

CHOLSEY PARISH COUNCIL

To all members of the Council, you are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of Cholsey Parish Council on Wednesday 4th October 2023 at 7.30pm to be held at The Pavilion, Station Road, Cholsey for the purpose of transacting the following business.

28th September 2023
Claire Bird, Clerk to the Council

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive Declarations of Personal and Pecuniary Interest for any agenda items
3. To hear questions or comments from members of the public (max 15 mins)
4. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2023
5. To receive any reports from County and/or District Councillor
6. To note the Clerk's Report (verbal)
7. To review and agree any changes to the Allotment bonfire policy
8. To receive update from the Transport Working Group (Cllr Worley)
 - a. To agree whether to apply for an SODC grant towards a possible recreation ground footpath project
9. To receive update from Cllr Finch on an outdoor gym proposal and agree whether to spend CIL funds on this project
10. To discuss the 5-year Strategic plan – preparing the first draft
11. Finance
 - a. To note conclusion of external Audit
 - b. To approve payments made and note payments received

12. To agree responses to planning applications as at 27th September 2023

P23/S2977/HH	Two storey side extension and single storey front extension 40 Crescent Way
P23/S2710/HH	Single storey side extension 29 Honey Lane
P23/S3015/RM	Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval for new detached dwelling Land to rear/side of 75 Honey Lane

13. To note planning decisions as at 27th September 2023

P23/S2070/HH	Erection of outbuilding The Hazels, 12 Church Road Granted by SODC
P23/S2553/LB	Installation of Air source heat pump Kentwood House, 81 Station Road Granted by SODC

14. Items for information or inclusion on future agenda

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Minutes of the meeting of Cholsey Parish Council duly convened and held on Wednesday 13th September 2023 at 7.30pm at The Pavilion, Station Road, Cholsey

Present were Cllr Bolt (Chair), Cllr J. Collins, Cllr G. Herbert, Cllr Hope Smith, Cllr K. Pomlett, Cllr C. Worley

Also present were C. Bird (Clerk), V. Beardall Richards (Environmental Coordinator 7.30-9pm), SODC Cllr A-M. Simpson (7.30-8pm), two members of the public (7.30-7.50pm)

Start time: 7.30pm

End time: 10.15pm

79. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr D. Bamford, Cllr J. Finch, Cllr P. Jenkins, Cllr L. Nixon and Cllr Smith.

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

None received.

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

Two members of public (a Station Rd allotment holder and a resident living next to the Ilges Lane allotments) attended the meeting to speak about item 8b, the Allotment bonfire policy.

82. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd August 2023

Approved with amendment to Minute 74, paragraph 3 which will read:

'Cllr Worley and Cllr Collins had discussed the Oxfordshire County Council's Community EV Microhubs Scheme – they felt that chargers in the Pavilion car park would not necessarily benefit Cholsey residents and should not be a priority at this time. Councillors suggested that the Clerk forward details to the Cholsey Meadows Management Company.'

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

SODC Cllr Simpson's report was noted with thanks.

84. To note the Clerk's Report (verbal), in particular:

a. To discuss and agree process for filling two Councillor vacancies

It was agreed that the Clerk would draft a Councillor advert to include the skills and experience that the Council would particularly like to prioritise. The Clerk will promote the two Councillor vacancies, including at the Cholsey Meadows residents event on 21st September.

b. To discuss and agree the Clerk enrolling on CiLCA training

It was unanimously **resolved** to spend £750-£1000 on enrolment and training for the Clerk to complete CiLCA. The CiLCA qualification involves approximately 200 hours of study and coursework and must be completed within a year of enrolment. It was agreed that up to 100 hours of this time would be paid as overtime for the Clerk if required.

c. To discuss any items arising from the OALC August Update newsletter and SODC August Parish newsletter

It was agreed to publicise the Fix My Street super user role and to explore the TOE Environmental grant and Defibrillator funding further.

85. To receive update from the Staffing Committee, in particular:

a. To agree the appointment of a new Maintenance Person

It was **resolved** on the recommendation of the Staffing Committee to appoint Antony Swiatoniowski as the new Maintenance Person.

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b. To agree to adopt new contract templates and staff handbook prepared in consultation with GAP HR (appended)

It was **resolved** to adopt the new contract templates and staff handbook with one amendment to dependency leave arrangements (to be unpaid) and subject to sick pay arrangements (in addition to SSP) being reviewed and agreed with the Staffing Committee. The Council wishes to thank GAP HR for working with the Clerk to produce these detailed documents.

86. To note the Estate Manager's Report, in particular:

a. To agree the Recreation Ground Management plan (appended)

It was **resolved** to adopt the Recreation Ground Management plan with the following additions:

- an introductory section to explain the plan's aims and set it in context
- detail of arrangements for grass cutting, litter and dog waste management
- cross references to hedge and tree management plans where applicable

Cllr Worley asked about maintenance of the mounds around the skatepark – there is some wear from use. The Clerk will catch up with the Estate Manager on this when she is back in the office.

b. To review and agree any changes to the Allotment bonfire policy

It was agreed that this topic would be deferred until the next full Council meeting so that Councillors can consider input from residents and allotment holders.

c. To agree a Hedge Management plan for the next 3 years (appended)

It was **resolved** to adopt the Hedge Management plan with a few minor edits to clarify hedge locations and the agreed management actions.

It was agreed that the aim is for the Maintenance Person to maintain the hedges where possible using Council-owned equipment, but that where work needed is significant, an external contractor will be used.

It was agreed that the Ilges Lane allotment hedge has reached the stage where it needs to be coppiced and that this should be carried out in three stages to minimise impact on nature and residents. The Clerk will liaise with the Estate Manager and Maintenance Person to decide whether this work can be undertaken by the Maintenance Person or an external contractor. It was unanimously **resolved** to pay the estimated costs of £5700 for an external contractor to coppice the hedge if this is deemed necessary.

The Clerk will find out whether there are plans to re-plant the hedge that has been removed from the tennis court boundary.

d. To discuss the Cholsey Meadows Youth and Community Garden Project

It was agreed that this topic would be deferred until the next full Council meeting as the Council is awaiting more information from the proposer.

e. To discuss litter bins in the recreation ground

Cllr Worley proposed that the Council consider removing the litter bins and replacing with signs asking users to take their litter home. There was concern that this could result in more rubbish being left on the recreation ground. Cllr Collins proposed a combined approach – leaving the bins in place for now and introducing signage.

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87. To receive update from the Transport Working Group (Cllr Worley)

a. To agree response to the East End 20mph speed limit Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) consultation

It was **resolved** to support the East End 20mph speed limit proposal.

b. To discuss traffic calming on A329

Cllr Worley and Cllr Collins are meeting with OCC representatives on 27th September and will raise ideas including changes to the layby slip roads and electronic signage.

c. To agree whether to express an interest in the OCC EV Microhubs Scheme

The Clerk shared further information provided by OCC about the potential demand for community EV chargers from residents.

It was unanimously **resolved** to work with the Cholsey Meadows Management Company to express an interest on behalf of the Cholsey Meadows site. Cllr Worley will contact CMMC.

It was unanimously **resolved** not to express an interest in the scheme for the Cholsey Pavilion carpark due to continued concern that this would not benefit local residents.

88. Finance

a. To approve payments made and note payments received

The payments were approved.

89. To agree responses to planning applications as at 6th September 2023

P23/S2856/HH	Single storey rear extension, front porch, internal reconfigurations 35 Crescent Way It was resolved to support the application.
P23/S2932/HH	Single storey side extension Mulberry House, Caps Lane It was resolved to make no comment.

90. To note planning decisions as at 6th September 2023

P23/S1751/HH	Rear extension and porch 47 Ilges Lane Granted by SODC
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91. Items for information or inclusion on future agenda

Thames Water bathing water status submission – to be submitted by Cllr Hope Smith

The Draughtbusters project is underway – Cllr Herbert is leading for CPC

Leavesley appeal – Cllr Pomlett reported that a response to a letter from the Secretary of State requesting more information will shortly be submitted by the Rule 6 team on behalf of the Parish Council. We continue to defend the Neighbourhood Plan from this speculative planning application.

Allotment bonfire policy
Youth and Community Garden Project

Next meeting of full Council: 7.30pm, 4th October 2023, The Pavilion

Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate 2022/23

In respect of

Cholsey Parish Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it does not provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>.

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2023; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors

2 External auditor report 2022/23

Except for the matters reported below on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with the Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

The Council has answered 'Yes' to Assertion 3 on the Annual Governance Statement. The Annual Internal Audit Report has noted a 'No' response to control objectives L and N with regards to publication of the annual financial information online. The council is required under regulation 13(2)(b) of the Accounts and Audit Regulation 2015 to upload this information to its website for public access. As a result, we expected a 'No' response to Assertion 3 on the Annual Governance Statement.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

The Council's name was not entered on Section 2 of the Annual Return on the initial submission. We consider the omissions to be trivial, however, the Parish Council should take care to ensure the form is fully completed in the future to ensure full compliance with the regulations and code of practice. This was also raised on last year's External Audit report.

Figures included in the 2022 column of Section 2 did not agree to those included on the 2022 audited AGAR. When queried the clerk explained these numbers had been restated due to an error being identified in the prior year figures. The AGAR initially submitted to us did not mark these numbers as restated and so has been resubmitted to clearly show the restatement and also published to the website.

3 External auditor certificate 2022/23

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

External Auditor Name

 MOORE

External Auditor Signature



Date

17/09/2023

Date of meeting....04.10.2023...

Signatures of authorising
councillors:

**PLEASE NOTE & SIGN THE RECONCILED BANK STATEMENT AND
REPORT AS AT 31.08.2023**

Payments made between meetings			
Screwfix	Padlock for bin store	£7.69	Paid by d.card.
Screwfix	Safety boots for new Maintenance Person	£57.98	Paid by d.card. £34.99 refunded on account since due to return.
SLCC	Clerk AI training	£18.00	Paid by d.card.
SLCC	Clerk CiLCA training	£300.00	Previously approved by Council. Minute ref 2023/84b
Village Van Services	Relocation of park benches	£20.00	Authorised by The Clerk.
	TOTAL	£403.67	
Automatic payments			
Gap HR	HR support	£56.40	Inc VAT
Staff salaries	Sept 2023 salaries	£5,469.17	Net Pay
Nest	Sept 2023 pensions	£131.12	
Grundon	Waste collection - burial ground	£64.85	Invoices for £8.28 & £56.57 added together on the bank statement
Virgin media	Phone & broadband	£82.62	No invoice due to problems with our online account
	TOTAL	£5,804.16	
Payments for agreement			
J.Drewe Landscaping	Grass cutting	£1,794.98	Inc VAT
Moore	External audit fees	£1,008.00	Inc VAT
Hemmingway	Monthly payroll fees	£45.00	Inc VAT
Shield Maintenance	Dog bins	£169.00	Inc VAT
	TOTAL	£3,016.98	
<u>Income received</u>			
Burial fees		£300.00	
	TOTAL	£300.00	
<u>Income expected</u>			
	TOTAL	£0.00	