



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council meeting
held on Wednesday 11th December 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, Tony Vettors, Tom Greenwood, Arthur Sinclair, Jack Wells, County Cllr Liz Leffman, District Cllr Andy Graham, **Town Clerk:** Lisa Wilkinson, 2 members of public.

1. Apologies for Absence were received from Roy Scott.

2. To receive Declarations of Interest: none received.

3. Contributions from members of public

Phil Winser from the Bull spoke about the current planning application for the Bull and how it impacts parking. The Town Council has objected to this planning application. It reduces parking spaces to eight from the 12 specified in the 2016 planning permission. Mr Winser has commissioned a survey which states that 12 spaces cannot fit into the area. The main issue is with locating the bins. Mr Winser requests that councillors meet with him to talk through the current planning issues.

Andy Graham described the West Oxfordshire District Council enforcement issues at the Bull which he has overseen. The Bull has now been more co-operative about planning issues.

Frances Mortimer asked about promoting other ways for customers to travel such as car sharing (Hiyacar). Mr Winser explained that guests are encouraged to catch the train to Charlbury.

A moment's silence was held to show respect for Reg James and Glenn Chapman, two previous councillors, who have passed away recently.

4. To receive minutes from the Town Council meeting dated 27th November 2024
These were signed as a true record.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes (not elsewhere on the agenda)

The swing will be installed at Nine Acres week commencing 16th December.

6. Report from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)

Liz Leffman reported:

- A meeting is being held with GWR on 16th December. GWR has suggested looking at a second layer of car park: they would need to demonstrate a strong business case to the Department for Transport.
- A visit from Lord Hendy, the Rail Minister, has been arranged for January. He will look at the needs of the County: priorities are the Cowley branch line and Oxford station which needs significant investment.
- The parking consultation is being decided by the Cabinet for Highways and Transport on 12th December. The consultation top line shows that the majority are in favour so officers have recommended approval.
- The requested consultation for the draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan has been delayed as requested as it is too close to the recent parking consultation. Officers have agreed to delay it until mid-February with a decision in May. Discussion with Town Councillors resulted in a request to be made to delay this even further so any impacts from a proposed parking scheme, if it is approved, have settled in the town.
- A white paper is expected to be published on Monday about a potential devolved combined authority.



- OCC is currently working on the 2025-26 budget. There has been an in-depth reorganisation at the County Council to make savings. There will be significant amounts of money put into budget for Highways.
- The County Council is seeking to improve Fixmystreet using Artificial Intelligence.

Questions to Cllr Leffman:

- A request was made for Liz Leffman to ask GWR to fix the puddle on the entrance road to the station.
- Are there any updates on SEN provision? Cllr Leffman explained that over 50% of Education, Health and Care Plans are being delivered on time (4% previously). A Special Educational Needs Improvement Board has also been in place for 6 months.

7. Report from West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC)

Andy Graham reported:

- A budget consultation is currently open. It can be found on the WODC website. WODC has been able to improve services with no raised costs because it is now receiving a better return on its investments. An asset strategy plan has also been implemented for the first time.
- The Elmfield premises will be commercially let to bring in income.
- The Economic and Development officer will be contacting smaller towns to look at new initiatives to support markets.
- Memberships of leisure centres has increased by over 10%.
- The first phase of the Publica transfer of services is now complete. Planning and Democratic services are back in West Oxfordshire.
- The Rushybank planning application will be taken to Uplands planning committee at the end of January.

Questions to Cllr Graham:

- Query about where planning officers will be based if Elmfield is no longer used as Council offices? They are now working from the Wood Green offices. Planning officers will be at full complement now they are no longer employed by Publica.
- Query about when other significant planning applications in Charlbury will be heard at Planning Committee: Woodstock Rd and Spelsbury Rd. These have not been scheduled yet but Cllr Graham will find out.

8. Finance and Administration

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

These were approved and will be authorised by Cllrs Kenrick and Reason

- b. To agree training for clerk at cost of £55 (plus VAT)

This was **resolved**.

- c. To agree precept for financial year 2025-2026

Following approval of the budget for 2025-2026 at the November Town Council meeting, the tax base has now been received from WODC. This results in a precept rise of 2.13% (for a Band D household) or the equivalent of £2.23 per year. This was **resolved** and will be sent to WODC.

- d. To agree meeting dates for 2025

These were **resolved** and will be published on the Town Council website as usual.

9. Parking

- a. To agree that Cllr Gary Harrison attends the Oxfordshire County Council cabinet meeting on the parking scheme consultation decision

This was agreed.



10. Amenities

a. Mill Field

- i. To consider purchase of combination lock for field gate

This was agreed following a request for disabled access to the Mill Field. A combination lock up to the cost of £50 will be purchased.

11. Town Maintenance

a. Charlbury Community Works! Working Group CCW!

Ahead of further cold weather a statement on use of salt bins will be published.

The CCW! leaflets will be delivered by councillors this week.

b. To consider proposal to remove Five Ways bus shelter

Following a request that this unused bus shelter is removed, a quote has been requested for its removal (for information only at this stage). This is still awaited and this item will be deferred until January.

12. Engagement

An engagement working group meeting is being held on 13th December.

13. Land and Nature Group

a. To accept logo for Year of Nature Recovery

This was agreed and thanks were given to Tony Lloyd for the design of this logo.

14. Journeys

a. To review draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

Frances Mortimer explained the background to this plan: it originated out of the Journeys Working Group work during the last Council. It addresses areas where people have complained for years that there is a problem. Evidence has been collated over the last three years to develop a connected network for walking and cycling (mapping, speed data, interactive map with input from residents etc.) This was taken to OCC who were supportive and took over the development of the plan. It has now come out as a draft. It creates an overall vision with the understanding that the funding will not be there to make all those changes. But over time aspects of the plan could be implemented as funding becomes available.

OCC has now shared this draft plan. However, as it is a lengthy document the Town Council has requested further time to discuss it.

OCC will be requested to delay the initial consultation until next September to give the Town Council time to work through the document properly. An LCWIP Working Group will be set up for initial discussions on this.

15. Community

a. To consider comments for review of Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) Management Plan

Liz Reason, as a board member, has made comments on this.

16. Correspondence

- Volunteers needed for erection and removal of the Christmas tree at the museum: the museum will be asked to find volunteers
- Graffiti at bus shelter on Enstone Rd crossroads: this will be removed on 14th December during a leaf clearing session.
- Declaration of Interests complaint: a reply was agreed.
- Letter to Bamfords from the Cotswold Wardens requesting surface improvements to make the bridleway across their land accessible

Meeting closed: 9.16pm



**Appendix 1
Payment Schedule**

a. Payments received:

None

b. Payments to be authorised:

Lisa Wilkinson	Clerk's December salary, allowance, pension & expenses	£2,446.53
HMRC	Employer's contributions	£2,820.01
Wychwood Forest Trust	Donation (s137)	£250.00
Music Magpie	Refurbished iphone (for clerk)	£292.49
Corner House & WMH CIO	December room hire	£115.00
Kopyrite	Printing	£118.00
Fasthosts (multipay card)	Email hosting	£2.40
Castle Water	Allotment water supply (direct debit)	£135.62
Castle Water	Cemetery water supply (direct debit)	£5.38
Basecamp (multipay card)	Monthly subscription	£93.93
Walkers are Welcome	Annual subscription	£70.00
Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils	Clerk training	£66.00

c. Charlbury Town Council balances

To 30th November 2024	
Unity Trust Current Account	£12,719.43
Unity Trust Instant Access Account	£127,012.53