



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council
held on Wednesday 26th June 2024 at 7.30pm
in the Green Room, Memorial Hall**

Present: Cllrs: Gary Harrison (in the chair), Liz Reason, Peter Kenrick, Frances Mortimer, Ed Bradbury, Roy Scott, Tom Greenwood, Arthur Sinclair, County Cllr Liz Leffman, District Cllr Andy Graham, **Town Clerk:** Lisa Wilkinson, 4 members of public.

1. Apologies for Absence were received from Carl Perkins, Paul Honey, and Tony Vettors
2. **Declarations of Interest** were received from Ed Bradbury for item 13b, Nine Acres
3. **To receive Acceptance of Office forms from Liz Reason and Tom Greenwood**
These were signed.
4. **To co-opt councillor onto Town Council**
Katie Ewer applied for the role of councillor. She was co-opted unanimously. It was agreed that her declaration of acceptance of office could be returned at the July TC meeting.
5. **Contributions from members of public**
James Styring spoke about the Charlbury Youth Ambassador Steering Group which was previously supported by the Town Council. A Town Councillor is invited to join the steering group. A request for funding was made to the Town Council.

Residents of Ticknell Piece spoke about the grass cutting scheme at Ticknell Piece: explaining it is nice to look at when the grass is cut beautifully but it is currently a mess. The scheme has not been followed correctly so far this year. The 17th June was the first time the cut was carried out properly. Many residents were incensed about the whole scheme and the resident believes that the area has been ruined. He would like to alert new councillors to this issue.
6. **To receive minutes from the Town Council meeting dated 15th May 2024**
These were signed as a true record.
7. **Matters arising from the Minutes** (not elsewhere on the agenda)
 - As the quote for design of the rock ramp fish pass was too expensive, funding from DEFRA has been applied for.
8. **To receive report from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)**
Cllr Leffman reported:
 - With the election due, much work has had to be postponed until after the election
 - OCC has published its annual report: it has received 21 different awards, including two for work on climate change. OCC is now beginning to look at negative emissions not just net zero.
 - Cabinet meeting was held last week; OCC is applying to become a county of sanctuary for refugees and asylum seekers; it has agreed a statement on modern slavery; a review of bus services is being undertaken; electric buses are now in Oxford.
 - GWR is developing an electric battery train. Plans are for electrification of the track between Didcot and Oxford but beyond that batteries will need to be relied on.
 - The road to Fiveways/Wellington Cottages is being resurfaced in September. Liz Leffman has asked for the work to extend work to Shilson Lane.
 - Surface dressing has taken place on various roads recently to improve road surfaces.



- A publicity campaign will be started in July to explain the new traffic filters in Oxford which will start in November. There are still problems on Botley Road as the station work is unfinished but OCC will start work regardless of this and use it as a monitoring exercise. The plan is that a reduction in cars travelling into Oxford will allow buses to run more freely. Funding received from the Government is dependent on buses doing 10% better at keeping to the timetable.

9. To receive report from West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC)

Cllr Graham reported:

- Coronation Living Heritage fund to support local tree planting projects in West Oxfordshire is now open.
- WODC was a finalist for an innovation and partnership award for working with Windrush Against Sewage Pollution campaign group. The Council is working with Thames Water to see deliverable outcomes.
- The first phase of bringing Council services (such as planning) back to West Oxfordshire starts from 1st November: moving away from the Publica model.
- Cllr Graham was asked about the work of its grass cutting contractors. He explained that they have requested significant demonstrable improvements from Ubico.
- Concern raised by Liz Reason about the lack of planning officers for so much work. Andy Graham will address specific concerns on this.
- A Youth Development Officer is about to be appointed, responsible for rural areas. It would be useful for the Youth Ambassador steering group to meet with the officer. Youth initiatives funding is available for youths to apply for (small sums of money).

10. Ticknell Piece

- a. Vandalised bin

The bin at the skate park has been vandalised. This has been reported to West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC).

- b. To consider grass cutting

Concern has been raised about the grass cutting schedule at Ticknell Piece. Frances Mortimer explained the background to this. The recent long length of the grass was due to an early April cut and late May cut by WODC and by the extreme weather conditions. It is necessary to separate the two issues of whether to manage the grass with meadow areas and how to manage the WODC grass cutting contractors.

This discussion will be continued under item 12.

11. Finance and Administration

- a. To receive payment schedule and authorise payments (see **Appendix 1**)

These were agreed and authorised by Cllrs Peter Kenrick and Liz Reason

- b. To consider request for ad hoc funding for the Scout Hut

The Scout Hut has requested a grant towards the cost of the repair to the wiring. It was agreed that Ed Bradbury would ask the Beer Festival if funding was available from them.

- c. To appoint positions deferred from the Annual Meeting

- i. Ticknell Piece playground and skate park

- ii. Youth Ambassador steering group

- iii. To appoint representatives to Charlbury Exhibition Foundation

To be deferred until July meeting.

- d. To adopt Personnel terms of reference

These were **resolved**.

- e. To agree expenditure on repair of printer



This was agreed up to the cost of £100.

12. Town Maintenance

- a. To consider relaunch of initiative (originally called) Town Proud

The idea of this is to:

- Encourage people to look after their own patch and look out for neighbours who cannot manage their own.
- Establish a work party of volunteers that could come together to do things around the town (e.g. clearing autumn leaves)
- Work with OCC & WODC to improve management of verges etc.

It was agreed to set up a working group to start work on this. Members of this working group are Peter Kenrick, Liz Reason, Frances Mortimer and Ed Bradbury. The group will aim to bring a proposal to the July meeting.

- b. To consider grass cutting management across the town

Frances Mortimer presented a paper on taking a more active role in managing OCC verges in Charlbury. She presented two options: to implement additional management in prominent areas (e.g. cutting strips at the front of verges on The Slade) or to implement additional management in prominent areas plus taking on responsibility for all OCC verges. This second option would enable the TC to manage those verges belonging to OCC according to the TC's grass cutting management plan rather than being reliant on OCC. A grant is available from OCC (under the Local Government Act 1972 s.101) for this which would not cover the extra cost to the TC but would help to mitigate it.

Costs involved:

Option 1 – additional management in prominent areas: annual cost £900

Option 2 – additional management in prominent areas plus responsibility for all OCC verges: Income: £842.50 grant, cost: £1500, net annual cost: £657.50

It was **resolved** to accept option two. The Clerk will apply for the grant/section 101 agreement from OCC.

- c. Duke of Edinburgh award working party

It was agreed that a working party of Duke of Edinburgh students could start removing the ivy on the partly collapsed cemetery wall, in preparation for repair in the autumn.

13. Nine Acres

- a. To agree a sign as recommended by playground inspectors at cost of £30

This was **resolved**.

- b. To award maintenance work to contractor

Three quotes were sought but only one received. It was **resolved** to award the work to Ed Bradbury at the cost of £500.

14. Walkers are Welcome

- a. To consider contribution of £1230 as matched funding in order to access the awarded grant from Cotswold National Landscape (CNL).

An award of £2,000, which is 62% of the requested expenditure of £3,230 has been awarded.

Therefore, in order to accept the grant, the TC would need to fund the remaining 38%.

This was **resolved**, with a virement from the Mill Field budget agreed to finance this.

- b. To consider paying up front for the Walkers are Welcome project ahead of receiving the agreed funding from Cotswold National Landscape

This was **resolved**.

- c. To accept revised map for display

This was approved with a number of small amendments proposed by Peter Kenrick.



- d. To consider printing copies of Gateway leaflet and town trail

This was **resolved** in line with the project costs up to £250.

- e. To set up working group

It was agreed to set this up to support the relaunch of the initiative. Peter Kenrick and Tom Greenwood will be on this and volunteers will be asked to join.

15. Engagement

- a. To receive paper and agree cost of leaflet printing

The Working Group is currently working on collating the results of the town survey. It was agreed that:

- an A5 leaflet is prepared, the content to include:
 - the overall results of the survey with highlights
 - description of progress made by the Parking Working Group and the set-up of Charlbury Town Proud (name to be changed)
 - councillors' names and contact details, the website and a QR code which takes people to the council responsibilities' diagram
- the clerk provides a big 'header' to the poster outside the Coop which describes the responsibilities of different council authorities to draw attention to its content

It was **resolved** that this leaflet will be printed at the cost of £140.00 for 1400 copies.

A decision on councillors delivering leaflets in a given patch will be deferred until July.

- b. To consider printing for events/engagement for financial year

It was **resolved** that printing for events/engagement can be authorised by the clerk up to the budget limit (remaining publicity budget is £210) to enable publicity to be produced in a timely manner.

16. Parking

- a. Update from Parking Working Group

The Working Group is currently meeting with the local businesses to establish what the problems are. Staff parking has been raised amongst other issues. A survey is being designed to identify where people, parking in the Spendlove car park, are going and how long they will be parked for. This data, amongst other information, will enable the working group to establish when the busiest times are. Two days of survey will take place before the school holidays. The clerk will look for volunteers to help with this task.

It was agreed to suspend standing orders to continue the meeting.

17. Land and Nature Group

- a. To receive a report on the Nature Day event and the Nature Recovery Framework (NRF) consultation

Peter Kenrick gave feedback on the Nature Day and gave thanks to the various organisations involved: Wychwood Forest Trust, Riverside Festival group, OCC, Wild Oxfordshire, Ditchley Farm and Evenlode Catchment Partnership, Charlbury Primary School and Evenlode Voices.

- b. To approve the timetable for the NRF consultation and follow-up

The following consultation timetable was approved:

- closing date for responses for questionnaire Friday 27th September 2024
- pop-up events at some Charlbury Market days as well as at the Charlbury Beer Festival, Riverside Festival and Street Fair. Events to be held in Fawler and Finstock if possible.
- NRF follow-up workshop event – Saturday 5th October 2024



18. Community

- a. To consider request for funding for Youth Ambassador project

A request has been received for funding for £4,500 for this project. Unfortunately, the TC does not have the funds/budget available to give such a large grant. Ed Bradbury will talk to the Beer Festival to see if they have funds available.

- b. To consider arranging an explainer meeting about new traffic scheme in Oxford

Liz Reason proposed arranging this with Oxford Liveable Streets to enable people to understand how the filters/traffic system work. This will be held in September.

- c. To consider memorial to recently deceased resident

Roy Scott proposed naming the path behind the tennis court after a recently deceased resident, in recognition of all the community work he undertook over many years. However, it was agreed not to proceed with this as it may set a precedent and the TC does not own the path.

19. Thomas Gifford Trust

- a. Nomination of trustee

It was **resolved** to nominate Anna Boardwell as the trustee.

20. Correspondence

- Dogs on leads
- Complaint about allotment plot
- School traffic parking on Ticknell Piece
- Trees overhanging tennis courts
- Grass cutting – Marlborough Place
- Smoke pollution
- Grass cutting -Ticknell Piece
- Security at cemetery
- Zebra crossing
- Oxfordshire Tree giveaway-request for funding
- Cotswold National Landscape Board member
- Invitation to a Community Conversation on Climate Change and Health
- Community funding for community projects
- Station facilities
- Support for TC current grass cutting plan x 4 emails
- GWR site meeting

**Appendix 1
Payment Schedule**

a. Payments received:

Banbury Memorials	Memorials	£335.00
Reeves Memorials	Memorial	£185.00
Thomas Cakebread Memorials	Memorial	£185.00
A.L. Sole & Son	Burial fees	£250.00

b. Payments to be authorised:

Lisa Wilkinson	Clerk’s June salary, allowance, pension & expenses	£2418.64
HMRC	Income tax/ NI contributions Quarter 1	£2,445.74



Oxfordshire Association for Local Councils	New Councillor training	£864.00
Bowards Trees	Work at Mill Field not be paid	£3,900.00
Corner House & WMH CIO	June room hire	£35.00
Fasthosts (multipay card)	Email hosting	£2.40
Castle Water	Allotment water supply	£7.38
Castle Water	Cemetery water supply	£5.38
Basecamp (multipay card)	Monthly subscription	£93.81
Rob Jackson	Grass cutting at Mill Field	£400.00
Simon Walker	Repair of leaking tap at allotments	£2.65
Charlbury Scout Hut	Hire of Scout Hut (Nature Day)	£80.00
West Oxfordshire District Council	Emptying waste bins (April to September 2024)	£1,566.86
Viking Direct	Stationery	£20.08
Blueprint Imaging Ltd	Printing (Nature Day – LNG)	£36.00
Evenlode Landscaping	Grass cutting (April, May, June)	£3,260.62

c. Charlbury Town Council balances

To 31st May 2024	
Unity Trust Current Account	£23,961.01
Unity Trust Instant Access Account	£100,794.95