

MAPLEDURHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held in the Parish Hall, Trench Green on 7 November 2023, commencing at 8.00pm, and concluded at 9.10pm.

Present: Mrs J E Bowen (Chairman), T M Whitaker (Vice-Chairman), Dr D W H Miles.

Also present: P H Dragonetti (district councillor),

Apologies for absence were received from Dr J S Rogerson, R W Taylor, Lord Thurlow.

58 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 5 September 2023 were taken as read, confirmed and signed as a correct record.

59 REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Mr K Bulmer, the county councillor for the Goring division, submitted reports which covered

- the decision of his Council to refuse planning permission for a road in the Didcot area;
- the national review of low traffic neighbourhoods and 20mph speed limits on roads;
- the publication of details as to how his Council will monitor and evaluate the impact of splitting Oxford into 4 sectors by using traffic filters;
- a trial of longer-lasting road surfaces;
- the Government's intention to abolish charges for non-household waste, eg do-it-yourself waste, at recycling centres;
- the cost of severance etc pay to members of his Council's staff made redundant;
- an unfavourable report by OFSTED/the Care Quality Commission on his Council's support for children and young people with special educational needs;
- the withdrawal of the Labour Group from his Council's ruling coalition and the resultant changes to the personnel serving in the Council's Cabinet;
- the limited incidence of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) in schools in the County, both those maintained by his Council and those which had become academies.

60 REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Mr P H Dragonetti, the district councillor for the Kidmore End and Whitchurch ward, submitted a report which covered

- his Council's free on-line forum on supporting energy efficiency upgrades to homes;
- the availability of a thermal imaging camera on loan;
- his Council's success in securing funding from Sport England towards the running costs of its swimming pools and from the Rural Prosperity Fund;
- recent motions passed by his Council about its contractors paying the Real Living Wage and requesting a regulatory assessment of the Government's changes to policy regarding Net Zero;
- changes which enabled Section 106 developer's contributions to be used a grant to build energy efficient affordable housing;
- arrangements for collection of domestic waste during bad weather conditions.

61 COMMEMORATIVE TREE

It was noted that the oak tree, planted to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of the late Queen Elizabeth 2, was thriving. The wording for the plaque had yet to be compiled.

62 HIGHWAYS' MATTERS

(i) A4074 road, Chazey Heath – drainage

The Chairman reported that, as the Highways' open day had been cancelled, she had reported the lack of cleaning of the highways' gullies on the A4074 road between the county boundary and Chazey Heath on FixMyStreet.

(ii) Salt bin

The Clerk reported that he had received a favourable informal reaction from the County Council to the request for the installation of a salt bin at the junction of Mill Lane with Mapledurham Hill.

(iii) Junction of Pond Lane with road to Mapledurham

Members commented that, Pond Lane having been resurfaced by the Estate at its junction with the road to Mapledurham village, the County Council be requested to the repair the latter road at that location.

RESOLVED: That the County Council be requested to repair the surface of the road to Mapledurham village at its junction with Pond Lane.

63 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MATTERS

Reference was again made to the siting of the sign warning about the unsuitability of the road through Tinkers Green for heavy goods' vehicles, at its junction with the A4074 road.

RESOLVED: That the County Council be requested to resite the warning sign at the junction of the road through Tinkers Green and the A4074 road, better to deter lorries using that route.

64 DONATIONS MADE BY FILMING COMPANIES

The Clerk reported that the dog waste bin, to be installed near to the former telephone kiosk in Mapledurham village, had been delivered.

65 READING FESTIVAL

The Vice-Chairman reported that he had attended the post-event review meeting, about the Reading Festival, organised by Reading Borough Council.

Reference was made to problems experienced by residents caused by departing festival goers using Sheepways Lane.

66 OXFORDSHIRE PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION

The Chairman advised that she had attended the annual general meeting of the Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association.

67 MAPLEDURHAM ESTATE

The Chairman and Dr D W H Miles had met Mr W Sleeman of the Mapledurham Estate on 24 October 2023. (A copy of the notes of the meeting compiled by the Chairman, and circulated shortly after the meeting, is attached to the Minutes to be signed).

RESOLVED: That the Estate be requested to advise of filming activities for 2024.

68 PLANNING MATTERS

(i) Decisions

The Council noted that the applications for

repairs and alterations to Stirrups, Mapledurham (P20/S4860/HH and P20/S4861/LB); and remove and replace antennae on mast at Sandy Hill, Mapledurham (P23/S3329/T28)

had been permitted conditionally.

(ii) Applications

It was reported that no comments had been invited on the application for change of use of existing cow shed to flexible commercial use at The Old Cowshed, New Farm, Mapledurham for the Mapledurham Estate (P23/S3200/N4C). The application to remove and replace antennae on mast at Sandy Hill, Mapledurham for Everything Everywhere (P23/S3329/T28) had been determined by the planning authority before comments could be submitted.

RESOLVED: 1 That no strong view be expressed on the application for temporary siting of tipi style covered marquee between May and October for use as wedding venue for a period of 5 years at Mapledurham House, Mapledurham for the Mapledurham Estate (P23/S3149/FUL).

2 That the following comments be submitted in respect of the application for new outbuilding at rear of property, adjoining existing small outbuilding, to create a gym/recreation room at Foxgloves, Nuney Green for Mr A Basso (P23/S3444/HH): "The Council objects to this application because there is insufficient detail in the application, plans and drawings to enable the Council to reach a conclusion on it".

(iii) Storage of portable toilets, Trench Green

Reference was made to the continued storage of portable toilets at the former wood yard at Trench Green.

69 ROKEBY RECREATION GROUND

The Chairman reported that, arising from the report from the inspection of the play equipment at the Rokeby Recreation Ground, she had ordered a replacement toddlers' swing seat, at a cost of £191.

The Chairman had approached Ian Kendrick Ltd and Mr R W Butler for prices of the revised grass cutting etc regime at the Recreation Ground. Ian Kendrick Ltd had quoted £2295 for the year whilst Mr Butler had quoted £2,500. It was proposed that formal quotations be sought from them, in response to an agreed specification of works.

The Chairman further reported hedge planting at the Recreation Ground would be undertaken on 11 November 2023, and bramble growth removal was scheduled.

The Clerk advised that Centurion Running had made a donation of £75 in thanks for using the Ground as a feeding station for their event on 16 September 2023.

70 CHAZEY HEATH BUS STOP

Quotations had been sought for the removal of the large bush at the north-bound bus stop in Chazey Heath, as follows:

Ian Kendrick Ltd - £310
R W Butler - £175.

RESOLVED: That the contract for the removal of the bush at the north-bound bus stop at Chazey Heath be let to R W Butler, in the sum of £175.

71 MAPLEDURHAM PLAYING FIELDS

The Chairman reported that the next meeting of the Mapledurham Playing Fields Management Committee would be held in the Civic Offices, Reading.

72 PARISH HALL

Dr D W H Miles advised that the Parish Hall Committee held cash assets of c£11,000. The floor in the kitchen at the hall was to be relaid imminently, and the floor in the main room restored by the end of the month. The baby changing facilities were about to be installed.

The Clerk advised that Barclays Bank UK plc had closed the Committee's bank account on 13 September 2023. Subsequently, the bank had sent a cheque for the closing balance, £9167.74. Following informal discussions with her colleagues, the Chairman had agreed that the Council would receive the Committee's income, and meet its liabilities, pending the Committee securing a new bank account, recognising that the Council had the legal power to do so and was the owner of the premises.

In the meantime, the Clerk had lodged a complaint with the bank about its actions: a response was awaited.

RESOLVED: That the action of the Chairman be approved and confirmed.

73 COUNTRYSIDE COMMITTEE

It was reported that the Countryside Committee had not met since the last meeting of the Council, but a meeting had been held with Mr W Sleeman, concerning Mapledurham Estate (see Minute 67).

74 OXFORDSHIRE COUNCILS' CHARTER

In e-mails, the County Council's Policy Team advised that the principal councils in Oxfordshire, together with the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils, were working together to develop a charter to support partnership working with parish and town councils. A roundtable discussion, described as a "summit", both in person at County Hall, Oxford, and on line, had been held on 26 October 2023. The Chairman reported that she had attended on-line, until her IT equipment had failed.

75 OXFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

The Council noted the updates for members published by the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils in September and October 2023.

76 THE SAMARITANS

The Fundraising Trustee of the Oxford Samaritans, in a letter, requested financial assistance. Members observed that the budget for the financial year 2023/24 contained provision for grants totalling £120 to outside bodies.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £20 be made to Oxford Samaritans in the financial year 2023/24.

77 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The following accounts were passed for payment

Parish Council

Shield Maintenance Ltd – Servicing dog hygiene bin £10.39) Already

Playsafety Ltd – Inspection of play equipment	£102.60) paid
Shield Maintenance Ltd – Servicing dog hygiene bin	£10.39
Glasdon UK Ltd – Dog hygiene bin	£320.26
The Samaritans Oxford – Grant	£20.00

Parish Hall Committee

Mrs J E Bowen – Cleaning and sundries	£54.48)
Mrs J E Bowen – Replacement cheque	£54.48) Already
R F Penfold – Replacement cheque	£290.00) paid
SSE – Electricity	£214.01)

As Barclays Bank UK plc had closed the Parish Hall Committee's bank account on 13 September 2023, it did not honour the cheques drawn on that account in favour of Mrs Bowen and Mr Penfold. These were replaced by the Council, in accordance with the decision recorded above (see Minute 72).