

ROTHERFIELD PEPPARD PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of The Meeting of the Parish Council
held at The Sports Pavilion, Stoke Row Road, Rotherfield Peppard
on Monday January 13th 2014 at 7:45 pm

Present:

Councillors:	David Hammond	(DH)	Leeanne Flett	(LF)
	Tony Cotton	(TC)	Valerie Ross	(VR)
	Fiona Berry	(FB)	Hadley Cooper	(HC)

Clerk: Linda Collison (LC)

OCC Councillor David Bartholomew (DB) (part – to item 5)

SODC Councillor Paul Harrison (PH) (part – from item 5)

Press: Dan Robinson, Henley Standard.

Members of Public: 39 (part)

Key: “The Charity” = The Sports Pavilion and Field, Rotherfield Peppard Charity

Open Forum:

All of the members of public were present to express their concern regarding the possible boundary change between the parishes of Rotherfield Peppard and Sonning Common as part of the Governance Review. One member of public was also present to raise his concern regarding the Mulberry House planning appeal.

It was unanimously agreed to hold a short Trustee meeting at the beginning of the February Council meeting, to consider those items postponed in the Trustee meeting held at 7:30pm.

1 Apologies:

Apologies were received prior to meeting from Parish Councillors Terry Ryan, Simon Crouch and Lee Rawlings.

2 Member’s declaration of Pecuniary Interests:

LF declared an interest in agenda item 5.

3 Minutes:

It was MOVED by TC, seconded by VR and resolved unanimously that the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday December 9th 2013 be signed as a true record of the meeting.

4 Co-option New member:

DH reported that the candidate for co-option had withdrawn his application.

It was agreed to discuss matters relating to Oxfordshire County Council next to allow Councillor Bartholomew time to attend another Parish Council meeting.

5 Matters relating to Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)

• **County Councillors Report: (DB)**

DB reported on the budget, home to school transport, flooding in the area, care home fees review and funding opportunities. Full report - appendix 1

• **Traffic accidents on the B481 at Bolts Cross**

DH reported that residents had written to the Council regarding the number of traffic accidents that had occurred recently (and over the past few years) on the B481 near Bolts Cross and also regarding the traffic problems caused by the large puddle of water at the junction.

It was proposed, approved, and kindly agreed by DB to fund a speed monitoring study at the junction out of the Councillor Community Fund. Action DB & LC.

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DB left the meeting.

PH joined the meeting.

6 Matters relating to South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC):

• **District Councillors Report: (PH)**

- **Waste Collection:** PH reported that the waste collection should be back to normal after the Christmas and New Year holidays. He recommended a new 'app' called *Binfo* that can be downloaded to mobile 'phones and used to see when the next collection will be.
- **Planning:**
PH confirmed that he was speaking at the SODC Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 15th January 2014, in relation to planning application P13/S3230/FUL (Red House).
DH asked why had application P13/S3517/FUL (change of use of an office to a dwelling house at Manor Farm) had been decided by a planning officer and not at the Committee meeting. PH agreed to investigate.

LF left the meeting.

• **Community Governance Review:**

DH explained that following the decisions made at the RPPC meeting on 9th December 2013 regarding the most recent Sonning Common boundary proposal, and before the RPPC had actioned those decisions, RPPC had received a letter from the SODC Strategic Management Board outlining a proposed boundary between Rotherfield Peppard and Sonning Common that they were 'minded to recommend'. RPPC were given the opportunity to comment before the end of January.

DH added that as a result of this, the response to SODC from RPPC agreed in the December meeting, had not been deferred until after this meeting and the leaflets delivered to residents who would be directly affected by either the Sonning Common or the SODC proposal had been written to include both proposals.

DH presented a draft response from RPPC to SODC Strategic Management Board that had been previously circulated to members. Note copies had been handed out to the members of public at the beginning of the meeting.

Following a lengthy debate, Council unanimously agreed to send the response detailed in Appendix 2 to SODC.

LF re-joined the meeting.

7 Finance and Staffing:

TC presenting a report from the Finance and Staffing Committee meeting held on Tuesday 7th January 2014.

- TC confirmed that the 2013-14 accounts had been reviewed and that, including the donations being proposed (below), the forecasted total spend for 2013-14 would be £26,050.03. (Appendix 3). TC added that this is £1,043 less than budget, and would result in a closing bank balance of £17,198.00. (Appendix 4).
- The following (previously agreed in the Finance and Staffing Committee meeting) were proposed by TC, seconded by VR and unanimously agreed:
 - To approve 2014-15 budget (Appendix 5).
Note: The forecasted spend for 2014-15 is £27,116.
 - To approve a 2014-15 precept of £26,895 (Appendix 6)
Note the CTS grant for 2014-15 is £331.

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- To make a donation of £250 to Club-SC, Sonning Common Youth Club.
 - To pledge a donation of £2,500 towards the cost of renovating the toilets at Peppard War Memorial Hall.
 - To employ Jean Nunn-Price as Internal Auditor for year 2013-4 with a focus on internet banking processes and wages processes. LC to action.
 - To pay clerks expenses £421.82
- LC requested, and it was agreed, that the member's allowances for 2013-14, as approved in the Annual meeting of the Parish Council, May 13th 2013, could be paid in February. LC to issue allowance forms to elected members DH, TC, FB, TR and LF who should complete and return if they wished to receive the allowance.
 - LC also requested that the Council considers either outsourcing payroll or seeking professional advice to ensure that all HMRC requirements are met. LC confirmed that the recommended RTI tool is being used and PAYE payments correctly paid on time. Action LC to investigate further for resolution at the next Council meeting.
 - LC confirmed that she had received revised prices from British Gas for the electricity supply:

	Estimated year usage	Unit Rate	Standing Charge / day
PEAK	2500	0.1039	<i>0.2634</i>
OFF PEAK	18000	0.0690	0.2228
Credit	<i>-£125.00</i>		

It was agreed that LC should obtain 2 further quotes and accept the above quote from British Gas if it were the lowest.

- DH reported that a request for a donation had been received from Peppard News, but due to an administrative error, had not been considered at the Finance and Staffing meeting. This would be considered at the next meeting.
- TC agreed to review the bank reconciliation as at 31st December 2013.

8 Approval of Spend and Cheques to be signed:

It was RESOLVED unanimously that the following payments are approved. DH and FB were instructed to approve the internet payments.

Ref #	Account	Payee	Description	Power	£
14-104a	SP&F Grant – Elect	B Gas	Electricity (Dec Bill)	LGA (Misc Act)1976 s19	29.52
14-104b	SP&F Grant – Elect	B Gas	Electricity (Dec Bill)	LGA (Misc Act)1976 s19	245.16
14-107	Various	L Collison	Expenses	Various	421.82
14-108	Staff Costs	T Parisi	January wages	LGA 1972 112	confidential
14-109	Staff Costs	M Bowles	January wages	LGA 1972 112	confidential
14-110	Staff Costs	L Collison	January wages	LGA 1972 112	confidential
14-111	Staff Costs	OCC Pension	January pension	LGA 1972 112	£151.88
14-112	Staff Costs	HMRC	January PAYE	LGA 1972 112	£32.71
14-095	SP&F Grant – Maint	D J Scott	Electrical Inspection	LGA (Misc Act)1976 s19	£640.00
14-113	SP&F Grant – Maint	D J Scott	Electrical Works	LGA (Misc Act)1976 s19	£226.80

9 Peppard Wood

This matter was deferred to the February meeting.

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10 Peppard War Memorial Hall (PWMH):

This matter was deferred the February meeting.

11 NDCC - Commons:

It was noted that the clerk had not contacted the Nettlebed Estate (owners of the Commons) seeking their approval for a play area to be built on the Top Common. LC to action.

TC reported that the Kingwood Volunteers are looking for new members as there were now only about 10 members with a focus primarily on Kingwood Common. TC added that on Saturday and Sunday the 25th / 26th of January 2014 the Friends of the Commons are holding a History Weekend at the Nettlebed Village Club.

12 Public Footpaths

DH reported that Rotherfield Peppard had a new Chiltern Society Rights of Way representative – Philip Bennett – who had provided a very comprehensive report of the Parish’s rights of way. Action DH to circulate.

VR raised concern regarding the hedges overgrowing the footpath that runs along the side on the B481 from Bolts Cross to the Ruchetta at Dog Lane. Action LC to write to the owners of the owners of the land next to the footpath and to OCC Highways.

13 Planning Committee Chairman

It was proposed by DH, and agreed unanimously that Councillor Valerie Ross become the Planning Committee Chairman.

14 Correspondence

None to report.

15 Matters for next meeting:

- Peppard News Donation
- Payroll process.
- Peppard Wood Lease.
- Peppard War Memorial
- Energy Audit – next steps
- Carlings Orchard – new member responsible for.
- Trustee meeting.
- Insurance
- Footpaths/Public Highways

Meeting ended at 9:30 pm

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Appendix (1) – County Councillors Report

GENERAL OCC REPORT

THE BUDGET

Since 2010, we have saved £127 million, with plans set to save another £74 million over the next few years. Despite this, further cuts to our budget by Central Government mean we must find another £64 million, bringing the total reduction to £265 million. The early indication of the Local Government Settlement announcement in December may mean that we have some additional funding available although it will be nowhere near the amount required to avoid any cuts.

The draft proposals were presented to the Performance Scrutiny Committee on 16th December, who had the opportunity to comment on them. There is now a period of consultation prior to Cabinet agreeing its budget on 28th January 2014. The proposals will then be debated by all Councillors on 18th February 2014, when a Budget is set by the Full Council.

HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Ten public meetings have been held across the County to discuss proposals that are part of the original £74 million we need to save. To ensure that everybody has an opportunity to make representations, the consultation period has been extended to 14th January, with an additional Cabinet meeting taking place on 4th February to consider the proposals.

WINTER RESILIENCE & FLOODING

OCC had been concentrating on efforts to make sure all is in place for snow and ice, but now the emphasis has changed to flood mitigation measures. River levels in Oxfordshire remain high and with the ground already saturated, rivers and streams respond quickly to any rainfall. Many vulnerable areas are flooded. The Environment Agency monitors the river levels and updates their website to give the latest information of the flood situation. We work with Town & Parish Councils so that they have plans in place to assist during any bad weather. If you require further information, please contact: Paul Wilson, Adverse Weather Manager at Oxfordshire County Council, Highways and Transport, PO Box 842, Oxford, OX1 9LL. Tel: 0845 310 1111, email: highwayenquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer is in touch with Councillors on a regular basis and when necessary the OCC Emergency Planning Team will establish an Oxfordshire multi-agency Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). This helps all the relevant Oxfordshire teams and agencies to continue to co-ordinate their responses to any flooding and identify priorities across the county. For more information on protecting your home please follow the guidance here. <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/if-theres-flood>

CARE HOME FEES REVIEW

As in previous years, OCC is undertaking a consultation regarding the fees paid to care homes. The Council recognises the need to ensure that good quality care is sustainable and properly funded, and is mindful of obligations to consult regarding this matter. To participate in this consultation please see: <https://myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/carehomefee2014/consultationHome>

SPECIFIC REPORT FOR ROTHERFIELD PEPPARD

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

I still have some funding available to local organisations in the Division via the **Councillors Community Budget**. If you know of any organisations that might be interested, please see further information at <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/councillor-community-budgets> I also still have a small amount of **Area Stewardship Fund** monies for highway issues in particular.

Requests for both must be submitted before the end of January.

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Appendix (2)
Response to SODC regarding Boundary change/ Community Governance Review

Response to letter received from David Buckle, Chief Executive dated 19th December 2013:

Rotherfield Peppard Parish Council has considered the recommendations which the South Oxfordshire District Council working group is “minded” to recommend and makes the following comments:

1. The Council believes that there is no benefit to Rotherfield Peppard nor any of its residents for these proposed boundary changes. They will have a detrimental effect on the affected residents, do not meet the assessment criteria of the working group, will cause all residents to face increased costs, will cause difficulties with the Sonning Common Neighbourhood Plan and should be rejected.
2. Residents of the area concerned have shown no desire to be in any other Parish than Rotherfield Peppard. This is confirmed in Rotherfield Peppard’s 2011 Community Plan Survey which was completed by 85% of the households in the Parish. Since seeing your recommendations, forty-six residents have made representations to this council in person, by telephone and in writing to express strong opposition to the changes. The opposition is shared by many residents in the rest of the Parish. Only one note of support for the changes has been received.
3. Rotherfield Peppard has a strong community spirit as shown by many local activities including the Peppard Revels and the annual beating the bounds. There is much support for these activities from the residents of the area affected by the proposal including past and present Parish Councillors and a past chairman of the Parish Council. The last two editors of Peppard News, our well-respected village magazine, live in the affected area.
4. The proposal means that Rotherfield Peppard would lose its only village store.
5. The existing Parish Boundary follows the rear of properties in Shiplake Bottom (a boundary with open land for most of its length) meaning that only a pair of properties in Shiplake Bottom and a pair of properties in Blounts Court Road are currently in adjacent parishes. The proposal would result in a large number of houses being in a different parish from their neighbours opposite. The Council believes this is divisive and conflicts with the Assessment Criteria used by the Working Party which refers to “housing developments that straddle parish boundaries, thereby resulting in people being in different parishes from their neighbours.
6. The proposal will mean that the affected residents will be moved into a different County Council electoral division and also a different District Council Ward.
7. The proposal will result in the transfer of some 161 properties. This will result in a loss of tax base for Rotherfield Peppard which is likely to result in a reduction in services or increase precept demand for the remaining properties in Rotherfield Peppard. At the same time, the transferred properties will face a significant increase in Parish Council Tax demands from Sonning Common where Band D charges are £53.75 for the current year – 76% higher than in Rotherfield Peppard. The impact of the additional residents in Sonning Common will not be significant given the larger size of Sonning Common.
8. The removal of this area from Rotherfield Peppard would reduce the households in Rotherfield Peppard Parish by nearly 25%. This would have a major impact on the viability of Rotherfield Peppard as a stand-alone Parish. It would also put at risk RPPC’s support of the War Memorial Hall, the Sports Pavilion and Field and Carlings Orchard as well as other local charities.
9. The proposed change will have an impact on Planning Policy: The properties being moved currently form the majority of Peppard Common – a “Small Village” defined in the SODC Core Strategy. The transferred properties would become subject to the planning rules for the “Large

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Village” of Sonning Common. The Core Strategy would need to be updated to remove Peppard Common from its definitions.

10. The recently approved Neighbourhood Plan Area for the Sonning Common Neighbourhood Plan does not include the properties identified to move to Sonning Common. As a minimum, it would therefore suggest that a revised Neighbourhood Area would need to be agreed (with the necessary public consultation) or that the Sonning Common Neighbourhood Plan may face challenge at the inspection stage.
11. The proposal to move Blounts Court (home of the Johnson Matthey Research Centre) from Rotherfield Peppard to Sonning Common is also opposed by the council. Whilst it is anomalous to have the car park for the facility in an adjoining parish, it would make more sense to move the car park into Rotherfield Peppard. Blounts Court is an historic part of Rotherfield Peppard and provides local employment. The planning issues which arise with development of this facility have always related to its position dominating Stony Bottom and the rural outlook within the AONB and have been handled successfully with close cooperation from Rotherfield Peppard Parish Council.
12. Rotherfield Peppard parish Council would like to know the rational that has been applied for the suggested changes proposed by SODC.

To conclude Rotherfield Peppard Parish Council strongly oppose the boundary changes detailed in your letter dated 19th December 2013 and **recommend that parish boundary between Rotherfield Peppard and Sonning Common remains as is.**

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Appendix (3) – Accounts as at 31st December 2013

	2013-14							2013-14 BUDGET
	Apr - Dec 13	FORECAST Jan - Mar				YEAR TOTAL FORECAST		
	Total	Jan 14	Feb 14	Mar 14	Total			
Income								
Precept	27,094.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	27,094.49		
Bank Interest	6.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.99		
Total Income	27,101.48	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	27,101.48	27,094.49	
Expense								
S137	50.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	0.00	
Total Staff Costs	7,557.30	839.68	839.68	839.68	2,519.04	10,076.34	9,764.00	
Total Councillor and Clerk	437.30	50.00	840.00	0.00	890.00	1,327.30	2,500.00	
Total Finance, Admin and IT	803.17	252.00	0.00	820.00	1,072.00	1,875.17	2,000.00	
Insurance (RPPC)	300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	
Total Subscriptions	273.00	18.75	0.00	362.00	380.75	653.75	520.00	
Total Village Upkeep	310.05	99.95	0.00	0.00	99.95	410.00	1,100.00	
Total Carlings Orchard	1,410.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,410.00	2,300.00	
Total Grant to SP&F Charity	2,976.13	545.41	882.00	250.00	1,677.41	4,653.54	3,410.00	
Total Donations and Grants	1,735.00	0.00	0.00	2,750.00	2,750.00	4,485.00	2,750.00	
Total Projects	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,750.00	
Total Miscellaneous	788.93	20.00	0.00	0.00	20.00	808.93	700.00	
Total VAT	-982.81	0.00	0.00	982.81	982.81	0.00	0.00	
Total Expense	15,658.07	1,825.79	2,561.68	6,004.49	10,391.96	26,050.03	27,094.00	

April to December are actual figures; January to March are forecasted

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Appendix (4) – The forecasted bank balance for the year 2013/14

	Total	Unity Trust	Nat West	Reserve
Bank Balance at 31st Dec 2013	27,590.26	1,732.38	1,641.87	24,216.01
Forecasted Spend to end of year				
January	1,825.79			
February	2,561.68			
March	6,004.49			
	10,391.96			<- Includes £2500 for PWMH
Forecasted Balance at 31st March	17,198.30			

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Appendix (5) - 2014-15 spend budget

	2014-15	2013-14	
	Budget	Budget	Forecast
S137	50.00	0.00	50.00
Total Staff Costs	8,217.80	9,764.00	10,076.34
Total Councillor and Clerk	1,336.00	2,500.00	1,327.30
Total Finance, Admin and IT	1,640.00	2,000.00	1,875.17
Insurance (RPPC)	300.00	300.00	300.00
Total Subscriptions	675.00	520.00	653.75
Total Village Upkeep	3,234.00	1,100.00	410.00
Total Carlings Orchard	2,405.00	2,300.00	1,410.00
Total Grant to SP&F Charity	4,509.00	3,410.00	4,653.54
Total Donations and Grants	2,750.00	2,750.00	4,485.00
Total Projects	2,000.00	1,750.00	0.00
Total Miscellaneous	0.00	700.00	808.93
TOTAL	27,116.80	27,094.00	26,050.03

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Appendix (6) – The Precept calculation:

- The forecasted bank balance for the year end = (Appendix 4) £17,198.00 (A)
- The Reserve required = (below) £17,308.00 (B)
- The 2014-15 spend budget = (Appendix 5) £27,116.00 (C)
- The total funding needed for 2014-15 = £27,226.00 (D = B+C-A)
- The CTS Grant is £331.00 (E)
- The Precept for 2014-15 should be **£26,895.00** (D-E)

Note: Below included in the minutes for reference.

Year End Reserve*	
o A General Reserve covering 6 months operating costs	11,850.00
o An Election Reserve (1 contested election)	1,958.00
o A Legal Reserve (unforeseen legal costs)	1,000.00
o A Locum Clerk Reserve (3 months)	1,800.00
o A Maintenance Reserve (benches and other assets)	200.00
o Other (eg Skate park pledge)	500.00
	17,308.00

* based on the CPALC 'Best Practice Guide to Parish Councils for Reserves'.

Estimated Election Costs:	
Printing poll cards	72
Printing ballot papers	285
Printing postal votes	165
Posting poll cards	384
Posting postal votes	50
Clerical Fees & RO Fee	316
Staff costs for polling station and count	400
Delivery and collection of polling booth	84
Hire of Hall	200
Total	£1,958.00