

## Minutes of the Meeting of Appleford Parish Council on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022 by Zoom

Time: 20.00 – 21.55

### Attendance

Parish Councillors: Greg O’Broin (GO) Chair  
Victoria Shepherd (VS) Vice Chair  
Sandrine Philippet-Gasc (SPG)  
Manu Mavrikis (MM)  
Daniela Danaila (DD)

Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO): Gill Brook (GB)

Members of the public: William Finch, David & Katherine  
Andrews, Lyn Cook, Katharine & Craig  
Jefferies, Jim & Claire Boyce, Johanna  
Richardson

The meeting was quorate

The minutes were taken by Gill Brook

Thanks to the Finches for the Zoom link

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – none
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**  
GO asked for any comments or questions from the public. There were none. He added that they could comment later if appropriate.
4. **MINUTES OF MEETING ON 5<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022** (previously circulated) including the approval contained in the post-meeting note – approved with immaterial amendments detailed at the meeting.
5. **FINANCE**  
(a) **PAID INVOICES & COMMITTED EXPENDITURE**

Invoice ref no.	Invoice date	The following invoices have been paid since the last meeting and were noted:	Amount £
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2058	N/A	Lloyds	quarterly bank charge	18.00
2059	N/A	Gill Brook	January salary	305.50
2060	23/12/2022	Pet Waste Solutions	Collection 21.12.21	36.00
2061	31/12/2022	Jim Boyland Trading	Dec litter & bins	60.00
2062	30/12/2021	Wicksteed Leisure	Springy repair. Approved 7a, 1.12.21	262.50

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
Environment Report		Re planning app'n. Approved if required. 7a,1.12.21	200.00
Neighbouring Parish Council Committee		Phase 1 to identify tech issues. Approved 6, 5/7.1.22	1,500.00

The above items were **noted and approved**.

GO commented that, under the NPCC item above, 4 reports had been received (one final and 3 in draft), which had been circulated to councillors on 25.1.22:

1. Final Transport Assessment - Sustainability (Prof John Whitelegge)
2. Draft Traffic Modelling (Andrew Dorian)
3. Draft Landscape & Green Belt (Alan James)
4. Draft Hydrology Report (Dr George Reeves)

- (b) INTERNAL AUDITOR: to continue appointment of Mr Alan Lambourne for 21/22 accounts. **Approved.**
- (c) REPLACEMENT CONTRACTOR: to discuss and decide on a replacement contractor for maintenance of the green areas with effect from 1.3.22. GB presented a summary worksheet and Quotes 1, 2 and 3 (already circulated 25.1.22). GO thanked GB for this preparation. There was a discussion about the relative merits of the 3 quotes. Quote 1 and 2 were competitive, while Quote 3 was out of our budget. Quote 2 also works at the Hagbournes and Milton. It was agreed that GB would double-check the experience of these other two parishes and, if necessary, get references for Quote 1, and make a decision based on that. Any decision is for 12 months and then subject to review. **Approved Quote 1 or 2.**
- (d) GRANT APPLICATION: Update. Refer to MM's email earlier on 2.2.22. MM introduced the feedback received on this unsuccessful grant application but stressed that, given time, we could make another application with more likelihood of success. He had noticed the capital grant scheme at the last minute in December and knew there were a few things missing in the application. GO thanked MM for his efforts.

ACTION September 2022: to obtain professional quotes for capital expenditure with Appleford committed to 50% in our budget, which would be matched; to look at other examples of what South & Vale have funded.

ACTION MM to check the South & Vale website re a £250 grant option.

- (e) PRECEPT: Update. GB put in the precept application on 8.2.22 to Vale and it has been acknowledged.
- (f) NEIGHBOURING PARISH COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION/PAYMENT COORDINATOR  
GO: reported that he had received advice from OALC and various clerks concerning the group's financial administration. Nuneham Courtenay PC had offered their clerk, Geoffrey Ferres (GF), to act as coordinator for payments under phase 1 and phase 2. In light of advice received, GF and GO are working together to fine tune the payment process.

[Post meeting note: the group has been renamed 'The Neighbouring Parish Council Joint Committee']

ACTION GB to follow up on the coordination process practicalities with Geoffrey Ferres.

6. NOISE: Report on FCC/Hanson meeting 10.1.22. Survey. Warden.

**WARDEN**: GO reported that Lionel Reid (LR) had agreed to act as noise warden.

**MEETING**: VS attended a regular (approximately quarterly) FCC/Hanson meeting on 10.1.22. See VS's summary email circulated to the village via GO on 14.1.22, plus Facebook update. The formal

minutes were issued on 31.1.22. The most important point from the Appleford perspective is the extended operating hours: we are quite literally on track to get noisier, with no preferential treatment from National Rail for unloading during operating hours.

VS's internet connection meant we lost her input a couple of times.

GO: this meeting led to a 2-hour site visit on 1.2.22 attended by VS and LR.

VS: FCC/Hanson seem willing to work with us, at least to listen, but they are commercial operators, and it is unclear whether we have any influence and what can be done. Main Road residents can hear the clanging to clear out each train wagon (train lengths have increased following the extension of the sidings) and loudspeaker announcements which should be an interim measure to help route vehicles around the site whilst an electronic board will soon take over in most cases. Hanson are proud to have replaced their reversing beepers with white noise which means the noise should travel less.

**NOISE SURVEY:** GO prepared a Village Noise Survey, launched 31.1.22, to establish how noise impacts residents. He thanked Sandra Oldfield for her help with the structure and wording of the survey. All villagers are invited to complete the survey, either online or by completing a paper version. A meeting has been called to discuss village concerns about noise:

Wednesday 9.2.22, 19.00, Village Hall. Village Meeting with FCC and Hanson. All villagers invited. Apologies from SPG.

ACTION GO to invite Councillor Richard Webber and MP David Johnston (see also point 9 below)

DEFRA has flagged Appleford as an area of noise concern. The extension of Hanson's sidings and the proposed new road will exacerbate noise issues. Hanson have officially objected to the proposed road as it stands. They believe that there is not sufficient clarity from OCC on how HIF will impact their site including their vehicle access, and that the planning application is not fit for purpose. They are awaiting an OCC follow-up meeting to discuss their concerns. They will share their objection with us before the 9.2.22 meeting. Hanson are surprised that OCC are not being more forthcoming.

GO: commented that it is good that Hanson have objected, but bizarre that we can't see their objections, nor other rejections.

GO: LR is well placed to be able to assess the noise levels. GO is following up a quote from Sharp Acoustics for a noise survey. To be discussed at the 9.2.22 meeting and the next Parish Council meeting.

ACTION GB for next agenda.

7. **HIF1 PLANNING APPLICATION**: to discuss & decide whether to produce a formal response.

GO: Chris Hancock (CH) has been doing a huge amount of work on the technical issues. It was **agreed** that GO et al should work with CH on an initial response from Appleford to the planning application using what has already been discovered.

8. **RWE UPDATE**

VS attended the quarterly RWE liaison meeting on 10.1.22 which focused on the proposed Didcot Data Centre [see <https://www.didcotdatacampus.co.uk/>]. See minutes circulated 2.2.22. The Public Consultation should have opened on 27.1.22 but has not been seen yet. Sutton Courtenay have been active in the past and the proposed development will be in that parish. The buildings will be 35 metres high and therefore visually imposing. A lot of

comment has been made on how it will impact Didcot but it's also relevant to highlight that it will impact Appleford.

9. **PROPOSAL FOR FACE-TO-FACE VILLAGERS/HANSON/FCC MEETING** re points 6 & 7 above

VS confirmed that a face-to-face meeting has been fixed for 9.2.22 at 19.00. FCC have confirmed their attendance but Hanson have not yet. There is no contact with Fortera.

ACTION VS to follow up with Bill Stuart-Jones, OCC.

ACTION GO to follow up with Colin White of Hanson to be sure to send someone (Hanson currently have limited personnel)

10. **OCC'S LOCAL TRANSPORT & CONNECTIVITY PLAN (LTCP)**: to discuss (GO)  
Deferred item.

11. **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**. To consider the plans produced by neighbouring parishes and whether Appleford has the capacity/desire to create one (GO/VS)

GO commented that this is a major exercise. The advantage would be to give the parish certain rights when dealing with OCC/Vale. Culham, Clifton Hampden, Long Wittenham and Sutton Courtenay either already have one or are at an advanced stage with their draft and provide some good templates. After planning permission on the proposed road has been determined, we need to look at this, to cover what the village wants, what is the vision for the future, and what kind of developments are wanted.

12. **WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA DEVELOPMENT**

SPG provided an update. She is still looking for a volunteer from Europa School but has not found one yet. She has looked at the Appleford website, which is acceptable, while the Facebook site is quite static. Do we have other platforms?

GO: we used to have Twitter (Lucy Guinn). People may not have noticed but a lot of material has been posted on the website, including a video of David Johnston, MP. One aim is to make the website more pleasing, including more videos and other material. Another problem is that the website is not sufficiently dynamic or the go-to place for village information. Some headings need to be changed.

ACTION SPG to carry on trying to find someone to improve the situation.

MM suggested that Anna Richardson could be paired up with someone SPG finds, in a coaching way.

ACTION VS to contact AR.

SPG: asked about Pressings, the village newsletter. VS had been editing it but has not had time recently. Some print copies were produced with it also available digitally. GO: There is plenty of current material to be included. There was a discussion: if a student could be found, Pressings could be posted on the website with e.g. VS/Katharine Jefferies/Anna Richardson providing editorial review. GB asked whether 6 different sorts of media for a small village is overkill: Facebook, website, Twitter, email, notice board, and newsletter. Which is the best approach? GO said there is a structural issue behind this and that more village email accounts are needed.

SPG: asked if people know what tasks were available to volunteer for. VS: last year we hand delivered post cards asking if there is anything you can do amongst the list of about ten skills. 10-15 responses were received, mostly from those already active within the village. We could re-print annually to remind villagers that help is always needed.

ACTION Annual reminder to ask people if they are prepared to take on a specific task.

ACTION GO to say a few words at the end of the 9.2.22 meeting asking for volunteers for specific tasks (see list under 13d).

**13. GENERAL ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION:**

a) Village Hall (refund of loan, lease, enhancement). They are still trying to sort out the signatures on the bank account. They could write a cheque to repay the loan.

b) Outdoor tap:

ACTION JB Jim Boyce kindly offered to look at it at the weekend [5/6.2.22]

c) Car park (raking, disposal of real Christmas trees).

ACTION VS to check if the trees are still there.

ACTION GB to get the Rec car park put on the collection list for Christmas 2022

d) List of small jobs around the playground. See list.

ACTION MM

e) Dog bin repair (corner of Rec and Main Road)

ACTION JB. Jim Boyce kindly offered to look at this at the weekend.

**14. DIVISION OF JOBS AMONGST COUNCILLORS** (e.g. community spring clean event; Rec. management; integration with/support of other village organisations; broadband services; planning developments; newsletter editor) Deferred to 9.2.22 meeting.

ACTION MM to continue asking around (builders/handyman). GO mentioned Spare Hands as an option.

**15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

For information, VS reported that Gervase Duffied, Appleford House, is putting in a planning application to build a library for his collection of historical religious books. It would be an extension changing the house from an L shape to a U shape, which would mean that the collection could stay in Appleford. He is happy for people to go and chat with him about it.

For information: OCC meeting next week 8.2.22; OCC cabinet on 12.2.22. Anyone can log into these meetings.

**16. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON NEXT AGENDA**

a) Queen's Jubilee celebration. Appleford Community Project Meeting 4.2.22 at 12.30 at the VH re request to celebrate on 5.6.22.

ACTION Make sure there is no football that day.

- b) VH: lease situation, general enhancement, broadband (Jim Boyce is looking at Gigaclear – they'll take it to the boundary and then you have to dig it in), TV.
- c) Updates from County/District Councillor (Richard Webber) to be a standing agenda point

17. **TO AGREE THE DATE FOR THE NEXT MEETING**: Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022  
(SPG may not be available).

ACTION GB to book the VH.

GO thanked everyone for coming and the good work done.

GB/6.2.22  
Approved 16.3.22