

ROTHERFIELD PEPPARD PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of Annual Meeting held at The Sports Pavilion, Stoke Row Road,
Rotherfield Peppard
Monday 9th May 2011 - 19:30 to 22:45**

PRESENT:

Nick Launders (Chair)	(NL)	Fiona Berry	(FB)
Linda Collison	(LC)	Leeanne Flett	(LF)
Clive Mills	(CM)		

SODC:		Paul Harrison	(PH)
Press:		Phil Simms	(PS)
Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer:		Helen Lewis	(HL)

NOT PRESENT:

OCC: Carol Viney (CV)

1. APOLOGIES

TC, DH, TR and CV.

2. ELECTIONS – DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE BY COUNCILLORS

NL confirmed that at this point, we need to deal with the Declaration of Acceptance of Office by councillors.

The Declarations of Acceptance of Office were signed by CM, FB, LC, LF and NL.
These were witnessed and signed by HL.

a) Election of Chairman

NL was nominated Chairman by CM. This was seconded by LF and FB. NL was happy to accept and was duly elected.

b) Declaration of Acceptance of Office by Chairman

NL read and signed The Chairman's Declaration of Office.

c) Election of Vice Chairman

NL confirmed that DH wishes to stand for Vice Chairman and proposed that he did. LF seconded and DH was duly elected.

d) Appointment of committees and sub-committees

Finance and Staffing Committee

NL confirmed that TC had offered to continue as the Chairman of the Finance and Staffing Committee. This was seconded by all. It was agreed that there are no changes to the Finance and Staffing Committee.

Committee Members:	Linda Collison	Tony Cotton	David Hammond	Nick Launders	Terry Ryan
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Planning committee

NL asked if anyone was keen to take over the running of the Planning Committee as DH would like to step down if possible. As there were no volunteers DH was re-elected as Chairman.

There is no limit on the number of people that can join this committee and there is a shortage at present.

Committee Members:	Fiona Berry	Tony Cotton	David Hammond	Clive Mills	Nick Launders (ex-officio)
Reserve Committee Members:	Linda Collison	Leeanne Flett			

Carlings Orchard working group

It was agreed that there are no changes to the Carlings Orchard working group.

Working Group Members:	Linda Collison	Leeanne Flett	Terry Ryan
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3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was resolved that the 11th April minutes be amended to include the planning minutes, page numbers and to show “postponed” instead of “abandoned” with regards to the plans for the library and that this be presented as a true and accurate record.

It was resolved that the APM 16th April minutes be amended to include CM’s apologies and be adopted as a true and accurate record.

New Agenda Item: Register of Members’ Interest Form

CM, FB, LC, LF and NL completed the Register of Members’ Interest Forms and passed to HL. It was resolved that we give the remaining Councillors until the 15th June to complete.

Action1: HL to send copies to the Monitoring Officer of the District Council.

New Agenda Item: RPPC Members' Allowances Scheme Form

CM, FB, LC, LF and NL completed these and passed to HL.

NL suggested that Councillors read through the code of conduct, which contains information about interests, gifts, hospitality and restrictions and keep it close to hand. This can also be accessed on the web.

NL proposed that we deal with 4) Standing Orders later and alter the agenda so that we deal with item 6) first. This was accepted by members.

6. SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL (SODC) MATTERS

a) District Councillor's Report

PH has just come from the first group meeting with his political party since the election. There is a full council meeting on Thursday 19th May and there will be little to report until then.

b) Election of Councillors

PH thanked everyone for voting last Thursday. There was a 48% turn-out. The results released on Friday confirmed that the votes were:

Conservative	Paul Harrison	1461
Conservative	Alan Rooke	1259
Green	Adrian Carlisle	652
Labour	David Winchester	486

The postal votes and the count on Friday had not proceeded satisfactorily. The problems were was blamed on complications arising from the AV vote and difficulties with the printers. As this is the third time that there have been problems with postal votes, an independent enquiry will be arranged by the Scrutiny Committee.

It is likely that the opposition will be formed by a coalition.

At the next council meeting PH will confirm what committees he is on. Alan Rooke wants to be on the Planning Committee, and as we are a 2 ward seat, PH will not be able to sit on this committee.

c) Other Business

The Standards Committee is likely to be disbanded by the end of the year due to new Code of Conduct legislation.

d) Commons

It was established at the Conservators meeting that they have the right to remove signs on commons land as long as they keep the sign for 6 months so that the owner can request it back. The same rules apply to RPPC for RPPC land and RPPC for OCC land (where written permission is provided by OCC).

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The Conservators are still waiting for a verdict on Kingwood Common which is likely to be 3 months from the point of enquiry.

LC confirmed that there is more flytipping on the top common. Linda has notified Verdant and the Conservators and responses are pending. LC has photographs.

PH expressed concerned about the bank by The Wish which has been put in place to prevent erosion or enable building work. Provisional approval had been granted by the Conservators subject to discussion.

The Conservators confirmed that they would prefer cars to park nose in. There are now problems with parking for the pub and tennis club as spaces are being shared with builders working on The Wish. A member of the public has asked if the Conservators had given permission. Permission was granted by an individual from the Conservators but not the Conservators Committee. The Conservators will contact the owners of The Wish to discuss.

CM said that it was interesting point as to how far parking should extend and said that it seemed appropriate to try and define the parking areas for the tennis club and pub.

LF mentioned the incident of child outside the Red Lion stepping into the road just as a car was travelling by at an estimated 30mph, nearly causing a serious accident. It was established that we cannot have speed bumps unless we have street lighting. NL commented that with the new school, a speed limit of 20mph may be imposed but this issue lies with the highways department and not the Conservators.

Action2: PH will talk to the conservators about designated parking.

A member of the public has approached NL about the salt dump to the far north of Kingwood Common. Contrary to the 1906 act the Conservators agreed to a salt dump being placed there by Thames Water for the purpose of water purification. It is now a mess and an “ecological disaster”. NL asked what plans the Conservators now have for the complete removal of the dump. OCC have completed a study and according to hearsay “they have decided to take no action”.

Action3: PH will find out what was in the OCC report and what plans the Conservators have.

4. STANDING ORDERS

NL confirmed that he has looked through the Standing Orders and will read thoroughly. NL stressed how important it is that everyone reads these and that it is on our risk register to do so.

a) Review of delegation arrangements

Already discussed under 2d).

b) Review the terms of reference for committees

No change required.

c) Receipt of nominations for existing committees

Already discussed under 2d).

d) Appointment of new committees

Not necessary, although it would be worthwhile having a working group for the pavilion.

e) Review of standing orders and financial regulations

It was agreed that HL will informally comment on what we do throughout the year and that we will work towards a safer audit and ensure that the regulations are observed.

f) Review of arrangements with Local Authorities

It was agreed that this include planning, SODC and OCC and that this be put on the agenda for the next meeting for discussion when DH is present.

Action4: HL to put “Review of arrangements with Local Authorities” on the next agenda.

CM commented that he was concerned at the level of attendance and information that we are receiving via CV regarding matters relating to OCC and us.

Action5: HL to remind CV of meeting dates and actions arising.

PH was asked to confirm the current planning procedure for SODC:

- “Against group” speaks for 5 minutes
- Applicant speaks for 5 minutes often answering the points raised by the “Against group”
- The Ward Member i.e. PH or AR speaks for 5 minutes often mopping up any of the issues not already answered by the applicant.

AR and PH do not take part in planning decisions at parish level.

g) Review of arrangements with external bodies

It was agreed that discussions about the relationship with the police be deferred until the next meeting.

Action6: HL to put “Review of arrangements with external bodies” on the next agenda.

h) Review of inventory of land, assets and office equipment

No change required.

i) Review and confirmation of arrangements for Insurance

There has been a full review (see 9b)

j) Review of the council/employees’ membership of other bodies.

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HL is joining the Society of Local Council Clerks. Cheque signing under 9e)iv).

k) Review of complaints procedure and requests for data

We don't have a complaints procedure.

Action7: NL to contact Legal and Democratic and ask for their advice.

l) Review of policy for dealing with press/media

We have an open and transparent policy.

LC requested that we have a process in place for when the press phone up.

Action8: HL to put "Review of policy for dealing with press/media" on the agenda for next month.

m) Setting the meetings for the year ahead

Meetings are held on the second Monday of every month but the process for setting dates should be reviewed so that we always stay a year ahead. LC and CM suggested that the Financial Calendar holds meeting dates.

Action9: HL to put "Financial Calendar & Meeting Dates" on the agenda for next month.

5) MEMBERS DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS:

None.

7) OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (OCC) MATTERS:

a) County Councillor's Report

NL confirmed that there is no more news about the salt bin policy or the library.

NL said that he believes RPPC should buy salt bins and cost the salt in the event that they are not filled up by OCC. NL went on to say that RPPC needed to make a decision in June.

Action10: NL to chase CV for her response about OCC filling up the salt bins.

CM stated that it was incomprehensible that we still do not have a response as this was first raised in Feb 2010.

b) Revised Household Waste Recycling Centre Strategy

Oakley Wood is been open since November 2010 and accepts small trailers

Action11: HL to remove from agenda for next month.

C) Pothole survey

LC confirmed that there are a lot of potholes that have been ringed with white marks for more than 28 days now. It was agreed that we needed input from TR and so this issue is postponed until the next meeting.

Action12: HL to add “Potholes – ringed for more than 28 days” to the agenda for the next meeting.

8) PEPPARD WAR MEMORIAL HALL

CM attended the last meeting on the 3rd May. The hall continues to be well used. Redecoration is continuing and soon it will have new curtains. The painting at the front of the hall is currently under way and the staining and varnishing will be undertaken shortly. They now have building regulations for the internal disabled toilet. An estimate for this work is awaited. A major element of the work planned for the hall is the re-roofing which is scheduled for 2013. There are various ideas floating around about how it will be done. Grants have been mentioned as a source of funding.

LF requested that we feedback thanks to the PWMH committee for giving us the slot for our APM and that we feedback how successful it was.

NL confirmed that gaining access for the APM could be smoother. HL and LF confirmed that they and others had experienced similar problems in the past and that potential bookings had been lost.

Action13: CM will feed back problems experienced with gaining access.

NL also confirmed that the deposit has been requested without a bill being issued, but that he would proceed with payment.

Nick has a meeting with Helen Beville, one of the co-ordinators of the new proposed pre-school at the Sports Hall tomorrow at 9:30.

9) FINANCE AND STAFFING

a) Approval of the 2010-11 accounts

The numbers were perfect except for an error in one cell which made a tiny difference. LC proposed that we accept the accounts as they are at present. FB seconded.

Keith Jefferies (KJ) has filled out the return for the external auditors much as he did last year. A lot of the concerns raised had already been identified by us and are being addressed. The charity figures are included in the audit.

NL proposed that we pay the £300.00 bill for KJ with a response to his letter which we will include in our submission to the external auditor. NL also proposed that our letter should seek further clarification re salaries, tax and NI. This was seconded by CM.

NL further advised that the minutes and risk register be supplied to KJ.

Action14: HL to supply minutes and risk register to KJ with letter and cheque.

NL suggested that we involve an internal auditor half way through the year for the 2011-12 accounts so that our processes are reviewed early.

Action 15: LC to compile a first draft response to KJ

NL wanted to thank the Finance and Staffing Committee and in particular LC for assisting.

NL stressed how important it was that we meet the deadline for the external auditor as last year we missed the deadline and had to pay for it.

b) Insurance Renewal Update

LC confirmed that there are 3 quotes under £1,000. Came and Company proposed a new scheme today of 16 months worth of insurance for 12 months premiums, which brings them in as the cheapest insurer by £50. They have comparable offerings with the other 2 companies.

90% of Parish Councils have their insurance start on the 1st June which is why Came and Company have introduced the new proposal where some councils are moved back to September to spread the load. LC suggested that we may want to do this at some point in the future to avoid clashing with other Parish Councils.

LC proposed that as the new Came and Company proposal was only submitted today, we switch to Zurich for our Insurance. LC confirmed that she has used an estimated 3% growth in asset value and confirmed that we are covered for solicitor's fees as long as the insurers are notified first.

CM confirmed that LC has done a splendid job and it was resolved that RPPC go with Zurich.

CM expressed concern about the 192K valuation for the sports pavilion which doesn't seem enough for demolishing, clearing the site and rebuilding. It was agreed that the council should look to revalue the sports pavilion when the insurance is in place.

Action16: HL to place "revalue sports pavilion" on the agenda for the next meeting..

c) Mr Parisi and Mr Bowles.

Defer to next meeting.

Action17: HL to put on the agenda for the next meeting.

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d) Approval to set up standing orders for HL:

- phone £26
- pension £102.55
- wages £427.87 (£436.22 + £20 contribution to office expenses - £28.35 employees contributions).

Approved.

e) Cheque signing

Approved as follows:

Agenda item	Description	Amount	Cheque Number
a) Jefferies Consultancy Services	Internal Audit	£300.00	001920
i) Mr Parisi	Wages	£61.75	001921
ii) Mr Bowles	Wages & Expenses	£88.94	001922
iii) Trinity Creative Resources	Invoice for printing AGM paperwork	£54.00	001923
iv) SLCC (increase in approved amount)	Annual membership	£107.00	001924
v) AR Cotton	Expenses	£27.55	001925
vi) OALC	Local council administration 8 th Edition	£53.60	001926
vii) HL	Wages and expenses	£495.88	001927
viii) Higgs	Printing the Community Plan Surveys	£1,741.50 (£1,451 net)	001928
(New agenda item) Oxfordshire County Council Pension Fund	March and April 2011 Employer contributions	£202.44	001929

Expenditure approval and cheque signing approval:

(New agenda item) PWMH	Hire of PWMH for APM	£80.00	Not drawn up after meeting.
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We need to transfer some money into our current account from the reserve account before issuing cheques.

Action17: LC to contact bank and establish actions for transfer.

f) Approval of cost of web domain.

£16 for two years approved.

10) SPORTS PAVILION AND FIELD

i) Agreement with the Cricket Club

NL confirmed that an e-mail has been sent to Mr Greenwood (the solicitor appointed to advise on legal aspects of the Cricket Club lease) with a view to renewing a 25 year lease with suitable clauses.

NL confirmed that the remaining issues are now about securing the use of the grounds for any sport if the use by the cricket club declines or ceases. The ground is of interest to the Conservators.

CM suggested that the lease could cease when the cricket team are unable to put out a team.

Action 18: NL will speak to Toby Greenwood about CM's suggestion and confirm why the lease is a business lease.

Action 19: NL to speak to the England Cricket Association about the lease and how one judges if a cricket club is viable.

ii) Report by representative

Please see last paragraph under section 8).

11) Committee updates:

a) Planning Committee

Nothing to report.

b) Finance and Staffing Committee

Already covered.

c) Carlings Orchard Committee – watering of trees

LC and LF will deliver letters to residents on Friday.

It was resolved that the letter would be amended to remove the proposal to reimburse residents for the use of water, but that a request for reimbursement would be considered.

The web page for the new trees is scheduled to go live from tomorrow. LC will set out something specific with a page to register interest.

10) MISCELLANEOUS:

a) Permission to put up a notice for a musical concert at All Saints' Church.

Permission was given retrospectively.

b) Correspondence

None.

c) Rogation Sunday (Beating of the Bounds)

This on being held on the 29th May over the May bank holiday. This has been advertised on the notice boards for 12 noon at the Red Lion. The route will take the North and then North East boundary around the golf club, in and out of the woods and then back up the path to the church and back to the Red Lion.

d) Village Litter Blitz

This was a success and thanks were made to CM for obtaining the equipment.

e) Community Plan

Deferred to the next meeting

Action20: HL to put Community Plan on the agenda for the next meeting.

f) Public Sector Mapping Agreement signed with SODC

DH wanted to discuss payment of the Ordnance Survey mapping agreement and our options. This will be included on the agenda of the next meeting.

Action21: HL to put mapping agreement on the agenda for the next meeting.

g) Agree feedback to OALC re Area Steward

Action22: HL establish more information and advise Councillors.

h) Number of councillors wishing to attend “How to be a Better Councillor.

NL confirmed that the courses do incur a cost, are at specific times and referred members to the OALC website where future courses are listed. It was resolved that those wishing to attend could do so and that this and cheque signing would take place at the next meeting.

Action23: HL to put this on the agenda for the next meeting.

13) VERGES, FOOTPATHS AND OPEN SPACES: report if applicable

LC asked for clarification around the procedures for hedges encroaching on footpaths. It was confirmed that a tactful suggestion to the owner of the hedge is made first and that if this fails, the standard letter be issued.

NL confirmed that Sandra Willcock, who wanted to purchase and install a bench in Carlings Orchard in memory of her father has postponed her appointment. The meeting is still awaited.

LC confirmed that the Peppard 10K race will now take place on the 4th September.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME/PARTICIPATION

None.

14) MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION ONLY

HL confirmed that she has worked an average of 20 hours per week, during the busy April period and would like to keep to a maximum of 12 hours per week from now on, due to family commitments.