

**Minutes of the Meeting of Appleford Parish Council  
on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022 by Zoom**

**Time: 20.00 – 21.32**

**Attendance**

Parish Councillors:	Greg O'Broin (GO) Chair Victoria Shepherd (VS) Vice Chair Sandrine Philippot-Gasc (SPG) Manu Mavrikis (MM)
Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO):	Gill Brook (GB)
Members of the public:	William Finch (WF)

**The meeting was quorate**

**The minutes were taken by Gill Brook**

While GO was present, he was unwell and handed the chairing of the meeting to VS who welcomed those present and wished GO a speedy recovery. VS asked for GB's support on the financial matters.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Daniela Danaila (DD)

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

VS and GO declared being on the Parish Trust Committee. GO declared being on the Village Hall Committee.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

WF kindly hosted the meeting on behalf of Katie Finch who had provided the Zoom link. He was invited to contribute.

4. MINUTES OF MEETING ON 1<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2021 (previously circulated) – approved.

5. FINANCE

VS explained that the main agenda item was to go through the budget for 2022/2023 and set the precept. It was the first time for the group to meet to do this and followed a pre-meeting on 21.12.21 between GO, VS and GB. VS thanked GB for the work done and appreciated the additional new councillors (SPG and MM) online and the support of WF.

(a) PAID INVOICES & COMMITTED EXPENDITURE

Invoice ref no.	Invoice date	The following invoices have been paid since the last meeting and were noted:	Amount £
2048	N/A	Gill Brook December salary	305.50
2049	07/12/2021	George Downham, Crosscut Rec tree works (approved 7a 1.12.21)	150.00
2050	26/11/2021	Hobs Reprographic. Reimb M Hancock A4 & A5 photocopying	40.32
2051	23/11/2021	SLCC Budgeting basics training	42.00
2052	30/11/2021	Jim Boyland Trading Nov litter & bins	60.00
2053	N/A	Village Hall remainder transfer Share of St Edmund's rent of £200	199.00
2054	15/12/2021	The Play Inspection Co Outdoor annual inspection (approved 7a 1.12.21)	83.40
2055	13/12/2021	Pet Waste Solutions Collection 9.11.21	36.00
2056	20/12/2021	Pet Waste Solutions Collection 24.11.21	36.00
2057	13/12/2021	Pet Waste Solutions Collection 9.12.21	36.00

Committed expenditure:		
Playdale	Zip wire and bump stop. Approved 7a, 22.6.21	1,185.00
Playdale	Additional repair of Zip Wire. Approved 7a, 1.12.21	151.03
Wicksteed	Rocking horse / see saw repair. Approved 7a, 1.12.21	218.75
Environment Report	Re planning app'n. Approved if required. 7a, 1.12.21	200.00

VS updated the meeting: a representative from Wicksteed had visited and went through the whole annual Playground Inspection Report with her. The seesaw has been fixed. It was an old model without a 'notch' so had always rotated. He created a notch which will help in the future. Much of the work on the Inspection Report could be done by a local person e.g. painting, welding. Playdale could quote.

**ACTION VS:** to follow up the various points in the Report, per summary email to Parish Council dated 22.12.21, 23:07

**ACTION VS:** to follow up on the Playdale zipwire and bump stop orders

Buying the environment report (see above) is pending.

- (b) To discuss and approve the draft budget for 2022/23, including funds for the road campaign and playground maintenance, as in previously circulated spreadsheet.

GB summarised the draft budget for 2022/23, explained briefly how the precept request works, and how any change is reflected in the overall council tax bill for an average Band D household. The proposal is for an 18% increase from £111.79 to £131.91, which is estimated to increase the overall council tax bill for a Band D household from £2,057.87 to approximately £2,144.44, i.e. 4.21% if VOWH and OCC both increase their precept by the maximum of 3% and Thames Valley Police increase their precept by £15, as last year.

Councillors asked questions and made comments as follows:

MM: had applied on behalf of the Council for a capital grant and is waiting for a reply (possibly mid-March 2022). VS: added that it had been a last-minute application which could be avoided another year. Any grant is for 50% with Appleford matching the amount. This would influence the budget, but for the moment we are working on a best estimate of what we know and can try to predict.

VS: wanted to be able to justify the budget and therefore the precept.

GB: explained that the Council provides services and needs money to do this. The budget sets out the services and how much they cost. Without a budget, nothing could be done to maintain the standards within the village, whether it be dog waste collections,

keeping the Recreation Ground and its trees tidy and safe or campaigning to move the proposed road away from the village.

GO: The playground maintenance took up a large proportion of the precept in 2021/22 and in 2022/23 it is estimated to be more moderate, but the budget allows us to do what is essential. The main expenditure items are the road campaign and the noise equipment.

WF: feels that it is not a lot of money for each household

SPG: the Recreation Ground is the heart of the village

EM: agreed

VS: the budget demonstrates that we care and feel comfortable that we can justify the budget to any villager who asks. The road is a focus.

The 2022/2023 budget (net expenditure) of £21,868 was approved

(c) To discuss and approve the precept for 2022/23, as in circulated spreadsheet.

The 2022/23 precept of £21,868 was approved.

## 6. OTHER BUSINESS

GO updated the meeting on progress made at the group of 5 Parish Councils (Neighbouring Parish Council Committee) which had agreed on 17.12.21 to appoint Charlie Hopkins to produce the phase 1 report from advisors to identify a list of technical issues and deficiencies in each technical area to challenge the road proposal. This would then lead to a phase 2 report, if appropriate. Two initial reports are expected to be received on Friday [7.1.22]

There was a discussion about whether this meeting could approve specific expenditure within the already-approved £5,000 in-principle commitment to the road campaign. It was realised that a detailed email dated 31.12.21 from GO had mistakenly not been received/seen by some members of the council so they were unaware of the details of GO's specific proposal. [Post-meeting note: an email dated 17.12.21 had also not been seen/received by some members of the council]

VS offered to summarise that email and circulate it to all 5 councillors (including DD who could not be present) and the clerk, and that each would reply urgently with agreement or questions as necessary. All agreed to reply as quickly as possible so as not to delay the progress, but to provide a careful paper trail of the Council's financial decisions. [Post-meeting note: GO summarised the information: see below]

[Post-meeting note: see approval detailed below]

7. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON NEXT AGENDA: Village Hall, outdoor tap, adult exercise equipment, football goals, noise issue, Hanson & FCC updates.
8. TO AGREE THE DATE FOR THE NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022 at 8pm

VS closed the meeting thanking GO for his hard work and apologising for the earlier misunderstanding.

Post-meeting approval of point 6 by email:

GO: proposer, 5.1.22, 23:17  
 GB: agreed & approved: 6.1.22, 00:03  
 VS: agreed & approved, 6.1.22, 08:16  
 SPG: agreed & approved, 7.1.22, 01:25  
 MM: agreed & approved, 7.1.22, 11:43  
 DD: agreed & approved, 7.1.22, 13:50

The details of the approved proposal are £1,500 out of the 2021/2022 committed in-principle amount of £5,000 as follows:

Approval for Commitment to engage Charlie Hopkins & Professional Advisors (Phase 1)

As advised on 19 Dec. 2021, The Neighbouring Parish Council Committee (NPCC) representing Appleford, Sutton Courtenay, Culham, Clifton Hampden & Nuneham Crtny] held an on-line meeting and agreed to appoint Mr. Charlie Hopkins (<http://www.charliehopkins.co.uk/>) as Project Manager. Formal instructions to follow.

Each Parish Council has approved the follow amounts for this purpose.

Appleford.	£5,000 (33%)
Sutton Courtenay	£5,000
Culham.	£2,000
Clifton Hampden.	£2,000
Nuneham Crtny.	<u>£1,000</u> (upped from £500 to £1,000 on 4/1/22)
	£15,000

Liaising with the NPCC committee CH will engage & manage professional advisors on all aspects of the project excluding administration (invoicing and payment).

The work proposed will be conducted in two phases.

Phase 1 - Scoping Exercise to identify a listing of technical issues & deficiencies in each technical area. An assessment on how / whether to proceed to the next stage (Phase 2) will be made on completion of Phase 1.

**BUDGET / FUNDS APPROVED - £4,500 (Phase 1). Leeway £500.**

**Approved by NPCC**

1 Charlie Hopkins	Project Manager & Legal / Planning
2 Prof. John Whitelegg	Transport
3 Andrew Dorrian	Traffic modelling
4 Sharps Acoustics	Acoustics
5 TBA	Air Quality / Pollution
6 Alan James	Landscape & Green Belt
7 Dr George Reeves	Hydrologist

Leeway of £500 allowed / Phase 1 budget £5,000.

Note: The above listing is indicative and other consultants may be appointed by the Project Manager in liaison with NPCC. At all times advisors will be engaged within the funds available and allocated by NPCC.

Approval is sought to commit 33% of the funding approved to allow work on Phase 1 to proceed.

NPCC. £15,000 x 33% = £5,000 or

APC. £ 5,000 x 33% = £1,500 \*\*

(Appleford share leaving £3,500 funding approved 21/22 to be allocated for follow on work).

\*\* The subject matter of the discussion (£15k x 1/3 x 1/3 =£1,500) as explained verbally.

The work to establish the group of 5 neighbouring PCs multiplies resources by a factor of three. This has taken considerable effort.

I am concerned how this neighbouring group and my role can work if our representatives (GOB & VS) are not able to make (reasonable) commitments within budget funding previously approved by the Parish Council.

Greg

GB/18.1.22  
 Approved 2.2.22