

## Letcombe Regis Parish Council

Parish Clerk Mrs Elizabeth Jenkins  
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Letcombe Regis  
OX12 9LD

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 7.55pm**  
**Due to Covid-19 PC meetings are currently being held as virtual meetings using the Zoom Platform.**  
**The first 10 minutes were for meeting preparation**

**Present:** Jeanne Lapsley (JL) Chairman. Loretta Light (LL) Vice Chair,  
Councillors David Barber (DB), Paul Batchelor (PB), Doug Frewer (DF),  
Kristine Hitchcock (KH). Elizabeth Jenkins (EJ) Parish Clerk,

County Councillor Yvonne Constance (YC), District Councillor Paul Barrow (PB-DC)  
Alan Doman joined the meeting to discuss the Saddleworth House Application.  
Henry Hallward joined the meeting to discuss the Bowers Farm Application

Item		Actions
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence:</b> Apologies were received from Cllr Michelle Benton and Debbie Webb.	
2.	<b>Declarations of Interest:</b> There were no declarations of interest.  The Chairman Cllr Lapsley welcomed Ian Robertson (IR) the new manager at Richmond village to the meeting and asked Councillors to introduce themselves. She also suggested it would be useful to have separate meetings to help strengthen the ties between the village and Richmond. IR said that he was happy to accept, the Clerk would email and get suitable times and dates. Cllr Lapsley then handed over to Cllr Light for approval of the minutes as she had chaired the previous meeting.	EJ
3.	<b>Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021:</b> The minutes were approved by all Councillors, and duly signed.	
4.	<b>Actions arising:</b> <b>From the Minutes of the 18<sup>th</sup> July</b> Item 4 i) Options for powering the Village Hall in an Emergency. It was decided to form a sub group to talk through the details of contractors provided by Viral Patel – Clerk to arrange with Cllrs Frewer, Light and Lapsley. <b>Ongoing</b>  Item 6 ii) Cllr Benton to provide Cllr Constance with list of gullies. Cllr Constance said she had discussed the drains and gully clearance issues with Gordon Kelman. The major issue is the flooding at the lower end of Windmill Hill and Court Hill junction. OCC are asking landowners to dredge their ditches. Then OCC would then do any repairs after that. There is an issue about funding the grips which are expected to be done	EJ

	<p>on a priority basis. She is keeping Gordon Kelman focussed on the issue and had his final report this afternoon. Cllr Batchelor asked what the priority criteria is. Grips were originally checked every year, however since the road maintenance budget was halved this has moved to every four years and now done on a 'need to respond' basis. So it is important to let them know of any problems. The other issue about priority is the amount that the road is used which will raise it up the list.</p> <p>Cllr Barber pointed out that if the water runoff could be stopped at the top of hills it will help. <b>Ongoing</b></p>	
Item 7	<p>Cllr Frewer reminded Cllrs that he needed their comments for the draft report on OCC 2050. <b>Ongoing</b></p>	<b>Cllrs</b>
Item 11	<p>Cllr Hitchcock to approach Richmond re placing a LINK ATM in the shop. See later item 7 iii). <i>(We have since heard that LINK have visited the site and do not believe there would be enough use so will not be taking this any further)</i> <b>Completed</b></p>	
Item 14 i)	<p>Meeting to discuss Maintenance Contract. Clerk will remind those who have not replied to her previous email asking for their availability. <b>Ongoing</b></p>	<b>EJ</b>
Item 14 ii)	<p>Arrange meeting re the Platinum Jubilee/Fete in June 2022 Clerk will remind those who have not replied to her earlier email asking for their availability.</p> <p>Cllr Lapsley had raised this at a recent RG &amp; VH Trust meeting. The Trust are planning to hold a Family day and it has been suggested that we should link together in some way and perhaps Richmond might like to come on board as well. IR replied that it sounded like an excellent opportunity. <b>Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>Cllr Lapsley welcomed Alan Doman from Saddleworth House who was attending the meeting in connection with his application to build a greenhouse on their land.</b></p> <p>Alan Doman explained the background. They had purchased the land from Mr and Mrs Elliott as an extension to their garden in 2019. Basically it is used as as a play area for their grandchildren being mainly grass. They applied for planning permission to put a greenhouse there but the planners who visited said it is not classed as a domestic garden so they could not have a greenhouse there. AD advised that he thought the land was originally used for garden waste, bricks, polythene etc.</p> <p>Cllr Lapsley thanked him and asked if there were any question. Cllr Barber asked what it was classed as before however the planners did not know. Cllr Barber commented that it was a lot tidier now than five years ago.</p>	<b>EJ</b>



Cllr Lapsley said she had attended a webinar with Matthew Barber and the OALC and he mentioned that there would probably be investment from the police for provision of the monitoring equipment.

Cllr Constance confirmed that the 20mph scheme would probably take longer to implement. The new administration had been left a £200K budget and she hoped that it would be approached County wide then it would not be necessary to prove the need in every village.

Cllr Lapsley reported that village residents had been asked, via the village email, to respond to the County Review about the possible closure of waste tips. She asked if there were any questions.

Cllr Frewer reminded Councillors to let him have their their views on the Oxfordshire 2050 consultation which closes on October 6<sup>th</sup> and Cllr Constance requested a copy.

Cllr Light said she had attended one of the Webinars as well and was able to put a question about health and was quite reassured that Adrian Collwell, the project lead for the Oxfordshire plan had a clear understanding of the current health reorganisation which had caused her concern in the original document.

Cllr Constance pointed out that GP practices are actually private sector businesses. The NHS property services do not respond they are statutory consultees on all planning applications but never respond. There is a vision in the 2050 plan to build in community hubs in new settlements and these could be used by visiting GP's. We should make as much of this as we can.

Cllr Lapsley then asked Cllr Light to give her report on health issues.

Cllr Light reported first on the Mably Way Health Centre that the planning application for the extension had gone to the District Council. It is only single storey but will provide more consulting rooms and the plan if approved is to break ground January 2022.

Oxford Health the current owners will be keeping Wantage hospital open and using it for a variety of outpatient and diagnostic space. There is a very firm commitment to open and use it. The debate about whether there will be inpatient beds is ongoing. This may be affected by the new NHS plan to discharge people. There is a small area for beds but as yet we do not know where that is going. OX12 Group will be involved in the consultation.

The Ambulance Trust – The demand on category one, the really urgent cases, heart attack, stroke, serious bleeds is up by something like 27% for this time of the year pre-Covid. This is not just Covid but all demands and the ambulance service is struggling to cope.

Cllrs.

Waiting times for all categories of emergencies are increasing. Meaning that some people are having to wait a very long time. As far as we can measure we do look at long waits very very carefully and there have been no serious outcomes to patients health as regards the long waits. The armed services have been involved as drivers when we need them but we are still at the highest level of demand and has been for some weeks.

Cllr Frewer had commented that there was currently no thought given to a further expansion of the Mably Way Health Centre which would probably be needed. Cllr Light said that she had had a discussion with one of the GP's about this but it appears that the district valuer would not even consider it because it is a privately owned building.

Cllr Lapsley drew this to a close by saying that the District Councillor Paul Barrow was keeping a watching eye on this and the meeting would now go to item 6.

**6. District Council Matters:**

- i) Joint Local Plan 2041 'Call for Land and Buildings Available for Change' *See email from Paul Barrow re amendments to numbers (email circulated 6.9.2021) Community Led Plan circulated 7.9.2021)* Cllr Barrow pointed out that Letcombe Regis is not one of the villages highlighted for development so the two areas in the village in question are unlikely to be used however it is always possible. Cllr Lapsley said it would be useful to find out where these had come from. The village also had its Community Plan which stated clearly that only infil should take place in the village. The field between Bablakes and the housing had been put forward once before and this had been turned down. Cllr Barrow asked Cllr Constance if she had any comments. Cllr Constance replied that she could understand farmers putting their land up for housing considering the price of building land. However only land close to amenities is likely to be considered. There would be other levels of consultation. Cllr Lapsley queried this and Cllr Constance confirmed that there would be more than one level.
- ii) Cllr Light - Health Update, Hospital, Health Centre and Ambulance – Covered in the previous item.
- iii) Wantage Health Centre, email from Cllr Paul Barrow (*Circulated 3.9.2021*)  
Cllr Barrow reported that OX12 had been subsumed into the County wide Health Review. There is a Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting this Thursday and this is one of the items which will be under discussion because it is a new committee with new council members and there would be some bedding in. There is a push to get the committee working more proactively and to get members involved in actual projects. The Community Health Review is one of the things that I am going to be actively involved in. Cllr Lapsley thanked Cllr Barrow for keeping us informed.

7. **Parish Council Matters:**

- i) Burial Ground Update Cllr Lapsley confirmed Councillors were pleased to see that work is underway and thanked Phil Hodgson for liaising with the contractors. The site is clean and tidy and they seem to be doing an excellent job at the moment. The topsoil has been removed to the old riding field and has since been spread. They are preparing to set out the tarmac. They have purchased oak for the Lych Gate and the first payment has been made. The PC has received the S106 money from the District Council. It is anticipated that the project will be completed by the end of October. To protect the Trust land from any incursion the PC needs to decide whether to use timber trip rail at around £1450.00 or bollards at a cost of £1,680.00. Councillors discussed and decided on bollards and they would let Cllr Lapsley have their choice for the bollards. Cllr Barber pointed out that one bollard needs to be removable to allow access to the annual bonfire.
- ii) Request from Airband to give presentation at the PC Meeting. *The Clerk had previously confirmed with Airband that they are including domestic as well as business. She had also let Airband know that the PC do not currently want a presentation.*

Cllr Batchelor reported that two years ago Airband were carrying out installations under a Government Voucher scheme to support businesses in rural communities and the PC had discussions with them about bringing it into the village and include residential properties. Airband then went quiet and we were also hit by Covid. The Government then changed its stance and introduced a further voucher scheme which we missed out on, not being given enough time to respond. Since then along with Cllr Barrow we have been working with Oxford County Council and other villages to understand how we can get ultra-fast full fibre broadband. At the moment we have fibre to cabinet at the bottom of Court Hill which relies on copper cable from there to the village apart from the link (installed by Airband) down Warborough Road. Airband recently wrote to everyone to say they would help everyone to install fast fibre.

There is a national programme to remove copper wiring from the telephone system in stages. There is an area meaning that between April 22 and April 25 we will have ultra fast fibre access to all premises between the north boundary of the railway line and southern boundary at Fawlsey and between the east boundary of Ardington and the west boundary is by Sparshalt. The whole of the telephone exchange system is changing and Wantage will be a head exchange meaning that full fibre optic will be a priority. This means that it will open up to markets such as Airband and other companies to bid for the work.

Working with Cllr Barrow and a West Challow Councillor Cllr Batchelor confirmed that they are working together to ensure that the needs of those in the area mentioned are met as best possible. He will pull together a paper to enable everyone to understand what is happening which will be sent to residents.

Cllrs.

PB

Cllr Constance confirmed that she had experienced all that Cllr Batchelor had said. Sparshalt assembed a group of around 60 and both Airband and BT were then interested and they received the full fibre because of the numbers.

Cllr Batchelor confirmed that the Group is in discussion with a wider group and warned that Airband will not carry all services and Sky are dropping their satellite system which is prohibitively expensive to maintain. Making Fibre the most sensible approach for communications.

Cllr Barrow mentioned that the Government had allowed another £140 million for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire which is probably to help pay for outlying properties.

Cllr Barber asked if Richmond residents were interested in obtaining full fibre. Richmond Manager Ian Robertson confirmed that there had been enquiries and that they were interested but he did not know how many.

Henry Hallward said that Airband were currently in the process of installing fibre to his home which should be completed by the end of November. They are also connecting to two others locally. Under the Rural Broadband Scheme.

Cllr Lapsley thanked District Cllr Paul Barrow and Cllr Batchelor for their continuing work towards getting fibre to the villages.

iii) ATM Link Cash points for rural areas.

Cllr Hitchcock had met with Richmond Manager Ian Robertson to discuss the proposal. He would look into this as the only suitable place was the shop/cafe which is a listed building. However since this Link have visited the area and decided that there would not be enough business to make it worth installing a machine.

iv) Budget for next year

The Chairman pointed out that next years budget would be discussed at the November meeting and asked Councillors to give the budget some thought.

8.

**Village Items:**

i) Request from Debbie Webb to cut back the fruit and Silver Birch trees on the Millennium Green which were overshadowing their house and garden.

The Fruit trees were in need of pruning and before the meeting the Clerk had already contacted Bertie Raines who had previously done tree work on the Millennium Green and confirmed he would put in a planning application to the District Council. He also pointed out that Silver Birches do not take kindly to any pruning and that there was no right of light. It was also agreed that the trees were in place when the Webbs had moved in to the property. The PC will await the

Cllrs.

	<p>outcome of the planning application.</p> <p>ii) Burial Ground Update – (See earlier item 7i)</p> <p>iii) The Queen’s Green Canopy  Cllr Lapsley asked Councillors to bring suggestions for Native trees to be planted in the old Riding Club Field to the November PC meeting.</p> <p><b>9. Financial Matters</b></p> <p>i) Clerks report</p> <p><b>HSBC bank</b>  Recent report from OALC stated that HSBC is closing their Community Accounts facility. I spoke to the bank who said they are actually changing the name of the account, which will be for Registered charities and non profit making organisations. I asked if anyone was available to help with the changes that we wanted (new signatures mandate, changing to BACS and obtain a purchase card, I then waited for another half an hour without an answer so gave up will wait until I hear from them when hopefully I will have the direct number to speak to them to get some answers.</p> <p><b>Millennium Green</b>  Bertie Raines is putting in an application to prune the fruit trees on the Millennium Green and to remove the lower branches of the silver birches.</p> <p><b>Annual Audit 2020-2021</b>  The Auditors report is due to be received by the end of September.</p> <p><b>Policies and Procedures for renewing or updating.</b>  Child Safeguarding Policy Review November meeting</p> <p>Code of Conduct In 2012 the Vale requested that all Town &amp; Parish Councils should adopt their code of Conduct. This was agreed at an Extraordinary Parish Council meeting in June 2012. This is possibly being reviewed by the new legal officer. Awaiting confirmation.</p> <p>Confidential Community Emergency Plan (June 2021) - For Councillors and the Emergency Response Group May 2022  Community Emergency Plan for the Website (as above)</p> <p>Document Retention Policy in line with legal requirement (September 2010) January 2021</p> <p>Standing Order Amended in April 2020 to include Covid-19 update. March 2022</p> <p><b>To Review this month</b>  Register of Members Interests - email sent to Councillors asking them to fill in any changes on the amendment form and return to the</p>	<p>EJ</p> <p>LL</p> <p>All</p>
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	<p>Clerk to send to the VOWH – Annual reminder sent from VOWH.</p> <p><b>Parish Council Accounts as of the 31<sup>st</sup> August – to the nearest £</b>  Current Account - £32,320. This includes the £21,005.00 S106 funding for the Burial Ground improvements paid over by the VOWH.  Deposit Account - £78,328. This includes the £9k matched funding for the Children’s playground. and S106 £45k funding. Other funding held by the PC to be used to top up overall costs.  Village Hall Project Account - £1,357. For new or replacement items for the Village Hall.  BIG Lottery account - £12,473. For new or replacement items for the Village Hall.</p> <p>ii) Ratification of invoices paid and to be paid.  Came &amp; Company - PC Insurance £375.06; Green &amp; Stripey - BG Ground mowing £110.00; BGG - Garden &amp; Tree Care £220.00; PAYE for July £51.20; Clerk July Salary £419.33; Phil Hodgson for the planning application fee £58; Clerk August Salary £416.48; PAYE for August £50.60; Purchases for PC £50.91; Letcombe Brook Project Grant £700.00; Village Warden £240.00; Julie Arthur Burial Ground Clearance £50.00; Letcombe Football Club £300.00; Letcombe Regis Village Hall- 2<sup>nd</sup> half of annual maintenance grant £904.25, OALC Training £60.00;  <b>Direct Debits</b> Mobile phone to August 7<sup>th</sup> 2021 £10.00; to September 7<sup>th</sup> 2021 £10.00.</p> <p>Councillors then approved the payments.</p> <p>iii) Summary of costs against budget  Emailed to Councillors before the meeting, there were no queries.</p> <p>iv) Grant Applications  The PC had received the request from the Letcombe Brook Project for their grant. The sum had been agreed in the previous budget as £700 and this had been sent to them.</p> <p>The PC had also received a request from the RG &amp; VH Trustees for grant towards the Fireworks on November 6<sup>th</sup>. Councillors discussed and decided to give a grant of £300.</p>	<p>EJ</p> <p>EJ</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><b>Planning Applications:</b>  <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.</p> <p>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. MD reported that he had a conversation with the Applicant at the end of February and clear progress has been made over the last month. He is confident that the Applicant is keen to move things orward with some speed.</p>	

While MD appreciates that more detail would be helpful he points out that the content of the conversations has to remain confidential at this stage. *Martin Deans has since had another meeting with the Samuels' agents and has reported that there is clear progress being made on reviewing the options for the site. The Agents apologised for the delay in progress caused by a high workload and constraints imposed by the pandemic, but they are clearly engaged in the work.*

**P21/V1668/HH, The Dower House, South Street Letcombe Regis OX12 9JY.**

Proposed single storey extension, first floor extension, alterations to the house and erection of a double garage with home office above. End Consultation Date 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021. Target Decision Date 2<sup>nd</sup> August. PC comment *Letcombe Regis Parish Council have no objections to the planning application*

*The Planners are waiting for confirmation of any trees affected by the application before the final decision is made. Ongoing*

**P21/V1998/FUL, Richmond Letcombe Regis OX12 9RG**

Replace the wooden walkway with a crushed limestone path similar to that on either end of the walkway on the clients land and the public footpath to the south. End Consultation Period 25<sup>th</sup> August 2021, Target Decision Date 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021 Cllr Hitchcock had mentioned this to Ian Robertson Cllr Lapsley said that there had been concerns about the proposed route for the pathway and IR asked if it would be possible meet on site so he could understand the problems that village residents were concerned about. He would let the Clerk have some dates when he would be available.

*Please see the following letter below from the Countryside Officer in respect of this application) The New Manager has been invited to the next meeting when the PC will be discussing this and also the Nature Reserve.*

*The Meeting has now taken place. Richmond to provide a piece for the Register.*

**From the Countryside Officer (South and Vale) 18 August 2021**

Using the submitted information, it is not possible to reach an informed view on the likely ecological impacts of proposed development. The site resides in an area of increased ecological value, close to the Letcombe Brook, a globally rare chalk stream, which is known to support populations of water voles. The woodland within which the existing path is located is identified as being a priority habitat, when using Natural England's Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) resource.

Development must not harm the priority habitat woodland or the adjacent Letcombe Brook watercourse. The applicant should be mindful of the requirements of Core Policy 46 and Development Policy 30. I recommend that photos of the existing walkway are provided, including images showing the existing ground conditions under the walkway. It may be appropriate to require a tree survey, to ensure that works are not impacting the roots of trees. The applicant may wish to provide a preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) to support this application. **Ongoing**

**P21/V2151/FUL, Saddleworth House, South Street, Letcombe Regis OX12 9JY**

Retrospective change of use of land to garden amenity area and erection of a greenhouse. End Consultation Period 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021, Target Decision Date 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021. *See earlier discussion with Alan Doman the owner*  
PC Response Councillors are mindful that there could be an issue with the land recently purchased from a neighbour and wish to ensure that there is no possibility of future building in the area. The applicant has indicated that he would be happy to have a covenant on the land to prevent this happening. Councillors also agree with the conservation officer that the greenhouse should be placed in the garden area. **Ongoing**

**P21/V2210/DIS, Bablakes Farmhouse Letcombe Regis, OX12 9JD**

Discharge of Condition 3 (Construction Environment Management Plan) on planning application P20/V2560/HH Detached Oak framed ancillary outbuilding. Discharge of conditions only not for comment.

**P21/V2403/FUL, Letcombe Bowers Farm, Letcombe Regis, OX12 9NG**

Variation of condition 2 (Approved plans) in application P19/V1917/FUL. To incorporate design features Alterations to the existing farmhouse and replacement of the self contained east wing. Start Consultation date 26 August 2021, End consultation Period 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021, Target Decision Date 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Cllr Lapsley asked Henry Hallward to update the PC on the application. HH reported that they had put in an amendment for the main house which was to be split into two including the addition of the Orangery. Cllr Light asked about the road access with the develop of the barns have consent to change driveway outside the barns, confirming access to farmhouse will use new access route rather than the old one and Cllr Barber asked if this would be the access for Tony Pryor HH confirmed it would. The old access would be used until the new access had been completed Cllr Lapsley thanked HH for attending. **Ongoing**

Other planning issues (if any)

**P21/V2583/HH, Mill Fleurs, Main Street, Letcombe Regis OX12 9JP**

Demolish existing porch and garden room, Convert existing garage to bedroom, erect single store extension and new entrance porch. Erect new single storey kitchen studio and utility/WC/Amend 1<sup>st</sup> floor window above main garage, Insert french doors and glass balustrade Amend timber windows on main street to white uPVC

Councillors discussed the application and made the following comments to be sent to the planners.

This application was discussed at the Parish Council meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> September and Councillors have several concerns about the planning application.

- Lack of detailed information on the plans. No heights of the proposed extension are shown. The Juliet Balcony overlooks surrounding properties. The garden is very tight and there is no indication of where the oil tank is to be re-sited or the soakaway will be placed. The garden is small and Councillors believe this to be an overdevelopment of an already tight site.

- Mille Fleurs is surrounded by Grade 1 and grade 2 listed buildings. Councillors would expect to see comments from the Conservation officer.
- Trees close to the property are not shown on the plans with the glazed kitchen extension particularly close to one of them the Tree Officer's views should be sought to avoid any root damage during the build.
- The build is also within a couple of metres of Letcombe Brook tributary with the possibility of contamination entering the water during the building process unless steps are taken to avoid this. The stream then passes under the road through a culvert for several hundred yards until it reaches the Letcombe Brook.
- In 2007 the house on the opposite corner was badly flooded due to a blockage in the culvert.
- The Letcombe Brook Project provides environmental management of the Letcombe Brook Corridor to maintain and enhance ecological diversity, minimise flooding and pollution and develop the Corridor as a green community resource. Councillors would expect them to be consulted.

**11. Parish Council meetings: Dates approved by the PC but subject to change,**

15th November 2021,  
17<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

Elizabeth Jenkins  
Parish Clerk  
22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021