

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OAKLEY & DEANE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON DECEMBER 9TH, 2021

Present: Mr. Harding (Chairman), Mr. Adams, Mr. Bullions, Mr. Ellison, Mrs. Hayman, Mrs. McCullins, Mr. Rowley, Mr. Startin, and Mr. Gaskell (Borough Councillor). Mrs. Meyer (deputy clerk) also attended.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr. Bealing and Mr. Parry and from Mrs. Taylor (Borough Councillor). Due to Mr. Parry's absence, Mr. Harding was elected to chair the meeting until agenda point 2.

2. Election of Chairman

Following Mr. Parry's resignation as Chairman at the last meeting, Mr. Startin proposed that Mr. Harding be elected, and Mr. Bullions seconded. Mr. Harding confirmed that if elected he would be willing to stand, and all members voted by show of hands. Mr. Harding was elected unanimously.

3. Election of Vice-chairman

The election of a vice-chairman was deferred. Mrs. McCullins asked if there was a defined role for a vice-chairman and the clerk agreed to research this and respond at the earliest opportunity.

4. Minutes of meeting held on 11th November 2021

Minutes of the meeting, having been previously distributed to all members, were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and the chairman signed the minutes. However, the version of the minutes shown on the RAGIC database was incorrect and will be updated.

5. Section S101 Delegation for emergency use if face to face meetings must be postponed.

Owing to the rise in COVID infections and the changing Government Guidance, HALC has issued a briefing note advising that the safest option for councils to continue business during the next few weeks is to approve a temporary delegation allowing the clerk to implement recommendations by councillors informally. Mr. Ellison proposed, and Mr. Startin seconded, and a majority of members (excluding Mr. Rowley, who did not support the motion) agreed via show of hands to implement a delegation to the clerk, as Proper Officer, and Mr. Ellison, Mr. Harding (as Chairman), and Mr. Startin. The Planning Committee decided not to adopt a delegation scheme and will continue with face-to-face meetings. The delegation will be in place until 31 March 2022 but does not cover certain actions – for example, the setting of the precept, or the appointment of a clerk, so for this a face-to-face meeting will be required. The delegation does not

mean that the members cannot meet for other business, but it means they have an option.

6. Circulars and Correspondence

- a) **HALC Training Report:** Mr. Rowley attended a New Councillor course held at Rooksdown PC and issued a report.
- b) **Mayor's Carol Service:** Mrs. McCullins will attend on December 11th to represent the Parish Council.

7. Clerk and Deputy Clerk report

The clerk and deputy clerk had issued their report in advance and there were no questions.

8. Planning Matters

- a) **Minutes of the Planning Meetings held in November** were circulated by the deputy clerk to all members. There were no comments or queries.
- b) **Summary of planning Applications and Decisions for November** was issued by the deputy clerk and there were no comments or queries.

9. Working Party Reports

a. Burials and Churchyards

- a) There was no formal working party report. The working party met on 4th December, but unfortunately Mr. Warner was unable to attend, so a further meeting to examine and report on the trees in the churchyard will be arranged as soon as possible. Mr. Ellison commented that the Working Party might want to review the wording in the tender documents for maintenance of both Burial Ground and Churchyard as these tenders are up for renewal at the end of March 2022. The clerk was asked to send the current wording to the working party. Mrs. Hayman asked the clerk to forward all documentation relating to the Parish Council's responsibilities for the closed churchyard. This is not stored on the current computer system so may have to be sourced from paper records, but the clerk will commence the work asap. She was also asked to ascertain the insurance liabilities for the Churchyard as to who is responsible for personal liability should injury occur. Mr. Gaskell mentioned that there are various re-wilding grants available that might benefit the church grounds and agreed to forward details to the clerk.

b. Environment

- a) **Working Party report** was issued in advance and there were no questions or comments. Mr. Harding expressed his wish to restart

regular monthly working party meetings and asked WP members to confirm their availability.

- b) **Canterbury Garden Allotments:** Mr. Harding, the clerk and representatives from the Borough Council and Bewley Homes are meeting at the site on January 12th to agree a way forward. Currently the Borough are asking for a 3.5m wide tarmacked road to be put through the site, reducing the available plots from twelve to five.

c. Finance

- a) **Approval of Payments:** it was proposed by Mr. Ellison and seconded by Mrs. Hayman, and agreed by all members, that the following payments be made:

Payee	Charge to Budget	Total Cost	Service	Status
NEST	116.06	116.06	Clerk Pension November	Paid DD
EE and T Mobile	32.00	38.40	Clerk/deputy mobile phone	Paid DD
HMRC	646.50	646.50	Nov Contributions	Unpaid EFT
Scofell	296.66	355.99	November Grounds Maintenance	Unpaid EFT
M Bastick	266.00	266.00	Handyman Hours November	Unpaid EFT
Larkstel Ltd	2860.50	3432.60	November Grounds Maintenance /marking out/bins	Unpaid EFT
Nigel Jeffries	1175.84	1411.00	Oct/Nov Grounds Maintenance	Unpaid EFT
BT	41.95	50.34	Office phone	Unpaid DD
B Bedford Exps	118.03	128.34	Wreaths for Remembrance Service, refreshments, toner cartridge	Unpaid EFT
BT	14.00	16.80	Hub from BT	Paid DD
HALC	90.00	108.00	Training	Unpaid EFT
G Fuller	150.00	150.00	Bugler at Remembrance Service	Paid EFT
Rooksdown PC	69.00	69.00	Training	Unpaid EFT
Play Inspections Ltd	225.00	270.00	Annual inspection and report	Unpaid EFT
Lightworks Plus	38.00	38.00	PAT Testing	Unpaid EFT
St Leonards Centre	36.00	36.00	Room Hire 8 th January 2022	Paid EFT
Bishops Sport and Leisure	232.96	279.55	Boot brushes (2 sets)	Paid EFT

Greenhouse Graphics	165.00	165.00	Service Sheets for Remembrance Service	Paid EFT
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Mr. Harding and Mr. Startin approved the EFT payments.

- b) **Budgets:** Mr. Startin and the clerk reviewed the submissions from the working parties and prepared a preliminary budget based on a 3% increase in precept. There were a number of assumptions – on the increase in costs for energy and for grounds maintenance tenders, both of which are renewed at the end of March 2022 for a three-year period. Members were asked to review their budgets and let the clerk and Mr. Startin know of any queries. The intention is to finalise the precept figure at the Strategy meeting on 8th January, but the approval must be done at a face-to-face public meeting. Depending on COVID guidance this may be an extraordinary meeting, held outside, and considering this one item only.
- c) **Grants:** Mr. Gaskell advised that there is still funding available via the Borough Councillor grant scheme, and that a bench could be funded (or a contribution to the purchase price) and the clerk will investigate. Mr. Gaskell also confirmed that the clerk could contact him with relation to the grant she wanted to request for purchase of packs of wildflower seeds for inclusion in the welcome packs. Mr. Ellison explained that at some stage it may be advisable to move from gas to electric heating at Newfound, and Mr. Gaskell advised there were grants currently available from HCC for this purpose. However, Mr. Ellison confirmed that the existing gas boilers were only around five or six years old, so was not an immediate requirement. Mr. Ellison asked the clerk to enquire with BDBC about S106 funding currently available to the Parish Council for play areas, sports grounds, and other categories.

d. Highways and Transport

- a) **Working Party report** was issued in advance, and there were no queries. Mr. Harding expressed his wish to restart regular monthly working party meetings and asked WP members to confirm their availability.
- b) **SID:** Mr. Harding confirmed that the new SID was still not working properly. Mrs. Hayman will write to the manufacturer informing them that either a replacement system or a full refund of purchase price is required, or a claim will be issued via the Small Claims Court.
- c) **Surface Water:** Mr. Gaskell enquired if this was a problem in Oakley – apart from an area of Rectory Road near the entrance to Park Farm, it was not an issue, but it is in Deane and Deane has flooded in the recent past. Mr. Gaskell explained that in some of his other parishes, for example around The Candovers,

surface water flooding is a real problem, and that HCC are not as responsive as they could be, and stressed how important it is that any property affected by this must report it so that action can be taken – but that landowners have a responsibility to keep ditches and gullies clear of debris.

e. IT/Governance

IT: A working party report was issued in advance of the meeting. Mr. Harding proposed that rather than looking at what a system can do, it is important that we set out what we want to/need to do. Mr. Harding and Mr. Rowley attended a virtual meeting with Cloudy IT and both had follow up meetings in early December. Mr. Rowley disagreed with the WP report and felt a wider and more strategic view should be taken. He also felt that using Vision ICT to set up .gov.uk email addresses was not the right way forward, as if we did move to Microsoft 365 we would have to do two migrations – therefore it would much more straightforward to do one move.

Mrs. Hayman expressed concern about not having a .gov.uk email ID and wanted to resolve this issue as soon as possible. Mr. Rowley informed members that of the top ten parishes in Basingstoke (by population) 5 used Microsoft 365. He also confirmed that we would need support from Cloudy IT or a similar company for some but not all of the migration – the exact arrangement would be agreed at the time.

An estimated figure of £2000.00 was provided as a worst-case scenario to cover the whole move costs.

Mr. Ellison asked for clarification on legal requirements and stated that it had always been agreed that after a period of using RAGIC that a re-evaluation was done of the system and its use by members. Mr. Harding asked all members to write a brief document covering what they need from an IT system and how they feel about RAGIC and send to the clerk before the next meeting. Mr. Harding, Mr. Rowley, Mr. Adams and Mr. Paler should meet as soon as possible to arrange terms of reference and future actions.

Governance: a working party report was issued, there were no queries or comments. The strategy day will be held on 8th January 2022. The clerk was asked to send out the notes from the last strategy meeting, which was held in September 2019. The clerk will arrange a meeting with Borough **Councillors** – Mrs. Hunt confirmed that Tuesday mornings would be preferable for her.

f. Publicity and Events

Membership of the Working party: the sole member of the WP is Mrs. McCullins, and so all councillors were asked if they would join, at

least on a temporary basis. No volunteers came forward, so the clerk suggested that members might know residents who would be willing to be co-opted to the working party, and Mr. Rowley and Mrs. McCullins both commented they might be able to suggest people. The clerk agreed to send Mrs. McCullins a list of the regular events the PC runs or contributes to.

Remembrance Service: the clerk thanked Mr. Bullions for laying the wreath on behalf of the PC, and Mr. Harding for reading a lesson. She also thanked Mrs. Meyer for doing the refreshments at the event, which was very well attended.

Carols at the Pond: the clerk thanked Adhoc and PC members who helped put up the tree on 7th December. She reminded members that they needed to bring a sock or hat to collect at the event, the two beneficiaries being the Men's Shed and Jubiloaks. It was not clear if refreshments would be possible, due to COVID restrictions. The mayor is attending, and the clerk has prepared a list of notable Oakley events from the past year for her to include in her speech.

g. Sports and Play areas

Mr. Ellison issued **a working party report** in advance of the meeting and there were no comments or queries.

Members noted the following:

Play area inspections: a full colour report, with recommendations, was received after the Play Inspection Company carried out their annual inspection at all three play areas. The cost of £220 was a substantial saving on the Borough's proposed charge of £1500.

All PAT testing was done, and all items marked. The cost of £38 was within budget.

Works at Peter Houseman; the trimming and clearing around the floodlight posts was agreed at a cost of £250.00

Pressure washing of wet pour safety surfaces of the double cradle swings at Upper Farm Road and Beach Park was approved at a cost of £400.00. Mr. Ellison advised that as the use of a bowser would be required, the water usage at Newfound would be increased significantly and this was included in his budget calculations.

Mr. Ellison suggested the purchase of a Beamish Hexagonal tree seat at Peter Houseman site – cost is £441, and the item has a 25-year guarantee. It would be stood on a concrete circular slab (Nautical design) at a cost of £300.00. Mr. Rowley asked about any adverse environment impact that might occur with this proposed installation but was assured that it would not affect the tree or the roots. Mr. Rowley proposed, Mrs. McCullins seconded, and all members (by show of hands) agreed to the purchase.

10. Reports from representatives to other organisations.

Andover Road Village Hall: Mr. Bullions will be contacted by the committee when the next meeting is to be held.

East Oakley Village Hall: Mr. Adams attended the AGM. The clerk has forwarded an appeal for volunteers to the Link magazine, as the committee is very short-staffed.

Jubiloaks/Woodlands Group: nothing to report.

Village Show Committee: nothing to report.

Oakley Community Association: Mr. Startin issued a report in advance of the meeting and there were no questions or comments

Community Kindness: nothing to report.

Oakley Support Network: nothing to report.

Love Oakley? Go Green: nothing to report

Policing: Mr. Gaskell informed members that the Police and Crime Commissioner was meeting with the Borough Councillors in February about rural crime, and to forward any issues or concerns members wish to raise to him asap.

11. Confidential Items

RESOLVED: that owing to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

12. **Date of the next meeting is January 13th, 2022,** format will be decided nearer to the time, subject to guidance.