



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council
held on Wednesday 27th November 2024 at 7.30pm
in the Memorial Hall**

Present: Cllrs: Gary Harrison (GH) (in the chair), Liz Reason (LR), Peter Kenrick (PK), Frances Mortimer (FM) (late arrival), Ed Bradbury (EB), Tom Greenwood (TG), Tony Vettters (TV), Arthur Sinclair (AS), Roy Scott (RS), Jack Wells(JW), **Town Clerk:** Lisa Wilkinson, 12 members of public.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** none were received.
2. **Declarations of Interest:** none were received. Liz Reason declared an interest later in the meeting for item 15b.
3. To receive Declaration of Acceptance of Office from Jack Wells
This was signed.
4. **Contributions from members of public**
Kevin Slevin asked that a councillor should request a named vote for item 9a. Parking.
5. **To receive minutes from the Town Council meeting dated 23rd October 2024 and minutes of the Finance Committee meeting dated 13th November 2024**
The Town Council meeting minutes dated 15th November 2024 and extraordinary meeting minutes dated 15th November 2024 were approved and signed as a true record. The minutes from the finance meeting were accepted and signed.
6. **Matters arising from the Minutes** (not elsewhere on the agenda)
None.
7. **Nine Acres**
 - a. To resolve that the hard surface area of the tennis court will be retained for the foreseeable future as an amenity for the people of Charlbury (for funding purposes).
This was **resolved**.
 - b. To consider request from the tennis club that they fund-raise for a new surface on the hard courts and to receive costed proposal.
The tennis club has requested that the hard courts are resurfaced. They have offered to fund-raise for this as there are currently no funds available. They have submitted three quotes for the work, ranging from £30,000 to £50,000 plus VAT. The Council **resolved** that this fund-raising could proceed (proposed LR, seconded JW). A contractor for the work will be decided when funds are available.
 - c. To consider cutting headlands/edges of Nine Acres at cost of £850 plus VAT
This was **resolved** (proposed GH). Michael Oliver, as the agreed contractor for many years, will undertake this work.
8. **Finance and Administration**
 - a. To receive payment schedule and authorise payments (see **Appendix 1**)
These were **resolved** (proposed by TG, seconded by PK) and will be authorised by Cllrs Reason and Kenrick.
 - b. To note agreement on Local Government Services Pay scale 2024/25. The increased amount on the pay scale point will be backdated to April 2024
This was noted.
 - c. To agree training for clerk: experienced clerk refresher, at cost of £60
This was **resolved** (proposed EB, seconded AS).
 - d. To receive recommendations from the Finance Committee:
 - i. To accept the proposed budget for 2025-2026
The proposed budget had been previously circulated to all councillors and the chair then talked through the budget. This was **resolved** (proposed LR, seconded JW) . The actual amount of the precept request cannot be calculated until the tax base figures are received from West Oxfordshire District Council. This will be brought to the December TC meeting. The approximate precept request to



balance the agreed budget is £108 per annum for a Band D household (an increase of 2.8% or £3 per year - just above inflation). The headline figures in the budget can be found in Appendix 2.

e. To set date for Annual Parish Meeting in 2025

This was agreed as Friday 25th April 2025.

f. To note non-attendance of councillor for six months (LGA 1972, s 85(1) and (2)) and therefore casual vacancy on the Council

The vacancy has been advertised. Closing date for expressions of interests is 10th January 2025. Co-option will take place at the January Town Council meeting on 22nd January 2025.

9. Parking

a. To consider Town Council response to residents' parking scheme

Gary Harrison explained the background to this:

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) put forward a proposed scheme to the Town Council, the Town Council agreed that this should go to consultation, the consultation has now finished and the TC must enter its response to the consultation (**not decide** on the parking scheme).

Liz Reason explained some further background:

- Residents' bays are not resident-specific
- Any OCC process always needs a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) – this consultation is the start of the TRO. The second part occurs, if the scheme is agreed by the OCC Cabinet member, after which the proposals will be implemented.
- If the scheme is approved, OCC will first undertake a spot survey of parking around the centre of town before installation and then a few months after installation to identify how it is working and whether any changes would be appropriate.
- Market St and Fishers Lane were omitted in error but will be included so, residents of both streets will be eligible to apply for parking permits.
- This consultation is not a referendum: OCC will deliberate on the scheme and its effects on Charlbury taking into account all the responses received.
- Any required changes can be made in six months' time after the review has been undertaken.
- Residents' parking-only areas can be used by any resident with a permit at any time of day wherever they live so spaces probably won't remain empty if one resident leaves for work and is away all day. This will be reviewed at the six-month review if there are regularly empty parking spaces.

Tom Greenwood raised concerns that the TC is being asked to comment without knowing the views of the residents. It was explained that the Town Council was responding to the consultation just like the residents did. Peter Kenrick quoted Neighbourhood Plan policy A4 to support existing services and businesses and asked to express these concerns in the TC response.

Proposal for response to the residents' parking scheme consultation (proposed by JW and seconded by LR): Charlbury Town Council would like to thank OCC and its officers for all the hard work on this scheme and would like to make the following points:

- It is concerned about parking for people working in town.
- It awaits the outcome of the consultation and requests that OCC takes into consideration all the views of the people who have answered the consultation.

Peter Kenrick proposed an amendment (seconded by EB) to include a request to ensure any scheme supports the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan in its policies to support existing businesses and services. This was voted on and **resolved**.

The original proposal with the amendment was voted on: 9 for 1 against. This was carried. The full text of the TC response is:

Charlbury Town Council would like to thank OCC and its officers for all the hard work on this scheme and would like to make the following points:



- It awaits the outcome of the consultation and requests that OCC takes into consideration all the views of the people who have answered the consultation.
- The TC requests that any scheme supports the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan in its policies to support existing businesses and services as it is concerned about parking for people working in the town.

b. Update on other parking work

Liz Reason explained about the survey at the Spendlove Centre car park that the Council had carried out over six days. West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) has been informed about some of issues that arose from it and WODC has agreed to reline the car park and to reorganise the parent & child and disabled bays as they are currently under used. This is estimated to gain an additional four parking spaces.

Liz Reason has also spoken to the cricket club in case supplementary parking is needed. It has been provisionally agreed that the first car park into the cricket club could be used for staff who work in the town centre (not for rail users).

10. Amenities

a. Cemetery

- i. To agree budget for repair of stone wall

No budget is necessary as fallen stone from further down the wall will be used. It was agreed to give a donation of £250 to Wychwood Forest Trust.

b. Bowls Club

- i. To consider revised quote to fell ash tree

Following approval of £620 at the October Council meeting for tree work on this tree, the recent high winds weakened the affected area and resulted in falling branches. A reassessment by JAG Trees has resulted in the submission of a new quote for removal of the tree. The revised quote is for £1,230 plus VAT. The Bowls Club has agreed to contribute £300 towards this cost. It was **resolved** to pay the extra £310, if required, in order for this work to proceed (proposed AS, seconded LR).

- c. To consider installing combination code lock on gate into field

This was agreed up to the cost of £150 to purchase padlock and chain.

d. Mill Field

- i. Update on Rock Ramp Fish Pass and bridge

News of the funding bid to Defra for the design phase of this project is still awaited. Evenlode Catchment Partnership (ECP) has agreed to underwrite the costs of this (circa £93,000) if the work is completed before the end of March 2025. The funding originates from Thames Water. Fishtek has been awarded the design contract and has agreed to complete the project in time.

11. Town Maintenance

a. Charlbury Community Works! Working Group

- i. To consider leaflet including councillor delivery of it, webpage and resident sign up for project

The content and design of the leaflet was agreed. The printing of 1700 copies at the cost of £100 was **resolved**. It was agreed that the councillors will deliver this leaflet to all households in Charlbury. The new webpage contains a sign-up form to Charlbury Community Works! Residents signed up will receive communications about Town Council working parties to clear leaves, snow, weeds on pavements etc. They will also be able to share details and photos of their own working parties set up with their neighbours. Residents signing up via the website will also be asked if they would like to join a Whatsapp group to share the information as above.

12. Engagement

- a. To consider use of new infographic



A clearer infographic of town, district and county council responsibilities has been shared by Gary Harrison. It was **resolved** to use this infographic on the website and print a large poster to be displayed outside the Co-op, at the cost of £20.

b. Communication

- i.** To consider adoption of Communications policy

This was adopted.

- ii.** To consider council use of charlbury.info's forum

It was agreed that in order for the TC approach to be unified only the Clerk or Chair will post (factual) information or the agreed TC position.

13. Walkers are Welcome

- a.** To resolve cost of design of the interpretation board content at cost of £500 (matched funded by Cotswold National Landscape) and printing of the boards at £38 per board (x4)

This was **resolved** (proposed LR, seconded FM). Creative Gravy was appointed to design these, using the content provided by Frances Mortimer and Christine Elliott, previously agreed at Council. Blueprint in Witney will be asked to print them. **Resolved.**

- b.** To resolve cost of printing revised Walking leaflets (matched funded by Cotswold National Landscape)

Richard Fairhurst is currently revising these (funded by Cotswold National Landscape funding bid). It was **resolved** to pay £200 for this work as specified in the funding bid. It was **resolved** to print 1000 of these leaflets for £150 (proposed PK, seconded EB).

14. Community

- a.** To consider comments for review of Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) Management Plan To be brought to the December meeting.

15. Land and Nature Group

- a.** To approve response to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), the Oxfordshire statutory framework for nature recovery

This was approved.

- b.** To consider applying for funding to Sustainable Charlbury to support Year of Nature Recovery activities

Liz Reason declared an interest.

The Land and Nature Group would like to apply for funding to hold launch and closing events for the Year of Nature Recovery and to include a sum of £3000 in the bid for local groups to bid for if they want to undertake a relevant activity. This was **resolved**.

16. Correspondence

- Parking consultation x2
- Request for paid contractor to clear paths
- Damage to cars on Dyers Hill/proposal to introduce chicanes with downhill priority
- Mill Field meadow restoration issues
- Speeding statistics on Woodstock Road
- Laser beams over Cornbury
- Ticknell Piece grass areas
- Proposal to remove Five Ways bus shelter
To be brought to December meeting
- Youth Transport Forum
- Request for access to Mill Field for wheelchair user
Take to December meeting



- Request for information re parking work
- Rats at Nine Acres
- Request for traffic lights at Enstone Rd junction: the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan is being progressed and will include proposals for this area of town.
- Proposal for resurfacing Stonesfield Lane bridleway
- Thomas Gifford Trust response to parking consultation

Meeting closed: 9.30pm

**Appendix 1
Payment Schedule**

a. Payments received:

Banbury Memorials	Memorial fees	£335.00
Resident	Memorial fees	£185.00
HMRC	VAT refund Quarter 2	£1,011.58

b. Payments to be authorised:

Lisa Wilkinson	Clerk's November salary, allowance, pension & expenses	£2,957.62
Village Farm Contracting	Mill Field meadow project (Sustainable Charlbury funding)	£485.00
Village Farm Contracting	Harrowing on Mill Field	£308.62
Corner House & WMH CIO	November room hire	£65.00
Bowards Tree Surgery Ltd	Reduce scrub/lift trees canopy at Kendal Piece	£600.00
Fasthosts (multipay card)	Email hosting	£2.40
Castle Water	Allotment water supply (direct debit)	£7.56
Castle Water	Cemetery water supply (direct debit)	£137.80
Basecamp (multipay card)	Monthly subscription	£89.74
Evenlode Landscaping	Grass cutting	£1,025.00
Evenlode Landscaping	Cemetery clearance, hedge trimming	£1,000
Elancity	Speed Indicator Device	£3,449.99
Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils	Clerk training	£72.00

c. Charlbury Town Council balances

To 31st October 2024	
Unity Trust Current Account	£26,253.95
Unity Trust Instant Access Account	£127,012.53

Appendix 2

Agreed budget for 2025-2026

Expenditure

Administration	£55448
Subscriptions	£1026
Grants	£11130
Engagement	£3100
Amenities	£35,597



Town maintenance	£40,200
Mill field	£5,000
Land & Nature	£530
Market	£100
Transport	£560
Walkers are Welcome	£500

Total Expenditure **£152,820**

Income

Precept	£149,125
Bank interest	£1,800
Cemetery fees	£6000
Bowls club rent	£310
OCC (grass cutting grant)	£880

Total Income **£158,820**

Increase in Reserves (as per external auditor request) £6,000

DRAFT