

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN THE JUBILEE HALL ON 9th DECEMBER 2024

Present: Mrs Caroline Hjorth (Chair)
Mr Duncan Boulton
Mrs Margaret Poole
Mr John Poole
Mr Ray Hudson

Ms Barbara Drysdale (Clerk)
Ms Donna Evans (incoming Clerk)

Also present were: Cllr Georgina Heritage (SODC) & Mr Peter Gardner (NP committee)

Apologies were received from: Cllr Les Gordon (LPC)

Item 1: MEMBERS’ DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None were received.

Item 2: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of the parish council meeting held on 11th November 2024 were accepted as being a true record of proceedings by councillors and signed accordingly by the Chair.

Item 3: MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

There were no matters arising that are not covered under other items.

Item 4: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN SESSION

There was none.

Item 5: CLERK HANDOVER

Cllr Boulton and the Clerk briefed the council on the final arrangements for the changeover of Clerk. Any salary owed to the outgoing clerk would be paid in January. The new clerk’s contract had been finalised. The outgoing clerk would pay any outstanding petty cash direct to the new clerk.

Item 6: THAMES VALLEY POLICE

There was no police report. The council noted that it had been many years since LPC had received reports from Thames Valley Police. Cllr Heritage said she would raise this during a meeting to discuss the Police and Crime Commissioner’s annual report.

GH

Item 7: DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS’ REPORTS

The council noted receipt of monthly reports from both Cllr Heritage and Cllr van Mierlo. Cllr Heritage told the meeting that the Local Plan had been submitted and that she would email the possible timeline for its progress. Mr Gardner told the meeting that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group would be talking to SODC about the Local Plan in the new year.

Chair:

Date:.....

The Chair told the meeting that with reference to the litter initiative mentioned in Cllr Heritage's report, she had asked SODC to also include MacDonald's in Benson in their litter initiative in the hope this would decrease the amount of litter in the parish.

Item 8: FINANCE

a) The council received and noted a budgetary control report for the year to date from the RFO which showed balances as of 4th December 2024:

Treasurers Account: £3,555.22

Business Savings Account: £ 19,330.86

Hall Account: £8,214.70

And noted that the RFO had transferred £2,000 from LPC's savings to its Treasurers account.

The cashflow was signed by Cllr Boulton (finance councillor).

b) The council approved payment of the following outstanding accounts:

i) SLCC	Subscription	£150.00	S.111 LGA 1972	Chair/
ii) CAB	Donation	£100.00	S.142 (2A), LGA 1972	RH
iii) OALC	Training	£72.00	S.111 LGA 1972	
iv) B Drysdale	Clerk's expenses	£79.20	S.112(2) LGA 1972	
v) D Evans	Petty Cash uplift	£50.00	S.112(2) LGA 1972	
vi) PetWasteSolutions	Dog bin emptying	£92.95	S.111 LGA 1972	

c) The council approved the 2nd draft budget for 2025-26 and the revised grasscutting quote to include the verge at Manor Close. The Chair formally signed the precept request form for £22,000. This would be emailed to SODC in January.

Clerk

d) The council received the hedgecutting quote from Allen Landscaping for £580+VAT; it was agreed that the Chair would discuss the detail of what was to be done with the contractor.

Chair

e) The council discussed the announcement that Lloyds Bank would be introducing charges from January and considered the options researched by the Clerk. It was agreed that, at least for now, LPC would remain with Lloyds and that the Clerks would start the process of changing LPC's contact details.

f) The council approved the purchase of a new parish laptop as the current one was no longer charging. It was agreed that the Chair, Vice Chair and new Clerk would arrange this purchase and, if possible, an invoice would be sent direct to LPC (the Chair would discuss this with John Lewis). Given the urgency, the council agreed payment would be approved as soon as possible with a budget of a maximum of £500.

Chair/
Vice Chair/
Clerk

Item 9: PLANNING

a) The council noted the following amendment:

P24/S2648/HH Sheep Brook Cottage, Nethercote Lane, Lewknor

Two storey side extension, the addition of dormer windows in the loft and internal alterations

NB The Chair told the meeting that an ecologist report was awaited.

b) The council considered the following new applications:

i) P24/S3760/LB The Hall Barn Church Lane Lewknor

Part retrospective Listed Building Consent application for maintenance works to reconstruct a section of the boundary wall between St Margaret's Church and The Hall Barn

The council formally agreed to support this application.

ii) P24/S3826/AG Knapp Wood Farm, Hill Road, Lewknor

Erection of an agricultural straw barn

The council formally agreed to support this application.

Chair:

Date:.....

- c) The council noted the status of the following planning application:
 P24/S1542/FUL Lancing, 11A Weston Road, Lewknor
 Division of site. Construction of new house and retention of existing bungalow
 Appeal lodged APP/Q3115/W/24/3352135 Decision awaited
- d) It was noted that there were no updates on the proposed solar farm.
- e) The council discussed the process of LPC being consulted on planning applications. It voiced concern that parish councils are only 42nd on the list of priority for consultation. The Vice Chair had raised the issue with Cllr Heritage who had forwarded it to the SODC cabinet member responsible for Planning who in turn had raised LPC's concerns with the head of Planning. It was hoped he would contact LPC directly.

Item 10: HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

- a) Hill Rd handrail: OCC had held a meeting with the tree contractor, arrangements were being made to use the layby for vehicles involved in installation which will be carried out by end of March.
- b) Manor Close: no update. It was agreed the Clerk would raise this issue again with its OCC councillor, highlighting the recent flooding there. Clerk
- c) The installation of the new 20mph VAS: OCC says Westcotec has begun installing the new VAS across Oxfordshire. The Clerk was asked to raise the issue of the overgrown trees in South Weston which might prevent installation of the VAS there. Clerk
- d) Overgrown path off Nethercote Lane: this issue had been raised by incoming Clerk, Donna Evans. It had been reported to OCC whose new paths officer had registered it for attention but given no timescale.
- e) The Clerk voiced her frustration at getting nowhere with the Highways Engagement team on replacing the faded weight limit sign in Salt Lane and replacing the lost 20mph sign in Box Tree Lane. The Chair said she would raise these issues with a member of the Engagement team she was due to meet tomorrow. Chair
 Cllr John Poole reported that a Speedwatch sign had been stolen from Chalford Road in Postcombe. It was agreed the Clerk would purchase this immediately. (Cost approx. £60). Clerk

Item 11: VILLAGE HALL

The council noted, with regret, that SSEN has turned down LPC's grant application for half the cost of solar panels on the hall roof. However, the council agreed that other avenues for funding would be explored and that, if needed, there was enough money in LPC's LPRG&H account to cover half the cost (though this would mean using money earmarked for maintenance etc). All

It was noted that the Vice Chair would be representing LPC at the SODC Grants panel on Thursday 12th December to which LPC had applied for the other half of the cost of the panels. Vice Chair

The Vice Chair told the meeting that a new burner had been needed for one of the boilers; this had now been installed and the council approved payment of the invoice (£599.95) in January. Clerk

Item 12: CIL

There was further discussion about replacing the Postcombe and South Weston noticeboards using the remainder of LPC's CIL funds. It was agreed that the Vice Chair would finalise the spec and the quote for these; to be agreed and approved at LPC's January meeting. Vice Chair/
Clerk

Item 13: CLOUD STORAGE

Clerk

Chair:

Date:.....

The incoming Clerk suggested replacing Dropbox with One Drive for storage; it was agreed she would check how much storage was available and if it was free.

Item 14: RECORDING PERMISSION

The council agreed to allow the new Clerk to continue the practice of recording meetings to help compile the Minutes; the Chair formally signed the agreement.

Item 15: REMOTE PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

It was agreed that councillors would individually complete the online consultation on this government proposal. All

Item 16: CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Several councillors voiced their frustration with the new gov.uk email accounts - that they were difficult to access and read. The Vice Chair agreed to take this up with VisionICT. Vice Chair

The meeting closed at 9.25pm

Chair:

Date:.....