

HARBURY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
Thursday 25 April 2024 at 7.30pm
Harbury Village Hall

Present

Cllr Tim Lockley (Chair)
Cllr Kate Gard
Cllr Alan Knowles
Cllr Julie Balch

Cllr Keith Thompson
Cllr Alex Potter
Cllr Ed Mulley

Absent

Cllr J Dominick; 1 vacant seat

In Attendance

Mrs Alison Biddle, Clerk to the Council
District Cllr Susan Ostrander

Public

9 members of the public

24/058 Apologies

Cllr Dominick

24/059 Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Mulley declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 13.5 relating to footpath SM 81b as his daughter is involved with the application to upgrade it to a bridleway.
- Cllr Knowles declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 12.3 (a) as his son has provided a quote for the allotment markers.

24/060 Dispensations

None.

24/061 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 28 March 2024 as a true and complete record of that meeting.

24/062 Co-option

The application has been withdrawn.

24/063 Public Participation

Footpath SM81b – Thwaites Estate

An application is being made to WCC to upgrade this public right of way (PROW) from a footpath to a bridleway. The PROW runs along the main drive from the entrance to Thwaites Estate at Five Ways and has been used by horse riders and cyclists as long as anyone can

remember. Witness statements to this effect are being collected (there are over 80 already) and will be submitted with the application to WCC next week. It is hoped that the parish council will lend its support to the application.

The Great Western Public House

A new group is in the process of forming to save the former public house from dereliction and return it to community use. They already have 570 members in their Facebook group and a range of community uses have been suggested. Their intention is to formalise the group as a not for profit organisation and this is the first step towards submitting a business proposal for the building. They are asking the parish council to support them in two ways:

1. Help with registration of the building as an asset of community value.
2. Funding of £240 for the membership fee to join the Plunkett Foundation which would provide them with all kinds of resources and templates etc.

At the suggestion of the chairman, the parish council agreed to alter the order of the agenda as follows:

24/064 Footpath SM 81b

The chairman explained, for the purpose of transparency, that conversations had taken place with past and present landowners of parts of the estate over the course of several years regarding the possibility of land for a new cemetery. These conversations, which are a matter of public record, are ongoing but in fact the drive along which SM81b runs, is not owned by the same landowner.

Cllr Mulley, speaking as a member of the public as he had previously declared a non-pecuniary interest, made the point that the path, which gives access to a number of bridleways in the area, has been used by riders for a very long time and if they could no longer use this access, they would have to go a longer way round by road which is becoming busier as a result of more housing development.

It was noted that the application to upgrade the path will be decided by WCC. Councillors therefore felt that it would not be appropriate for the parish council to become involved at this stage. The application is a formal process which will take a very long time. It was **RESOLVED** to refrain from commenting until the PC is formally consulted.

The rights of way officer has advised that pedestrian access to the footpath must be maintained. The chairman reported that the side gate had now been unlocked which would allow for this.

24/065 The Great Western Public House

It was noted that as the steering group is not yet a formally constituted body and has no bank account, it would not be possible for them to make a formal application for a grant from the parish council to join the Plunkett Foundation. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that the council would pay the membership fee of £240 direct to the Plunkett Foundation on the group's behalf.

It was agreed to support the group in its application for the building to be listed as an asset of community value. If possible, the group should make the application themselves. The clerk will liaise with them on this and provide all the relevant information.

24/066 Community Grants

1 Harbury Carnival

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £483 to pay for a Punch & Judy show and a stilt man.

2 Harbury Show

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £385 to pay for the hire of the village hall from Friday to Saturday inclusive.

24/067 Other Organisations

1 Harbury Library

No report.

2 Harbury School Governors

No report.

3 Southam College

The new building has opened. The old building has still not been demolished.

4 Twinning Association

No report.

5 Village Hall

A portrait of HM the King, which was ordered by the parish council, has now been handed to the village hall chairman.

6 Harbury Energy Initiative

No report

7 Harbury Village Club & Institute

No report.

8 SDC & WCC

County and district councillors reported as follows:

SDC

Cllr Ostrander's report had been previously circulated to members. She highlighted the following:

- On Sunday 28 April 2024 Stratford Leisure Centre will host a prostate screening event to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of prostate cancer and to offer free prostate PSA screening blood tests.

- SDC's cabinet has approved a revised approach to allocating its portion of Community Infrastructure Levy ((CIL).
- The Police & Crime Commissioner election is taking place next week.
- People living with Parkinson's Disease can now get free membership at Southam Leisure Centre.
- The income eligibility criteria for Home Upgrade Grant phase 2 (HUG2) funding, has increased to £36,000 a year.

WCC

Cllr Kettle was not present and there was no written report available.

24/068 Planning

1 [Planning ref 24/00832/TEL28 - Vicarage Lane](#)

Installation of a 12m pole for the mounting of LoraWAN gateway equipment.

The council expressed concerns about the height of this pole which was thought to be excessive. However, it was noted that this is not a consultation but a notification only and therefore it is not possible to object in the usual manner.

2 [Planning ref SDC/24CM004 - Landfill Site, Ufton](#)

Variation of conditions 2, 13 and 14 of planning permission ref S/91/1659 to amend the approved pre-settlement restoration profile, final restoration scheme and to agree an aftercare scheme and long term ecological management plan.

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

3 **Delegated Responses**

There had been no delegated responses this month.

24/069 Future Energy Project UKSPF Grant – Car Park Extension

1 **Update on Works**

There are still some snags to be worked through. The surface is not yet finished as the holes are still waiting to be backfilled with grit which will improve access. Mr Quinney has sent the clerk his response to the queries raised about accessibility issues and confirmed that the gap between the bollards on the path meets the minimum width for wheelchair users. The hedge and trees have been planted.

Councillors were concerned about surface of the grasscrete which is not currently useable by people in wheelchairs or with pushchairs. Mr Quinney explained that it may need more than one fill before it is finally completed and the surface is level. The council agreed to monitor the situation over the next 4 weeks but if at the end of this period, the surface is still not fully accessible, the council will look at other ways to mitigate this, possibly by laying a path across the centre. The extension may need to be fenced off again if the surface isn't finished soon. The clerk advised that if the surface is a risk to

health and safety, it should be fenced off. Mr Quinney has reported the issues raised with the manufacturers.

2 Funding Update

Centrica has now responded that they are currently focussing on preparations for the site development and will come back to the parish council in due course regarding wider community benefit.

3 Matters for Consideration

a) Crocodile Teeth

There is still no price for the removal of the crocodile teeth.

b) Correspondence re accessibility issues

This was discussed at 24/069.1 above. The clerk will respond accordingly.

24/070 Properties

1 Playing Fields

a) Skate Park Refurbishment

There was no news to report.

b) Perimeter Path

No progress with this yet. It has been too wet.

c) Tree neighbouring Margaret Close

The tree had been identified and photos circulated. It's a large and healthy tree and significant within the playing field. Councillors agreed that removing the tree would not solve the problem of lifting paving slabs in the neighbour's garden. It was **RESOLVED** that the tree should not be removed. The clerk was asked to respond to the neighbour accordingly.

2 Pineham Farm Allotments

a) Well-being Project

Thanks were expressed to Cllr Gard and Mr Simon Nicholson who had helped with the selection of a suitable greenhouse and shed. These are currently on order and will be delivered soon. There have not yet been any takers for the additional raised beds.

b) Tree Position

One of the new trees has unfortunately been planted too far over and is actually obstructing the footpath between the plots. It was agreed that the clerk should ask if the tree can be moved.

3 Hall Lane Allotments

a) Plot markers

It was **RESOLVED** to accept a quote for making the allotment plot markers at a cost of £225.

b) Wall inspection

The structural survey is taking place tomorrow. Cllr Thompson is meeting the surveyor on site.

c) Risk assessment

Cllr Thompson had completed the risk assessment which had been circulated to members for review. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt this without further amendment.

4 Notice board

A request had been received to consider installing an additional village notice board outside the school entrance in Park Lane where people are using the school fence to post village notices. The council did not feel that another notice board was justified but agreed to communicate to the village that notices should only be posted on the official notice boards.

24/071 Environment

1 Replacement of stiles at Bridge End Farm

The replacement safety latches have been received and are waiting to be fitted by the contractor.

2 Removal/replacement of stiles on SM62a/SM62

The clerk has not yet had time to contact the landowners.

3 Bush Heath Road/Butt Lane Traffic

It was agreed that the level of service from WCC regarding this matter was very poor. The clerk has complained to Cllr Kettle that WCC has not directly contacted the PC on this matter despite the PC having commissioned the work. The chairman said he would also write to Cllr Kettle.

4 Mill Lane access problems

This continues to be a problem for residents of Mill Lane with vehicles regularly blocking the junction with High Street. Regarding a recent incident involving the Co-op lorry, the clerk had written to the area manager but has not received any reply. County Cllr Kettle had also contacted the Co-op. It is not known if he has received a reply.

5 Footpath SM 81b

This was discussed at 24/064 above.

24/072 Climate Change

1 Update

There is no one available from the parish council to organise the Eco-fair this year. The clerk was asked to approach e-Wheels and HEI to see if they are planning anything separately.

24/073 Finance & General Purposes

1 **Budget report for year ended 31 March 2024.**

Noted.

2 **Bank reconciliation reports for 31 March 2024**

This had been prepared by the clerk and checked by Cllr Allen before circulating to members. All noted as correct.

3 **Approval of end of year transfers to reserves**

It was **RESOLVED** to transfer £10k to the new cemetery fund and £5k to the skatepark/BMX fund.

4 **Approval of financial report 2023/24**

The clerk pointed out that this is a report, not a statement of accounts which is included in the AGAR. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the financial report for the year ended 31 March 2024 which was duly signed by the chairman and the clerk/RFO.

5 **Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024**

a) Receive and review internal auditor's report.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the internal auditor's report. There were just a couple of points to note which were that a risk register is needed, and the assets register should include a schedule of additions to and disposals from the register for approval by the council. It was noted that the NS&I account does not provide a statement at the end of the financial year but this is outside the council's control.

b) Approval of section 1 of AGAR 'Annual Governance Statement 2023/24'

All of the questions in section 1 were read out by the chairman and all were answered by members in the affirmative. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual governance statement which was duly signed by the chairman and the clerk/RFO.

c) Approval of section 2 of AGAR 'Accounting Statements 2023/24'

The clerk/RFO had signed the accounting statements prior to the meeting and they had also been circulated to members. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the accounting statements and they were duly signed by the chairman.

d) Period of public rights and date of publication on website

The dates had been set by the RFO. It was noted that the notice of public rights would be published on the council's website on Friday, 31 May 2024 and documents would be available for inspection from Monday, 3 June 2024 to Friday, 12 July 2024.

6 Insurance Renewal 2024/25

The renewal documents had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. It was agreed that Hall Lane allotments, a recent acquisition, should not be included for property insurance. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the renewal at a cost of £1422.53.

7 Amendment to standing order

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the amendment to the standing order to FM Farmers which increases from £1213.20 pm to £1237.45pm with effect from 1 April 2024.

8 Renewal of WALC subscription

It was **RESOLVED** to renew the annual subscription for WALC for 2024/25 at £778.

9 Risk Register

This document is still not ready for adoption and was deferred again.

24/074 Seasonal Lights

Cllr Allen reported that the new lights were in stock and it would be a good idea to purchase them now before they sell out again. The cost would be approx £900. Also, it had previously been agreed to purchase a battery. There is one available for £1500 which would meet all the requirements. It was **RESOLVED** that the clerk should place the order for the lights and the battery. Cllr Allen will send her the details.

24/075 Annual Parish Meeting

The chairman volunteered to purchase the wine, juice and nibbles. The clerk will ask if the wine glasses at the village hall could be made available.

24/076 Accounts for Payment

It was **RESOLVED** to formally approve the accounts for payment as per Appendix A. Cllrs Thompson and Allen will authorise the payments and confirm that they have checked the invoices by email.

24/077 Reports & Questions

- Please could the clerk find out from WCC what is happening about the supposed broken land drain on the corner of Binswood End and Farm Street.
- The ditch at the far corner of the playing field needs cleaning out. Also, the nettles and brambles need clearing away from the new trees that were planted a couple of years ago. The clerk will ask the contractor to do this.

24/078 Exclusion of Public & Press

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the public under Sec 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 to discuss the following confidential item:

1 Recruitment of general maintenance person

It was agreed to employ a maintenance person. The clerk was asked to prepare an advert.

24/079 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be the annual meeting of the parish council which will be held at Harbury Village Hall on 23 May 2024 at 7.30pm and which will be immediately followed by the next ordinary meeting of the council.

The meeting closed at 8.57pm

Signed Chairman Date.....

APPENDIX A
Accounts for Payment

Accounts for approval 25 April 2024				
Urgent accounts paid since the last meeting and requiring formal approval of the council				
Payee	Payment ref	Net	Vat	Gross
YU Energy (street lights) inv 01616788	d/debit	530.97	106.19	637.16
YU Energy (street lights) inv 01602617	d/debit	33.07	1.65	34.72
YU Energy (street lights) inv 01616789	d/debit	13.71	0.69	14.40
YU Energy (street lights) inv 01616791	d/debit	46.12	2.31	48.43
Shedstore (well-being allotment shed)	240400	416.66	83.33	499.99
Greenhouse People (well-being allotment g/hous	240401	848.58	169.72	1,018.30
		-		-
	Sub-total	1,889.11	363.89	2,253.00
Accounts for payment on 25 April 2024				
Payee	Payment ref	Net	Vat	Gross
Staff costs	240402 to 05	2,880.12		2,880.12
HL News - annual subs	240406	8.00	-	8.00
Village Green Tree Surgeons	240407	1,940.00	-	1,940.00
WALC (annual subs)	240408	778.00	115.60	893.60
Npower (defib cabinet electric supply)	240409	1.86	0.09	1.95
IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd (internal audit)	240410	280.25	56.05	336.30
Rhino Security (extra keys for new bollards)	240411	90.00	18.00	108.00
Bull Ring Garage Ltd (office electric)	240412	75.95	-	75.95
Greentech Ltd (line marking powder)	240413	162.20	32.44	194.64
Newton Newton Flag & Banner Ltd (D Day 80 fla	240414	24.00	4.80	28.80
A Biddle (cllrs' corner banner)	240415	26.24		26.24
T Bastin (bus shelter cleaning)	240416	40.00	-	40.00
Glasdon UK Ltd (picnic bench)	240417	1,119.20	223.84	1,343.04
BT (phone & b/band)	d/debit	64.48	12.90	77.38
Adams & Munson (office rent)	s/order	460.33	-	460.33
Frank Mann Farmers (grds m'nance)	s/order	1,031.21	206.24	1,237.45
		-	-	-
	Sub-totals	8,981.84	669.96	9,651.80
	TOTALS	10,870.95	1,033.85	11,904.80
		-	-	-