

# CHOLSEY PARISH COUNCIL

## **Minutes of the meeting of Cholsey Parish Council duly convened and held on Wednesday 12th July 2023 at 7.30pm at The Pavilion, Station Road, Cholsey**

**Present were** Cllr D. Bamford, Cllr J. Finch, Cllr G. Herbert, Cllr P. Jenkins, Cllr L. Nixon (Chair), Cllr K. Pomlett, Cllr C. Worley, Cllr M. Smith (from 7.45pm)

**Also present** C. Bird (Clerk), one member of the public (7.30-7.45pm)

Start time: 7.30pm

End time: 9.50pm

### **52. To receive apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr V. Bolt, Cllr J. Collins, Cllr Hope Smith, SODC Cllr A. Simpson and SODC Cllr B. Manning

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

A resident attended the meeting to talk about using the recreation ground skatepark - in particular the benefits for exercise and learning, and the sense of supportive community among those who use the skatepark, young and old.

He was concerned that he had recently experienced verbal abuse from a resident who was unhappy that he was using the skatepark at approximately 6.45am on a Sunday morning. He is aware of concerns from neighbouring residents about the skatepark and asked how the Council is responding.

Cllr Nixon explained that the Council is continuing to look at options and will be meeting the local PCSOs in early August. The households nearest the skatepark have expressed concern about antisocial behaviour, particularly in the evening and into the night. A particular group of users bring lights and music to the facility.

The Council thanked the resident for coming to the meeting to share his views.

### **54. To receive any reports from County and/or District Councillor**

The District Councillor's report received by email was noted.

### **55. To receive Declarations of Personal and Pecuniary Interest for any agenda items**

There were none.

### **56. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023**

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June and they were signed by Cllr Nixon.

### **57. To receive update from the Annual Community meeting subgroup on community engagement activities and discuss next steps in the strategic plan process**

Councillors have visited both village schools (Treehouse and Cholsey Primary) to gather feedback from the children. Further engagement activities are planned including at the Community Larder, with the WI, at the Village show on 19th August and at the Great Hall on 21st September.

Residents' feedback received so far will be reviewed at the August Parish Council meeting.

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### **58. To note the Clerk's Report (verbal)**

#### **a. To note items of correspondence and agree next actions**

Correspondence had been received via Facebook on i) the use of bonfires on allotments and ii) late June verge cutting.

Cllr Herbert suggested that the Council should not allow burning of materials on the three allotment sites, due to likelihood of very dry conditions increasing in the summer, and health hazards for residents living nearby with breathing difficulties.

A review of the policy and decision regarding allotment bonfires will be added to a future agenda.

It was proposed to review the verge-cutting contract for 2024/2025 (urban and rural) and to consider asking the contractor not to cut a small number of areas that have particular value for nature, provided they can be cost effectively maintained through other means. Cllr Herbert will investigate sources of grant funding available for mapping such areas.

#### **b. To approve full Council meeting dates for the remainder of 2023/2024**

The following dates were confirmed. The Clerk will find out whether it is possible for the Council to meet on certain dates at the Great Hall, Cholsey Meadows.

23rd August 2023

13th September 2023

4th October 2023

25th October 2023

15th November 2023

6th December 2023

#### **c. To discuss any items arising from the OALC June Update newsletter and SODC June Parish newsletter**

Cllr Nixon highlighted a number of grants and training opportunities in the OALC Update newsletter. Cllr Smith has recently used the planning surgery session offered by SODC and found this very valuable.

### **59. To note the Estate Manager's Report**

The Clerk gave an update on various estate items on behalf of the Estate Manager:

- The flower bed at the front of the Pavilion will be weeded in preparation for planting with perennials.
- The Estate Manager will prepare a hedge management plan for consideration at the next full Council meeting
- The Environmental Coordinator and Estate Manager have been working on a recreation ground management plan for discussion at the next full Council meeting
- Allotment plots have been inspected and letters to plot holders will be sent where work is needed
- Cholsey Meadows play area – since the April meeting between the developer Vistry,

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SODC and the Parish Council, the Clerk has been chasing Vistry regularly and is hopeful that the necessary repair works will now be carried out by the developer. This will then enable transfer of the play area to the Parish Council via SODC, should the Parish Councillors decide to approve this.

- Millennium footpath bridge – following the mistakes made by the bridge contractor in the Environment Agency permit application process, the Council's agreement with the bridge contractor has been terminated and the deposit returned. A new contractor has been found and the EA permit is now being worked on in-house by the Estate Manager. We have been informed that a bespoke permit application is required because the surrounding area is a protected habitat and species location (deciduous woodland and water vole).

It was unanimously **resolved** to accept the quote of £1,380 plus VAT from Barry Robson to construct a footbridge, replacing like with like.

- A self-seeded sycamore tree on an allotment plot at Ilges Lane needs to be removed as it has become too large.

It was unanimously **resolved** to secure the services of a tree surgeon to remove the tree.

- It was agreed that it would not be a financially wise decision to claim on the Council's insurance for the recent theft of two power tools, given the likely effect on the insurance premium in the following year.
- The current Maintenance team have decided to step down due to other commitments. The Clerk and Estate Manager will advertise the position and ensure that the job description is up to date.

### **60. To receive update from the Transport Working Group (Cllr Worley)**

Cllr Worley will contact OCC to ask for the public consultation on a pedestrian crossing on the Reading Road to go ahead.

Cllr Worley is working on an updated proposal for the parking review and will bring this to full Council.

### **61. Finance**

#### **a. To receive update from the Finance Committee (Cllr Bamford)**

The Finance Committee met on 10th July and draft minutes will be published on the Council web site. Cllr Bamford will continue as Chair of the Finance Committee which meets quarterly. Other committee members are Cllr Collins, Cllr Pomlett and Cllr Worley, with the Clerk and Assistant Clerk/RFO attending meetings as officers.

The Committee is working on an updated financial risk assessment for full Council to review.

Expenditure for the first quarter of 2023/2024 is on track, with one key unbudgeted spend on the skatepark noise survey.

A CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) payment of approx. £136K has been received in connection with Poppy Fields phase 2. This has been moved to a separate CIL Projects account. CIL has most recently been spent on Happy Hub roof blinds, library lighting and thermostat upgrades in the Pavilion building. The strategic plan under development will be

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important for informing how remaining CIL money is spent.

Given the level of reserves, particularly CIL, currently held by the Council, a review of banking providers is prudent. The Finance Committee will develop an investment strategy and a proposal for revised banking arrangements for consideration by full Council.

### **b. To approve payments made and note payments received**

The payments were approved.

### **62. To consider planning applications as at 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

P23/S1460/A	Two non-illuminated advertising displays New Barn Farm Quarry It was <b>resolved</b> to make no comment.
P23/S2115/HH	Demolition of conservatory and rebuild Riverside, Reading Road It was <b>resolved</b> to make no comment.
P23/S2070/HH	Erection of outbuilding The Hazels, 12 Church Road It was <b>resolved</b> to make no comment.

### **63. To note planning decisions as at 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

P23/S0339/FUL	Change of use: farmland siting of mobile home, Farmyard to South East of Wallingford Road, <b>Granted by SODC</b>
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### **64. Items for report or inclusion on future agenda**

CHEC Energy group Draughtbusters project  
August meeting with PCSOs  
Transport plan update  
Emergency plan  
Leavesley appeal and Neighbourhood Plan  
Cholsey Community Support Services inc. Happy Hub - update on CIC proposal  
The need for clearing of drains/gulleys by OCC  
Broken fencing between church and school  
Car park improvement works (this is dependent on parish office team workload)  
Closure of Westfield Road for filming 21 August

Strategic plan writing process  
Councillor bios for the web site  
uWatch

Next meeting of full Council: 7.30pm, 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023, The Pavilion