



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council
held on Wednesday 28th August 2024 at 7.30pm
in the Green Room, Memorial Hall**

Present: Cllrs: Gary Harrison (in the chair), Liz Reason, Peter Kenrick, Frances Mortimer (late arrival), Tom Greenwood, Ed Bradbury, , **Town Clerk:** Lisa Wilkinson, 2 members of public.

1. **Apologies for Absence** were received from Roy Scott, Arthur Sinclair, Tony Veters, Paul Honey, Katie Ewer and County Cllr Liz Leffman.
 2. **Declarations of Interest:** Liz Reason declared an interest in item 14 Land and Nature Group.
 3. **Contributions from members of public**
None
 4. **To receive minutes from the Town Council meeting** dated 17th July 2024
These were signed as a true record.
 5. **Matters arising from the Minutes** (not elsewhere on the agenda)
None.
 6. **Report from Oxfordshire County Council**
Cllr Leffman has sent in a written report which can be found in Appendix 2
 7. **Report from West Oxfordshire County Council**
No report received.
 8. **Transport**
 - a. To consider draft parking scheme designed by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)
A draft parking scheme has been shared with the Town Council which incorporates residents' parking on Browns Lane, Market St, Sheep St, Thames St, Dyers Hill, Church Lane, Church St and Park Street. OCC has asked if the Town Council finds the scheme acceptable to go forward to public consultation.
The Town Council voted to support this parking scheme but will request the following amendments:
 - Can the double yellow lines outside the Old Grammar School (but not past the school because of the bend) be removed and replaced with residents' parking/1 (or 3) hour parking to help pre-school drop off parking?
 - Can OCC ensure that the consultation clearly explains to residents that the implementation of a parking scheme is not a certainty but is dependent on the results of the consultation?
 - Can the three bays outside the pharmacist be just one hour parking rather than permit holder spaces as well? This will encourage shoppers which was the original idea of the one hour bays.The scheme subject to requesting these amendments (proposed by Peter Kenrick, seconded by Liz Reason) was voted for and carried.
The County Council will hold a full consultation on this scheme in the autumn.
- See item 16 below for Parking Working Group detailing further work that is being carried out.
- b. Feedback on meeting with GWR



The chair met with GWR at the station to request to have access to the noticeboard and other issues. Use of the noticeboard has been agreed. It needs a clean and a decision to be made about what to put on it. The Engagement Working Group will be tasked with this. The Town Council is still waiting to hear if GWR is taking action on the flooding at the corner and lighting and flooding on the bridge.

9. Finance and Administration

- a. To receive payment schedule and authorise payments (see **Appendix 1**)
These were agreed and authorised by Liz Reason and Peter Kenrick.
- b. To adopt new financial regulations
These were adopted.
- c. To receive external audit certificate and report
This was received. The auditors made an incorrect assertion and as reports cannot be amended once sent out, a letter of clarification has been produced by them. This is published alongside the report. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been displayed. Thanks were given to the clerk for her work on this.
- d. Review of effectiveness of internal control
This was received and is displayed on the Town Council website (charlbury-tc.gov.uk).
- e. To agree draft Emergency Plan
This document has been created by Charlbury Town Council to provide contacts and a basic framework for managing the **initial** stages of a major emergency that may threaten the safety and welfare of the community, its people and property. It is not the intention of this plan to replace in any way help from the recognised emergency services.

Members of the Emergency Management Team were appointed as follows:

- Chair of the Town Council Gary Harrison
- Vice chair of the Town Council Liz Reason
- Councillor Katie Ewer
- Councillor Tony Veters
- Chair of the Community Centre Chris Potts
- Trustee of the Corner House and War Memorial Hall CIO Paddy Gallagher (Roy Scott as backup if Paddy Gallagher is not available)

These Emergency Management Team members will hold a full copy of the Emergency Plan, as will Oxfordshire County Council Emergency Planning and West Oxfordshire District Council Emergency Planning teams. A redacted copy of the plan will be available on the Town Council website. The Emergency Plan was adopted (proposed by Liz Reason, seconded by Ed Bradbury).

- f. Town Council Strategy Review and Branding Review
As the new Town Council is now in place, a review of the current strategy will be undertaken. The clerk will set up a meeting to facilitate this.

10. Amenities

a. Mill Field

To note funding bid alteration

The application to the Water Restoration Fund has had to be amended as the bid was not considered large enough. The original tender from Fishtek of around £93,000 has now been submitted.

b. Bowls Club

- i. To consider quote for felling ash tree (ash die back)

The Bowls Club has received a quote for £500 for felling the tree. Further quotes have been requested.



c. Cemetery

i. To consider quote for tree survey

A quote for £400 to undertake a tree survey has been received from Bowards.

Quotes to carry out work required on the lime tree in the old cemetery are awaited from Treetech and JAG Timber.

ii. To consider burial request

A burial request to inter ashes before a full burial in the same plot has been received. This was agreed provided a guarantee is given that the full burial will happen when the time comes, as space is becoming limited.

11. Town Maintenance

a. Update from Charlbury Community Works! Working Group (CCW!)

Liz Reason, with the help of residents, has undertaken large amounts of work on The Slade clearing vegetation on pavements. Soil is being cleared from between cracks in the pavements to prevent further weeds growing. West Oxfordshire District Council will take the bags of cleared debris. CCW! would like to concentrate on this area (The Slade/Sandford Rise) and on Dyers Hill down to the station. This work will set the tone to encourage residents to care for their area and show that the Council is being proactive. A letter has been produced to remind householders about their responsibilities looking after frontages.

The clerk has arranged a walkabout with a representative from OCC Highways and will ask what their responsibility is towards maintenance of kerbs.

The public footpath between The Slade and Dancers Hill is overrun with weeds growing into the stream which runs alongside it, causing water to run along the path with flooding at the stone stile at times. The clerk will report this to OCC.

CCW! will create a display for Street Fair to show people the work being undertaken and to get their support.

b. To consider quote to reduce trees on The Green

A quote has been received for £500 for this work. A further quote has been requested. Ed Bradbury will speak to Richard Wooley to see if this is an SSE responsibility.

c. To sign agreement under section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 to take on County Council grass cutting responsibilities

This was deferred until clarity on any grass cutting outside the 30mph speed limit is received.

12. Nine Acres

a. To consider request for contribution towards cutting back branches overhanging tennis courts

The householders who own the trees have decided that they will not pay at this time. It was agreed to send another request as a tree owner has a duty to do what is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent or minimise the risk of interference with or damage to the property of his neighbour. The TC **resolved** to underwrite the cost of this work (£1000) with Nine Acres Management Committee (NAMC) by March 2025 if required. It will pursue the contribution from the householder in the meantime.

b. To consider ROSPA playground inspection report

Quotes for a new junior swing have been requested as required by the inspection report. Much of the damage on the play equipment has been caused by strimmer damage. The Town Council NAMC representatives will speak to NAMC about how to deal with strimmer damage.



A quote for new gates at Ticknell Piece of £525 was accepted. Evenlode Landscaping will undertake the work.

13. Walkers are Welcome

- a. To consider quote for surface improvements to areas on Gateway Walk 1 and Wigwell permissive path (from Cotswold National Landscape (CNL) funding with matched funding already agreed) and to purchase waymarkers

Quotes have been received from the Cotswold Wardens for surface improvements to areas on the Wiwalk at the cost of up to £1000. The TC has already agreed that it can pay for the Walkers are Welcome work up front and then claim 65% of the cost back as funding has been agreed by Cotswold National Landscape. This is a specific quote for the improvement of Walkers are Welcome walks (which forms part of the successful bid to CNL). It was **resolved** that this could go ahead and could include any missing waymarkers on the routes as well.

This was **resolved**.

14. Land and Nature

- a. Proposal for nature recovery engagement event(s) in November

As previously agreed, consultation on the NRF will continue until Friday 27th September 2024 with a final active public engagement effort at Street Fair using existing materials produced for Nature Day. Further engagement is proposed (already agreed in principle) by holding follow-up public events in November as summarised below:

7th November, Thursday evening talk inviting local groups and societies to share what they are already doing to restore nature

16th November, Saturday afternoon: facilitated workshop to create a shared vision for nature recovery in 2040 and help everybody come up with next steps for a Year of Nature Regeneration in 2025.

The idea is to launch a Year of Regeneration as something that everyone can get behind and contribute to, not centrally controlled by the Land and Nature Group or the Town Council. All local organisations, groups and societies would be approached and invited to be part of it. There would be a special emphasis on youth involvement and education which would align well with the Youth Ambassador initiative.

Two major priorities for the November events will be:

- **Engagement:** to actively involve the many local groups who are already doing great things, to find a way to reach others more effectively than previously - especially young people.
 - **Practical Action Plans.** Identifying practical projects that can be achieved quickly and involve local volunteers as much as possible – helping to secure community buy-in!
 - Drawing out these ideas will be a central feature of presence at Street Fair
- The November events (especially the Saturday workshop) will involve costs for room hire, light lunch & tea, illustrator and publicity. A grant application to SusCha is being prepared to support the above events supplementing remaining TC funds approved from the LNG budget.

These proposals were fully supported by the Town Council.

15. Community

- a. To consider plans for Charlbury Street Fair
- Land and Nature Group as above



- Charlbury Community Works!- to involve photos of cleared paths and sharing idea of wildflower areas
- Buildings- to initiate interest in shared purchase of solar panels
 - b.** Update on Charlbury Youth Ambassador project

The position has been advertised and applications received.

It was agreed to suspend standing orders to complete the items on the agenda.

c. Riverside Festival

A complaint has been received about the extension of the Festival this year and the use of the temporary bridge for pedestrians. It was agreed to ask Andy Pickard to present the plans for next year at a planning meeting.

d. Charlbury Christmas Market

Following the success of last year's Christmas market, it was agreed that the TC would run it again, to be held on 21st December. It was **resolved** to pay the cost of the hall hire up to £100. The Engagement Working Group will work on the publicity for this.

e. To consider restarting Councillor surgeries

These ran successfully for three months last year but were paused with the start of the new council. It was agreed to restart these, to be run on Saturday mornings in different venues around town.

- f.** Peter Kenrick recorded appreciation and thanks on behalf of the Town Council to the organisers of Charlbury Festival for a magnificent event with an amazing exhibition of Charlbury local history.

16. Parking Working Group

Continued from item 8

The Parking Working Group is developing a strategy which involves a range of different activities, not just working with OCC to draft a residents' parking scheme:

- Interviewing local businesses whom we know or suspect generate significant demand for parking, either from their own staff, or for their customers.
- Establishing whether there are alternative car parks which could be used by those who work in town, those who are customers for local services such as the pubs and nursery, or those who meet in Charlbury as the setting off point for walks.
- Talking to WODC about how the current car park is used and whether changes could be made to the existing 12-hour parking limit.

Surveys are currently being undertaken at the Spendlove car park by councillors and volunteers, to understand how it is being used. Recommendations can then be made about possible ways to proceed.

17. Correspondence

- Complaints about Wilderness Festival
- Complaint about Riverside Festival
- Positive feedback from survey response flyer
- Community Orchard planting (WODC)
- Spendlove car park
- GWR meeting
- Council procedures
- Land and Nature Group survey
- NALC Star Council Awards



- Blenheim building site
- Ticknell Piece grass cutting

**Appendix 1
Payment Schedule**

a. Payments received:

A.L Sole & Son	Cemetery fees	£515.00
Peter Smith & Son	Cemetery fees	£250.00
HMRC	VAT refund Quarter 1 2024-2025	£1,141.10

b. Payments to be authorised:

Lisa Wilkinson	Clerk’s August salary, allowance, pension & expenses	£2,404.23
Information Commissioner’s Office	Annual data protection fee (direct debit)	£35.00
Corner House & WMH CIO	August room hire	£35.00
Fasthosts (multipaycard)	Email hosting	£2.40
Castle Water	Allotment water supply (direct debit)	£7.56
Castle Water	Cemetery water supply (direct debit)	£5.56
Basecamp (multipay card)	Monthly subscription	£93.32
Michael Oliver	Grass cutting at Nine Acres Recreation Ground	£378.00
Evenlode Landscaping	Grass cutting	£1,275.00
Evenlode Landscaping	Removal of hemlock at Mill Field	£300.00
Trevor Stewart	Repair of see-saw	£510.00
OALC	Councillor planning training	£288.00
PWLB	Cemetery extension loan repayment	£2,017.60
PWLB	Sports pavilion extension loan repayment	£2,182.84
Rob Jackson	Grass cutting (July cut) - Mill Field	£200.00
Moore	External audit	£504.00
Kopyrite	Survey response flyers & Land and Nature Group printing	£251.00
Playsafety Ltd	ROSPA playgrounds inspection	£314.40

c. Charlbury Town Council balances

To 31st July 2024	
Unity Trust Current Account	£10,496.99
Unity Trust Instant Access Account	£96,394.10

**Appendix 2
County Council Report to Charlbury Town Council, August 2024**

As I will be away on August 28th I am sending my written report to the Town Council.

No confidence vote in Thames Water: County Councillors voted that they have no confidence in Thames Water. As leader I have written to the Secretary of State to urge limits on bonuses for water bosses and requesting that the government evaluates the pros and cons of renationalisation.



Call for Council to step up flood prevention role: Council passed a motion calling on the County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority to respond to increasing risks to flooding and to work with relevant national and local stakeholders to advocate for greater powers.

Delay to Oxford traffic filter trial: Trials of six traffic filters to reduce congestion have been delayed. They were due to take place in November but have been pushed back due to work by Network Rail overrunning. It is not certain when Network Rail will complete the work.

North Cotswold Line event in parliament: Rachel Reeves recently announce that Worcestershire Parkway will be a site for a strategic housing development. This will have a big impact on the North Cotswold Line and an event is being held by the Task Force on September 4th to show the business case to government ministers and our new MPs.

New county-wide bus ticket: A new ticket that works across different bus operators has been launched, costing £6.50 a day for unlimited travel for adults and £3.50 for under-19s

Adult social care: Adults with learning disabilities in Oxfordshire have helped to redesign a service that will offer them more choice and flexibility around their short break options.

Road works: The resurfacing of Grammar School Hill/ Park Street is scheduled for September 11th and is expected to be completed on September 13th

DRAFT