

BLEWBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes

Of the Parish Council meeting of Blewbury Parish Council
held on Wednesday 22nd January 2014 at 7.30 pm in the Vale Room

Councillors present: Mr R Farrell (Chairman), Ms J Gibson, Ms V Fox, Mr R Cooper, Mr M Shayler, Mr C Lakeland, Mr M Carey, Mr M Blythe

Also present: E de Ridder (clerk), County Councillor Lilly, PCSO Clements, 1 member of the public

Matters resolved:

1. The Precept would be raised by £500 to £40,500 following the loss of funding from the District Council.
2. Decisions re the Village Hall project: The Parish Council (1) noted the draft project plan, (2) agreed that up to £25,000 can be spent on design development and planning, with just over £4,000 of this related to obtaining planning approval, (3) agreed to the appointment of West Waddy as project architects and (4) noted the intention to explore the scope for further developing the Vale Room-end of the hall
3. White Horse Horticulture was appointed for 3 year grass cutting contract
4. It was agreed that the pickup could be disposed of in due course
5. It was agreed that the clerk could move up in salary scale to the next "spinal point"
6. All payments were approved.

Actions arising from the meeting	Target date
1. RF to study original OCC play area lease	By February meeting
2. Clerk to let Mr Saunders know his letter has been passed to the County Councillor	As soon as possible
3. JG to draft a notice re the Red Lion to go in the Bulletin	By February meeting
4. Clerk to draft a letter to the CIC outlining essential maintenance works	Before CIC meeting
5. Clerk to appoint White Horse Horticulture for 3 year grass cutting contract	As soon as possible
6. Clerk to circulate the inspection report	By February meeting
7. Clerk to enquire about the allotment extension cost	By February meeting
8. Clerk to discuss the data transparency code with the internal auditor and RF	By February meeting
9. Clerk to buy topsoil for the cemetery	As soon as possible
10. Clerk to reply that the PC prefer 1-3 Applethorpe for the new development off London Road	As soon as possible
11. RF to look at Croquet Club's lease and draft a response to their letter	By February meeting
Actions brought forward	
1. Clerk to make signs for TFF litterbins	As soon as possible
2. Clerk & RF to complain to the VWHDC's chief executive	As soon as possible
3. RF & BC to define questions and contact a heating engineer	As soon as possible

1. **Apologies for absence:** Mr G Reade, District Councillor Shelley
2. **Declarations of interest.** None made.
3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2013** were accepted and signed as a true record.
4. **County Councillor's report.** Cllr Lilly reported that another meeting re the A417 would be held on Feb 21st. OCC has to continue to make savings but child protection services have been increased. Concern was expressed about how schools were funded by central government. It was reported the response time for fire and rescue services will improve when a new call centre is opened in Theale very shortly. This includes having the facility to locate a mobile phone user within an area of 3 m³ which would be a great help in an emergency. In response to enquiries by the Clerk, the Highways were sent out to the problem on Westbrook Street. Cllr Lilly also responded to the query about the rent review for the play area and did not think the increase was unreasonable as it was professionally valued. Cllr Lilly informed the PC that they have the right to appeal. **Action: RF to study original OCC play area lease.** The County Councillor informed the PC that bus subsidies will be cut. He

urged users of the bus services to continue to use it as the Blewbury route is very close to being profitable.

5. **District Councillor's report.** District councillor sent her apologies as her husband had an accident and had to undergo surgery.
6. **Police liaison.** PCSO Clements reported a theft from a farm vehicle and break-in at the stables. Crime prevention event for 20th July is being planned which will include dog micro-chipping and saddle and tack marking and a venue is still being sought. The Environment officers will be asked to come along. The PC asked that information should also be made available about the responsibilities of dog owners. Parking problems along Westbrook Street were also mentioned.
7. **Lengthman's report.** No lengthman present.
8. **Open Forum.**

A letter about the upgrading of Cow Lane to a bridle path was circulated prior to the meeting. A member of the public came to discuss this further and to ask the PC if anything could be done to stop the application going any further as alternatives might be available which would not upset users of the footpath or force horses onto the main road. The PC was asked about the procedure of the consultation. The chairman explained the procedure of obtaining a Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) which is set in law and could not be changed. He also explained that the OCC first consulted the PC in March 2013 and as it was received after the PC meeting it was dealt with via email. The PC apologised for not minuting the decision to not object at the next meeting. With hindsight the PC also pointed out that "no objection" did not answer the question as to whether the PC was aware of any relevant "evidence to decide whether or not a public right which is currently not legally recorded does, in fact, exist". The OCC approached the PC again on the same matter in November 2013 as there was an error in their letter and it was briefly discussed at the December meeting. The documents were studied after the meeting and the response agreed after the meeting was: *For as long as any member of the Parish Council can remember FP19 has been designated as a footpath and horse riders could only use it with the permission of adjoining land owners which certainly happened on occasions. The Parish Council is aware of considerable public interest in this and would ask for the greatest possible consultation with the wider community should the Council be minded to consider a change of status.* Certain members of the public who expressed an interest in this were made aware of this consultation. It was explained that nothing could be done to stop the process and that there would be a 6 week consultation which would be published in the local press should the officer recommend that the DMMO go ahead. During this time residents would be able to make representations to the OCC. If objections are received during this consultation it will automatically be referred to the planning inspectorate who might hold an enquiry or ask for written representations.

A separate letter re Rubble Pit lane has been given to the Parish Council and passed on to the County Councillor. **Action: Clerk to let Mr Saunders know his letter has been passed to the County Councillor.**

9. **Matters arising.**
 - 9.1. 12/06/13 Neighbourhood Plan (NP). The NP's launch will be on March 8th. Leaflets will be printed and distributed with the Bulletin. Some funding has been secured and has been paid to the PC.
 - 9.2. 09/10/13 Assets of community value. It was confirmed that the Red Lion has been entered onto the register. Interested parties should be ready and informed prior to a possible sale. A notice will be placed in the Bulletin. **Action: JG to draft a notice re the Red Lion to go in the Bulletin.** Item closed.
 - 9.3. 11/12/13 Goalposts for TFF. Nothing to report.
10. **Village hall redevelopment**
 - 10.1. Feasibility study for redevelopment/refurbishment of village hall. See 10.2.
 - 10.2. Working party. A report from the working party was circulated prior to the meeting. The Parish Council (1) noted the draft project plan, (2) agreed that up to £25,000 can be spent on design development and planning, with just over £4,000 of this related to obtaining planning approval, (3) agreed to the appointment of West Waddy as project architects and (4) noted the intention to explore the scope for further developing the Vale Room-end of the hall. **Action: Clerk to respond to village hall working party. Clerk to appoint West Waddy architects.**

- 10.3. Fundraising. The application for a small grant with the Vale has been unsuccessful.
11. **Recreation Ground.**
- 11.1. 14/12/11 **BVCIC.** The CIC has scheduled a directors' meeting for 7pm Thursday 23rd January.
Action: Clerk to draft a letter to the CIC outlining essential maintenance works.
- 11.2. 09/05/12 **Car Park.** The car park resurfacing works should start on 27th January. Concerns were raised by the band and choir about mess but as the long-term weather forecast did not look good, it was decided not to postpone. The contractors said normal club activities should not be affected and they would try to keep disruption to a minimum.
- 11.3. 11/12/13 **Plant room.** There was a serious leak in plant room due to an error during installation. The idea to get expert help to see if the plant room could be changed to be more efficient for the clubhouse needs, should be further explored. MB could supply the name of an engineer who could assist with heat pumps but Alan Heatherington would be consulted in the first instance.
12. **Risk Management.**
- 12.1. 03/07/13 Review of standing orders. On-going.
- 12.2. 09/10/13 Grass cutting contract renewal. At the previous meeting this matter was delegated to the clerk and MS. The Parish Council was aware that another lower quote was received but some concern was expressed that this quote was considerably cheaper than 3 years ago even though it was for the same scope of work. It was recommended to the finance committee that the existing contractor, who has proven to be good value for money and extremely reliable in the past, should be appointed again and this recommendation has been brought to the PC. The Parish Council agreed and White Horse Horticulture will be appointed. **Action: Clerk to appoint White Horse Horticulture for 3 year grass cutting contract.**
- 12.3. 09/10/13 Annual play area inspections. The inspection report was received. One small issue relating to the skate ramp was identified. The contractor who would maintain the ramp agreed to make this small amendment free of charge when he does the maintenance. **Action: Clerk to circulate the inspection report.**
- 12.4. 09/10/13 Annual review of risks and risk management plan. Circulated and approved. Item closed
13. **Planning & Housing.**
- 13.1. 02/02/06 **Planning Committee Report:** See Annex B - planning report, attached.
- 13.2. 08/11/12 **Current applications.**
P13/V2573/LB, The Forge House Westbrook Street Blewbury OX11 9QB
Proposed replacement of three existing windows to West elevation and general renovation works. BPC has no objection.
- 13.3. 11/09/13 Planning policy. The District Councillor also had no response to our complaint.
Action brought forward: Clerk & RF to complain to the VWHDC's chief executive.
14. **Finance & Administration**
- 14.1. Lengthman's appraisal and review of hours. Prior to the finance meeting, the clerk, RF and MS met to discuss a new schedule of works for the lengthman. Another meeting took place with the lengthman to discuss this proposal and a breakdown of hours will be given once it has been approved by the PC. There would be a strict control on expenditure using an order book and he would be required to submit weekly timesheets and to inform the clerk of work he intend to do in the coming week. Appropriate use of equipment was also discussed.
- 14.2. Pickup. The Council remained unconvinced that the pickup was needed. It was agreed that the pickup could be disposed of in due course. The lengthman expressed concern about moving fuel and equipment. A big double wheeled wheelbarrow could be a possible solution.
- 14.3. Budget report. A copy of the budget was circulated together with the draft minutes for the finance committee meeting. The chairman discussed various areas of the budget where changes were made. The clerk was asked to leave the meeting while her salary for the next year was discussed. It was agreed that the clerk could move up in salary scale to the next "spinal point". Provision was made in the budget for contribution towards a year's membership of County Council pension fund but it might not be used. Questions were asked about the new allotments, including if the BVGA has contributed towards the cost of the new extension and if the original

agreement re rent has been honoured. **Action: Clerk to enquire about the allotment extension cost.** In conclusion, the budget as it stands will result in a deficit of £2167 and having discussed the level of reserves, it was agreed that the “black swan” reserve would be reduced accordingly.

- 14.4. Precept 2014/15. It was agreed that the precept be increased from £40,000 to £40,500 to reflect the loss of funding from the District Council.
- 14.5. Data Transparency Code. **Action: Clerk to discuss the data transparency code with the internal auditor and RF.**
- 14.6. New OCC agreement – KAP rent review. See item 4.
- 14.7. Small grants for CAB, South and Vale Carers, Cob Wall fund. It was agreed that these payments could be made at the next meeting.
- 14.8. Payments for approval to be made under ancillary powers and within budgeted amounts

Description	Amount
E de Ridder	£837.25
P Skelton (paid prior to the meeting)	£334.71
E de Ridder (expenses)	£13.38
BT Payment Services Ltd (direct debit)	£21.60
Blewbury Croquet Club	£5.98
St Michaels Church Blewbury PCC	£250.00
ORCC (Neighbourhood plan)	£1,884.00
White Horse Horticulture	£100.00
TOTAL	£3,446.92

All payments were approved.

15. **Cemetery.** Following the persistent rain it has been reported that some graves have sunk quite a bit. Even though the graves are the responsibility of grant owners, it was felt that the Parish Council should assist by providing some topsoil. **Action: Clerk to buy topsoil for the cemetery.** In future public opinion might be sought about decorations on graves.
16. **Allotments.** Nothing to report.
17. **Footways, Footpaths and rights of way.**
- 17.1. **Applications for definitive map modification orders (DMMO).** Following the discussion during the Open Forum (item 8), the clerk pointed out that if the original consultation was minuted as it should have been, members of the public would only have learnt about this 6 weeks after the closing date. The Parish Council concluded that when the OCC consults with the PC, it does not expect the Parish Council to make a further consultation. The PC’s response to this consultation is minuted in the Open Forum item. Item closed.
18. **Roads, Road safety and public transport.** Problems with a building site on Westbrook Street have been reported to Highways and the HSE. The situation seemed to have improved.
19. **Village Hall management committee report.** It was reported that the VHMC spend over £1000 for waste removal. As it has recently come to light that the lengthman uses the Village Hall bin, the PC has included a donation of up to £250 towards the cost of the waste removal in the budget for the coming year.
20. **Environment**
- 20.1. Playclose bins. Included in the budget for the next year.
21. **Correspondence**
- 21.1. Items requesting a reply & consultations
- 21.1.1. Cycle way to Upton. The clerk has replied to confirm that several attempts have been made but landowners have so far not given their consent.
- 21.1.2. New street name for new development of 3 houses off London Road. **Action: Clerk to reply that the PC prefer 1-3 Applethorpe for the new development off London Road.**
- 21.1.3. Blewbury Brass Band – possible extension to Band Hall. The Parish Council has no objection in principle but the BBB should be made aware of the location of cables.

21.2. Items for information

21.2.1. Croquet Club's letter re hedge trimming. **Action: RF to look at Croquet Club's lease and draft a response to their letter.**

22. **Any Other Business.** Mark Carey handed in his resignation due to new commitments. The Parish Council expressed their thanks and regret.

23. **Details of the next meeting.**

The next meeting will be on February 12th in the Vale Room.

Meeting closed 21h39

Annex A – Planning news for Bulletin notice January 2014

Planning Applications

For full details see the Vale website - <http://bit.ly/u2FSqN>

Decision from the District Council:

P13/V2354/HH – Shires, South Street – Proposed first floor extension and alterations. Granted.

P13/V1561/O – Palmers, London Road – Outline application for one detached dwelling. Granted.

P13/V2501/FUL – Land behind Westbury, Westbrook Street – Erection of two new dwellings. Refused.

P13/V2502/HH – 21 Bridus Mead – Proposed ground and first floor extension, with ground floor front fill extension incorporating new porch. Granted.

Responses from the Parish Council:

P13/2502/HH – 21 Bridus Mead – Ground and first floor extension. No objection.

P13/2463/A – The Band Hall - 'Join Your Local Brass Band' sign on wall outside. No objection.

P13/2573/LB – The Forge House, Westbrook Street – Replacement of three existing windows. No objection