

Shilton Parish Council

Minutes of Annual Council meeting on 1st December 2022 held at The Old School, Church Lane, Shilton, OX18 3AE at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr David Cuthbertson (Chair), Cllrs Andy Robertson & Donal Lowry, Sarah Royle & Parish Clerk Julie Alden.

Members of the public: 22

1. Welcome from the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. To receive or accept apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Andy Bray and County Councillor Nick Field-Johnson

3. To approve and sign minutes of Council meeting on 25th August 2022

The minutes were approved.

4. To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Matters arising from that meeting not on the agenda - none

6. To receive reports from District and County Councillors

Nicholas Field-Johnson was unable to attend but District Councillor Rosie Pearson presented a report as below:

News from WODC:

Budget: WODC is currently inviting consultation: <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/budget>

Cost of living advice: useful stuff available from WODC.

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/news-items/help-if-you-re-struggling-with-living-costs/>

Botley West Solar farm:

WODC is not the planning authority, only a consultee, but is invited to submit a Local Impact Report.

There have been events in various villages, and there is an online webinar on Monday 5 December 5pm <https://botleywest.co.uk/Consultation.html>

Waterways Day: Good attendance. Evidence that the debate has moved on. It used to be about whether or not there were discharges of untreated sewage, and whether or not they are lawful. Nowadays, thanks to the efforts of WASP and others, Thames Water does not deny them, and has started to make some real efforts to improve the situation.

Instead, the argument now is about whether or not they have paid dividends in the past 5 years. Which they claim not to have done, but were proved to have done. So the ownership structure of the water companies is being questioned.

Also, members of the public asking how we are still approving houses when Thames Water says there is insufficient capacity.

Contentious planning application for a new development in Hanborough was passed by one vote, after an impassioned plea from the ward councillor – who happens also to be the cabinet member for environment – not to allow the development on the basis of inadequate infrastructure, especially sewerage capacity.

5-year land supply – ours is at 4.1. Many councils are in similar position. “Tilted balance” means more pressure to approve, but determination not to let through low quality development. New local plan (consultation ends Oct 5th) will have lower growth expectations.

Cabinet on tour:

11 Jan Woodstock

22 March Carterton

19 April Eynsham

All at 2pm

Railway to Carterton – looks a bit more likely after the developers of Salt Cross near Eynsham approved of the idea.

Carterton growth – much talked about, nothing definite. I am keeping my eyes and ears open, and pressing for densification rather than sprawl, and also making sure that any new developments are fit for purpose and actually provide housing that is needed rather than more holiday lets.

Refugees: as you may have heard, the council was not consulted about the Witney hotel being requisitioned for those ejected from Manston. There are around 40 families at the hotel, including around 30-40 children. Donations can be made via St Mary’s Church in Witney.

Finally, because your county councillor tends only to bring negative reports about the county council, I am taking the liberty of telling you of an OCC success that will definitely have local benefits: they have been awarded a grant of £150,000 under Defra’s Woodland Creation accelerator fund. It was the best application received.

What your district councillor has been up to!

Hard to categorise, constantly busy, particularly involved in nature recovery, biodiversity, food & farming issues.

5/9: Chaired briefing at WODC on food & farming. Heard from small-scale food-growers as well as groups of farmers who are trying to aid nature recovery. Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group – Jenny Phelps – particularly helpful at helping small farmers find the right grants for encouraging wildlife and helping the environment. Importance of including food-growing in neighbourhood plans.

27/9 Attended briefing on renewable energy: the LEO project in Eynsham – setting up local energy networks in Eynsham and Osney Island in Oxford; Roadnight Taylor, based in Burford, who enable grid connections for renewable energy; Southill Community energy from Charlbury.

Have been on training to look at ways of using the planning process to improve infrastructure, and biodiversity.

On 2 scrutiny committees: not the most effective system. Scrutiny training has changed all that – feel much more confident to question the underlying principles and the practical delivery of services.

I proposed a motion for WODC to support the private members' bill known as the Climate & Ecology Bill, which is stronger than the government's Environment bill, which, in any case, they are not complying with, particularly on biodiversity. Pointed out that we cannot demand high energy and building standards with the current national laws because the inspectors override our standards. The motion passed.

Visited the SUEZ recycling plant in Birmingham and took part in discussions about the renewal of the contract and whether there should be a change in the recycling system (I'm against).

Tomorrow (2 December) I am doing training in the LandApp which helps landowners, farmers and parish councils to plan their land use. I have been part of a small group of councillors looking at how the new local plan can make space for nature, community and smaller scale renewable energy.

Policy and Finance

7. Finance update – to review and approve finance update.

See attached form.

8. Payments and receipts – to review and approve current payments and note receipts.

See attached.

9. The Council budget for 2023-24.

This was proposed for acceptance by Cllr SR, seconded by Cllr AR.

Planning

10. To comment on any planning applications received before the date of the meeting.

There were no new planning applications.

11. Update on previous planning applications

There was an application to put a new entrance on to John Holloway's property which entails removing part of the wall halfway up, due to the dangers of the current entrance on the hill. This was rejected on conservation grounds. The Beresford's application for Shilbrook House was withdrawn; conservation deemed that the proposed changes did not enhance the listed building. We did not comment. Cllr DC remarked that we need to make more comments ahead of letting the planning officer decide. There is an outstanding application that has not been decided – the Rose and Crown. We have commented on, and supported this, especially the possibility of a solution to the current parking situation, as there is an option for additional parking in the field.

Traffic

12. 20 MPH scheme

We have applied to be a part of this scheme, and we are waiting to hear back. District Councillor Pearson noted that Brize Norton had had confirmation last week. Cllr DC will see if he can get this moved along.

13. Speed Watch Group

There have been 7 sessions so far, with 56 cars speeding, and the police have been notified with registration numbers. So far the maximum speed has been 49mph. Steve Harrison noted that some signs for speedwatch can be bought. Cllr DC said that he is not sure there is a need, but that the radar works. Steve Harrison said that in response to cars speeding up the hill, the radar guns could be used to do checks for up to 20mph. Cllr AR asked if the police wrote letters in response to speeding. Steve Harrison believes so.

14. Radar device

See above.

15. Wildlife Park

Cllr DC has not been able to act on this yet, but will sort it out. Liz Lovell hoped this could be done before the traffic starts speeding through the village again. Cllr DC pointed out that there is nothing that he can do about satnav causing people to divert through Shilton, but hopefully setting the speed limit may help if the satnav picks this up.

16. Road closure Burford Road Carterton.

This will take effect from 9am until 5am between 23rd and 27th January. Cllr DC emailed the information out. John Coghlan asked what the closure was for. Cllr DC informed us that it is due to repairs.

17. Bridge street parking

There is nothing that we can do. The work on Pump House is almost finished so there may now be some respite.

Environment

18. Flood defence

The pond has been desilted. Initial impressions are that the flow away from the village and under the footbridge has significantly improved. Liz Lovell asked if the work was completed, as she has asked the workmen and they only went as far as the grassed area before the trees start. Cllr DC will talk to Tom as he has shown him the area. Cllr DC wondered if the issue was nearer to Carterton. Cllr AB is going to walk it and check. Cllr DC noted that we can't go further, as that is the responsibility of the Environment Agency. He has asked the Carterton Town Council and the Mayor to look at their responsibility regarding riparian matters. There has been an issue with water on the road – an outlet running underground to the pond is bunged up. In the schedule of work next year, this will be dug up and replaced by a larger pipe. Liz Fenner asked if Thames Water would increase pipe size throughout the village as the drain outside John and Delia's field doesn't take the water run-off. Cllr DC suspects that they won't, but also noted that Oxford County Council is responsible for drainage. Glenn Loxton recommended a website called fixmystreet where repairs and other work can be flagged and reported. Lawrence King (OCC Flooding Officer) has apparently recommended homeowners taking measures themselves, such as water butts, or directing the rainwater elsewhere. Liz Fenner raised the possibility of wifi system which is running in some villages, whereby

the water butts empty when it rains to create space. Cllr DC has investigated this and is happy if people want to get water butts. Glenn Loxton asked if there was an issue with the runway and airfield creating an obstacle to the drainage. Cllr DC said that he would look into this.

Cllr DC has a willow tree to plant but as it is too big for the triangle of grass, it will go where the poplar was. He also has a smaller tree to plant as well. Someone raised the issue that they have the stepping stone tiles from around the pond, which were removed for safekeeping when the pond work was going on. Cllr DC said that this is an Oxford County Council matter. He noted that the bin was moved for one day while the work was carried out. It has been put back further up from where the trees were.

19. Old School re-roofing

Cllr DC remarked that a super job has been done replacing the chimney, which was in a worse condition than expected, and which has incurred additional cost while the stonework was replaced and rebuilt. The roof and floor of the main hall are now fully insulated, reclaimed tiles have been fitted to the front elevation, new to others. The gully roof and all flashing are new. Pipework for a future 'wet' heating system has also been fitted under the floor, ready for connection when sufficient funds have been raised. The Old School Committee need £14,000 to complete the heating system. After all options have been considered, it is back to oil for the moment. The final flooring will go down next week – this was delayed due to supply issues.

20. Bins

There is a new bin on Scrubbs Lane, 2 at the pond and 2 in Ladburn Lane.

21. Street signs

The sign on Ladburn Lane is bent up. Cllr DC believed this was not a parish council matter, but it is. Suggestions have been made to have a 'fancier' sign, but this would require changing all of the signs around the village. This was thought to be unnecessary and needlessly expensive. Cllr CD suggests hammering the existing sign back into shape. Someone asked about the stone marker but Cllr DC advised that this is not a parish council matter as it is on John Colson's land.

Other matters

22. Opportunity for the public to speak – to provide members of the public/press with the opportunity to comment on items on the agenda or raise items for future consideration. In accordance with Standing Orders, this will not exceed 15 minutes in total and 5 minutes per person.

John Coghlan asked about the heating system for the Old School, and whether it was just pipes. He noted that Warwick Hall in Burford has a ground source heat pump. Cllr DC said that this situation was different. Catherine Beresford was concerned about not just the speed limit but the type of vehicles coming through the village. She noted a large vehicle transporter coming through the village, when access is for 7.5 tonne only. She asked if there was a way to limit larger vehicles coming in, or if the police could monitor this. Cllr DC said that this is a police matter and encouraged people to speak to them if they have concerns. The parish council has limited powers in this matter. Gillie Coghlan says that she constantly reports them already.

23. AOB

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Dr. Smith', located at the top center of the page.

24. Date of next meeting

TBC.

Meeting ended at 8.15.