

**Letcombe Regis Parish Council**

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OX12 9LD

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 7.55pm**  
**Due to Covid-19 PC meetings are currently being held as virtual meetings using the Zoom Platform.**  
**The first 5 minutes were for meeting preparation**

**Present:** Jeanne Lapsley (JL) Chairman. Loretta Light (LL) Vice Chair,  
Councillors David Barber (DB), Paul Batchelor (PB), Michelle Benton (MB),  
Doug Frewer (DF), Kristine Hitchcock (KH). Elizabeth Jenkins (EJ) Parish Clerk,  
County Councillor Yvonne Constance (YC), District Councillor Paul Barrow (PB-DC)  
Mr P Hodgson attended for the Burial Ground Improvement update  
There were three member of the public present

Item		Actions
	<p><b>The vice-chair Cllr Light chaired this evenings meeting.</b></p> <p><b>1. Apologies for Absence:</b> There were no apologies.</p> <p><b>2. Declarations of Interest:</b> Cllrs Lapsley and Benton declared an interest in Item 3 as they both knew one of the contractors</p> <p><b>3. Burial Ground - Update from Phil Hodgson on the Burial Ground Improvements Planning Application No P21/V0256/FUL</b></p> <p>Councillors had received Mr Hodgson's report on the tenders for the Burial Ground Improvements before the meeting.</p> <p>Mr Hodgson summarised his report for Councillors and the full report is attached as Appendix one.</p> <p>From the total of 7 contractors contacted two did not submit bids and one withdrew being unable to make the completion date.</p> <p>There were four compliant bids who had completed a pricing schedule breaking their bid into 8 separate categories in order to facilitate comparison. The three lowest tenderers confirmed that they have made due allowance in their preliminaries for H&amp;S matters, site security, tree protection etc.</p> <p>Councillors discussed the tenders and unanimously voted that the contract should go to MPW construction whose tender came to £58,435.36.</p>	

	<p>The Chairman of the Trustees and the Recreation committee had indicated that they were willing to allow a part of their existing car park to be used as a site compound for the duration of the works and Mr Hodgson would arrange to meet with MPW Construction to go through the agreement.</p> <p>Cllr Lapsley said that Mr Hodgson had agreed to oversee the building work.</p> <p><b>4. Information from Viral Patel re options for powering the Village Hall in an Emergency:</b></p> <p>Cllr Light asked Cllr Benton to introduce her neighbour Mr Viral Patel who was attending the meeting to inform Councillors of possible options for supplying power to the village hall if it was being used as an emergency refuge for the village if the normal power was unavailable.</p> <p>Mr Patel discussed the pros and cons of the available options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Duration of power failure</li> <li>• A generator eg diesel, petrol, gas, lpg. etc.</li> <li>• Agreement with an outside contractor as has been done by Richmond is reliant on third party and priority of supply</li> <li>• Area of the power cut</li> <li>• A permanent installation would need annual maintenance and would be extremely costly</li> </ul> <p>Mr Patel's only source of power for his house is electric and after looking at various options he had decided on battery installation, which could be both solar powered or charged direct from the grid. There are various types including lithium which although expensive to install, is smaller and needs less maintenance.</p> <p>The size of battery would depend on the capacity needed to power the village hall and Councillors decided to request that an expert in this field should be consulted and the PC would discuss further. The Chairman asked if Mr Patel would let the PC have some contact details. He confirmed that he would and the Chairman thanked Mr Patel for his input to the meeting.</p> <p>Mr Hallward pointed out that this type of power supply would not cope for more than a few days, for the longer term a generator and back up fuel storage would be needed.</p> <p><b>5. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and the Extraordinary meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021:</b></p> <p>Cllr Light suggested an addition to the wording for the proposed ramp on the Millennium Green which was needed for anyone using a wheelchair, or with impaired mobility.</p> <p><b>6. Actions Arising:</b></p> <p>i) <b>Item 5 Approach Police to request stop sign at the bottom of South Street KH/JL – Ongoing.</b></p>	<p>PH</p> <p>VP</p> <p>KH/JL</p>
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**ii) Annual Parish Meeting**

Cllr Lapsley and the Clerk to approach Richmond Residents Committee later about the possibility of village residents using the Richmond Bus. It is thought that this is unlikely to be a feasible solution for other villagers.

Cllrs Frewer and Benton confirmed that there is a new manager at Richmond who is currently undertaking tests and training and will start on 3<sup>rd</sup> August. His name is Ian Robinson. Until then the deputy manager is acting as manager. Cllr Hitchcock said that village residents could not use the Richmond bus due to problems with spacing during Covid-19 and also with insurance.

District Cllr Paul Barrow had spoken to David Hatchin? about the Uffington Community Bus. He said that they had in the past run through Letcombe Bassett but there wasn't a great deal of interest and currently have a problem with getting enough drivers. At this time no obvious solutions for community transport possibilities but the PC will continue to monitor the situation.

Cllr Constance to raise the issue of gullies in Letcombe Reg not included in the OCC schedule. Cllr Benton will let Cllr Constance know which are outstanding.

**MB**

**iii) Extraordinary PC Meeting Monday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021:  
Item 5 Planning Application no P21/V/1668HH – The Dower House, South Street, Letcombe Regis.**

See Planning Applications item 15.

**7. County Council Matters:**

Cllr Constance asked why the police had been asked about the stop sign at the bottom of South Street and Cllr Lapsley confirmed that they had been approached for their views on making the junction safer.

Cllr Constance also said that she had spent a considerable time some three years ago trying to get a community bus organised for the Challows, Childrey and the Letcombes. However the problem is having enough drivers trained to drive a public service vehicle to order to make possession of the vehicle worthwhile and the need for insurance.

Cllr Constance outlined the report from the County Council's Chief Executive and the report on bringing in the 20mph speed restriction in villages.

The Growth Board have decided to change their title to Future Oxford Partnership, the aims are expected to remain the same. They are committed to build 100,000 homes by 2030 and there is significant funding secured by the previous administration to build the infrastructure (£680 million). All political parties agree that OCC needs to build 300,000 houses a year.

OCC expect Oxfordshire to have something like 65 to 85 thousand jobs by 2030. Cllr Constance commented that the figure will be exceeded as there

are already 50 thousand new jobs in Oxfordshire.

Cllr Constance was invited to the opening plans that Oxford City is working on with British Rail Network on the plan to enlarge the Oxford Rail Station which will become a hub for the region between Oxford and Cambridge and Government have provided 69 million towards this. Planners now expect 110 thousand new jobs in Oxfordshire alone by 2040. This shouldn't impact on Letcombe Regis due to the Richmond development but will affect elsewhere. What is needed is the infrastructure to make it work.

There will be parliamentary boundary changes due to the growth particularly of the proposed Didcot Garden Town. This will not affect the Letcombes and villages around Wantage but under the present proposals the divisions along the A420 will all move into the Witney Constituency.

Cllr Lapsley asked about Grove railway station and Cllr Constance replied that it is built into the Oxford study for delivery by 2028. Our MP has put in for a bid for funding the station under the 'Restore your Railways Fund' but there needs to be a new rail line installed allowing trains to pass and a station requiring funding is well in the region of 100 million, which is not currently available.

Cllr Light thanked Cllr Constance for her report and asked for a volunteer to compile a draft report of the Parish Councillors responses to the OCC 2050 plan. Cllr Frewer agreed to do this and Councillors were asked to forward their contributions to him.

DF/Cllrs

**8. District Council Matters:**

**Update on Health provision**

**i) Response from Cllr Barrow (see Appendix 2)**

Cllr Barrow had been unable to attend the HOSC meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> June, but he had listened into the Health & Wellbeing board meeting the previous week. There was a presentation at both by Oxford Health supported by the CCG about the new County wide Health Service strategy.

There are still concerns about it being based on home first rather than to community hospitals. The idea is that patients who are discharged to home and supported there recover quicker with fewer side affects. However there has been no comparison made between discharge directly to home and discharge to community hospitals. There is a huge drive towards home first. However the case has been made several times by Oxford Health that beds in Wantage Hospital are unlikely to be provided there but there will be a whole raft of other services set up and some have already started.

The OX12 Review showed that the strategy needed to be rational and evidence based. Questions on the interactions between Wantage and other community hospitals and how GP surgeries fit in plus changing populations need taking into account. After some discussion it was suggested that a workshop should be arranged to work though the

details with all stakeholders. Cllr Light asked if OX12 groups would be involved and Cllr Barrow expressed the hope that they would, having had so much experience in reviewing this.

Cllr Batchelor said the major issue is not so much just health issues but also the relationship with Social care and until the Government agrees on what it wants to do with social care he believes that planning for healthcare is limited and the Council should put pressure on the Government to get out the social Care Plan. Without that there is no guide as to the demand which will be placed on healthcare. The biggest problem over the next 30-40 years is the problems with the aging population and the care they will need. Cllr Light said that the mix between statutory and non statutory components will mean problems with budget and sharing in the new Integrated Care Systems. She has anxieties about the top-down structure as well.

**ii) Response on reply from MP reply from Cllr Light.**

Cllr Light confirmed that MP David Johnston had received a reply from Dr James Kent to say that progress on funding for the Health Centre had been made and the development is likely to go ahead but there is no indication of the timing.

**Road Closures**

Cllr Benton had an email at 4 am in the morning to say that there would be partial road closures for drain clearing in Letcombe Regis that day which is incredibly short notice. The Water Board also did some gully cleaning on the same day which had not been notified. Cllrs Barrow and Benton would follow this up and Cllr Light said that the Clerk would send notices round by the village email as soon as she was informed.

**9. Outcome of the Football Lighting Consultation: (See Appendix 3)**

Cllr Batchelor summarised the report forwarded earlier to Councillors on the consultation as follows

A total of approximately 500 forms were distributed at the beginning of June. At the close of the consultation period a total of 102 forms had been returned, i.e. approximately 20% of the electorate.

40 households were positive in their support for the floodlighting proposal, with 23 very much in favour while 47 households against, 36 of which were very strongly against. 11 households were neither for nor against and 2 forms were 'spoilt', one containing a number of option choices instead of the requested single option while the other made no option selection.

A robust and lengthy discussion followed with Councillors unanimously deciding that Cllr Batchelor should compose a letter with the results of the consultation to be sent to the football club, and the village email and placed in the register.

**PB**

<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Thames Valley Flood Scheme:</b> Discussion for deadline - Consultation closes 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Cllr Light pointed out that this document does not require a response and there will be further consultation later.</p>	
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Parish Council Matters:</b> <b>Link offering ATM cashpoints in rural areas</b> – extract from the Saturday Times Cllr Hitchcock updated the meeting on the item, it was agreed that in principle it would be advantageous for villagers to have a cash point in the village. It is operated by banks and building societies. However siting of the cashpoint is problematic.</p> <p>The cashpoint needs to be situated in a building and the two obvious sites, the shop and the pub are both listed buildings. After discussion it was decided that Cllr Hitchcock would approach Richmond to see if they would consider having one in the shop.</p> <p><b>OALC Community payback identify potential projects.</b> Community payback is the Government scheme where offenders are given community service.</p> <p>Cllr Lapsley asked if there had been any previous use of this service. The Clerk confirmed the Trustees had used it. This was discussed and Councillors would identify potential projects and inform the Clerk.</p>	<p><b>KH</b></p>
<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>Internal Auditors Report:</b> The proposals were agreed with one exception rather than deal with updating policies and procedures annually Cllr Light proposed that this should be done on a rolling programme. This was agreed and the Clerk would prepare a check list to add these to the Agenda.</p> <p>Cllr Benton asked why the PC didn't pay by BACS. The Clerk replied that the on-line bank account had only been set up for authorising transfers between the PC's own accounts.</p> <p>The PC had since taken the decision to change to BACS payments and apply for a payment card, however due to the pandemic it had not been possible to visit the bank to make the necessary change to the setup. In case there had been any changes she had recently checked with the Abingdon bank and had received the same answer.</p> <p>However due to todays relaxation in the rules governing the pandemic she would contact HSBC again.</p>	<p><b>Cllrs.</b></p>
<p><b>13.</b></p>	<p><b>Financial Matters</b> <b>i) Clerks Report</b> The Clerk reported that the Audit paperwork had been sent to Moore SA, the Auditors, after the extraordinary meeting where sections 1 and 2 were approved. They have acknowledged receipt and are awaiting any comments.</p>	

The Internal Audit Report was covered in the previous section. The Clerk will be sending off another claim for VAT refund in the near future.

The Clerk had received an email from the Village Hall administrator asking if the PC will be returning to meetings in the hall as she is getting requests from the WI and Choir. She had previously emailed the Chair of Trustees as well as the administrator to say that the PC understood the problems and could look into a way of re-imbursing the Trustees for the lost income. But to date has not had a reply.

EJ

The Clerk had received a complaint from a Richmond resident about loud music heard over the previous two Saturdays. Last Saturday he had tried to contact the police unsuccessfully and then drove round the village, he believed it was coming from the area around the bottom of Court Hill as he could hear voices and laughter which in his words it sounded like a rave. It eventually finished at about 1am. The Clerk suggested he contact the Environmental Department of the Vale District Council, who deal with noise. He will do this and then try the police again. Councillors reported that the noise on the first Saturday was from a wedding held at Letcombe Bassett and the second Saturday it was understood to come from Anvil Close. Subsequently found to have come from outside the village towards Wantage.

The Clerk is continuing to look through the paperwork in relation to the Richmond Path currently which has been closed for repair for some months. Cllr Frewer had left a message with their Land Agent James Gillies who had put in a planning application due to Richmond deciding to change the pathway that afternoon but had not received a reply. The Clerk would also contact the Land Registry for further information. Cllr Light had contacted the Letcombe Brook Project. Cllr Lapsley had spoken to BBOWT who had promised to let the PC have a copy of their lease of the field adjoining Richmond.

**ii) Ratification of invoices paid and to be paid**

Mrs E de Ridder-Locum clerk - £94.50, Mrs E Jenkins-clerk April salary- £378.72, PAYE for April - £62.60, Purchases for PC - £390.31, Mrs E Jenkins clerk May salary - £486.90, PAYE for May - £68.00, Letcombe Regis Football Club 1<sup>st</sup> half for the MG grass cut - £300.00, Mark Bradfield, MG wild flower maintenance - £168.00, Chairman replacement cheque for purchase of Christmas tree - £89.99, Tarki Technology, Internal audit - £100.00, Village warden lost cheque & timesheets to May 2021 - £1990.00, Green & Stripey – Burial Ground - £55.00, Mrs E Jenkins clerk June salary - £473.87, PAYE June - £64.80, Tarki Technology, DO\$H maintenance - £35.00, Clerk, stamps, printer cartridge, box for Emergency safety items - £78.72, Mrs E de Ridder locum clerk - £121.50, Came & Co. - Insurance year 2 of three year agreement - £375.06  
Direct Debit for PC Mobile May 7 - £10.00, June 7 - £10, July 7 - £10.  
Councillors ratified the payments.

	<p><b>iii) Summary of costs against budget</b> Forwarded for information.</p> <p><b>iv) Grant applications</b> Aspire 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Appeal (email sent to Councillors 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021) Councillors discussed but as this only covered Oxford City decided not to give a grant. The Clerk will let Aspire know.</p> <p><b>14. Village Items:</b></p> <p><b>i) Village Maintenance contract for discussion.</b> Cllr Light reported that there had been complaints from residents and on Facebook on the untidy state of the village and that it had been decided that a contract should be drawn up to go out to tender for village warden duties and it would be helpful to get together with the RG &amp; VH Committee in order to employ a single contractor for the whole village. She proposed setting up a small working party in order to draw up proposals for the specification and asked for volunteers to form the working party. Cllrs Light, Batchelor, Lapsley and Hitchcock put their names forward and the Clerk would also be involved.</p> <p>The Clerk reported that she had also received a complaint from a villager about the weeds/wild flowers on the footpath around the church and also the condition of the two footpaths on either side of the farmer's field above the recreation ground up to Green Lane. The weeds around the church footpath have since been removed and she would contact OCC who were responsible for the public footpaths.</p> <p>There had also been a comment about Richmond staff parking outside the church which could prove problematic for both weddings and funerals.</p> <p><b>ii) Platinum Jubilee June 2022 /Fete?</b> Cllr Light suggested that this should be arranged by a working party and asked for volunteers. Cllr Hitchcock felt that she could no longer lead the project but would help. Cllr Benton volunteered together with Cllr Lapsley and Cllr Light would also help.</p> <p>The Clerk had forwarded a quote from Mark Bradfield for the continued maintenance of the wildflower area of the Millennium Green. Councillors agreed with Cllr Light that this should be accepted. The Clerk would let Mark Bradfield know.</p> <p><b>15. Planning Applications</b></p> <p><b>Report from Mr Hallward on the Bowers Farm Planning Application</b> The Report had only been received on the afternoon of the meeting and Cllr Light said that a detailed discussion should be postponed to another time and asked Mr Hallward if he would briefly run through the proposed changes.</p> <p>He reported that there are two planning consents for the complex and this is the refining of the different dwellings and garaging for the cars. At the</p>	<p><b>LL,PB, JL,KH, EJ</b></p> <p><b>MB/ KH/ JL/LL</b></p> <p><b>EJ</b></p>
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	<p>Planning Officer's request this is being done under a section 73 amendment.</p> <p>The red lines show what has already been approved and the blue lines cover the alterations requested under the section 73 amendment.</p> <p>The second application covers work on the Farmhouse the plan is to demolish half of the farmhouse and a separate new dwelling will be built. There are no drawings for this at present. The main difference for the farmhouse is levelling up of the roof lines and making the house look more like a farmhouse than a lot of buildings sandwiched together, and includes the addition of an Orangry.</p> <p>They are exploring having their own private water supply. If the samples are acceptable there will be a planning application for agricultural water extraction.</p> <p>The main access is to be moved about 4 metres north so as not to impact on tree roots and they have agreed a land swap with neighbours to cover this.</p> <p>The overall picture is that they will get rid of the sheep structures and are getting involved with breeding goats. This will involve a couple of paddocks and goat shelters which will incorporate bat hotels.</p> <p>Mr Hallward said that there are other changes in the pipeline and he will forward the information for Councillor's consideration as it comes through. Councillors are welcome to visit the site; just contact him to make the arrangements. He then asked if anyone had any questions.</p> <p>Cllr Light asked if the house shown on the right of the farmhouse on the site plan is the one to be demolished. He suggested looking at drawing W05 which shows what is being retained and what is being demolished. The site plan shows what it will be rather than as it is currently.</p> <p>Cllr Lapsley asked about the plan to extend the curtelage onto agricultural land and he confirmed that it is not being extended.</p> <p><b>LRE/4783/6-X, Antwicks Stud, Main Street, Letcombe Regis.</b>  Outline application for the erection of an additional thirty stables with associated store and tack room. New indoor riding school and manège. Conversion of the existing bungalow on the site into two residential units. Since the initial meeting meeting between VOWH and the Applicant Martin Deans (MD) of VOWH is contacting them monthly and reporting back to the PC. The Clerk reported that Martin Deans had spoken to the Agents and would be meeting them in the next couple of weeks and would report to the Clerk once he had spoken to them. The Clerk would forward the answer to Councillors.</p> <p>Cllrs Lapsley and Light will request a meeting with Adrian Duffield Head of Planning at the Vale of White Horse DC as this matter has been dragging on for nearly 8 years. <b>Ongoing</b></p>	
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<p>16.</p>	<p><b>P17/V0163/FUL</b>, Blandys Farm, Bassett Road, Letcombe Regis OX12 9LJ. Demolition of all existing buildings (including car showrooms, sales reception and car preparation barn). Erection of single dwelling with ancillary accommodation and garaging. <b>This application ran out on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020. The Clerk had written written to VOWH asking if the six month extension, due to the Pandemic applied and will Planning inform the PC if the applicants wish to re-apply? To date she had not received an answer from the Planners. However Cllr Barrow had earlier contacted the applicant who had not realised that the application had run out of time and reported that he would be putting in another application for a smaller building.</b></p> <p><b>P21/V1668/HH, The Dower House, South Street Letcombe Regis OX12 9JY.</b> Proposed single storey extension, first floor extension, alterations to the house and erection of a double garage with home office above. End Consultation Date 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021. <b>ONGOING</b></p> <p>The Clerk had written to the planning officer in respect of the plans which were not clear. The Agent had confirmed that the wall area above the front door would be filled in thus giving another bedroom on the first floor and roof lights would be added to the second floor. She would also check whether or not the application had been approved and would let Councillors know. <b>ONGOING</b></p> <p><b>P21/V0849/HH, Manor Farm, Warborough Road, Letcombe Regis OX12 9LD.</b> Installation of Air Source Heat Pump. Relocation and replacement of the existing oil tank. (As amended by documentation received 11 May 2021) <b>GRANTED 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021</b></p> <p><b>P21/V1723/HH, Saddleworth House. South Street, Letcombe Regis OX12 9JY.</b> New Greenhouse to rear of property. End Consultation Date 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021. The planning application was withdrawn on the 12<sup>th</sup> July.</p> <p><b>Other planning issues (if any)</b> There were no other planning issues</p> <p><b>Parish Council meetings: Dates approved by the PC but are subject to change.</b> <b>2021</b> 20th September and 15th November, <b>2022</b> 17<sup>th</sup> January and 21<sup>st</sup> March.</p> <p>Elizabeth Jenkins Parish Clerk 11th August 2021</p>	<p><b>EJ</b></p> <p><b>JL/LL</b></p>
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Approved