

Appleford Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting duly convened and held on Thursday, 14th November 2024 at 8pm

Attendees – Councillors:	Apologies:
Victoria Shepherd (Chair) (VS)	
Greg O’Broin (Vice-Chair) (GOB)	
Dom Grigg (DG)	
Manu Mavrikis (MM)	
Sandrine Phillipot-Gasc (SPG)	
Cllr Peter Stevens (PS) – District & County Cllr	
Cllr Stephen Cole (SC) – Didcot Town Cllr	
Sharon de Brú – Bluestone Planning LLP	
	In Attendance:
Members of the public: 14	Jane Humphreys– Clerk

The Meeting Opened at 8.00pm

<p>1. Welcome, Apologies and Quorate VS welcomed all to the meeting. The meeting was quorate. Apologies received from a number of parents who said it would be helpful if dial in details could be provided so those with young children could more easily follow discussion.</p>	ACTION
<p>2. Declarations of personal and prejudicial interest VS & GOB declared an interest in Appleford Parish Trust. GOB is also involved in the management of the Village Hall.</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of the APC meeting held on September 5th, 2024 Minutes from the meeting held on 5th September 2024 were APPROVED and signed by the Chair.</p>	APPROVED

Signed:

Date.....

<p>4. Public Participation</p> <p>A resident commented that there have been a number of deer fatalities in the local area and requested that the PC order deer signs to be placed at either end of the village.</p> <p>A number of residents also commented that more 20mph signs should be installed along the road. One resident objected to too many signs and suggested the signs should be focused only on key areas. 20mph wheelie bin signs were handed out at the meeting; more available.</p> <p>The resident responsible for maintaining the village defibrillators noted that the defibrillators are working and fully stocked; an order has been placed with WEL Medical to replenish defibrillator stocks for next year - £691.02 incl. VAT.</p> <p>A number of residents commented that there are people sleeping in vans in the recreation ground car park. It was suggested that a sign should be installed in the car park prohibiting overnight stays.</p>	
<p>5. Report from District and County Councillor Peter Stevens</p> <p>PS asked for feedback from the community since the installation of the 20 mph signs in the village. PS noted that other villages are choosing to move the signs to different locations, Drayton PC has applied for a pelican crossing. TVP will be pursuing drivers who fail to adhere to the 20mph speed limit. SPG felt that speeding had improved near the railway station and close to the SIDs. MM confirmed that the SIDs can be moved to different locations, as required.</p> <p>PS noted that OCC has not responded to the Joint Local Plan consultation as it did not consider that the plan raised any serious issues. GOB commented that APC has responded to the Joint Local Plan consultation. GOB noted the absence of any public transport policy within the JLP and the conflicts between the number of construction schemes and the impact on climate. GOB also noted that the JLP does not include any plans for flood defences or active travel. GOB noted that there are no Sunday rail services for either Appleford or Culham. The JLP housing targets are lower than the government plans. GOB believes that the JLP was rushed through to avoid the government housing target increase. GOB believes that a Local Transport Plan and a Climate Resilience Plan need to be added to the JLP.</p> <p>PS noted that the deadline for applying for the County Councillor Priority Fund (CCPF) is the 30th of November. GOB confirmed that APC will be applying for this funding to pay towards a benchmark noise survey to be carried out by consultants in advance of any major construction work within the parish. The possibility of obtaining a noise sensor had been considered but the cost was thought to be £10K+ and therefore too expensive for the PC. It was noted that the BESS application includes a noise survey which representatives from TBC Partners offered to share with PC once complete (likely January). PS agreed in principle to support the application for funding for a noise survey, subject to a formal application from the</p>	<p>Action: MM reinstate SID at Meadow House with CCTV (NB Solar Panel theft & damage)</p> <p>Action: GOB – forward a copy of APC’s JLP response to PS</p> <p>Action: GOB apply to CCPF</p>

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<p>PC. The noise from the FCC site was mentioned and it was noted that the next FCC Liaison meeting is in January (Monday 13th January).</p> <p>The Thames Water SESRO was discussed. PS noted concerns regarding raising underlying water table by up to 1m, and need for emergency discharge within 4 days, which during wet season would add significant water to already flooded area, plus risk of potential breaches, and environmental challenges locals continue to face following TW ‘improvement’ work between SC and Appleford; meeting due to be held on the 26th of November between Thames Water and Sutton Courtenay representatives to resolve historic issues in Hobbyhorse lane has been postponed. PS will be pushing for further work on significant flood risks of proposed SERSO particularly in the case of breaches or emergency discharges. Local disruption and environmental decimation, during construction, also noted.</p>	
<p>6. Planning</p> <p>a. Discussion with Didcot Town Council councillors on Neighbourhood Planning and the proposal to extend Didcot Town Neighbourhood Plan designated area to include Appleford.</p> <p>Didcot Town Councillor Stephen Cole (SC) attended the meeting along with Sharon de Brú (SB), a planning consultant from Bluestone Planning LLP. SC presented a short overview of Neighbourhood Planning (NP) and the benefits of working together with neighbouring parishes. The adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan gives rise to a 10% increase in Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding (from 15-25%).</p> <p>Appleford Parish Council is entitled to apply for funding to develop a Neighbourhood Plan with an initial grant of £10K available from Locality, with a further £8K potentially available for developing design codes (if required): https://locality.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning</p> <p>Didcot Town Council would be entitled to apply for the same level of funding. Due to the size - and rapid growth - of Didcot, it was felt that Appleford’s requirements would be lost. It would be preferable for Appleford to embark on its own NP. It was agreed that working in parallel with Didcot and also other parishes on the Didcot boundary to develop policies that are aligned would be preferable.</p> <p>SB noted that if Appleford develops its own NP then it could, if required, incorporate policies on flooding, local green spaces, important views and housing. A NP would also provide a degree of protection against speculative planning applications. SB noted that she is working with SCPC to promote the development of Didcot’s Masterplan and is asking other local parish councils to engage with this process. A resident raised concern that the Didcot Masterplan boundary includes land in the south of Appleford Parish,</p>	<p>Action: VS – research potential boundary issues in Didcot’s masterplan</p>

<p>overlapping the Community Orchard, and BESS application (South of the B4016 between Appleford and LW).</p>	
<p>b. Discussion on the Parish Council response to public consultation for the proposed BESS development.</p> <p>A discussion was held on the merits of the proposed BESS development to the south of Appleford Parish. Councillors enquired if this is the first step toward the site becoming suitable for housing. The site is susceptible to flooding and therefore less suitable for housing. The landowners were present at the meeting and confirmed that the proposed development would mean the land would be leased not sold. The land does currently flood; the landowners confirmed that they are prohibited from clearing Moor ditch which crosses the land. The landowners would prefer that the land remain agricultural. However, with land left fallow past two years due to flooding issues, it is time to consider alternative uses.</p> <p>APC determined that it would remain neutral. No response to the proposed development would be issued by APC. This is a proposed development therefore not at the planning stage. If the development goes ahead, there would be construction traffic and disruption for between 18 months and 2 years; all wiring would be underground toward Didcot Power Station (approx. 1.4km). There is the potential for low level noise from the site after construction and the site would represent a fire risk due to the lithium in the batteries, e.g. https://www.saynotosunnica.com/bess.</p> <p>c. Update on HIF1 status and noise issues (GOB) – no update on the HIF1 was available at this meeting. Cllr Peter Stevens to attend an OCC update on Wednesday 20th November.</p> <p><i>Post meeting note – as of 28th November communication received from DFT stating they have received a report from the Planning Inspector. There was an earlier communication from Leanne Palmer (Planning Inspectorate) on 22 Oct stating that the Inspectors report (presumably on the Planning Application) had been sent to the Secretary of State. This suggests both reports have now been issued and we await a decision from both Sec of State for Housing and SoS for Transport on the CPOs and Orders. Timing is impossible to say but it might be before Christmas, or early in 2025.</i></p> <p>7. Volunteers and new Parish Councillors – your parish council needs you! Councillors noted that Claire and Jim Boyce, the current Village Hall managers, have done a fantastic job in keeping the Village Hall running and in good condition. GOB commented that the VH is a tremendous resource and does make a modest surplus each year but it does require people, ideally a small team, with energy to manage it. The village could employ someone to manage the Village Hall but the reality is it might have to close.</p>	<p>Action: PS – to investigate issues with Moor ditch</p> <p>Action: Clerk – add any APC BESS consultation responses to APC website</p> <p>Action: ALL – please consider which village resources & activities you can</p>

Signed:

Date.....

Appleford Parish Council needs support from volunteers and new Councillors to drive forward the work that is needed in coming years to sustain and develop the parish and to support the community. Please make yourself known if possible.

contribute time to, and let the Clerk or Cllrs know

Volunteers and new Councillors are needed in several areas including –

- Helping to manage and develop the Village Hall to keep it open in the New Year once Jim and Claire step down (31/12/2024). Please help us to ensure it can remain a valuable facility for the community in the future.
- Working to improve the safety of the roads in our parish with the introduction of additional traffic calming measures.
- Developing a plan for renovating the playground and ensuring its operational safety into the future.
- Reviewing planning applications and creating a Steering Group to drive forward a Neighbourhood Plan to benefit the whole community.

There were no volunteers during the meeting, but a number of villagers came forward after the meeting to volunteer support for both the Neighbourhood Plan and the Village Hall.

8. Finance

APPROVED

- a. To note invoices paid since the last meeting and to consider invoices for payment itemised below.

Supplier/Invoice	Purpose	Net	VAT	Gross
Payments for approval:				
MM expenses	Repair of SIDs	116.20	21.58	137.78
VS expenses	20mph bin stickers	108.00		108.00
ElanCity SAJ-UK/2024/02067	SID repair	799.76	159.95	959.71
ElanCity SAJ-UK/2024/02112	SID repair	84.46	16.89	101.35
Payments made:				
Pet Waste Solutions 36555	Dog bin collection	85.80	17.16	102.96
Pet Waste Solutions 35411	Dog bin collection	85.80	17.16	102.96
Pet Waste Solutions 34196	Dog bin collection	85.80	17.16	102.96
Scribe Accounts INV-7212	Accounts system	12.00	2.40	14.40
Scribe Accounts INV-7388	Accounts system	12.00	2.40	14.40
Scribe Accounts INV-631	Accounts system	12.00	2.40	14.40
Clerk's Salary September				£433.42
Clerk's Salary October				£433.42
A&W Grounds INV-0089	Grass cutting & public	599.00		599.90
A&W Grounds INV-0094	Hedge cutting	360.00		360.00
A&W Grounds INV-0075	Grass cutting	599.00		599.00

Signed:

Date.....

Appleford Parish Council

UKAEA CPS24.300	Playground signage	28.50	5.70	34.20	
Wychwood 0090	Installation of wheelie bin	415.00		415.00	
Dee Corney (Hostworld)	applefordpc.org.uk	30.00	6.00	36.00	
Receipts					
VOWHDC	2nd Half Precept 2024/25			11,000	

b. To approve and sign bank reconciliation to 31st October 2024 **APPROVED**
c. Payments & Receipts Summary to 31st October 2024 and progress against budget **APPROVED**
d. To note transfer of funds from NS&I and closure of account.
e. To note NALC revised pay scales for Clerk for 2024-25 **APPROVED**
f. To discuss the APC budget for 2025-26. The 2025-26 budget was discussed but further clarification on payments that may be made in the current FY will be needed before the budget can be finalized and approved. GOB noted that the Village Hall requires a fire alarm. Further discussion on the budget and precept to be deferred to January meeting.

Action: GOB
– investigate costs of a fire alarm for the VH

9. Risk Assessment

a. **Playground Maintenance:** To report on progress on playground maintenance since last meeting. Not discussed at this meeting – deferred to January meeting.

b. **Playground Inspections:** To discuss current issues with regular playground inspections and to review costs associated with quarterly playground inspections by Play Inspection Co. Not discussed at this meeting – deferred to January meeting

c. **Playground renovation:** [FCC Community Action Fund](#): Grant Application for playground refurbishment – to review progress and determine next funding round for application (*2024-4 Round opens 18 September 2024 and closes at 5.00pm on 20 November 2024*). 2025 rounds will be announced during the last quarter of 2024. To seek support from the local community to put a plan together which will form the basis of the FCC application. Not discussed at this meeting – deferred to January meeting.

Date of Next Meeting: 9th January 2025, 13th March 2025 (NB – one week later), 5th June 2025

Please add these to your diary; we look forward to seeing you there.

The Meeting Closed at 9.45pm.

Signed:

Date.....