

## CHOLSEY PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Annual meeting of Cholsey Parish Council duly convened and held on Wednesday 8th May 2024 at 7.15pm at The Pavilion, Station Road, Cholsey

**Present were** Cllr D. Bamford, Cllr V. Bolt, Cllr J. Collins, Cllr J. Finch, Cllr G. Herbert, Cllr J. Hope-Smith (from 7.30pm), Cllr L. Nixon (Chair), Cllr K. Ofield, Cllr S. Raisey-Skeats, Cllr M. Smith

**Also present were** C. Bird (Clerk), SODC Cllr A.M. Simpson (7.15-7.30pm)

Start time 7.20pm

End time 9.10pm

#### **1. To elect the Chair of the Council and to receive the Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

It was unanimously **resolved** to elect Cllr Lis Nixon as Chair of the Council. Cllr Nixon signed the declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of the Clerk. The Council expressed their thanks to Cllr Nixon for her work in her first year as Chair.

#### **2. To elect the Vice Chair of the Council and to receive the Vice Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

The Council expressed their appreciation to Cllr Bolt for her many years of service as Vice Chair of the Parish Council

It was unanimously **resolved** to elect Cllr Finch as Vice Chair of the Council. Cllr Finch signed the declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of the Clerk.

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

Apologies were accepted from Cllr P. Jenkins.

Cllr Miners has resigned from his role of Parish Councillor. The Clerk will arrange a notice of casual vacancy.

The Parish Council currently has 11 of 13 Councillor seats filled and therefore two Councillor vacancies.

#### **4. Public participation session: to hear questions or comments from members of the public (maximum 15 mins)**

There were none.

#### **5. To receive Declarations of Personal or Pecuniary Interest for any agenda items (*note, this does not preclude later declarations*)**

There were none.

#### **6. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 17th April 2024 (Appendix A) and receive update on any Minute items**

The Clerk noted an error in Minute 209 of the draft Minutes: this should read 'Church Road' not 'Station Road'. The corrected Minute therefore reads:

'It was **resolved** to undertake a short survey of the community to establish whether the construction of an all-weather path across the Recreation Ground would be supported by residents. The Clerk will produce a draft version with the aim of starting the survey at the Annual Community Meeting. Cllrs Bolt, Finch and Raisey-Skeats will work with Council employees on this project.

It was discussed that it is not feasible for the path to be routed to the back entrance of Cholsey Primary School due to seasonal flooding of the School's playing field. It was therefore agreed that, if this project proceeds, the path would need to be routed from the Pavilion entrance of the Recreation Ground to the Church Road entrance of the Recreation Ground.'

It was **resolved** to approve the corrected Minutes of the meeting held on 17th April and they were signed by Cllr Nixon.

#### **7. To receive any reports from County and/or District Councillors**

The SODC Councillors' report was noted with thanks.

#### **8. To receive the minutes and recommendations from the last meeting of the Finance Committee, held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 (Appendix B), in particular:**

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- a) **To agree transfers to Ear-marked and General Reserves**
- b) **To agree to transfer the CIL bank account to a new provider**

The draft Minutes of the 1st May 2024 Finance Committee meeting were noted.

Cllr Bamford, Chair of the Finance Committee, highlighted that the Council's 2023/2024 year-end balance is +£28,322 compared with the budgeted +£10,908, due to spending below budget in a number of areas.

It was therefore unanimously **resolved** to proceed with transfers from the current account to Ear-marked and General Reserves, as recommended by the Finance Committee:

Movements to Ear-marked reserves:

Pavilion: £15,000

Trees/hedges: £9000 – for anticipated work due to 2024 tree survey

Burial ground maintenance: £1250

Professional fees: £500 – for anticipated solicitor fees

Open space maintenance: £500

Skatepark maintenance: £600

Movement to General reserves: approx. £1.5K

It was unanimously **resolved** to proceed with the Finance Committee's recommendation to transfer the CIL Projects bank account to a new provider. The Responsible Finance Officer will open two new Nationwide accounts for the Council – a 35 day notice account (to hold c.£100K of CIL funds), and a 1 year saver (to hold c.£250K).

The Council expressed their thanks to the Responsible Finance Officer and Clerk for their financial management and detailed reporting.

### **9. To receive the minutes from the last meeting of the Staffing Committee, held on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (Appendix C)**

The draft Minutes of the 28th February 2024 Staffing Committee meeting were noted.

### **10. To approve Terms of References for the following Committees/Working Groups:**

- a) **Finance Committee (Appendix D)**
- b) **Staffing Committee (Appendix E)**
- c) **Transport Working Group (Appendix F)**
- d) **Station Working Group (Appendix G)**
- e) **Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group (Appendix H)**

It was **resolved** to approve the Finance Committee, Staffing Committee and Station Working Group Terms of Reference.

It was agreed that the Transport Working Group and Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group Terms of Reference require review. The Clerk will work with the relevant Councillors on this and any draft amendments will be brought to a future meeting of Council for consideration.

### **11. To appoint members to serve on the following Committees/Working Groups:**

- a) **Finance Committee *Previously: DB, JC, MS***

It was **resolved** that Cllr Bamford, Cllr Collins and Cllr Smith continue to serve on the Finance Committee. Cllr Jenkins had indicated in the 1<sup>st</sup> May Finance Committee meeting that he would be willing to join the Committee. It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Jenkins to the Finance Committee as the fourth member.

- b) **Staffing Committee *Previously: JF, VB, GH***

It was **resolved** that Cllr Bolt and Cllr Herbert continue to serve on the Staffing Committee. Cllr Finch will step down from the Committee following her appointment as Vice-Chair of the Council. It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Ofield to the Staffing Committee as the third member.

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### **c) Transport Working Group *Previously: JC NEED ONE MORE MEMBER***

It was **resolved** that Cllr Collins continue to serve on the Transport Working Group. It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Raisey-Skeats to the Transport Working Group as the second Councillor member.

### **d) Station Working Group *Previously: JC, JF, KO***

It was **resolved** that Cllr Collins, Cllr Finch and Cllr Ofield continue to serve on the Station Working Group.

### **e) Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group *Previously: GH, JC, JHS***

It was **resolved** that Cllr Collins, Cllr Herbert and Cllr Hope-Smith continue to serve on the Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group.

### **f) Planning Lead(s) *Previously: PJ, MS***

It was **resolved** that Cllr Jenkins and Cllr Smith continue to act as Planning Leads for the Council.

## **12. To approve and adopt the following**

- a) **Standing Orders for Cholsey Parish Council (Appendix I)**
- b) **Financial Regulations for Cholsey Parish Council (Appendix J)**
- c) **Code of Conduct (Appendix K)**
- d) **Complaints procedure (Appendix L)**
- e) **Publication scheme (Appendix M)**
- f) **GDPR Data Protection Policy (Appendix N)**
- g) **Employment policies and procedures (Appendix O)**

It was **resolved** to approve and adopt the above Council policies and procedures which have all been reviewed during the past year. It was noted that new Model Financial Regulations have recently been published by NALC. The Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer will review and adapt these for Council's consideration at a future meeting.

## **13. To confirm Parish Council Representatives to:**

- a) **Pavilion Trust *Previously: VB, JF***
- b) **Cholsey 1000 Plus *Previously: VB***
- c) **CCDT *Previously: JC***
- d) **Grundon *Previously: DB***
- e) **Defibrillator checking *Previously: JF***

It was **resolved** that the existing Council representatives on the above organisations continue in their roles.

## **14. To review arrangements with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses**

- a) **Grass cutting (J. Drewe) and verge cutting (Oxfordshire County Council and BGG)**
- b) **Waste services (Shield Group; Grundon)**
- c) **HR consultant (GAP HR)**
- d) **Payroll accountants (Power Team accountants)**
- e) **Office rental (Cholsey Pavilion Trust)**
- f) **Finance and allotment software (Rialtas)**
- g) **Internal auditor (Mulberry Local Authority Services)**
- h) **Phone and Broadband (Virgin Media)**
- i) **HCI gov.uk domain**

The above arrangements were reviewed and approved to continue.

It was noted that ASAP (IT Support) should be added to the list of ongoing arrangements. The Council's contract with ASAP was approved to continue in 2024/2025.

## **15. To note that this Council is not eligible for General Power of Competence; Local Government Act 1972 Section 137 spending is applicable, with a limit of £10.81 per elector in 2024/2025**

The Council's GPC status and Section 137 spending limit were noted.

## **16. To review the Council's asset register (Appendix P)**

The Council's asset register was reviewed. Work is ongoing to add all insurance replacement values e.g. for the Forty war memorial. Cllr Smith asked the Clerk to ascertain the ownership of the entry signs into the village.

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### 17. To agree arrangements for the Council's insurance cover

It was unanimously **resolved** to cancel the Council's cover with Hiscox, and to accept Zurich's insurance quote for a 3-year premium at £3190.49 per year, subject to their Long Term Agreement details.

### 18. To review Council and/or staff memberships to other bodies

- a) OALC: £954 inc. VAT
- b) SLCC (Clerk's membership): £55
- c) Information Commissioners Office: £35
- d) Community First Oxfordshire: £70
- e) Parish Online: £192 inc. VAT
- f) Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management: £100 inc. VAT
- g) National Allotment Society: £66 inc. VAT
- h) Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Plans Alliance: £50

The above arrangements were reviewed and approved to continue.

### 19. To review Council's expenditure in 2023/2024 incurred under S137 of the Local Government Act (Appendix Q)

The s137 expenditure report for 2023/2024 was noted.

### 20. To agree dates of ordinary meetings of the Full Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council

The following meeting dates were agreed: 5th June, 26th June, 17th July, and then from 18th September 2024 on the third Wednesday of the Month (all meetings to start at 7.15pm at Cholsey Pavilion or the Great Hall as advertised)

The Clerk will work on a draft scheme of delegation for the Council's consideration, including for Planning application comments.

### 21. To note Clerk's report (verbal) including:

#### a) Annual Community meeting preparation

Preparations are almost complete for the Annual Community meeting, including materials on the Strategic Plan, environment initiatives, community growing, allotments, play/leisure, emergency plan, and transport.

A community survey for the possible all-weather Recreation Ground path project will be launched at the Community meeting. Cllr Finch approved the draft survey on behalf of the subgroup working on this project.

The Clerk confirmed that the individuals who had been camping on the Recreation Ground have moved on following a verbal and written warning, and with the assistance of SODC Housing. The site has been cleaned up by the Parish Council's waste contractor, Shield; no hazardous materials of concern were found.

### 22. Finance

#### a) To approve 2023/2024 year-end accounts (Appendix R)

It was unanimously **resolved** to approve the 2023/2024 year-end accounts. The surplus of c.£28K was noted; the Finance Committee had received a detailed explanation of variances against budget from the RFO and Clerk (see 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 Finance Committee draft Minutes).

#### b) To note the reconciled bank balances as at 31st March 2024 (Appendix S)

The reconciled bank balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 were noted.

#### c) To confirm cheque and banking signatories *At present: DB, VB, JC*

It was agreed that Cllrs Bamford, Bolt and Collins will continue as banking signatories and will be joined by Cllr Nixon.

#### d) To approve new payments and note payments received (Appendix T)

The payments were approved and signed by Cllr Herbert and Cllr Ofield.

#### e) To agree whether to spend up to £1000 on replacing internal Parish Office window

It was resolved (with one abstention) to spend up to £1000 on replacing the internal Parish Office window to reduce draughts/heat loss from the office in cold weather. Cllr Smith will look into options for draught proofing.

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### 23. To consider planning applications as at 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024

P24/S1170/HH	Hip to gable loft conversion, 34 Papist Way  It was <b>resolved</b> to comment that in line with policy CNP H7, confirmation is required that sufficient parking will be available with an increase in number of bedrooms (increase three to four)
P24/S1169/HH	Hip to gable loft conversion, 32 Papist Way  It was <b>resolved</b> to comment that in line with policy CNP H7, confirmation is required that sufficient parking will be available with an increase in number of bedrooms (increase three to four)
P24/S1275/HH	Vehicle access change, Fairways, Church Road  It was <b>resolved</b> to comment that in line with Policy CNP H7, confirmation is required that sufficient parking will be available once works complete
P24/S1223/HH	Single storey rear extension, 18 Rothwells Close  It was <b>resolved</b> to make no comment on this application.
P24/S1380/HH	Single storey rear extension and garage conversion, 6 Goldfinch Lane  It was <b>resolved</b> to comment that in line with Policy CNP H7, as the garage will no longer be available, confirmation is required that sufficient parking will be available once works are complete.

### 24. To note planning decisions as at 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024

P24/S0610/HH	Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension 5 Cross Road <b>Granted by SODC</b>
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### 25. Items for report or inclusion on next agenda

Internal auditor report and AGAR submission 2023/2024  
Electric-Vehicle Charging – visit by OCC Project Manager  
Grant requests from HortSoc and Home Start  
Civility and Respect Pledge  
Transport Working Group TOR  
CEE Working Group TOR  
Scheme of delegation  
Working party at the Church clearing the paths – 18<sup>th</sup> May (Cllr Bolt)  
Station Working Group update – discussions with GWR are continuing (Cllr Collins)  
20mph consultation  
Cholsey Meadows leisure/play facilities including football goals (Cllr Finch)  
Office refit – proposal currently being worked on (Cllr Smith)  
Wallingford Road potholes (these have been reported on Fix My Street)

### 26. To confirm the date of the next Full Council meeting – Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June, 7.15pm, Cholsey Pavilion

Cllr Collins gave her advance apologies for the 5<sup>th</sup> June Council meeting.