore End;

had been permitted conditionally, and that the application for groundworks to facilitate change of use of land to recreation facility at Memorial Hall Field, Reades Lane, Sonning Common [Parish of Sonning Common] had been withdrawn.

(ii) Action of Plans Sub-Committee

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 rear and side extensions at Meadowcroft, Chalkhouse Green Lane, Chalkhouse Green;

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proposed demolition of existing dwelling and garage and erection of new replacement dwelling and garage at Oakbank, 19 Tanners Lane, Chalkhouse Green (amended plan).

(iii) The former Palm Tree Restaurant, Cane End – Proposed change of access

One of the District Council's Planning Officers, by e-mail, advised that he was intending to recommend approval of the planning application for the revised vehicular access at the former Palm Tree Restaurant, Cane End, to which the Council had objected. As a result, the application would be referred to the District Council's Planning Committee, unless the Council was to withdraw its objection. Members were minded not to withdraw the objection, but noted the opportunity to discuss the matter with the Planning Officer, in the first instance, with a view to the Planning Officer establishing whether there was anything which might assuage the Council's concerns.

RESOLVED: That Mr T M Perchard be appointed to discuss the application for a proposed change of access at the former Palm Tree Restaurant, Cane End with the Planning Officer

(iv) Gallowstree Common Recreation Ground - Flagpole

Mr & Mrs A K Martin of Wyfold Road, Gallowstree Common enquired, by e-mail, whether the flagpole erected on the northwestern boundary of the Recreation Ground at Gallowstree Common required planning permission.

RESOLVED: That the above enquiry be referred to the District Council.

(v) South Oxfordshire Local Plan

(cf 2.12(iv)/20) The Programme Officer for the Examination of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan had returned the Council's representations on the Local Plan, in response to the Inspector's "Matters and Questions", for editing, as he believed they did not specifically address the Inspector's questions. Accordingly, The Chairman, as a matter of urgency, following consultation with the Vice-Chairman, had amended the statement to conform.

RESOLVED: That the action of the Chairman be approved and confirmed.

3.13 READING ROAD, CANE END – TREES

By e-mail, an Arboricultural Officer of the County Council advised that 3 trees on the sides of Reading Road, Cane End (the A4074), near Kempwood and Primrose Cottage, would be felled because they were decayed or poor specimens.

3.14 TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURES

With e-mails, officers of the County Council gave notice of temporary closures, under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as follows:

- Tokers Green Lane, Tokers Green, north of the green, from 21 to 24 July 2020, to facilitate a water connection;
- Reading Road, Cane End, at Fox Heath Gardens, from 5 to 7 October 2020, to facilitate a water connection.

With another e-mail, notice was given of the extension of the closure of Reades Lane, Sonning Common, which was now to start on 7 August 2020.

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3.15 REGISTRATION OF BUSINESS PREMISES

The District Council's GIS Team Leader & Street Naming and Numbering Officer advised, in an e-mail, that existing commercial buildings at Withy Copse, Gallowstree Common had been registered as Buildings 1, 2/3 and 5 Withy Copse Workshops and the Lodge, Withy Copse.

3.16 OXFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

The Council noted an update for members published by the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils in June 2020, referring in particular to the paragraphs about the latest Coronavirus advice.

RESOLVED: That meetings of the Council continue to be held virtually, but that the arrangements be reviewed when the restrictions about social distancing, imposed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, are sufficiently relaxed.

3.17 TRAVELLERS' ENCAMPMENT

In an e-mail, Ms S McQuillan of Tanners Lane, Chalkhouse Green set out in detail the experiences of her family when travellers took up residence, uninvited, in their field, behind their home, on 9 July 2020. Mrs McQuillan's family had secured the removal of the travellers on 10 July, by a firm of bailiffs, at a cost to the family of c£4,000, as an alternative to a potentially lengthy civil court process.

Members expressed concern that the statutory authorities were not able or had not attempted to remove the travellers, but that the matter had rested with the landowner.

RESOLVED: That the case be drawn to the attention of John Howell MP, with a view to him supporting legislative changes, to remove the financial burden from the land owner in these cases.

3.18 NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN STEERING GROUP

(cf 2.15/20) The Vice-Chairman reported that the Neighbour Development Plan (NDP) Steering Group had met twice since the last meeting of the Council, the first to consider the critique by Mr A McAslan of Tokers Green Lane, Kidmore End. of the NDP process and the Plan, and the second to receive advice from officers of the District Council about proceeding to undertake the "Regulation 14" consultation in respect of the draft NDP.

The Council noted the response which the NDP Steering Group had sent to Mr McAslan.

The Council considered its own response to the critique, which sought to address aspects of the document about the role of councillors on the NDP Steering Group and the impact of the advice of the Monitoring Officers of the Oxfordshire authorities relating to bias in decision-making by councillors.

RESOLVED: That a response along the lines set out in the Appendix hereto be sent to Mr A McAslan.

3.19 PLAYING FIELDS COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Playing Fields Committee reported that the Committee had met on 8 July 2020.

The Chairman of the Committee reported that the Cricket Club had resumed matches at the Recreation Ground, although the Diamond Jubilee Pavilion remained closed. The Cricket Club was operating a bar outside of the Pavilion.

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The Chairman of the Committee further reported that the debris in the vicinity of the cricket score hut at the Recreation Ground had largely been cleared, much having been taken by a scrap metal dealer.

Finally, the Chairman of the Committee advised that, when the water had been reconnected at the Pavilion, and the heating system restarted, faults had been found, and rectified, in the Pavilion, eg with taps and a leak in the ceiling.

3.20 TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

The Vice-Chairman advised that the Transport Committee had been heavily engaged in the response to the Reading Transport Strategy (see Minute 3.09 above).

3.21 MEETINGS, CONFERENCES ETC

The Vice-Chairman reported that she had attended a meeting of the Chilterns Conservation Board Planning Committee earlier in the month.

3.22 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the public be excluded from the meeting, pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, during consideration of the following item on the grounds that exempt information, under paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act shown below, would be discussed:

Item	Paragraph
Part 2 minutes of the last meeting	3
Gallowstree Common Recreation Ground	3
Works at Gallowstree Common and Kidmore End Play Areas	3

3.23 PART 2 MINUTES

The Part 2 Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2020 were confirmed.

3.24 GALLOWSTREE COMMON RECREATION GROUND

The Council appointed Caversham Solicitors Ltd to act for it in connection with the acquisition of land adjacent to Gallowstree Common Recreation Ground.

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APPENDIX

RESPONSE TO CRITIQUE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROCESS AND THE PLAN

The Council wishes to address points 2.1 and 2.3 in the critique, and make an observation about part 8.

As you quote in your critique, the Council established the Steering Group to drive the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, independent of the Council, save for finance. It has charged the Steering Group to report to it, as qualifying body, at specific stages in process. It has appointed 2 members to serve on the Steering Group, in the same way, for instance, as it appoints members to serve on the Kidmore End Playing Fields Committee, a registered charity. The Council sees nothing of concern in those arrangements.

As to the councillors who serve on the Steering Group, they are bound, like all their colleagues, to act in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct: the Council adopted the model code, as recommended by the District Council. Actions of councillors believed to be contrary to the Code may be reported to the District Council's Monitoring Officer, for her investigation. In addition, all councillors are expected to take heed of the Oxfordshire authorities' guide on bias in decision-making, but that is a decision for individual councillors.

Finally, the Council would observe that it is not the "competent authority" in respect of public footpaths and other rights of way: that is the responsibility of the County Council.