

Appleford- on- Thames Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting duly convened and held in Appleford on 21st September 2020.

Present: Cllrs J McCarthy, A Guinn, P Walker, .

Apologies: Richard Webber

1. Public Participation

A number of residents joined the meeting.

One resident would like to raise issues with Joanne on the Main Road who have put building materials on the verge.

One resident would like to ask about hiring the Recreation Ground for football matches

2. Apologies for absence - Richard Webber

3. Declarations of Interests

V Shepherd and G O'Broin were co-opted to the Parish Council.

Cllrs P Walker and A Guinn - Village Hall Committee

4. Minutes of the meetings of 08 June and 20 July 2020

The minutes of 08 June 2020 were approved without comment. Further thanks were given to former councillors.

The minutes of 20 July 2020 were approved pending confirmation from PW.

5. Reports from District and County Councillor

None

6. Planning

A. Proposed relief Road

Richard Webber has sent on an article for publication in the Pressings.

It was noted that a previous meeting confirmed that Clifton Hampden had met with the County Council. Members of the Village would like to work with the Parish Council to liaise with the County Council on the road. It was agreed that the Parish Council would nominate VS and GO'B to meet with OCC. Both VS and GO'B agreed to meet with the representatives of OCC on behalf of the village and are keen for existing councillors to join the meetings if possible.

VS and GO'B would like to lead the conversations regarding the road. They would like to conduct a village survey to validate the opinions that are held in the village regarding the road.

The group would like to be authorised as a sub-group of the Parish Council and would require approval of the Parish Council for decisions. Would like to go ahead with the village survey to get engagement and response from the village community. The survey would be completely anonymous but there would be the option for people to submit hard copy responses.

It was agreed that the survey would be distributed to the village. VS and GO'B were asked to report back to the Councillors.

In addition, VS and GO'B would like to attend the Didcot Garden Town Sounding Board.

Sutton Courtney had reached out to Appleford to discuss how to work together regarding the relief road. VS and GO'B are happy to reach out to Sutton Courtney as needed. It was noted that the Sutton Courtney may have different objectives from the relief road and these may need to be defined.

The village boundary is noted as being at the Appleford sign. The VOWH website confirms the Parish Boundary.

One of the main issues with the road development will be the fact that there will be a flyover which will be alongside the village at a raised height.

B. FCC Development

No detailed plans have been provided for the proposed development at Radcot Green. It was noted that this was dependent on the location of the new road.

This had previously been identified by the District and County Councillor as being a very speculative application.

It was noted that it may be worth clarifying with the District and County Councillor the grounds on which he made the statement regarding the likelihood of Radcot Green going ahead.

The land is a brownfield site which is beneficial to FCC. However, it was noted that there may be angles that could be exploited regarding the location of the road.

C. Joanne

The Parish Council to write to the Highways department to report an infringement on the highway.

No objections as long as reasonably in keeping with the development.

7. Parish Council Matters:

1. Parish Website/ The Pressings

No issues of the Pressings had gone out recently. It was noted that it was difficult to deliver items around the village. Some information would be moved to the website so that people can access this. Another option would be to add items to the Facebook page.

The only effective way for the Parish Council to engage with the village would be greater use of the website and social media.

Static information should go on the website and the Parish Council needs to look at how it can communicate better.

It was agreed that proposals would be made on how to use the website and social media more effectively. It was noted that the notice board were still in use and would be beneficial for the older people in the village. The Pressings is still a valuable tool for people and there could be ways to deliver this safely in line with the guidance.

The Pressings represents a huge amount of work, but there were also issues with a lack of advertising and events happening. It was suggested that the Pressings could be a single PDF on the website

No appetite for doing a printed issue of the Pressings soon. However, there is information that needs to be distributed to the village to inform them about the road. At the next meeting in November the Parish Council will consider a possible social media strategy for the village.

2. Reopening playground

It was noted that Jim Boyland had been asked to give the playground a pressure wash. Current guidance was that playgrounds could remain open, but there may be another lockdown in the near future.

The playground was a valuable resource for local villages and people came from nearby to use it.

There was no signage to say anything about safe use and it was difficult to lock the playground.

It was agreed to check with insurance company as to whether COVID would be covered if someone claimed they had become unwell from something in the playground. If the insurance company confirmed it was ok, the playground could reopen with appropriate signage.

The annual inspection of the playground equipment is due towards the end of the year.

The Parish Council asked a member of the Village to monitor signage that had been put in place in the playground.

There should also be signage that covers that adult gym equipment.

Signs would be arranged to ask people to follow government guidelines and would be for people using the field as well.

3. Basketball Hoop

A quote has been received to construct a basketball court. Following discussions with Trustees it had been agreed that there would be a basketball court between the edge of the football pitch and the Village Hall patio.

The costing has been agreed and it will be just over £6000 to cast the concrete and erect the basketball hoop. Currently awaiting the deposit and there is a free slot in the week beginning 5 October.

There was a question about who would pay as the Parish Council could claim VAT on the payment. This was awaiting confirmation from the Trustees.

4. HGVs through Village

There are still HGVs travelling through the village. The Clerk will raise this with Trading Standards to confirm that the signage needs replacing.

Cameras had gone up in Sutton Courtney but it was unclear who had installed these.

5. Replacement bench

Two benches had been provided on the death of a village resident which were now decayed.

It was noted that the family had declined to replace the bench. The benches were donated by the family, so it was nice to have the additional seating. However, it is not the responsibility of the Parish Council to replace the benches.

The Parish Council could agree to provide the bench but it would not have the plaque. The family had been approached and did not want to replace the benches.

It might be useful to have a bench if there were funds available and the people installing the basketball court could be asked to install a bench in the existing site.

This could be replaced with a plastic bench so it would not decay.

It was agreed that a new bench would be installed in the existing site. The Clerk should approach the company used previously (Recycled Plastic) for a cost. It was likely to cost around £350 and this could be arranged up to this amount.

6. Access onto B016 by University of Reading site.

There are gates now on the road but the purpose of these is unclear. It is on the right as you leave the village and it is being used to get heavy plant into and off the site.

It was agreed that there would be no access along that road.

The Clerk should make contact with Crowdace to ask for more information on why they are using the road for access when it was agreed that there would be no access.

7. Discuss hire of Recreation Ground and agree the terms

Bookings had previously been arranged through the Village Hall. Under 14s are allowed to use the Village Hall for changing rooms. If over 16s, the FA doesn't allow it.

Storage was required for equipment e.g. corner flags and nets etc in the Village Hall.

The resident who is keen to hire the ground confirmed that the group involved would be under 11s. They would need access to a pitch, to mark out a suitably sized pitch and store the goals. They would do pitch marking and the Parish Council has a pitch marker.

Under 11 matches take place on Sunday morning, usually between 10-12. The football club has its own insurance.

The previous team paid a fee to the council per annum which paid for more frequent grass cutting.

Residents use of the field would be restricted if there were matches every Sunday morning. It was noted that there was space for walkers around the outside and the Parish Council supported the use of the ground.

The seasons were shorter for the Under 11 team and should be finished by spring.

The organisers should ensure that the children don't use the adult gym equipment. It was asked that the Parish Council confirm what the fees would be for use of the Recreation Ground as the resident is looking at a number of options. Also, it was asked that the team would have access to the Village Hall to store the goals.

The Parish Council supported the suggestion and asked that the insurance certificate be provided.

It was agreed that there would be no charge for the current season and this would be reviewed when the season ends in the summer.

8. Wider Appleford involvement.

This relates back to the survey and Didcot Garden Town briefing.

Planning permission had been put in for a number of houses on a nearby farm. The two developments might become more linked.

A rejected development in Sutton Courtney had gone to appeal since the confirmation of the relief road funding.

9. Didcot Active Health Consultation

Around the same time as the road consultation, Didcot released an Active Health Consultation about road usage and infrastructure.

The road will release around 17,000 new homes in Didcot which will impact on their infrastructure.

It was noted that this would be related to the communications strategy.

Future discussions on cycle infrastructure would be linked to the new road.

8. Village Hall Update

There are no specific updates. The Pop-Up Pub will not take place in the near future.

Discussions are taking place as to whether the Village Hall will be re-incorporated into the Parish Council.

It was noted that the Village Hall was open and taking bookings although the Parish Council had recommended that it remain closed.

There was a requirement that the Village Hall have a QR code available for tracking purposes. This will be sent on to the Village Hall Administrator.

7. Neighbourhood Plan Group

A neighbourhood plan had been discussed and it was agreed that this involved a lot of work from the Village.

When a neighbourhood plan had previously been proposed, there was a push for localities to carry this out.

The survey may inform the thoughts about the neighbourhood plan.

Long Wittenham had been approached as they have completed the neighbourhood plan and would be happy to discuss this. GO'B would be happy to take this forward as would VS. Long Wittenham would be more comparable in terms of size. Engagement with the community is key to having an effective plan.

8. Liaison Groups

a. FCC

b. Hanson

c. Didcot Power Station

7. Finance

The Council agreed the following payments:-

Payee	Reason	Number	Amount
Mrs A Davies	Clerk Salary		£311.20
HMRC	Clerk Tax		£44.80
Alan Lambourne	Internal Audit		£35.80
Scoop Dotty Dog	Empty Dog Bins - July		£160.00
Scoop Dotty Dog	Empty Dog Bins - August		£67.00
Jim Boyland	Grass cutting - July		£747.60
Jim Boyland	Grass cutting - August		£729.60

It was agreed that VS and GO'B would be added as signatories to the Bank Account.

12. Correspondence

None noted

8. Items for report

Cars parked at the end of School Lane have returned now that people are returning to work. This makes the road narrow and this is due to people using the railway. If not contravening any laws, there is a limit to what can be done to stop this as they are parking in the street. A leaflet advising that people can park in the Recreation Ground was discussed but it was lawful to park on the street. Not obstructing anything but blocks eye line and could cause farm vehicles issues with passing the cars. The idea of a leaflet had

merit and this could be discussed further under the relief road.

It was noted that Peter Walker intends to resign as a Parish Councillor as soon as possible. He has been a member of the Parish Council for five years and is selling his property in the Village. He remains happy to oversee the installation of the basketball hoop and will return his keys to the car park and the Village Hall.

The number of members for the Council was discussed and it was noted that three was the minimum and five was the maximum.

There are a number of names of members of the Parish Council listed on the VOWH website.

It was noted that there was no Annual General Meeting this year. This was because the requirement to hold this was waived due to lockdown.

8. Items for inclusion on the next Agenda

Update on Relief Road

Additional councillors

Date of Next Meeting :- 16 November 2020