

HARBURY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
Thursday 25 November 2021 at 7.30pm
Tom Hauley Room

Present

Cllr T Lockley (Chair)	Cllr C Gibb
Cllr J Balch	Cllr J Thornley
Cllr A Knowles	Cllr S Ekins
Cllr S Allen	Cllr K Thompson

Absent

Cllr Rutherford; 1 vacant seat

In Attendance

Mrs Alison Biddle, Clerk to the Council
Mrs C Gwillam, Minute Secretary
County Cllr Chris Kettle (arrived 7.50pm)
District Cllr J Harris
Mr Paul Quinney (arrived 8.40pm)

Public

Mrs Linda Ridgley for Harbury & Ladbroke News
5 members of the public

21/129 Apologies

Cllr Rutherford

21/130 Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Balch declared a personal interest in agenda item Planning 8.7 as the applicant is a neighbour.
- Cllrs Lockley and Thompson declared a personal interest in agenda item 10.1a, relating to the tennis club lease as they are members of the club.

21/131 Dispensations

There were none.

21/132 Casual Vacancy

There were two candidates to be considered for co-option. It was **RESOLVED** to vote by ballot paper. Votes were counted by the clerk and scrutinized by Mary Thompson (a member of the public who was present at the meeting). It was **RESOLVED** to co-opt Jessica Dominick who duly signed her declaration of acceptance of office before the clerk and took her seat on the council. Thanks and commiserations were extended to the unsuccessful candidate.

21/133 Public Participation

1 Harbury's green spaces – proposal for re-wilding

A proposal had been received to allow village greens and verges to be mowed less frequently thereby improving biodiversity. This had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. This matter was on the agenda for discussion later in the meeting.

2 Members of the public raising any matter relating to items on the agenda

There was a complaint about the lack of information being provided in planning applications for tree works. Much more detail is required with proper location plan and details of the tree surgeon involved. The PC was asked to take this up with SDC.

The council was thanked for its initiative with the tree planting scheme, although they would take many years to mature, and it was therefore vitally important that as many existing trees as possible are retained.

21/134 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of the parish council held on Thursday 28 October 2021 as a true and complete record of that meeting.

21/135 Other Organisations

1 Harbury Library

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

- CO₂ monitoring had now been done and was nowhere near the limit, although a maximum limit of 30 people has been self-imposed.
- A mobile air purifier has also been obtained
- The drainage cost was unexpected and costly, but the problem is now rectified.
- Hosting the GASS post-box again this Christmas.
- Volunteer needed for a Thursday morning.
- In support of the start of the Seasonal Lights Trail, the library is running a children's Lantern Making Workshop.

2 Harbury School Governors

Cllr Gibb reported that the Multi Academy Trust, Southam, cannot accept Harbury school joining as it is church controlled. WCC is providing less support for the school than previously, so they are looking at other options and have visited MATs across Warwickshire. The governors are considering joining Arden Forest (Alcester, North Warwickshire) MAT which comprises several primary schools around Alcester and north of Warwick. Informal enquiries were encouraging, and a formal discussion is now planned, for staff and parents – the consultation period being 7-15 December. If it is agreed to go ahead, then there is a lengthy legal process to follow, and it is anticipated that the school would officially join the MAT in September 2022. Although geographically distant, Arden Forest has the right ethos. In practical terms, there will be little change, but the school will gain support for teaching standards and HR as well as buildings maintenance. Existing WCC staff would transfer to the MAT under TUPE.

The chairman asked councillors to send their views to the clerk, as soon as possible, so that she could reply to the school before the consultation window closed.

Cllr Gibb also pointed that the before and after club was experiencing some staffing issues - if the council knew of any keen interested people, he would appreciate them getting in touch.

3 Southam College

No report.

4 Twinning Association

No report.

5 Village Hall

In Cllr Rutherford's absence, Cllr Thompson reported that bookings were on the increase. Cycle racks were being investigated, probably situated at the end of the disabled ramps. There had been a drainage problem, but Severn Trent had done a good job clearing and sorting the problem, although had made a charge for doing so.

6 Harbury Energy Initiative

Nothing to report except that there is a meeting scheduled for Wednesday 8 December 2021.

7 SDC & WCC

WCC: Cllr Kettle reported that:

- HS2 continues to do what they want, regardless. Plans to close the Kington Road from Southam (B4451) at the same time as the closure of the Fosse and traffic lights on the A425 was farcical – fortunately, this has now been addressed.
- Harbury Lane/Fosse Way junction - no work before Christmas, but scheduled for early 2022, weather dependent.
- Avian flu is once again prevalent although the impact on humans is very low. The public should report any large dead birds to Defra who will collect. Any small birds found in the garden should be carefully double bagged and put in the waste bin. As from 29 November, all birds will have to be kept inside.
- Covid rates across the district continue to be high, although they remain low for the over 60s.

SDC: Cllr Harris's report circulated prior to the meeting; main points being:

- Casework continues, mostly issues around Orbit housing.
- Issues over bins and parking in Ivy Lane Harbury now settled down– she asked if the council had any views about resident permits implemented along this road? HPC had no strong views as enforcement was not possible.
- She reported that SDC is following up the unfulfilled planning conditions at Henry's in Bush Heath Lane. She has been assured that they were also going to be more robust in the future regarding enforcement of planning conditions.

- Meeting with Severn Trent about water managements and action in relation to flooding and supply. The main issue that water companies are focusing on seems to be on a change in the law, specifically around surface water drainage and connection to drains – the run-off is one of the issues causing flooding, along with too many tarmac drives and continued building.
- Severn Trent's website provides details of a project to provide water to vulnerable members of the community should supply be interrupted
- Work continues on the proposed merger with Warwick District Council

21/136

1 [Planning ref 21/03516/TPO – All Saints Church](#)

T1 – lime – fell. G1 – lime x 9 – crown lift to 4 metres.

This application had been listed on the agenda in error. As the deadline for the end of the consultation period is today, the clerk has already made a response of no representation under delegated powers, following consultation with members.

2 [Planning ref 21/03534/TREE – All Saints Church](#)

T1 – sorbus – remove. G2 – sycamore x 2 – crown lift to 4 metres over the highway

This application had been listed on the agenda in error. As the deadline for the end of the consultation period is today, the clerk has already made a response of no representation under delegated powers, following consultation with members.

The chairman asked to clerk to contact Stratford-on-Avon District Council asking that more information, including the name of the tree surgeon, is provided for tree work applications in future.

3 [Planning ref 21/03335/LBC – Wagstaffe Schoolhouse, Crown Street](#)

Conversion of existing roof void into habitable accommodation and installation of en-suite shower room to first floor bedroom

It was **RESOLVED** to make no representation.

4 [Planning ref 21/03548/TREE – Western House, Station Road](#)

T1 – cherry - fell

It was **RESOLVED** to make no representation.

5 [Planning ref 21/03550/TREE – 23 Farm Street](#)

T1 and T2 – holly - remove

It was **RESOLVED** to make no representation.

6 [Planning ref 21/03547/TREE – All Meadowside, Pirie Close](#)

T1 – lime - fell

It was **RESOLVED** to make no representation.

7 [Planning ref 21/03052/FUL – Hereburgh Way](#)

Single storey rear extension

It was **RESOLVED** to make no representation.

8 [Planning ref 21/02793/TREE – 39 Farm Street](#)

T1 – Sycamore: Remove sucker which extends over adjacent neighbouring property.
10% crown thinning of end-growth and shorten back crown where overhanging roof to give 2 metres clearance.

T2, T3, T5, T6: Sycamores: 20% crown reduction, height reduction by 2 metres

T4: Sycamore – Fell

G1: Cypress on rear boundary – reduce back to previous reduction points by reducing 3-4 metres in height, back to 3 metres above ground level

It was **RESOLVED** to object to the removal of T4 on the grounds that it was recorded in a recent tree survey on this site as being of conservation value for wildlife. The council had no representation to make on any other of the tree works listed in the application.

9 [Planning ref 21/02448/FUL – Eastfields Farm, Deppers Bridge](#)

a) **Recent meeting with JBM Solar**

Notes from the recent update meeting with JBM have been circulated.

Councillors present at that meeting recommended that the council reviews its previous response of no representation in the light of the council's recent acknowledgement of the climate emergency and considers supporting the application instead.

b) **Review of council's previous response**

It was **RESOLVED** to review the previous response of no representation in the light of the council's recent formal acknowledgment of the climate emergency and to support the application on the grounds that it is a sustainable development which mitigates climate change by providing renewable energy and has a net biodiversity gain which includes the planting of a wildflower meadow with public access. The site will be well screened and not, for the most part, visible from public roads. There is also some local public support.

10 **Delegated Responses**

Noted as per appendix A.

11 **Housing & Employment Land Availability Assessment - Consultation**

It was **RESOLVED** to comment that the frequency of the bus service should be taken into account, not simply the proximity to a bus stop.

21/137 Environment

1 **Climate Emergency – update from climate working party**

The climate group had not yet met, but several volunteers had come forward; it was hoped to arrange a meeting in early January when a plan of action would be drawn up along with any budget costs. It was agreed to allocate this item its own separate heading on the agenda for the council's January meeting.

2 **Greens & verges – discussion on re-wilding proposal**

This will need some careful thought. There are many different areas of grass around the village and leaving them unmown would be controversial, as well as posing seasonal problems. Slowly trialling different areas, or leaving some strips unmown, might be a way forward. It would have to be properly explained to residents. The impact on the grounds maintenance contract, currently out for tender, was highlighted. However, as any unmown areas would still require care and attention, it probably wouldn't cost any less to maintain so the impact on the contract would be minimal. It was agreed to delegate this matter to the new climate working party as part of their considerations.

3 **Feasibility Study Bush Heath Road/Butt Lane - update**

The clerk reported that she had completed the commissioning form; WCC would like to meet with councillors to ensure that everyone fully understands what is in the brief and what will be covered by the study. It was agreed to arrange this for January and to invite representatives of the residents' group too.

4 **Village Tree Planting – progress report**

Mr Quinney is liaising with the clerk to organise a meeting of all those who would like to be involved. He has drafted an invitation letter to interested parties outlining the scheme and what is hoped to be achieved. It is suggested that the meeting will take place in January 2022.

21/138 Properties

1 **Playing Fields**

a) Tennis Club Lease – update

The clerk reported that the tennis club lease, which was signed 2 years ago, has still not been registered with the Land Registry which is a legal requirement. The reason for this is that there is a restrictive covenant with Fields in Trust which requires their consent for any new lease. The FIT solicitor has pointed out that the lease, drawn up by the sports clubs' solicitor, does not exclude the security of tenure provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954, which is a requirement of FIT. The tennis club, who wish to avoid involving their solicitor again, has drafted an appendix to the lease to cover this but the FIT solicitor has advised that the security of tenure cannot be excluded by such a document. They go on to say that there is a formal statutory procedure that needs to be followed and specific clauses must be included in the lease. Nevertheless, they have suggested that we submit our application along with the lease in its current format to the

FIT committee to see if they will accept it as it is without further amendment. The clerk has completed and sent off the application, and it is hoped to have a response before Christmas. NB: the FIT fee is £300, as already approved at the last PC meeting but if the sports clubs' solicitor has to amend the lease, he will also charge a fee which the tennis club has suggested should be paid by the parish council.

b) Annual Bonfire Report

Mr Quinney reported that the event had been a great success and was an enjoyable evening, although this was attributable in part to the reasonable weather, so the field had not suffered. Clearing up went well. With the Covid situation still prevalent, no food was sold, and tickets had been sold online which had worked well. There were about 2,000 people present. Although more people than anticipated, there were only a few issues. It was thought that many had come from outside the village; people were glad of an occasion as Covid had ruined many events last year. Fireworks were low noise. A review had taken place after the event to see what lessons could be learned for future events. Parking was an issue, and GASS would investigate obtaining some traffic cones next year and encouraging people to use the bus. Cllr Thompson said that several people had raised some concerns about the event, primarily the huge crowds in a pandemic and the method of lighting the fireworks which looked unsafe. Mr Quinney assured Cllr Thompson that the fireworks were all lit by experienced people in accordance with safety regulations. Mr Quinney and GASS were thanked for organising the event.

c) Annual Playing Fields Inspection Report

This had only just been received and had yet to be reviewed by the properties group but at first sight, the consensus was that it was a good report and the only issues noted were low risk.

2 Deppers Bridge AED – updated quotation and approval of order

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the updated quotation of £1600 for the supply of the AED and cabinet plus approximately £200 for installation (the electrician's quote has not yet been received). The clerk will place the order.

21/139 Winter Lights

1 Confirmation of final arrangements for Switch-on, 27 November 2021

Cllr Balch reported that the new trail was now published and in the library; thanks to Cllr Allen for producing this. Thanks were also expressed to Richard Fowler at the library for hosting the lantern making workshop, and to Colin Sheasby for the loan of his cherry picker. Arrangements for refreshments were being reviewed in light of anticipated bad weather. This was going to be a combined effort from many people, working hard all day, starting at 9.30am with everything done by 4.00pm for the switch-on.

21/140 Finance & General Purposes

1 **Budget Report**

There were no questions.

2 **Bank Reconciliation**

Noted that this had been carried out by the clerk and checked by Cllr Allen. There were no issues.

3 **Approval of transfer from tennis courts maintenance fund to current account**

It was **RESOLVED** to transfer £885 from the tennis courts reserve fund to the general fund to pay for the courts cleaning.

4 **Review of fixed assets register**

This is already in progress with the properties group having checked the benches and bins. Two benches (at the cemetery chapel and The Pound) were beyond repair and will be removed. Cllr Thompson offered to help the clerk check the office equipment against the assets register. It was hoped that the review will be completed by January so that it can be signed off by the council at the January PC meeting.

21/141 Accounts for Payment

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the accounts for payment as per Appendix B. Cllrs Lockley and Thompson to authorise payment. They will confirm that they have checked the invoices (circulated prior to the meeting) by email.

21/142 Reports & Questions

- Cllr Lockley asked for a review of the working parties now that the recent vacancy for a councillor had been filled. This will be formally approved at the January PC meeting, but it was suggested that Cllr Dominick should replace Cllr Balch on the environment and properties groups and that Cllr Balch would join F&GP as the chair of the climate working party which may require some funding in the budget.
- Cllr Ekins had recently attended a training session on preparing the budget which he recommended to other councillors.

21/143 Exclusion of Public & Press

There were no confidential matters.

21/144 Date of Next Meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the parish council will be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 27 January 2022 in Harbury Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Signed Chairman Date.....

APPENDIX A

Planning Applications – Delegated Responses

25 November 2021

- 1 [Planning ref 21/03196/FUL - 18 The Beeches](#)
Proposed dormer extensions to first floor bedroom
No representation

- 2 [Planning ref 21/03534/TREE - All Saints Church, Church Street](#)
T1 – sorbus- Remove. G2 – sycamore x 2 – Crown lift to 4 metres over the highway
No representation

- 3 [Planning ref 21/03516/TPO - All Saints Church, Church Street](#)
T1 lime – Fell. G1 lime x 9 no. – Crown lift to 4 metres over the highway
No representation

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