

West Hagbourne Parish Council



Minutes of West Hagbourne Parish Council Meeting

held at Hagbourne Village Hall on Wednesday 2 March 2016 at 7:30pm.

Present: Cllrs M. Butler, H. Lewis, V. Brownsword, M. Telford, O. Doogue and Mr. A. Wise (Clerk)

	MB opened the meeting at 19:30 hrs.	
16/18 Apologies	Cllrs P. Greene and Cllr. J Murphy	
16/19 Declarations of personal and prejudicial interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	
16/20 Report on OCC and SODC activities	<p><u>OCC Report</u> – See appendix 6</p> <p><u>SODC Report</u> – See appendix 7</p>	
16/21 Hear representations from members of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	
16/22 Approve the minutes of the meeting of 4 November 2015	It was proposed by MB , seconded VB, that the minutes be signed as a true record. Carried nem con.	
16/23 Consider matters, not taken elsewhere, arising from the minutes of the meeting of 4 November 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All action items had been completed except for 	
16/24 Receive reports from Parish Councillors and the Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clerk to obtain a Declaration of Interests Form for Cllr. Doogue Report circulated by Cllr. Brownsword on the latest news on the future of the No. 94 Bus Route after the OCC Budget announcement for 2016/17. Bus subsidy extended to July 2016. She then updated the meeting on the latest from the sustainable Blewbury Group. Village PTR has undertaken a transport survey. Chairman to raise the issue of alternative transport arrangements for non-drivers in the village at the Annual Village Meeting on the 18th May 2016. It was proposed by MB , seconded VB, that WHPC adopt the Hagbourne Cemetery Committee Re-organisation Report recommendations in full. VB announced that it was her intention to continue as WH rep on the Hagbourne Cemetery Committee. Clerk to write to East Hagbourne Clerk to confirm decision of West Hagbourne PC to accept the recommendations and that Cllr. Brownsword would continue to act as WH rep on committee. Queens 90th Birthday Celebrations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman to speak to Village Association and attend their next meeting Chairman to speak to Pub Landlord in event that Village Association 	<p>AW</p> <p>MB</p> <p>AW</p> <p>MB</p> <p>MB</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ don't want to arrange street party ○ Clerk to respond to East Hagbourne's proposal re. joint party with firework celebrations by politely declining offer ● Annual Village Tidy Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was agreed that this would be held on Saturday 16th April 2016 ○ VB to write an article for the next edition of the newsletter advertising event and date ○ Clerk to contact SODC requesting equipment, bags and high viz for 16th April with VB to be the PC Contact 	AW VB AW
16/25 Financial matters	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approval of payments. It was proposed MB, seconded VB and carried nem con that the following invoices be paid: Parish Clerk's wages, expenses, PAYE, Hire of Village Hall and OALC Annual Subs for 2016/17 2. Current financial situation. AW presented the current financial situation – attachments 2 & 3. 	
16/26 Planning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AW presented the current planning application situation – attachment 4 	
16/27 Highways and Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● See action 16/24 for local bus update ● Chairman to raise issue of large pot hole outside Pub with OCC Highways 	MB
16/28 Risk assessment	MB signed off appropriate parts on the current Risk Assessment Checklist. - attachment 5	
16/29 Chairmans Report for Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chairman to draft a report for the next edition of the village newsletter which is due at the end of March 2016. 	MB
16/30 Respond to Communications as the Chairman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● None 	
16/31 Attend to any other business at the Chairman's discretion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● None 	
16/32 Date of next meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4 May 2016 and then annual village meeting on 18²⁴ May 2016 	
Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MB declared the meeting closed at 20:50 hrs. 	

Signed: 

Date: 4/5/2016

Attachments:

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1. Agenda
2. Financial Statements
3. Expenditure against Budget 2015-2016
4. Draft Budget for 2016-2017
5. Planning Applications
6. Risk assessment checklist
7. Hagbourne Cemetery Report
8. County Council Report
9. District Council Report

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REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS - February 2016

BUDGET

As reported last month, prior to Christmas, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) went out to consultation on possible additional budget cuts totalling £51m, which at the time was believed to be the worst-case scenario. It was hoped that when central Government confirmed the local government settlement that not all the 95 savings measures consulted on would have to be taken. As it transpired, due to a change in the funding formula which unexpectedly penalised shire counties, the settlement was even worse than expected and the total additional savings required now total £69m.

Councillor Ian Hudspeth, the leader of OCC, said: "The clear message from our budget consultation in the Autumn was that making proposed savings would have a real impact on people and communities. We had hoped our original savings options would be a worst-case scenario and that we would not therefore have to go ahead with them all. We are desperately sorry that we now have to consider all these savings, but will be doing everything we can to help communities manage the impact. We have found a series of short-term measures, including drawing on reserves, to buy time before we have to make yet more new savings to cover the difference between £51m and £69m. Our approach remains the same: we want to try to protect the most vulnerable people in Oxfordshire – by which we mean those adults who need help with basic personal care and children at risk of abuse or neglect."

By law, OCC has to produce a balanced budget and Cabinet has made the necessary recommendations that will be debated by Full Council on February 16th. This includes a proposal to raise Council Tax by 3.99%.

PROPERTY, BACK OFFICE AND RESERVES

There have been misleading media reports that OCC could reduce its financial challenges by selling property, cutting the back office and drawing on reserves. The reality is that OCC has already sold more than 100 properties realising over £62 million that has been used on capital projects. Furthermore, 26 leases have been terminated saving over £2.1 million pa. With regard to back office functions, the number of directors has been cut by 50%, senior managers by over 40% and staff generally by 30%. Various services are already shared with other councils and partners, and further options are being explored to find even more back office savings. Reserves are already being drawn upon and will soon become low compared to expenditure.

BACKLASH AGAINST SHIRE COUNTIES SETTLEMENT

Up to 50 MPs are understood to have signed a letter demanding changes to the Government's proposed settlement with local government, which was published last month. The letter calling for shire councils to be given more money has been sent to the Communities Secretary, Greg Clarke, before a final deal is laid before the Commons within the next fortnight. The Government insists the proposal is a good deal because it also allows local authorities to set their own business rates and increase council tax to make up the shortfall. But one Conservative MP said: "There are a lot of us who are absolutely furious about this. We accept the need for cuts, but it's about fairness. How can it be right that rural councils are facing cuts of 33 per cent, but urban areas – where it is cheaper to

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provide services – are facing a reduction of just 19 per cent? In Wales, it's just 8 per cent and Scotland 4 per cent." If you agree that this harsh treatment of rural councils is unfair please write to your MP and complain.

RISE OF APPRENTICES BOOSTS THRIVING OXFORDSHIRE ECONOMY

Recent growth in the number of Oxfordshire young people choosing apprenticeships as the key to forging a career is outstripping regional figures. While the number of apprenticeship starts for 16-24 year-olds fell across the South East by 2.5 per cent in 2014/15 compared with the previous academic year, Oxfordshire's figure rose by 2.4 per cent, as employers took on 2,510 new starters.

TEMPORARY NEW HOME FOR OXFORD CENTRAL LIBRARY

Continuing work to transform the Westgate Shopping Centre in Oxford has led to OCC's Central Library temporarily moving to a nearby location. Redevelopment work at Westgate includes the complete transformation of the front of the current library building. The existing frontage of the Central Library will be replaced to become part of the new curving wall forming the south side of Bonn Square marking the new entrance to Westgate. Once complete, the new library will feature a new entrance foyer, a refurbished and extended children's library and new feature windows with views over Bonn Square and Castle Street. While this work takes place, the location for the temporary library will be in the nearby Castle Quarter. Current plans are for the existing library to close to the public on February 27, with the new smaller temporary library opening its doors at the end of March. The library will remain there for 18 months until the new Westgate Oxford opens in October 2017.

Cllr Patrick Greene – Didcot East & Hagbourne Division – Oxfordshire County Council

District Council Report - March SODC Report

The thing foremost in our minds is the terrible event at Didcot Power Station. All of us have those hurt or lost and their families in our thoughts and prays at this time. Anything that we can do to help will be done.

This month has seen a number of important events, all of which affect our residents one way or another.

Council Tax

Firstly, when Council met on the 18th February it approved the budget for 2016/2017, which means that, whilst OCC have increased their bill by 3.99% and with a 1.99% rise for the Police and Crime Commissioner, SODC has kept it's element of the Council Tax frozen. This has been achieved without cuts to any of our services, which will be maintained at or above their present standards.

Corporate Services Project

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This financial 'win' is due, in no small part, to the pioneering work done by SODC in linking with the Vale of the White Horse in commissioning the original outsourcing of services some years ago. Without the experience gained, it would not have been possible for SODC to come to agreement with the four other councils now to sign up to the new Corporate Services Agreement. For SODC there is a saving of around £1 Million for each year of the new contract. Now that all parties have formally agreed, the work of recruiting the Contract Manager has begun. By now you will have probably heard that our Chief Executive, David Buckle, has decided that this is a good time for him to take retirement. David has worked hard to make SODC the success story it is today, and will be very active in recruiting our new Chief Executive as well before he leaves us.

Oxfordshire Vision

The third announcement is that the five district councils in Oxfordshire - including Oxford City Council - have announced their bid for devolution by the formation of three unitary authorities. This would mean the abolition of Oxfordshire County Council. If agreed, for us this will mean that SODC will merge with the Vale of the White Horse, taking on many responsibilities presently with the County Council and gaining new powers from Westminster. At the same time, we will manage others such as transport planning and waste disposal, through a combined authority formed by the new unitary councils. Crucially, and possibly uniquely in the country, the plan proposes the transfer of adult social care to the NHS. The needs of rural and city communities are very different and the Oxfordshire Vision proposal will ensure that the new councils replacing the existing two tiers with one, are the best match for those needs. This proposal has cross-party support from all of the MPs within our county - including the Prime Minister - and we hope that everyone will join us in supporting this exciting evolution of local government. More information, and news as it developments can be found on our website <http://www.oxfordshire.vision/>

Team News

Our Food and Safety Team won Team of the Year at an independent Employee of the Year Awards in Oxford. The awards are open to organisations from both the public and private sector, so it's a great prize to pick up. In addition to this the council's legal team has passed their annual Lexcel assessment. This is the Law Society's mark for excellence in management and customer care.

Planning and Development

A public inquiry into **89 homes near Icknield Way** in Chinnor was held at Thame Town Hall. We refused permission for this development as the site is not in our development plan and in our view would be harmful to the local area. It was heard at a public inquiry due to the level of interest in the case and because of the similarities with two other cases which we are challenging in the High Court this May. The council's Officers and witnesses and Chinnor's Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Team put up a strong defence of the Council's position. We must now wait for the Inspector's decision later this year.

This year, one of our housing associations, Soha Housing is celebrating the building of its 2,000th home.

Didcot Gateway Update

The Planning Committee unanimously approved outline plans to develop the 'Didcot Gateway' area opposite the station.

This is big news as it means we can move forward with exciting plans to breathe new life into this important area of the town. We'll keep you up to date with progress as it occurs.

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Rubbish And Waste

We're holding a focus group with residents to help us improve our waste collection service. It is happening on Wednesday 23 March.

If you know of any residents who might want to take part, ask them to email haveyoursay@southandvale.gov.uk with a brief note telling us why they want to get involved. Everyone who attends the group will receive £20 to cover travel and any other expenses.

Bin stickers

We've started putting stickers on bins in Abingdon and Didcot to try and address the ongoing problem we're having with recycling being contaminated with food waste and nappies. This is a trial run, and the stickers have our recycling website address on. If people visit the site they'll see a short message explaining why we're doing it. It's worth having a quick read of the message yourself, so you can respond to any questions you get about the stickers - visit www.morerecycling.co.uk.

Grants

The window for grants is still open, running until 1 April 2016 for decisions by 10 July 2016 and as previously reported, we have made changes to this process to make it easier to apply so we hope that our communities will make full use of this opportunity. The Working Group's first recommendation regarding the Council Tax Reduction Scheme funding has been agreed by the Cabinet, so Town and Parish Council's should soon receive our letter explaining that a Grant is being made available to help support celebrations to mark our Queen's 90th Birthday. Plans for the remaining funds are still being worked on and we expect to announce these shortly.

Forum for community groups

Our annual event to get local community and voluntary groups together so they can share ideas and advice is coming up soon.

The South and Vale Voluntary and Community Sector Forum will take place on Wednesday 23 March at Cornerstone from 9am to 4.30pm. Please invite community and voluntary groups in your area to come along.

For more details about the day's programme please see [OCVA's forum page](#). If you have any questions about the event please email OCVA or call them on 01865 251946.

Air quality consultation

We want to know what everybody thinks of some ideas that could reduce harmful vehicle emissions in South Oxfordshire, in particular in Wallingford, Watlington and Henley.

We employed some air quality experts to look into the problem, and they've made some suggestions, including a couple of ideas that would make a big difference in Wallingford and Watlington.

You can find out more and comment on what the air quality experts have recommended at www.southoxon.gov.uk/lowemissions until 25 March.

PCSO report

We part fund six PCSOs in South Oxfordshire. Between July and December 2015 the work they carried out included:

Providing support for 491 victims of crime, an under age test purchase operation in Wallingford, a drink and drug driving awareness event in Wheatley and a pre-Halloween awareness crime reduction event in Didcot.

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For more about what our PCSOs have been up to see the [Q2 and Q3 neighbourhood policing report](#).

Best Regards

Jane Murphy and Pat Dawe

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need any further information