

MOLLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Ginetta Best, Southview, Church Lane, Mollington. OX17 1AZ

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Draft Minutes for the Parish Council Meeting/AGM

Tuesday 28th May 2024 at 8.00pm

Present:

Councillor Steve Lapper
Councillor Phil John
Councillor David Sullivan
The Clerk
Residents and Public – 3

Welcome and introductions

Members are reminded that this is a meeting in public, not a public meeting, and all points, questions and comments should be addressed through the Chair.

Election of Chairman and Deputy Chairman and Co Option of Councillor

Councillor Phil John was nominated and seconded to be Chairman. Nomination was agreed and Councillor John signed the acceptance of office form. Councillor David Sullivan was nominated and seconded to be Vice Chairman. Nomination was agreed and Councillor Sullivan signed the declaration form.

Tim Banister was co-opted as a Councillor, in place of John Summers (previous minutes) and signed the acceptance of office form.

Apologies for Absence

Received from Peter Gorman and District Councillor Phil Chapman

Declarations of Interest *Members are asked to declare any personal interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.*

1142 Minutes of the meeting held 26th March 2024 (previously circulated) and Matters

arising. The minutes had been circulated in advance of the Meeting. They were agreed to be a true record of the Meeting and were signed by the Chairman. It was agreed that there were no matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

1143 Governance Arrangements

Delegation arrangements

It was reported that the Parish Council have no delegated committees as the Parish Council meeting covers all matters.

1144 Review and Adoption of standing orders and financial regulations (previously circulated and as amended)

It was reported that Standing Orders and Financial Regulations based on the OALC template were amended in May 2024. No further amendments were proposed to either document and it was recommended that these be adopted for the forthcoming year.

Resolved: To accept the proposed Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for 2024-25

1145 Review of Arrangements with Local Authorities

OCC Grass Cutting: It was reported that the Parish Council continued to undertake certain of the County Council's functions relating to highways, public rights of way, watercourses and school crossing patrols under the Highways Act 1980, and if relevant the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Land Drainage Act 1991, and any other enactment giving the County Council the duty or the power to carry out the functions delegated under this agreement.

This relates to grass cutting as set out in the Schedule to the Deed.

1146 Representation at external bodies and reporting arrangements:

- **PC Local Cluster Group:**

It was noted that the PC Local Cluster Group, an informal quarterly meeting of the local parish councils that does not commit Mollington Parish Council to recommendations, had not met in the last four years. It was recommended that should the group be reconvened the Chairman and Clerk attend. The chairman will feedback to the Parish Council on issues raised at the Cluster group and the Parish Council will consider, discuss and vote on recommendations as necessary. Mollington PC will question the cessation of these meetings and suggest that the group begins to meet again.

- **CDC/OCC Parish Liaison:**

It was recommended that one or more councillors and the Clerk attend the Cherwell District Council/Oxfordshire County Council Parish Liaison meeting and report back to the subsequent parish council meeting, which will consider, discuss, and vote on recommendations as appropriate.

1147 Review of Asset Register and Insured Risks

It was noted that the Asset Register and Risk assessments, previously circulated, had been updated and it was recommended to approve both documents for 2024/25.

Resolved: To accept the proposed Asset Register and Risk Assessment for 2024-25

1148 Membership of other bodies:

It was reported that the Parish Council continued to be members of the following bodies:

- SLCC
- OALC

1149 Annual Review of Policies

- **Complaints Procedure** - It was reported that the Parish Council complies with Cherwell District Council's Code of Conduct, which all councillors have accepted. Complaints will be dealt with under this Code of Conduct.
- **Freedom of Information Act 2000** The Clerk will process any requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- **General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR)** The Clerk will manage the use of data and process any requests made under the GDPR. The Parish Council had agreed the following in relation to GDPR: Information and Data Protection Policy;
 - Data Privacy Notice and Consent to hold Contact; and
 - Retention and Disposals policy; and
 - list of Documents for Retention or Disposal.
- **Press and Media** -It was reported that the Clerk will deal with issues involving press and media.

1150 Date and time of meetings for the forthcoming year: Parish Council and other meetings; to be held at 8pm in the Village Hall unless otherwise stated.

- 23 July 2024
- 24 September 2024
- 26 November 2024
- 28 January 2025
- 25 March 2025
- 22 April 2025 Annual Parish Meeting
- 27 May 2025 Annual General Meeting

A summons to meetings will be circulated to Councillors by email 3 clear days before the meeting, will be posted on the notice board and parish web site.

1151 Register of Members Interests – It was reported that councillors were requested to complete the annual declaration of interests if any changes were made and return to the Clerk as soon as possible.

Whilst this was not mandatory it was agreed that it was good practice.

1152 Adoption of Annual Governance Statements and Accounting Statement for 2023/24

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24 Form 2 previously circulated was considered.

It was resolved to:

- declare Mollington Parish Council exempt from the requirement for a limited assurance review as both Income and Expenditure were below the threshold of £25,000;
- receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report;
- approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1);
- approve the Accounting Statements (Section 2) previously certified by The Clerk;
- publish the numerical and narrative explanations for significant variances in the accounting statements; and
- commence the public rights period as soon as practical, which will end on 31 July 2024

1153 Chairman's Annual Report

The Chairman reviewed the work of the Parish Council since the last Annual General Parish Council Meeting in May 2023.

Thanks were expressed to David Sullivan, Peter Gorman, Stephen Lapper who had served as councillors over the last 12 months as well as Jim Broomfield taking a short term role as Chairman before resigning; Ginetta Best the Clerk who oversees and manages the governance and financial affairs of the Parish Council; Local District Councillors for their help and support; the Village Hall Committee who manage the Village Hall on behalf of the Trustees (Mollington Parish Council); and all those members of the public who had been able to attend meetings during this time. We welcome to the Parish Council Tim Banister (Church Lane) who has volunteered to join the team. PC members roles and responsibilities may change in the coming weeks and will be available on the website and the minutes.

Considerable discussions within the PC on the 24/25 budget took place considering the expected future maintenance works within the village, this resulted in a higher precept from each dwelling. The PC are conscious of keeping the increases as low as possible but with the higher cost levels and extended works it was necessary to ensure that the PC financial position is healthy and able to undertake works including emergency / one off activities without a negative impact.

Business for the Parish Council continued during the year with a number of planning applications, including tree works in the conservation area. Most applications were approved or withdrawn with some applications remaining to be determined by Cherwell District Council. Maintenance continues to be performed by Thomas Fox during the growing period and tree maintenance has been carried out by Tree Tops. Potholes are marked up in the village by Bob Wadsworth and supported by the Oxfordshire County Council Highways department who have also filled and replaced grit bins.

The Village Hall has continued to raise funds to supplement the previous grants and included dance nights and quizzes. The committee continue work hard to organise events and in reviewing possible funding / maintenance issues. It should be noted the village hall needs significant refurbishment works in the coming years with limited financial resources and I hope that future events are well supported. The Village Hall Committee will report more formally to The Trustees (Mollington Parish Council) at a Parish Council meeting later in the year.

Activities and fund raising has continued for essential work to the church and the forthcoming village fete on the 15th June will hopefully maximise the financial proceeds based on the significant effort by the fete committee.

Work has continued throughout the year to ensure the play areas remain safe, supported by an annual safety inspection from our ROSPA partner.

This included the replacement of platforms in the Mollington Playing Field.

Ongoing maintenance will be discussed at future Parish Council Meetings; specific work at the Orchard Piece playground will be the priority this coming year and I would hope that volunteers will be there to support future requests for ongoing maintenance works. The costs for using outside contractors is quite substantial and any help would be greatly appreciated.

The Ability bus remains popular and they have confirmed as from 7th May that they are able to provide on an 'on demand' basis a service on Tuesday and Thursday to Banbury. Full details of this service are available on the Village notice board and in the village hall. It should be noted that they are able to provide customised travel service on request at a cost.

The Service 77A continues between Leamington Spa and Banbury which picks up and drops off at Mollington turn, Monday to Saturday.

Mollington Matters has been printed twice a year to keep residents informed about issues that affect them in the village and elsewhere.

Mollington Munch continues to have record numbers attending the lunches. Once again the team were awarded a 5 Star Food Hygiene Rating and our thanks must go to the team of volunteers who make it such a success. Additionally the Village Hall team provides a monthly Coffee Morning and book swap, advertised on social media and posters throughout the village.

Our new team of Parish Councillors take over today and are supported by Ginetta Best as Clerk.

Finally, I would like to welcome all those who have moved to the village and say a fond farewell to those who have left.

1154 Clerks Report Financial Statement

The Clerk reported that 7 cheques had been raised in March and April 2024.

748	OALC	Subscription	168.00	In Budget
749	Clerk	Salary	702.10	In Budget
750	HMRC	PAYE	156.20	In Budget
751	KallKwik	Mollington Matters	85.00	In Budget
752	Thomas Fox	Grass cutting 1	323.60	In Budget
753	CDC	Dog bins	308.88	In Budget
754	Thomas Fox	Grass cutting 2+3	647.20	In Budget

During March we received the reclaimed VAT from HMRC for £776.50; during April we received the first payment of the Parish Precept of £8,260.

Taking the above into account, the expected bank balance is £25,035.06 which is reconciled to Bank statement sheet No.230 at 30th April 2024. This balance contains the remaining reserves of £2857.50 for Orchard Piece Community Play Area. The General Fund at the end of April stands at £21,570.61.

Overall, 2023-24 was a saving against the budget of £79.97.

The unexpected cost of repairs and maintenance to the play area equipment in Chestnut Vale meant that less was available to spend on overall village maintenance.

The budget for 2024-2025 reflects the need for more to be done to improve the overall appearance of the village and the essential tree work, as well as maintaining the ageing play area equipment.

Resolved: To accept the financial report

1155 Consultations

Parish Vacancies

It was reported that one councillor was co-opted to the parish council and the vacancy was now filled.

1156 Planning matters

Applications

- **24/01236/TCA** Puddocks Priors Church Lane OX17 1AZ Tree works *It is recommended that MPC do not object to this application*
- **24/01034 and 5/DISC** Poplars Cottage The Paddocks OX17 1BW Discharge of Conditions of 23/00528 and 9/F *It is recommended that MPC do not object to these applications*
- **24/01025/TCA** Lanes End Cottage Lower Farm Lane OX17 1BJ Treeworks *It is recommended that MPC do not object to this application*
- **24/00098/F** High Furlong Farm OX17 1QE Variation of Condition 2(plans) of 22/00906/F allowing width of building to be increased from 9m to 12m *This is believed to be in Claydon Parish so it is recommended that MPC do not object to this application*
- **24/00754/TEL** Mollington Sewage works March Road Installation of 3 new and 3 replacement antennas on existing 20m mast. Removal of smaller 15m *It is recommended that MPC do not object to this application*

Planning Applications published after the agenda

- **24/01300/OUT** Farnborough Road, Mollington Erection of agricultural worker's dwelling *It is recommended that MPC visit and discuss this application before commenting*

Decisions

- **24/00148/F** Land SE of Tile Barn Farm, Farnborough Rd Erection/re-siting of agricultural building *Application Permitted*
- **24/01025/TCA** Lanes End (as above) *Application permitted*

1157 Councillors Responsibilities

It is proposed that responsibility in the Parish Council for the forthcoming term should be:

Councillor Banister– Planning, Mollington Matters

Councillor John – Trees and Grass maintenance, Village Hall representative

Councillor Lapper – Playing fields, Orchard Piece play area

Councillor Gorman – Neighbourhood Watch, Police, Emergency and Neighbourhood Plans, Highways

Councillor Sullivan – Footpaths, Dogs, Village maintenance

Councillors Reports

Councillor John

Village Maintenance

It was reported that Thomas Fox has continued the contracted works of cutting grass and verges within the agreed schedule (and submitted to CDC). It should be noted that taking into account previous villagers' concerns regarding cutting verges whilst wildflowers are still in bloom, that Thomas Fox has restricted the cut in certain places. Steps will be taken this month to undertake a significant cut back and have tidier village green areas.

Plans are in place to replace the wooden posts / chains that have been damaged in common areas, it is expected that this will be done in the next month.

Significant tree felling has taken place regarding the village hall green area as well as Orchard Piece Playing fields, plans are in place for further works in Cow Lane and possibly entrance near Roundhill Road.

A survey of the water leakages around the village green has taken place and reported to Thames Water and OCC. More focus on obtaining remedial work will take place in the coming months.

Village Hall

It is reported that the hall continues to see a small uptake in bookings this year but concerns on future maintenance works will require some focus and support from the village in general.

The Tuesday Munch continues to be well attended and received. The involvement by the 'munch ladies' is commended and appreciated by all.

A successful quiz night was held in March. Further quiz nights planned for 6th July and 12th Oct 24. Monthly coffee mornings are ongoing, continued support is essential to ensure this successful and worthwhile.

Temporary accommodation was given to Bedford Girls School for its DoE scheme due to inclement weather.

Further dates for VH activities – Xmas Fair (30th Nov 24), Rock Choir(21st Dec 24) and possibly BBQ on VH green (Aug tba), Cocktails (Sept tba)

Villagers have been asked to utilise the 'Fix my Street' website used by OCC/CDC in order to highlight pothole and water leakage issues

Councillor Lapper

It was reported that the water leaks on Main Street are still a problem this is now causing the road surface to break up. As previously mentioned, this is an ongoing item on the Parish Council's agenda.

Following contact with Wicksteed play equipment suppliers it is reported that an approximate cost for a new embankment slide to be installed would cost approximately £5000 to £6000 including installation.

As this is over the current budget it is suggested that the old wooden structure is replaced with a steel or wooden frame and repairs made to the existing slide.

Councillor Gorman

Items to report have already been covered earlier in this meeting.

Councillor Sullivan

Councillor Sullivan reported that there have been the usual seasonal issues with footpaths and one issue with a footbridge bridge, which was quickly resolved on a report. Otherwise there have been no significant issues. Currently footpaths in the parish are believed to be in good order.

In the year Councillor Sullivan was appointed a Parish Footpath Warden, and in that capacity, recently attended a workshop organised by Oxfordshire County Council and the Ramblers. This was helpful in understanding the legal framework, responsibilities, reporting processes for issues with footpaths, and the County Council's priorities in addressing those issues.

Apart from the occasional report of dog fouling there have been no problems with dogs. A note was included in Mollington Matters to remind people to clean up after their dogs. In the year Cherwell District Council significantly increased the cost of emptying the five dog bins positioned in the village, which has adversely affected the budget.

1158 Councillors Points of Interest:

The next Parish Liaison meeting will be held on 12th June, in the evening, at Bodicote House. The Clerk is planning to attend, and Councillors are also encouraged to, if possible.

The RoSPA inspection of the two play areas and the equipment is scheduled for July.

There has been no response from OCC regarding the poor siting of the tree planted on Roundhill Road.

Date of next meeting

Tuesday 23 July 2023 Mollington Village Hall at 8.00pm

Parish Council meeting closed at 9pm