



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council
held on Wednesday 24th April 2024 at 7.30pm
in the Green Room, Memorial Hall**

Present: Gary Harrison (in the chair), Liz Reason, Frances Mortimer, Claire Wilding, David Green, Nick Potter, Tony Merry, Janet Burroughs, James Styring, Town Clerk: Lisa Wilkinson, 2 members of public.

1. **Apologies for Absence** were received from Peter Kenrick and Gareth Epps.
2. **Declarations of Interest:** Claire Wilding declared an interest in item 9: LNG Nature Recovery Framework launch.
3. **Contributions from members of public**
None
4. **To receive minutes from the Town Council meeting** dated 27th March 2024
These were received and signed as a true record.
5. **Matters arising from the Minutes** (not elsewhere on the agenda)
None
6. **Finance and Administration**
 - a. To receive payment schedule and authorise payments (see **Appendix 1**)
These were received and authorised by Cllrs Merry and Wilding.
 - b. To authorise accounts for financial year 2023-2024
Draft income and expenditure, end of year balances, bank reconciliation and reserves were presented. These were agreed and **resolved**.
 - c. To receive internal audit report and note recommendations
The internal audit report from Bridget Knight was received. No recommendations were made. Thanks were given to the clerk.
 - d. To approve Annual Governance and Annual Return (AGAR)
 - i. To approve section 1 Annual Governance Statement
This was agreed and **resolved**. It was signed by the chair, Gary Harrison and the clerk.
 - ii. To approve section 2 Accounting Statement
This was agreed and **resolved**. It was signed by the chair, Gary Harrison and the Responsible Financial Officer.
 - iii. To note dates of Notice of Public Rights
The dates for Notice of Public Rights are Monday 3rd June to Friday 12th July. The notice will be published on 2nd June as per legislation.
 - e. To note results of Town Council election
Seven councillors have been elected to Charlbury Town Council to take office from 7th May 2024. These are: Gary Harrison, Liz Reason, Peter Kenrick, Frances Mortimer, Tony Vettors, Tom Greenwood and Carl Perkins. The Council will now need to co-opt five further councillors. Co-option will take place on 15th May at the Annual Meeting (and at further meetings if necessary to fill the vacancies).
 - f. To review Standing Orders
These were **resolved**.
 - g. To adopt Co-option policy
This was **resolved** with a slight amendment. (Nick Potter abstained)
 - h. To consider setting up account for QR codes at cost of £10 per month
This was **resolved** if necessary. Research will continue to find out cheaper ways of doing this.
7. **Amenities**
 - a. To receive playground inspections and agree any maintenance required
Ticknell Piece had low risk issues so it was agreed that no action will be taken.
Nine Acres playground also had mostly low risk issues . It was **resolved** to:



- remove graffiti
- provide a sign with emergency contact details
- replace worn shackles and chains on the activity trail.

The Clerk will obtain quotes.

More general issues raised were the compacted soil under the grass matting for which the clerk will seek advice from a local contractor; and several timber posts are rotting. There is a sinking fund for replacement of equipment as the TC is aware of the gradual decay of the timber posts.

b. To consider repair work at skate park

Quotes will be requested to repair the remaining cracks in the surface of the skate park from a non-specialist company.

c. To consider adding the area around electricity substation on The Green, to the grass cutting schedule

It has been established that there is no owner of this land which explains why the grass is never cut. It was **resolved** that the TC would cut the grass three times a year at the cost of £45 per cut using Evenlode Landscaping.

d. Defibrillator at Fiveways

The warranty has expired. Russell Ingham (who maintains the defibs on behalf of the TC) has investigated this and received advice from British Heart Foundation and South Central Ambulance Service: there is no requirement to have a warranty as long as the TC undertakes regular inspections, keeps the consumable components in-date and generally follows good, sensible housekeeping and stewardship then even if the equipment were to fail in use (either in or out of a warranty) the TC and its Guardians could not be held negligent. The TC **resolved** that this would be their approach. Thanks were given to Russell Ingham for his work on this.

e. To receive allotment report

- Allotment plots are being well maintained.
- All plots are now tenanted.
- Allotment markers are required; the Community workshop has agreed to make these at the cost of the materials plus a small donation to the workshop.

8. Mill Field

a. To consider request from Cotswold National Landscape to run a primary school session on Mill Field

The session is planned for 22nd May. The insurance and risk assessment have been received by the clerk. This was agreed.

b. Update on rock ramp fish pass

Tenders have been sent out to six specialist companies. Closing dates for tenders is 3rd May. This project is being funded by Evenlode Catchment Project, with the TC acting as project manager. On a separate issue the Environment Agency has undertaken an electronic fishing survey at Mill Field and has found fish in the river.

9. Land and Nature Group

a. To receive report including update on Nature Recovery Framework (NRF) launch and costs required for event

The launch event for the NRF to start engagement with residents and neighbouring parishes is planned for 15th June at Wigwell Nature Reserve and the scout hut. (This falls at the end of Great Big Green Week which is 8th to 16th June). It aims to be practical and engaging with displays, short, guided walks, children's activities, dam building and music.

It was **resolved** that the full budget of £550 could be spent if required.

10. Community

a. To consider funding request from Cotswold Wardens to improve section on Gateway Walk 1



A request for £100 (matched funding) towards improvement of a small area of the walk that is often inaccessible, has been requested by Cotswold Wardens. This was **resolved**.

b. To consider presence at Street fair

It was agreed to have a stall at this year's Street Fair (at cost of £10).

c. Stonesfield bridleway and Cornbury permissive paths

In order to improve connections between Charlbury and the neighbouring parishes and to enable cycling and walking, a part of the Oxfordshire Way towards Stonesfield needs its surface upgrading as it is so muddy for a large part of the year that it is inaccessible. It was agreed to contact an Oxfordshire County Council footpath officer to ask what possibilities there are to make it more passable.

The path through Cornbury to Finstock has a kissing gate which makes it difficult to get bikes through. It was agreed to approach the Cornbury Estate manager to discuss ways forward with this.

d. Engagement to encourage co-option.

Liz Reason proposed offering a short workshop for new councillors and people who are interested in being co-opted. It was agreed that this could take place either in a community facility or on Zoom. A request will also be made to put it into the school newsletter.

11. Charlbury market

This is restarting on 1st June. No market co-ordinator has been identified so the clerk will continue to co-ordinate this in the short-term. The Community Centre continues to enable an area its car park to be used.

12. Buildings Working Group

a. To consider submitting an expression of interest to CPRE Oxfordshire to deliver rooftop solar audits

The Home Comforts project, having developed the whole house plans, was meant to proceed with meeting WODC planners. Unfortunately, the group has been unable to get WODC to engage as they are busy with revising the Local Plan. There is an offer from CPRE for expressions of interest for solar rooftop audits. It was agreed that Liz Reason would ask for more information on this before a decision on putting in an expression of interest was made.

13. Correspondence

- Concern about building a bridge at Mill Field
- Request to declare support for Zero Hour Bill
- Concern that Ticknell Piece grass is not being cut as per schedule
- Proposed Disabled Persons Parking Places consultation from OCC
- Request to support the Big Plastic Count
- Complaint from Beer and Wine Circle about noise after the planning meeting.
- Response to petition/parking issues on The Green

Gary Harrison thanked the departing councillors for all the work they have done, some over many years.

James Styring mentioned the achievement of Nick Potter for his massive contribution to the Council for over 30 years and a round of applause was given.

Meeting closed: 21.05.



Appendix 1 Payment Schedule

a. Payments received:

Allotment tenants	Allotment rents	£610.00
A.L. Sole & Son	Burial fees	£590.00
WODC	Precept first instalment	£72,500.00
HMRC	VAT refund – Quarter 4 2023-2024	£1,802.79

b. Payments to be authorised:

Lisa Wilkinson	Clerk's April salary, allowance & expenses (Salary increase as agreed November 2023)	£2383.53
Nest (direct debit)	Clerk's pension	£166.81
ATIC	Ad hoc funding (GPC*)	£250.00
Charlbury Museum	Funding for Beating the Bounds display (GPC*)	£127.97
OALC	HR Legal Update training	£12.00
Corner House & WMH CIO	Annual grant (GPC*)	£1200.00
Nine Acres Management Committee	Annual grant (GPC*)	£550.00
Charlbury Community Workshop	Community grant **(GPC*)	£300.00
Charlbury Lunch Club	Community grant **(GPC*)	£700.00
Thomas Gifford Trust	Community grant** (GPC*)	£1200.00
Corner House & WMH CIO	April room hire	£40.00
Fasthosts (multipaycard)	Email hosting	£12.60
Castle Water (direct debit)	Allotment water supply	£10.25
Castle Water (direct debit)	Cemetery water supply	£5.25
Basecamp (multipay card)	Monthly subscription	£94.96
PWLB (direct debit)	Loan repayment – external works to community centre	£4,027.23
Friends' Meeting House	LNG room hire	£30.00
Bridget Knight	Internal audit	£220.00
Rural Market Town Group	Annual membership	£120.00

*General Power of Competence

** Community grants were applied for in October 2023 and approved by the Council during the process of setting the budget for financial year 2024-2025. Details of the grants can be found here: <https://charlbury-tc.gov.uk/apply-for-a-grant/>

c. Charlbury Town Council balances

To 31st March 2024	
Unity Trust Current Account	£25,022.42
Unity Trust Instant Access Account	£50,794.95

d. Internal transfer

From	To	Amount
Current Account	Savings account	£50,000.00