

CHOLSEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting duly convened and held on Wednesday 1st March 2023 at 7.30pm at The Pavilion, Station Road, Cholsey

Present were D. Bamford (Chair), V. Bolt, J. Finch, J. Collins, G. Herbert, K. Pomlett, J. Hope-Smith, C. Worley, M. Smith (from 9.20pm)

Also present C. Bird (Clerk); District Councillor Simpson (from 7.50pm-9pm); 8 residents (children and adults) representing the Treehouse School (from 7.30pm-7.45pm); 1 resident from 7.40pm-9.45pm

Start time: 7.30pm

End time: 10pm

211. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Jenkins, Cllr Nixon, and District Cllr Murphy

212. To hear questions or comments from members of the public (max 15 mins)

Representatives of the Treehouse School attended the meeting so that five pupils could present the results of their traffic survey to the Council. The children were concerned about the number of cars driving past their school (over 200 during the 18 minute survey), the speed they are travelling, and the number of parked cars making it difficult to cross the road safely. Cllr Worley spoke about the Council's Transport Plan which is in the process of being written and suggested that they also write to County Councillor Bloomfield. The Council was very grateful to the School for carrying out this research and presenting their findings so clearly.

213. To receive Declarations of Personal and Pecuniary Interest for any agenda items

Cllr Bamford declared an interest in planning application P22/S4164/FUL, and that he would leave the meeting room for this discussion.

214. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 1st February 2023

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 1st March and they were signed by Cllr Bamford.

215. To discuss publication of Registers of Interest (Cllr Worley)

All Councillors have completed Register of Interest forms and it was noted that it is a legal requirement for these to be published on the SODC and Parish Council web site.

216. To note the Clerk's Report

a. To discuss plan for Annual Parish/Community meeting

It was agreed that a sub-group of Councillors (Cllrs Bolt, Collins and Finch) will work on a plan for the Annual Parish meeting (not to be confused with the Annual Council meeting). It will be held after 11th May and before 1st June.

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b. To discuss forthcoming elections process

The Clerk outlined the key dates in the elections process and will forward information provided by the Returning Officer to the Councillors so that they may complete and submit their nomination forms. The Clerk will also publish information about the elections and becoming a Parish Councillor on the Parish Council web site.

c. To discuss additional support from internal auditor

It was **resolved** to arrange additional training support on finance and governance issues from the internal auditor, for the Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

217. To note the Estate Manager's Report

a. To make decision on Cholsey United football pitch repairs

It was **resolved** to give permission to Cholsey United to carry out improvement works to the football pitch this summer. This will involve fencing off part of the pitch to protect the newly levelled and sown area. The Council asked the Estate Manager to find out how long this would be for, and to consider whether any village events might be affected.

b. Updates on: Ilges Lane allotment hedge; footbridge repair; Jubilee bench; Cholsey Meadows play area; Pavilion car park

It has not been possible to carry out work on the Ilges Lane allotment hedge before the nesting season and so this must be deferred until September. Bellway will ask their customer liaison to write to the residents stating that they have permission to cut the overhanging hedge from their side as necessary. The Council remain concerned about the difficulties created by the proximity of the development's fences to the hedge, which makes it very hard to maintain.

It is currently hoped that the installation of the new Millennium Wood footbridge will take place in May. This is dependent on the Environment Agency permit being secured; the application for this has been submitted by the bridge company. An area around the bridge will need to be cleared of scrub prior to installation.

The Jubilee bench donated by Cholsey 1000 Plus has been ordered.

The recent safety inspection report for Cholsey Meadows Play area is with SODC, which needs to decide whether it is in a condition fit to be transferred from the developer.

The Estate Manager and Cllr Bolt met with Cholsey Bluebirds regarding problems with parking on match days; discussions are ongoing.

218. To receive any reports from County and/or District Councillor

Cllr Simpson's report was noted with thanks.

Concerns were raised by Councillors about the need for photo ID at the forthcoming May elections. Cllr Simpson suggested that some residents may wish to consider registering for a postal vote if photo ID presents difficulties.

219. To discuss draft Transport plan (Cllr Worley)

Cllr Worley and Cllr Collins had met on 22nd February with a representative of Oxfordshire County Council Highways to discuss residents' concerns about Station Road parking fines. They discussed the possibility of the Parish Council funding a new Traffic Regulation Order

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(approximately £5300) covering Station Road, Papist Way and Wallingford Road. The process would include consultation of residents. Traffic enforcement activity would be paused during the process.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would cover the costs entailed in a TRO for this project.

Cllr Smith had asked about the possibility of changing the speed limit on Wallingford for a stepped limit to avoid a 60mph to 30mph change. This is in the draft Cholsey Parish Council Transport Plan. Cllr Worley also noted that Bellway have allocated money for the pedestrian crossing at East End; it is with OCC Highways to carry out the work.

The Terms of Reference for the Transport Working Group were approved.

Cllr Worley will next share the draft Transport Plan with the CHEC Transport group and invite them to join the Council's Transport Working Group.

It was agreed that the Working Group would focus first on a controlled pedestrian crossing on the A329 and a Twenty mph limit proposal.

220. To update on Youth Club grant (Cllr Bamford)

Unfortunately, Cholsey Youth Club has had to close in its current form. Cllr Bamford confirmed that the £5000 grant provided by the Parish Council to the Youth Club in 2022 will be returned.

221. To discuss Memorial bench request and policy

It was **resolved** to agree the Memorial bench and tree policy with minor changes. This will be made available on the Parish Council web site.

222. To approve maximum gravestone width in burial grounds (in preparation for revising burial ground regulations).

It was **resolved** to allow a maximum width of 27" for headstones for new burials. This will be included in the burial ground regulations which are currently under revision.

223. To consider planning applications as at 23rd February 2023

P23/S0339/FUL	Change of use to site a mobile home Farmyard to South East of Wallingford Road It was resolved to object on grounds of being outside the development boundary in accordance with CNP, and on grounds of change of use. The Council is unclear about the reasons for requiring a mobile home on the site for 24/7 use.
P22/S3290/HH	Dropped kerb and driveway creation 11 Crescent Way It was resolved to object on grounds of CNP H7: impact on character of the street scene.

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P22/S4164/FUL	<p>Change of use to informal private leisure use (retrospective) for open storage of non-motorised boats and a trailer storage shed Land East of Reading Road</p> <p>Cllr Bamford left the meeting room for this discussion.</p> <p>It was resolved to comment that the Council strongly discourages retrospective planning applications in the Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan. The Council requests a condition be added to the application to prevent any future change to commercial or business use.</p>
P22/S4578/HH	<p>Amendment received: proposing two smaller extensions in place of the one larger extension, with reduction of the overall height and omission of a proposed external flue The Winter Barn, 5 Abbey Close (previous objection lodged by Parish Council)</p> <p>It was resolved to continue to object on grounds of the application not being in keeping with Cholsey's Neighbourhood Plan: CNP H2 and CNP H7, general character of surrounding area and building.</p> <p>The Council has no objections to the proposed front canopy.</p>

224. To note planning decisions as at 23rd February 2023

P22/S4562/HH	Extension to existing rear extension 23 Reading Road Granted
P22/S4590/S73	S73 application, variation of condition on P20/S3618/N5B 2A Honey Lane Granted
P22/S4544/A	Signage for Winterbrook Meadows Land North of A4130 Granted

225. To approve payments

The following payments were approved:

Payments made between meetings			Notes
Library grant	22/23 donation	£3,000.00	
Castle Water	Station road allotments water	£154.55	Authorised by Finance Committee via email 20/02
Swift	Printing costs	£268.31	Authorised by Finance Committee via email 20/02
1st Class Tree Surgeons	Churchyard tree maintenance	£180.00	Authorised by Finance Committee via email 20/02
ASAP	Computer licenses	£22.56	Authorised by Finance Committee via email 20/02
Total		£3,625.42	
Payments for agreement			

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Swift	Printing costs	£6.00	Inc VAT
Play Inspection Co	Annual inspections	£175.08	Inc VAT
OALC	Training	£36.00	Inc VAT
Mulberry	Internal interim audit	£359.28	Inc VAT
Colliers	Maintenance supplies	£45.94	Inc VAT
Shield Maintenance	Dog bins - monthly charge	£156.00	Inc VAT
EC expenses	CHEC group expenses	£207.47	Inc VAT
Total		£985.77	
AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS			
Virgin media	Phone & broadband	£82.45	
Grundon	Refuse collection - churchyard	£58.75	Inc VAT
Salaries	Feb-23	£8,398.15	
Total		£8,539.35	
PAYMENTS RECEIVED 01.01.2023-30.01.2023			
TOTAL		£0.00	
PAYMENTS EXPECTED			
TOTAL		£0.00	

226. To resolve to exclude the press and public

Pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 it was **resolved** to exclude the press and public from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

227. To receive update from the Personnel Committee and agree staff salaries for 2023/2024

Cllr Finch, Vice Chair of the Personnel Committee, gave an update following a meeting of the Committee. It was **resolved** to increase staff salaries for 2023/2024 as proposed.

228. Items for report or inclusion on next agenda

Plans for the Coronation – these are being coordinated by Cholsey 1000 Plus and an organising group.

The CHEC Energy group have organised an energy-saving give away event on March 4th at the Pavilion.

Estate Manager's Report to Parish Council March 2023

Hedges

There is little to report about the meeting with Bellway on 8th February concerning the Ilges Lane allotment site hedge. Bellway will ask their customer liaison if it is possible to write to the residents concerned that they have been given permission to cut the overhanging hedge from their side. They will also ask if financial assistance could be given, but he doesn't hold out much hope.

We need to bear in mind that DEFRA states that there should not be any hedge cutting between 1st March and 31st August.

Therefore, Ilges Lane Allotment site hedge will need to be deferred until September.

St Mary's Graveyard

The split tree branch near the gate into Manor Farm's field has now been removed, although the tree surgeon advises that the whole tree is diseased and needs to be removed.

Allotments

I have offered a few plots to people on the waiting lists ready for the new rental year, and we now have 7 for Cholsey Meadows, 11 for Station Road and 4 for Ilges Lane on the waiting lists.

Invoices for the new increased annual rent, along with the new Allotment Agreement, will be sent to all tenants this month (March) for collection from 1st April.

Recreation Grounds and Play Areas.

Cholsey 1000 Plus Jubilee bench

Cholsey 1000 Plus will make a donation to the Parish Council and that the Parish Council instals and owns the bench, to be installed on Jubilee field.

A plaque to be fixed on the bench with an inscription to read: 'Commemorating the Platinum Jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth II 2022'.

All the Play Areas have now been inspected and we have received the reports resulting from these inspections.

Cholsey Meadows Play Area

The maintenance team continue to complete their weekly visual checks on the play area. The gate latch has again been broken and the maintenance team are purchasing a new latch and will repair.

A copy of the Cholsey Meadows Play area inspection report has been sent to SODC for the officer to compare with Home England/Vistry's inspection report dated March 2020. We can hope that this will aid progress for a resolution to this issue.

Station Road Play Area inspection.

The maintenance team continue to complete their visual checks on this play area.

The inspection report has highlighted a few low risk issues which can be repaired by the maintenance team. The shackles and chains on the swings etc are now showing wear and will need to be monitored and replaced in the near future.

Football Pitch Repairs

Cholsey United are asking for permission to do some work on the football pitch over the summer. They want to try and even out 1 of the sides but it would mean fencing off part of the pitch to ensure that people and grass cutting contractor keep off the newly levelled and sown area.

Bridges

Following my meeting with the Bridge company, I have learned that the Environment Agency now require an 'Ecological Assessment' to be included in an application for a permit to complete work over Cholsey Brook, designated as a river. This assessment needs to be carried out by a qualified person.

A 10m x 10m area around the bridge needs to be prepared for the installation of the bridge i.e. scrub and undergrowth removed. I have instructed our maintenance team to clear this and before the deadline of 1st March.

The height of the bridge may have to be raised because of possible flood risk and 'deflection criteria'. As a result, I will need to obtain quotes for stonework and ballast walls.

I am also trying to contact the footpaths officer for OCC as work will need to be completed on their footpath which leads up to the bridge, to ask for permission to do this. I have not had any success yet.

Trees

Since clearing an allotment plot on Station Road site, an uprooted tree has been discovered among the undergrowth, in order to be able to offer the plot to someone the tree will need to be removed and will require a tree surgeon.

Maintenance Team

The maintenance team continue to work well.

The equipment, strimmer, hedge cutter etc will need to be serviced soon, I will arrange for this to be completed at Milton Garden Machinery.

Car Parking

I am meeting with Cholsey Bluebirds and a councillor on Friday 24th February to discuss the car parking situation and other points.

Bus Stops

Papist Way

This bus stop shelter is showing it's age and requires some repair. There is rotten wood beneath the roof which needs removing and replacing. The maintenance team have assessed the problem and will undertake repairs.

The Forty

Wood and felt have been purchased to repair the roof of this bus shelter.

Tesco Litter Bin

I have spoken with the Manager at Tesco Express, who explained the reason why the litter bin was removed from outside the store. He still has the litter bin and would be prepared to contribute to the cost of having the bin emptied, but it would need to be daily as the bin was well used.

The Parish Office will enquire with our contractors about the cost of emptying daily and we will then discuss with Tesco.

Title	District Councillor's Report
Author	Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson
Parish	Cholsey Parish Council
Date	1 March 2023

Council passes 2023/2024 Budget

Action on climate change and key projects to enhance community wellbeing and support those most in need can progress thanks to South Oxfordshire District Council's improved financial position.

The council can focus on these priorities because its Cabinet has recommended councillors approve a budget for 2023/4 that shows a financial position in a healthier state than previously forecast thanks to the careful budgeting work in recent years. It also means the council needs to draw over a million pounds less from its reserves to balance the budget than it had prepared for a year ago.

To read more on our budget please click [here](#) .

Everyone will need photo ID at the local elections

The government has introduced a requirement for voters to show photo ID when voting at a polling station at some elections. This will apply for the first time in England at the local elections on Thursday 4 May 2023, so **please help spread the word in your local area.**

Accepted forms of photo ID will include, but are not limited to, passport, driving licence (including provisional license), disabled parking blue badge, certain concessionary travel cards and identity cards with PASS mark (Proof of Age Standards Scheme).

Anyone who doesn't have accepted photo ID can apply for a free voter ID document, known as a Voter Authority Certificate. The deadline to apply for ID for the local elections is 25 April.

For more information, including details on how to apply, people should visit electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID or call the Electoral Commission helpline on 0800 328 0280.

Award nomination for councils' planning websites

A dynamic new digital approach to planning has been recognised with an award nomination.

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have been shortlisted for the Digital Impact category in [the Local Government Chronicle \(LGC\) awards](#) for their work creating a digital-first approach to planning policy documents.

The councils wanted to move away from a traditional planning approach and create something engaging, easy-to-use and user-friendly.

For their Joint Design Guide, the usual pages-long document was ditched in favour of a new website, which people found easy to use and a great resource.

The same digital first approach was adopted for the Joint Local Plan consultation.

Rather than a long, text-heavy consultation document, an interactive website was created that allowed users to view maps and infographics, with survey questions embedded in the site so people could answer as they read through the different elements of the Plan.

The website was well-received by the public and was recognised by the government as a great example of a digital-first approach to planning.

This is great recognition of the hard work of our planning and communications team and well-deserved and this nomination is an added bonus after the great feedback we got and the knowledge that we've improved a service for our communities.

The LGC awards seeks to recognise and celebrate the absolute best in local government.

The award ceremony is on Thursday 8 June when the councils will discover if they have won.

- You can view [the interactive Joint Design Guide website](#)
- [The Joint Local Plan Storymaps consultation website](#) is still available to view (but the consultation has ended)

Joint Local Plan - Hundreds use new website to help shape districts' future

A new interactive website helped ensure communities had their say on the future of South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. The website was created by the two district councils to ask people their thoughts on their Joint Local Plan. The plan will help guide the councils when deciding on new housing and jobs up until 2041, as well as set policies to address climate change, environmental protection and ensure accessible community services for residents.

The new easy-to-use website made the process more engaging and interactive – when asked their views on the feedback process, about 70% of respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied. This was the first stage of consultation to gain a better understanding of the community’s priorities and concerns for the future. The results have reinforced that we’re focusing on what matters to our residents, such as protecting our countryside, taking action against climate change, and improving infrastructure.

The consultation also highlighted the challenges our districts face, such as balancing the need to provide genuine affordable housing with ensuring the landscape character and green spaces in the districts is protected.

Following the consultation, we’ve set out some principles that will guide the Joint Local Plan, differing from the last local plan:

- Working to Good Growth principles means thinking radically about how much development we plan, where it is located and how it is done.
- Rather than more of the same kind of development we’ve seen in recent years, we will focus on delivering homes to meet the actual local need.
- We will look at the number of and types of homes, their affordability and the energy efficiency standards they need to meet.
- We will use the opportunities we have through the planning system to protect nature and increase nature recovery.
- We will help tackle climate change by reducing carbon emissions, recognising this as an emergency and in line with our ambition to become zero carbon districts.
- We will focus on community health and wellbeing and locate new homes near to work places and community facilities.
- We will work hard to secure new and improved social and physical infrastructure to support development, ensuring that developers contribute a fair share of the cost.

This approach was a new one for our councils and it’s exciting to see how engaged and positively our community has responded. It has been important to us that our residents and businesses are part of this process from the beginning, to make sure the Joint Local Plan is on the right track from the very start, and these results will help guide the next stage of the process.

We are very grateful to everyone who submitted their thoughts through this initial consultation. We need everyone in our community to join in the journey to help plan and build our districts’ futures and there will be another opportunity to have your say later this year, when we will set out proposed policies and sites for development.

View the Joint Local Plan Issues Consultation Statement and find out more about the Joint Local Plan 2041 on both the councils’ websites.

- [South Oxfordshire website](#)

Household Support Fund closes but help is still available

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have now closed the Household Support Fund and are no longer accepting any new applications for this fund.

£139,615 has been made available to residents in the Vale and £142,615 to residents in South Oxfordshire to help people with the rising cost of food and energy bills. The councils each added £60,000 to funding from the county council to boost the funds available to people and provide support at a time when it's most needed.*

Applications are being processed

Applications already received are currently being processed and all applicants will be informed about whether their application has been successful or not. As there are a high volume of applicants, anyone who has not yet heard back is advised not to contact the councils or advice centres about their applications so that teams can focus on working through the applications - these are being worked through on a first come, first served basis.

Help is still available

The councils recognise that many residents are struggling due to cost-of-living pressures and although this fund has closed, support is still available through the councils' Community Hub team who offer a wide range of advice, including information on free or affordable food banks and council tax support. The Community Hub Team can also help to signpost people for debt advice and other cost-of-living support and provide information on housing support as well as guidance on how people can look after their mental health and wellbeing.

Anyone in need of support can contact our Community Hub team during office hours on 01235 422600 or they can email communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

Notes: The Household Support Fund Extension (HSF3) was announced by government in September 2022.

Oxfordshire County Council receive the Household Support Fund for the county area as the upper tier authority and make the funding available to district and city councils as appropriate for the circumstances of the area.

*Oxfordshire County Council made £79,615 available for the Household Support Fund Extension to Vale of the White Horse District Council and

£82,615 to South Oxfordshire District Council. Both district councils then added £60,000 each to help boost the funds available to help people who need it most with rising cost of food and energy bills.

Great British Spring Clean

This year we'll again be supporting the Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean by loaning litter pickers, high-viz jackets and bags to community litter picking groups and individuals. The event runs from Monday 17 March to Sunday 2 April. Equipment can be booked by completing and returning the booking form and declaration document to waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk.

The forms are available on our **South** litter picking pages. Equipment is limited so to avoid disappointment bookings should be made as soon as possible.

Bookings for litter picking equipment can be made at any point during the year, not just during The Great British Spring Clean!

Business Rates Revaluation

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has updated the rateable values of all business and other non-domestic properties in England and Wales from 1 April 2023. This process is known as Revaluation.

Revaluations are carried out to reflect changes in the property market, which means that Business Rates bills are based on more up-to-date information. For more information, see the **South** and **Vale** revaluations page on our websites

For Council news webpage with links to news pages, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and register for email alerts click [here](#)

To sign up for Planning news alerts click [here](#)

Version 1.0 Feb 2023

Cholsey Parish Council
Memorial Tree & Bench Policy

1. The Purpose of this Policy

1.1 Cholsey Parish Council occasionally receives requests from the public to donate memorial benches or plant trees. This policy sets out how we will consider such requests, who is responsible for the upkeep of these items and what is expected of the donor and the Council.

2. Legal Framework

2.1 The planting of trees, or installation of benches on land as memorials, is a private arrangement between the friends and relatives commissioning the memorial, and the landowner.

2.2 The Council can only consider applications for benches and/or trees to be installed on land in the Council's ownership. Please note that this does not include highways.

2.3 Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council must consider the effect of its decisions on crime and disorder. It may deem a location unsuitable if it may attract antisocial behaviour.

2.4 When the Council agrees to install a bench or tree, they can be paid for by the friends and family and given to the council as a donation, or paid for by the Council and a donation paid to the council to cover the costs. The costs include wildlife guards for trees and anchorage kits for benches, to which they will need to be attached.

2.5 After purchase, the tree or bench then becomes the property of the Council, and the donor does not retain any right to determine its future management. The Council will nevertheless endeavour to ensure it is properly maintained and cared for.

2.6 Usually, installing a bench will not be subject to planning permission, restrictive covenants, or other restrictions. However, there may be cases where the Council is unable to install benches for such reasons.

3. Determining Requests

3.1 Applications for a memorial bench or tree should be made by completing and signing the 'Memorial tree or bench application form', available by contacting the Parish Council office. The application form should be accompanied by a plan or photograph, clearly showing the preferred location for the item. We recommend that details for a second contact are also given.

3.2 Requests will be considered by the Parish Council at its next practicable Full Council meeting. The Council will endeavour to accommodate any reasonable requests for planting of trees or installation of memorial benches on Council owned land. Requests may not be approved if the location is unsuitable due to issues such as, but not restricted to, risk of vandalism, anti-social behaviour, overcrowding of trees or benches, or any other material factors.

3.3 The Council will stipulate the style and material of the bench to be installed to ensure that all benches are sympathetic to the surroundings. All benches are to be installed using an anchorage kit.

3.4 Once Council has approved the request in principle, the Estate Manager and a councillor will endeavour to meet with the donor to agree the location of the bench or tree.

3.5 The Council will liaise with the donor regarding their donation to the Council. If the Council are purchasing the bench or tree, on receipt of payment of the donation the Council will then arrange

for the bench or tree to be ordered and installed. If the donor is organising payment and ordering then they are to liaise with the Estate Manager to agree access and a suitable delivery time

3.6 The species and size of tree will need to be agreed with the Estate Manager. Tree planting will usually only be permitted between late autumn and early spring, in line with the optimum planting season. Appropriate tree guards should also be installed to protect the tree from wildlife.

3.7 The Council's contractors will endeavour to complete the work of within a period of three months.

3.8 Scattering or burying of ashes on Council owned land is not permitted.

3.9 The inscription on any memorial plaque (for benches) will be restricted to "In (Loving) Memory of" the name of the person and the dates of birth and death.

3.10 Memorial plaques on benches must be made of material specified by the Council, with engraved lettering, of landscape orientation and must not exceed 11cm X 7.5 cm. The plaque is to be fitted by the bench supplier or a Council contractor to the centre of the uppermost slat of the back of the bench.

3.11 Memorial plaques are not permitted on trees on council property.

3.12 The Council will give priority to residents of Cholsey Parish Council.

3.13 Memorial requests can only be made for humans, not pets or otherwise.

4. Donation

4.1 The donor makes a donation to cover the cost of the bench and anchorage kit/tree and wildlife guard, including delivery and installation costs.

4.2 A one-off contribution towards maintenance costs for the bench(es) may be made by the donor. The suggested donation to cover maintenance will be reviewed by the Council from time to time and will cover the following:

- a) Annual inspection of the bench to determine whether any repairs or maintenance is required.
- b) Any repairs will be undertaken as identified and required unless the bench is no longer viable.

4.3 Tree planting will be carried out as arranged with the Estate Manager. If the tree is to be planted by the Council's contractors, the cost will be payable by the donor.

5. Maintenance

5.1 The Council will only source good quality, durable benches and will endeavour to maintain and care for donated benches and trees. However, it cannot guarantee their condition.

5.2 Donors should be aware that benches or young trees in public areas may be subject to vandalism or theft, and that the Council will not be held responsible for any costs in replacing them.

5.3 The Council shall endeavour to maintain and care for a memorial bench or tree for as long as possible. However, it reserves the right to re-site or remove any tree or bench that it deems to be unsafe, beyond repair or for other reasons.

5.4 If a memorial bench is removed, any memorial plaque will be retained, if possible, awaiting collection by the donor. The Council will endeavour to contact the donor, using the details provided, to arrange collection. If the plaque remains uncollected after a period of 12 months, it will be disposed of.

5.5 It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the Council if your address or contact details change. Your original application form and any subsequent contact details will be kept on file for the lifespan of the donated bench plus one year.

5.6 Placing of flowers, statues, vases, toys wreaths or other items will not be permitted at the site of the memorial bench or tree, or elsewhere on the Council's property. Any such items will be collected and efforts will be made to contact the applicant. Any items which have not been collected after a period of 28 days will be disposed of. Any flowers will be disposed of.

5.7 The Council may occasionally resolve to attach items to trees on its property where it considers this is sympathetic to the surroundings. Notwithstanding this, the Council will not consent to memorials or other items being attached to trees by others on its property.

5.8 The donor, or their representatives, shall not be permitted to undertake any maintenance of the memorial bench or tree, as it will be the property of the Council. Should they notice maintenance is required, this should be reported to the Parish Council office.

5.9 Replacement of any plaque must be requested by contacting the Parish Council prior to removing and replacing.

6. Requests for information should be sent to: Clerk at Cholsey Parish Council, The Pavilion, Station Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire, OX10 9PT. clerk@cholseyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Policy Adopted on: 1st March 2023

Next review due: 1st March 2024