

## CHOLSEY PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting of Cholsey Parish Council duly convened and held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 7.15pm at The Pavilion, Cholsey

**Present were** Cllr D. Bamford, Cllr V. Bolt, Cllr J. Collins, Cllr G. Herbert, Cllr P. Jenkins, Cllr L. Nixon (Chair), Cllr K. Ofield, Cllr K. Pomlett, Cllr S. Schäfer and Cllr M. Smith

Also present were C. Bird (Clerk), District Cllr A. M. Simpson until 7.45pm, three members of the public until 7.30pm

Start time: 7.15pm

End time: 9.35pm

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

Apologies were accepted from Cllr J. Finch and Cllr J. Hope-Smith

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

Two members of the public attended to propose further development of the skatepark facilities.

A representative of a maintenance contractor attended to speak about verge cutting (agenda item 7b).

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

There were none.

#### **160. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025 (Appendix A) and receive update on any Minute items**

It was **resolved** to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2025 and they were signed by Cllr Nixon.

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

The District Councillors' report was noted with thanks.

#### **162. To note Clerk's report (verbal), in particular:**

##### **a) To agree date for the 2025 Annual Community Meeting**

The Clerk's report was noted.

It was agreed to hold the 2025 Annual Community Meeting on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June.

It was agreed that the Clerk would work overtime (an estimated 3 hours) to fix recent technical problems with website documents as soon as possible.

#### **163. To note Estate Manager's report (Appendix B), in particular:**

##### **a) To discuss and agree whether to proceed with an updated s101 grass cutting agreement with Oxfordshire County Council**

It was **resolved** to proceed with an updated s101 grass cutting agreement with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) *for urban verges only*. This means that the Parish Council will continue to have delegated responsibility for urban verge cutting. The responsibility for rural verges will be returned to the County Council, as is the case for the majority of parishes.

It was noted that OCC footway enhancement funds are available to ensure that key footways for active travel are kept accessible and not allowed to overgrow with vegetation. The Clerk and Cllr Pomlett as a Fix-My-Street Super User for Cholsey will continue to liaise with OCC on this.

##### **b) To discuss quotes for verge cutting for the 2025 season and agree expenditure for this work**

Officers have recently been successful in obtaining digital verge maps from OCC, enabling three quotes to be obtained for verge cutting. It was resolved to proceed with a quote from Grounds Maintenance contractor Tactical Facilities Management to carry out cut-and-collects of urban verges twice a year, at a cost of £2520 including VAT.

##### **c) To discuss and agree management plan for Whitehead Meadow for the 2025 season**

It was **resolved** to continue with the existing regime of cutting Whitehead Meadow twice a month in the growing season, and to revisit this in 2026.

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### **d) To discuss next steps for Forty Community Meadow project at the end of the 3-year trial in Autumn 2025**

It was **resolved** to carry out an advisory community survey in the Autumn, informing residents of the results of the 3-year trial, and to seek their views.

### **e) To discuss quotes and agree expenditure for necessary tree surgery works**

The Estate Manager had contacted four approved contractors in December for quotes. It has only been possible to obtain two quotes due to the workloads/availability of the tree surgeons. It was **resolved** to proceed with Tree surgeon Young's Tree Services, at a cost of £4488 including VAT. It was noted that following contact from a resident ecologist, some of these works will need to be delayed until autumn due to the risk of destruction of active bird nests, which is illegal. Bird-nesting activity now begins around a month earlier due to climate change. The Estate Manager will make the necessary arrangements with the agreed contractor.

### **f) To discuss costs of additional renovation of the Pavilion car park (right-hand side) and agree expenditure for this work if appropriate**

The renovation works on the left-hand side of the Pavilion carpark have proceeded successfully and are on track for completion after 2 weeks. The contractor has also provided a quote for renovating the right-hand side of the carpark in the same way. It was resolved to proceed with additional renovation of the right-hand side of the carpark at a cost of £45,900 excluding VAT. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds will be used for this work.

### **164. To receive update from the Transport Committee (Cllr Collins)**

The Transport Committee met on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2025 to progress projects including the station accessibility campaign.

It was noted that speed limit changes are currently being implemented following an OCC consultation in 2024.

Cllr Pomlett is now a Fix My Street Super User and has reported 40 potholes to date, including those on Ilges Lane byway, half of which have so far been fixed by OCC Highways.

### **165. To receive update from the Neighbourhood Planning Working Group (Cllr Pomlett)**

An update from Cllr Pomlett was noted.

### **166. To receive and agree response to a Notice of Intention to Transfer Maintenance Responsibility for St Mary's Old Churchyard, Cholsey, dated 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025 by the Parochial Church Council, under s215(2) of the Local Government Act 1972**

The Old Churchyard at St Mary's Church has now (as of 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024) officially been closed to new burials. The Parish Council has received a Notice of intention from the Parochial Church Council to transfer maintenance responsibility to the Parish Council.

It was **resolved** not to take on responsibility for the closed churchyard, and to give notice of this resolution to South Oxfordshire District Council, who under Section 215 (3) of the Local Government Act 1972 will then accept responsibility to keep the churchyard in decent order (2 votes to accept responsibility; 6 votes to pass on responsibility; 2 abstentions). The Clerk will prepare and send a Section 215 notice to the District Council.

### **167. Finance**

#### **a) To note 2024/2025 accounts at the end of the third quarter (Appendix C)**

The quarterly accounts were noted. A number of budgeted expenses have not yet come through in 2024/2025 (e.g. Cholsey Meadows play area solicitor fees); expenditure on tree surgery is under budget ytd; defibrillator expenditure is expected to be under budget due to external funding being obtained. In addition a number of budget lines are intended to build up ear-marked reserves for future costs e.g. skatepark, outdoor gym, carpark, pavilion maintenance.

#### **b) To approve and adopt draft revised Financial Regulations based on the latest NALC model document (Appendix D)**

It was **resolved** to adopt the revised Financial Regulations, including the following wording for clause 5.6:

*'For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the Council, unless the Council has deemed another method preferable for the contract. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.'*

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**c) To agree whether to continue to receive the Parish share of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from South Oxfordshire District Council**

It was **resolved** to continue to receive the Parish share of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from South Oxfordshire District Council.

**d) To note award of two South Oxfordshire District Council grants to support the Ilges Lane Community Allotment Project**

The award of two SODC Councillor grants totalling £2000 towards the Community Allotment project was noted. The Council expressed its thanks to the District Councillors for this support.

**e) To agree whether to make a donation of £1225 to London Hearts for the provision of a new defibrillator and cabinet for installation in the Papist Way telephone box**

It was **resolved** to make a donation of £1225 to London Hearts for the provision of a new defibrillator and cabinet for Papist Way.

**f) To agree response to 2025/2026 grant request for the Cholsey Community Library**

It was **resolved** to approve the 2025/2026 grant request of £3400 towards management of the Cholsey Community Library.

**g) To approve bank reconciliations (Appendix E)**

It was **resolved** to approve the bank reconciliations and they were signed by Cllrs Ofield and Herbert.

**h) To approve new payments and note payments received (Appendix F)**

It was **resolved** to approve the payments and they were signed by Cllrs Ofield and Herbert.

**168. To consider new planning applications and planning amendments at 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

P25/S0213/HH	Single storey extension to the rear of recently approved side extension (P24/S2602/HH), 29 Papist Way It was <b>resolved</b> to comment: 'This property has had a substantial increase in floorspace approved and whilst this application is within Policy CNP H7, further applications will require significant scrutiny. From CNP para 149: All new homes and all extensions to existing homes where the extension has vehicular access should be equipped with charge points for electric vehicles.'
P25/S0250/LB	Retrospective listed building consent for rear sunroom (granted planning permission under P20/S1221/HH), 1 Ratcliffe Court It was <b>resolved</b> to comment: 'It is regrettable that the sunroom was approved by SODC without realising that the building was listed. Any future amendments to the sunroom should ensure that the heritage officer's proposals are fully implemented. An internal investigation should be launched to learn lessons and prevent further errors.'

**169. To note South Oxfordshire District Council planning decisions as at 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

P24/S3538/HH	Two-storey side extension, replacement porch, internal alterations, 3 Hithercroft Cottages, <b>Granted by SODC</b>
P24/S3903/HH	Front porch extension and replacement garage, 4 College Close, <b>Granted by SODC</b>
P24/S1881/FUL	Vehicular access and field gate, Land at Caps Lane, <b>Granted by SODC</b>

**170. Items for report or inclusion on next agenda**

Emergency Plan  
Skatepark development  
Use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

**171. To confirm the date of next Full Council meeting – Wednesday 19th March 2025, 7.15pm, Pavilion, Station Road, Cholsey**