**Meeting of Ashbury Parish Council Via Zoom**

**Monday 13th July 2020 at 6.00pm**

**Minutes**

Present: Cllr C Davies (Chairman), P Cowx, C Prentice, A Reynolds, A Alvarez Nishio, J Greenham, County Cllr Y Constance, District Cllr E Ware, L Evans (Clerk) and 4 Members of the public

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ITEM** |  |  |
| **1** | **To receive apologies for absence**District Cllr S Howell |  |
| **2** | **To receive any declarations of Personal, or Personal and prejudicial interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting**None  |  |
| **3** | **To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on Monday 13th May 2020**Approved |  |
| **4** | **To address matters arising from the previous meeting**Subsequent to a meeting held on 23rd May 2020 the Council unanimously agreed to financially support Sally-Ann Spence and her team of street coordinators.Finance Matters- annual return Risk Assessment process is still outstanding. | **CD/LE** |
| **5** | **County & District Councillors-** To receive reports from County and District Councillors (5 minute time slot)District Cllr E Ware presented the report (attached to minutes in appendix 1)MP David Johnston has written to all volunteers to thank them for their contribution through this difficult period.Cllr C Davies asked District Cllr E Ware if Shrivenham or the Vale would be making a submission regarding the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Cllr E Ware confirmed the Vale will be making their own submission and Parishes would be part of the consultation next year.District Cllr E Ware explained that notification had been received on 13th July that contractors of Thames Water will be working on Shrivenham High Street for 3 days commencing the 17th August – post details via usual outletsCounty Cllr Y Constance explained that the active travel funding has not been supportive of cycle lanes as this did not fit their agenda. The response from NPG on behalf of APC did not meet these criteria either. County Cllr Y Constance informed the meeting that the B4507 is officially on the radar for road repair but was of relatively low priority based on traffic volumes. Cllr C Davies had suggested via Email that the 30MPH speed limit through Ashbury be extended beyond the respective Kingstone Winslow junctions on the B4000 & B4507 to improve road safety through the hamlet; that a similar speed limit be introduced on the B4507 at Idstone; and a reduced speed limit of 20mph be introduced near the school. District Cllr Y Constance indicated that this could be a scheme to look at funding from the Councillors Priorities Funding but would need to be costed and suggested contacting Lee Turner and Mark Francis from OCC. | PC/LE**CP/CD** |
| **6**  | **Chairs Verbal Update (3 minute time slot)**Chairs report attached to minutes in appendix 2* Cllr C Davies proposed votes of thanks to; S-A Spence and her team of street coordinators for their continued work for the community; E Derrington and team for the recent work on the Village Green, and; Tony Craddock for carrying out the tree maintenance in Chapel Lane, and to Pauline Smith for liaising. Unanimously agreed
* Appointment of new officers – Thanks were given to James Greenham for agreeing to be the Volunteers Officer and to Christopher Prentice for agreeing to be the Highways Officer.
* Impact of recent relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions on use of playgrounds-Cllr C Davies asked the councillors for their thoughts regarding opening the play park. Cllr P Cowx raised concerns about opening the play park so soon and Cllr A Reynolds wished for the Rospa Play park inspection [scheduled for this month] to take place first so that Council know all the equipment is still safe.

Cllr C Prentice proposed that the play park reopen once the Rospa play park inspection has taken place, Cllr A Alvarez Nishio seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed. Cllr C Prentice to provide signage for the park reflecting government guidance on Covid-19.* Village Green Boundary Fence- a complaint was made regarding the appearance of the fence, and its impact on maintenance. As the owner of the adjacent property is maintaining the fence line, the VG sub-committee decided that there is no cause for concern, and Cllr C Davies proposed that APC endorse this decision which was unanimously agreed.
* Replacement padlocks to maintenance gates- These have been purchased and fitted.
* Volunteer offers to maintain planters & around childrens playground – see 10c below
 | **CP** |
| **7** | **Clerks Verbal Update (3 minute time slot)*** Rospa Play Park Inspection will be taking place during July. Clerk to forward report once received.
 | **LE** |
| **8** | **Councillors Forum-** To receive reports from responsible officers (12 minute time slot) * Volunteer Officer update – Cllr J Greenham explained that all volunteers were contacted during May and June, all of whom agreed to ‘adopt’ an allocated village asset, this includes refreshing the existing asset and maintaining it.

All benches in Ashbury are now in a good state of repair and should be usable by residents.A couple of volunteers will be undertaking some repairs/renovations to the Ashbury phone box.The bus shelter has been repainted but more substantial work still needs to be done. Cllr C Davies suggested that as funding had been earmarked for this, Cllr J Greenham and Cllr P Cowx discuss what is required and gather costs for this work.* Shopperbus & website updates – Cllr P Cowx explained that the Shopperbus is still on hold and is awaiting further updates.

The website is slowly developing and the main focus is to make this more accessible.Concerns were raised to Cllr P Cowx regarding the hog roast that took place at the Village Shop as people were gathering and parking inconsiderately. The residents of Wixes Piece are not complaining but would like to be informed if this should happen again.* Finance Officer – Cllr A Reynolds presented the report attached to the minutes in appendix 3 – The Parish expenditure was £225 below the budget.
 | **JG/PC** |
| **9** | **Sub Committee Reports-** To receive reports from Sub-committees (6 minute time slot)**Village Green-** (Report attached to minutes in appendix 4)* The final touches to the landscaping has now been completed, and grass seed has been sown on all remaining bare patches.
* There is a serious problem with thistles all over the green, so the weed killer treatment already arranged will be extended to the Village Green, the additional cost being sourced from the VG budget.
* There has been a further delay in the delivery of the Lectern that will display a map of the Green and Tree Trail due to Covid-19
 |  |
| **10** | **Financial Matters**1. Bank Reconciliation to be approved- Cllr C Davies approved and signed
2. Cllr A Reynolds proposed that the council: Ratify the acceptance of the Annual Internal Audit report, Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statement previously approved by the finance sub-committee under powers delegated at the meeting on 11th May 2020- This was unanimously agreed.

**Provision for planters & VG boarders-** Julia Blake & Sue Stannard have volunteered to take the lead on maintaining the playground borders and planters. This will require some financial support. Sue Stannard explained that more compost is required to fill the planters and they are looking into sustainable, draught resistant plants. Cllr C Davies proposed that the costs for the planters and VG boarderscome from the Parish Maintenance Reserve with the initial costs being some £500, plus ongoing annual costs of £100-£200, these costs were unanimously agreed. |  |
| **11** | **Planning Matters****Decisions:*** P20/V1166/Dis- The old Dairy Kingstone Winslow- Discharge of condition 3 (Bat licence) on P19/V3225/FUL- Granted
* P20/V1038/LB & P20/V1037/HH- Kingstone Farm House, Kingstone Winslow- Rendering of East boundary concrete block Wall- Granted
* P20/V0615/HH – Billy’s Cottage, Church Lane – Erection of 3 bay oak framed garage with loft room over, replacing existing garage - Granted

**Other:**Proposal from Cllr A Alvarez Nishio, as amended at meeting: All decisions by the Ashbury Neighbourhood Plan planning sub-committee to be notified briefly and promptly to all APC councillors - the proposal was carried. |  |
| **12** | **Public Forum-** To take comments , representation or queries on agenda items (15 minute time slot) No comments or queries were raised from the members of the public. |  |
| **13** | **Individual Topics (12 minutes allocated)**Cllr A Alvarez Nishio and Cllr P Cowx asked if there was a budget for Councillor training, as there are relevant courses being ran by OALC. Cllr C Davies advised that there was no specific provision within the budget but suggested details of any course Councillors wished to attend be circulated with costs for consideration by the full council. |  |
| **14** | **Agenda Diary** |  |
| **15** | **Correspondence*** **18/05/2020- Temporary Road Closure- Watchfield T7852 (October) \***
* **22/05/2020 – Temporary Road Closure- Shrivenham T7853 (October) \***
* **28/05/2020 – OCC News Cycleways and Footpaths to be cleared – posted to website**
* **17/06/2020 – Temporary Road Cosure- Shrivenham T7879 (October) \***

**Items marked \* to be raised at next meeting*** **19/06/2020 – Police and Crime Commissioner Newsletter June 2020 – posted to website**
* **19/06.2020 – Feedback from OCC highways – continuing action**
* **20/06/2020 - Comments on issues arising from repositioned Wixes Piece boundary with VG – see 9-above.**
* **24/06/2020 – OCC News Step-change in Oxfordshire’s cycling infrastructure – see report at 5-above.**
* **24/06/2020 – District Council Update – see appendix 1**
* **30/06/2020 – Clarification of VG boundary with SOHA land - carried forward to next meeting**
* **02/06/2020 – Pig roast at Wixes Piece – see 8-above**
 |  |
| **16** | **Future Agenda Items-** see correspondence items to be carried forward |  |

The meeting closed at 19:15pm

Signed……………………………………………………………………………………………………..Dated………………………………….

Appendix 1

**District Councillors Report to Parish Councils**

**Watchfield & Shrivenham Ward**

**July 2020**

We are conscious that we haven’t provided you with a formal report since March but you have been kept informed on a regular basis by Cllr Simon Howell and the Vale’s Communications Team. We are so proud of the way in which all the villages in our Ward have responded to the Covid19 emergency and have come together to ensure residents have been and continue to be kept as safe and healthy as possible and we thank everyone for their support.

David Johnston MP has written to all volunteers to thank them for their contribution through this difficult period. A copy of the letter will be posted on village notice boards please.

**Vale of White Horse District Council**

**For the foreseeable future all Vale Council meeting will be held virtually. Members of the public may view or take part in meetings and full details are on the Vale’s website**

Full Council is due to meet on Wednesday 15th July. This will be the first meeting since February and the first virtual Council meeting. The agenda will be published on the Vale website.

Throughout this unprecedented situation many of the staff at the Vale have volunteered to have their roles re-purposed so that they could deal with residents needs whether they be large or small The Community Hub has provided the support that many have come to rely on. In order to deal with a possibility of having to go into Lockdown the Vale has formalised the structure of the Community Hub. OCC has launched a communications campaign which contains all the information residents and businesses require to help prevent a local outbreak or what to do if there is one. All details are on OCC’s website – [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk) local outbreak control plan for coronavirus.

**Climate Emergency Advisory Committee** – The Committee has been meeting on a regular basis since January, Formal virtual meetings were held in June and July and there are additional task and finish group meetings which report to the main committee. This is a high profile committee which is dealing with many issues including Air Quality, a green recovery plan from Covid19, working in partnership with other Oxfordshire Councils and reviewing the Corporate Plan 2020-24.

**Civil Parking Enforcement** – Due to Covid19 this project has been paused. It is anticipated that a report will be presented to Cabinet in October. The County are leading on this project and are due to present a paper to their Cabinet in the next few weeks.

**Planning Appeals** - There are no appeals outstanding in the Ward. Of the three mentioned in our last report two were allowed and one dismissed.

**Planning Applications and current developments** – There have been a number of planning applications for the Ward submitted in recent weeks. There is one speculative application in Shrivenham that is of great concern and the Parish Council will be objecting to the proposal. All applications will of course go through the normal processes and be consulted upon. The large developments in Longcot and Shrivenham are ongoing.

**Shrivenham Neighbourhood Plan –** Due to Covid19 the referendum for Shrivenham’s Neighbourhood Plan is on hold. As mentioned previously the work involved in preparing Neighbourhood Plans cannot be underestimated. Details of the plan can be found on the Vale’s website.

**South Oxfordshire’s Local Plan** – The Secretary of State wrote to SODC in March and directed the Council to progress the plan through examination and to be adopted by December 2020. The work is ongoing. From the Vale’s point of view this direction assists to protect its five year land supply and Local Plans part 1 & 2.

**Play areas** – Although the Vale will begin to open play areas they are responsible for it is not so straightforward for villages. Most villages in the Ward are not opening their play areas yet but will keep under review. As a reminder all Vale Leisure Centres remain closed.

**Support for Council Tax** – Support for those residents who are struggling to pay their Council Tax is available**. Visit** [**www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/ctrs**](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/ctrs) **for more details.**

**Recycling –** During Lockdown some residents haven’t been as vigilant as in the past and contamination has become a real issue. Putting the wrong things in the wrong bin only leads to not just the bin being contaminated but the whole vehicles contents has to go to land fill. Residents are reminded to think about what can go in the Green Recycling bin. If in doubt refer to the Vale’s website or the information leaflet that all households received earlier this year.

**Oxfordshire Plan 2050 –** Oxfordshire Open Thought has been launched and is asking residents if the changes they have made during lockdown life could create a better future. More details are available at oxfordshireopenthought.org Submissions made before 31 July 2020 will be used to inform the next stage of the Oxfordshire 2050 plan.

Although we don’t hold surgeries we are always available to deal with any issues.

Simon Howell – 01793 784491 – simon.howell@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Elaine Ware – 01793 783026 – elaine.ware@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Appendix 2

Chairs Report

**ACTIONS carried forward from March meeting by reference:**

**4c] Potential breach of planning in Kingstone Winslow:**

This matter has seemingly been paused due to the Covid-pandemic - continuing.

**15c] Horse box in Kingstone Winslow**

This has now been moved - complete.

**15e] Dangerous tree adjacent to Upper Mill pond**

This appears to have been cleared, and some well needed repairs carried out on the footpath – complete, and our thanks to the unknown individual that ‘made-good’ the footpath.

**18] Tree maintenance**

The work in Church Lane was carried out following the initial easing of the lockdown – complete. Our thanks to Tony Craddock for doing the work, and Pauline Smith for liaising.

**OTHER MATTERS**

**First & foremost:**

Our thanks to Sally-Ann Spence and her team of street coordinators for their continuing support to the community during the current pandemic. Thanks also to the volunteers that provided their time/effort to address some of the remaining issues and tasks on the Village Green

**Appointment of new Officers:**

Many thanks to James Greenham for agreeing to be our Volunteers Officer, and Christopher Prentice our Highways Officer – both are likely to be busy in the coming months.

**Village Green boundary:**

The fence has now been relocated to the agreed position, and the necessary application to HMLR to record the boundary change submitted.

A complaint had been received over the appearance of the fence, and the impact that its construction could have on maintenance, but as the fence forms part of the adjacent property, and the owner is maintaining the fence-line the sub-committee have decided that there is no cause for concern on either count, and it is proposed that APC endorse this decision.

**Children’s playground:**

Despite the recent relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions, the playground at Ashbury remains closed as the safety measures required could not be met due to a lack of resources. APC should continue to explore alternative options such as precautionary signage.

**Planters & borders:**

Julia Blake & Sue Stannard having volunteered to take the lead on maintaining the playground borders & planters respectively, it will be necessary to provide some financial support for planting and ancillaries. It is proposed that a commensurate sum be made available from the parish & VG maintenance funds – final amount to be determined by members

Cliff Davies

7th July 2020

Appendix 3

**ASHBURY PARISH COUNCIL**

**FINANCE REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2020**

1. The Parish precept for 2020/2021 is £9,984.

2. To 30 June 2020, precept-related expenditure was expected to be £1,725.

3. To 30 June 2020, precept-related expenditure was actually £1,500. The details can be found in the attached report.

4. At 30 June 2020, total reserves stood at £44,657 (compared to £46,554 at 31 March 2020) of which £30,002 related to earmarked reserves. Again, the details can be found in the attached report.

5. The General Reserves increased as the first precept instalment has been received (£4,992) and the Village Green earmarked reserves decreased by £5,200 mainly as a result of the retention for the landscaping being paid.

Appendix 4

**Ashbury Parish Council - Village Green Sub-committee**

**Progress Report July 2020**

1. We've now completed the final touches to the landscaping – making a level area at the end of what will become a willow tunnel at the North corner of the Green, contouring the mounds and smoothing sharp edges to facilitate future maintenance - and we've sown grass seed on all the remaining bare patches.

1. The priority now is to get the grass established and keep it in good condition – especially on the Playing Field. There are several issues to mention:
* The number of thistles over the whole Green is a serious problem and we think we need to act quickly to stop it getting worse. So we've agreed to spend £300 of the remaining £1140 in the landscaping account so that the weed-killer treatment already arranged by APC for the Millers Lane border can be extended to the whole of the Green. This should take place before APC's July meeting.
* There are brambles running along the boundary with the Free Church, which if allowed to spread, will hamper mowing and also interfere with the growth of nearby trees. Our initial plan was to root them up but a member of our sub-committee has kindly offered to keep them trimmed and tied back so that they can continue to produce blackberries without getting in the way of maintenance. We' ve agreed to give this a go.
* **Two members of our sub-committee raised concerns about the impact on maintenance of the new fence at 20 Wixes Piece. APC pointed out that the owner of the property had agreed to maintain APC's side of the fence, and taking this into account, other members of the sub-committee did not feel that there was a need for further action.**
* We're expecting that we shall need to apply fertiliser to the grass next spring and also to aerate soil of the Playing Field.

1. We're continuing to water and monitor all the trees. The great majority continue to thrive and some that have been slow are now doing better, but we have recently had to give up hope for two of the three prominent beech trees. The third, although it appeared fine at first, is now in serious difficulties too. This is disappointing, and also puzzling, as the trees all looked in good shape in the spring, and when we checked the roots we could find nothing amiss. We shall, of course replace the trees (all of which have been sponsored), but we cannot do this until the autumn. In the meantime we are in discussion with the nursery that supplied the trees to try to work out what has gone wrong and how to avoid it happening again.
2. There has been a further delay in delivery of the Lectern that will display a map of the Green and the Tree Trail and the plaques with sponsors' dedications. It was originally due in May but delayed to July because of Covid restrictions. When we chased progress in June the company said that they had a big backlog of work after lockdown, and that as we had asked for an extra large base it had taken extra time to source the wood, and it would not be ready for delivery until mid-August. This is disappointing but perhaps understandable.

Liz Derrington

6 July 2020