

FOREST HILL WITH SHOTOVER PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
Thursday 6th March 2025 at 7.00 pm in Forest Hill Village Hall

Present: Cllrs A Waite Brown (Chair), J Hobbins, G Blomley

In Attendance: S Cox, Clerk/RFO, Cllr T Bearder, SODC and OCC

Members of the Public: 2

No. Item

170. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – DW, GS, JS

171. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - To receive requests for declarations of interests from Councillors relating to items on the agenda. None.

172. PUBLIC FORUM – One member of the public attended the meeting to talk about what is happening with the STW behind his house. The work is being done to bring the STW up to today's standards for water, backup and generators, and mainly to increase storage capacity of storm overflow. There is more and more rainfall now. There is nowhere to pump raw sewage, so lorries have to empty the sewer. Will they have capacity to store other sewage? Probably not. The neighbour has been asked if they can use his field entrance to turn around. The lane is in a bad state already. Countryside Services protect the lane which is an ancient road. They won't tarmac the road but will fill potholes. AWB spoke to CS, and they will have to reinstate the lane. Oxford Sewage works is holding up Oxford housing. They are increasing flood capacity and updating the works. If they don't do it there will be excrement everywhere.

Action: Clerk to write to Thames Water via the planning application after the PC meeting with residents' questions that need an answer:

- - Once completed, will this improve the smell that sometimes comes from the STW?
- After the upgrade, will the STW be used for processing sewage from other locations?
- During the construction phase, there are concerns that Polecat and its entrance will not be able to handle the works traffic. How will this be mitigated?
- The map shows a segment of land outlined in blue that Thames Water claims to own. The council believes this is not the case. Can they provide further evidence of ownership?
- What is the program for works, including the start and finish dates?
- Will Pole Cat be protected from construction damage and returned to its current condition.

173. BUS SERVICE and TRANSPORT:

- Report from the PTR – JH
- Subsidised bus services: summary of changes from 30 March 2025
- Agenda for PTR meeting on 18th March 2025 – received

174. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL held on Thursday 16th January 2025 and previously circulated. Agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

175. UPDATE ON PROGRESS FROM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING – Chairman/Clerk to report on progress of outstanding items that do not require further decision.

- To confirm that CM has been removed from the Councillors email list – *AWB confirmed that CM has no access to PC emails.*
- 20 mph Speed Limit and traffic calming measures – *continue to explore solutions.*
- Church Hill – drainage and flooding – this has been passed onto another team. **Action:** DW to look at ditches and hedges to see who owns them. **Action:** *Highways have cleared and put in a new pipe – this item has now been resolved.*
- Village Hall Clock - update from JS and Shotover Estate - battery clocks range from £30 to £100 and run on AA batteries – how long do the batteries last. *The batteries will last for two years. A clock has been purchased for £30 plus VAT and will need to be put up by the VH Committee. JS to send the invoice to the Clerk for reimbursement.*
- The wall at St Nicolas Old Cemetery, Main Street, Forest Hill – response from Property Maintenance Project Officer, the district council will look to appoint a structural engineer to come out and carry out an individual structural assessment, to see if there is any immediate action that may be required – *no further updates received.*
- Two solar lights are not working – *Zeta have been to look at the lights and will prepare a quote for the repairs – received.*
 - The light inside the bus stop - West bound on the A40
 - The first light East bound on the A40 towards to the bus stop.
 - *Quote 7788 was not accepted and quote 7789 for £475 plus VAT was accepted. Clerk to notify Zeta. Two solar bus shelter lights to leave for now.*
- Roadside Technologies Quote: *update from AWB. The poles we have are not sufficient for a solar unit and the wind will knock them down. AWB is waiting for a revised quote. Solar could be £3,500 plus a pole fitted by Highways. Action: Clerk to look for old Westcotec emails with specifications of the poles previously installed. Action: AWB to resend quotes that have been received.*
 - **Pole mounted Display - £3,294.00 per unit.**
 - Optional extras to be added as needed:
 - Solar panel and batteries to offer continuous operation - £1,245.00 per unit.
 - Engineer Install and Training (Solar) - £695.00 per unit (Fitted to existing street furniture)
 - Vehicle Data Logging (Bluetooth) - £379.00 per unit
 - All quoted prices are plus VAT.
 - *Agreed to delay voting for the VAS until the April meeting*

176. OCC and SODC MATTERS – To receive reports from the County and District Councillor Tim Bearder:

- A40 Layby and Toilets – there is the potential to close both laybys. The Cycle Team have got money from Active England. This has not been co-ordinated with other teams. TB spoke to the Director and said it must be closed now. A TTRO will be needed and must prove risk to life to get one eg biohazard. It will take 18 months to get a TTRO. Repairing the fencing would help. Cutting the hedge would not help. Need more bins.
- Oxford Greenways Project Consultation – reply by 18th March 2025
- Sandhills – The Public Inquiry is from 1-4 April 2025. The land for the bridleway is not owned by anyone. An old rule could be used to compel OCC to move the bridleway onto land they do own. Legal have said that they can't stop the move. Rule S142 is for moving a bridlepath. Land would still have to be crossed that the developers don't own. A management company could be set up for all landowners. Cllr Bearder is furious that this is another site that is not low car, and officers are not minded to rejecting it. The development is not feasible for the existing infrastructure as TB wants low car development. The current Government want to build, build, build.
- LNBB – is also happening. SODC refused to publish the Grampian condition. TB asked for a postponement of the meeting. Officers won't publish the Grampian condition as it is on the video recording. The Environment Agency are not happy with the SODC Grampian condition. Building cannot start until the sewage problem is sorted out. They own a sewage works at Upper Heyford and will probably transport sewage to there and build their own septic tank at LNBB.
- Wheatley flooding report is nearly finished. This was a one in 750-year flood in Wheatley. Three cubic metres of water was going into a one cubic metre pipe. It would need two Olympic swimming pools to reduce flooding from one in ten years to one in 20 years. Is the modelling accurate.
- Buses – JH reported that the bus fares have gone up from Summertown to Oxford and it is now cheaper to get a taxi for four people than go by bus. It costs £5.50, one way, to get to school in Summertown, or £55 per week. It is cheaper to drive in and quicker – 40 minutes instead of 90 minutes to go in by bus. Uber is cheaper than a taxi.
- Parking fines – in Oxford are £70 or £35 if you pay within the time scale. It is now cheaper to get a fine for all day parking illegally than to pay to park all day in Oxford.
- Thank you to Highways for clearing up the laybys on the A40. PC asked TB to pass on their thanks.

177. PLANNING – To consider all recent applications received and to report notifications and decisions from South Oxfordshire District Council – all previously circulated.

Applications:

P25/S0467/FUL

Mulberry House, The Ridings, Shotover Hill, OX3 8TB

Demolition of the existing single storey side extension, construction of a two storey side extension and the sub-division of existing property to form

additional self-build dwelling and associated infrastructure. (Resubmission of extant planning permission P22/S2488/FUL).

The PC agreed to support this application

P25/S0644/LDP

78 Mickle Way, Forest Hill, OX33 1DX

Provision of twin unit mobile home in grounds of existing dwelling.

The PC will respond to this application and has no comments to make.

Decisions:

**P25/S0278/CM Sewage Treatment Works, Polecat End Lane,
Forest Hill, OX33 1EH**

Extension of Sewage Treatment Works to provide new inlet works elevation screen, balancing tank, above ground pipework, wash water booster station, motor control centre, standby generator and bulk fuel storage, break in chamber, security fence, flow control tank and pumping station, security fencing and associated works.

County Matter - Recommended Approval on 13th February 2025

Appeals

P24/S2074/O - Land at Bayswater Farm

P24/S0133/O - Land at Bayswater Farm

Public Inquiry commencing at 10am on 1 April 2025 at
Fountain Conference Centre, Howbery Park,
Wallingford, OX10 8BA.

AWB has previously responded to the Appeals

178. FINANCE – To receive, approve, consider, and review the following:

a) Balances at bank:

Business Reserve Account - Nat West	Closed	on 10.07.24
Current Account – Nat West	£5,000.00	at 30.09.24
Unity Current Account	£10,890.19	at 31.01.25
Unity Reserve Account – (2.60 %)	£33,140.82	at 31.01.25
Sub Total	£49,031.01	

Less: Unpresented cheques

£0

Plus: unpresented receipts

£0

Sub Total

£49,031.01

Less: Earmarked general reserves

£10,000.00

Less: Earmarked reserves - traffic calming

£30,000.00

Total available funds

£9,031.01

CIL balance

£27,278.17

Receipts included in above figure

Unity Trust – credit interest

£0

b) Payment requests – by Online Banking, DD or Cheque

Admin to the Parish Council – February	£481.31
Admin to the Parish Council – March	£481.31
Tactical Facilities Management Ltd – Jan dog bins	£55.85
Tactical Facilities Management Ltd – Feb dog bins	£55.85
Tactical Facilities Management Ltd – Jan grass	£288.00
Tactical Facilities Management Ltd – Feb grass	£288.00
Annual Subscription to Open Spaces Society	£45.00
Spanglefish – annual subscription for website	£39.95

- c) Scribe Reports:** Bank Reconciliations as at 31.01.25 and 28.02.25
- Chair to approve and sign - *completed*
- d) To consider** the Summary of Receipts and Payments against Budget Report up to February 2025 - *noted*
- e) Internal Financial Control check:** - January to March 2025 – for the April meeting and JS.
- f)** New Financial Regulations 2024 in draft, for approval at the April meeting – *draft to be circulated before the April meeting.*
- g)** Unity Bank – Account management: submission form to remove CM from the accounts. To be signed by AWB, JH and Clerk - *completed and Clerk to return form to Unity.*
- h)** HMRC Vat refund of £2,573.36 received 24.02.25

179. CLERK / RFO:

- Theresa Goss, Internal Auditor – Checklist and Interim Audit to complete. Invoice will be due for part payment following Interim Audit – *ongoing.*
- Review of the Effectiveness of Audit 2023/24 form to approve and sign – *approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk/RFO*
- Salary review for Clerk - *Clerk's Annual Review to be held before the Salary review can be considered. Clerk to arrange a date with AWB and JS.*
- To consider paying the SLCC membership subscription for the Clerk - *agreed and costs to be shared between Forest Hill and Beckley PCs.*
- Old printer and laptop to return to the Chairman and remove from Asset Register – *agreed.*

180. SECTION 137 EXPENDITURE: None.

181. VILLAGE and PARISH MATTERS:

- Emergency Plan – update contact details for Cllrs that have left the PC. *Clerk to replace CM's responsibilities with AWB and find a Village Hall contact for the Emergency Plan.*
- The Circuit – expiry date of new pads to add to The Circuit when the unit is returned to FH. *The unit has been returned. New pads expiry date is 28.01.2027. The defibrillator was checked on 6.03.25.*
- Quotes for Grass Cutting and Dog Waste and litter bin routine emptying –

all quotes received to be considered for the 2025 season, or three years. *Quote received for 18 mulching cuts between March and November at a cost of £172.50 per month = £2070 per year for the Recreation Ground. For the cemetery and verges a quote was received for 9 cuts at £240 per month = £2880 per year. Dog bins are emptied fortnightly. The PC agreed to a three-year contract with TFM for the above. To be reviewed every 12 months with an annual visit from TFM to a PC meeting.*

- Quote for replacement Dog Bin for Old Road, Shotover Hill - quote received for £780. *The dog bin is emptied fortnightly now and the PC considered whether to get a bigger bin or empty the existing bin weekly. It was agreed to purchase a bigger bin for £475.00 plus VAT and to re-site the old dog bin opposite the STW next to the bridleway on Polecat Lane at a cost of £125.00 plus VAT.*
- The junction at the bottom of Church Hill has waste everywhere – TFM to provide a quote to clear up the waste, bottles, road cones, and to clear the strip and maybe reseed.

182. VILLAGE HALL – To receive a report and updates

a. Managing Trustees report – February 2025

Current account balance £6725.22

Deposit account balance £2949.73

Total Reserves £9674.95

183. RECREATION GROUND:

- Changing facilities – update and decision – JH – *ongoing*.
- Routine Monthly Playground Inspection and actions required - AWB
- Grass cutting quotes for the next three years – to be discussed at item 181 above – *discussed and agreed*.
- To consider quotes for fencing – *postponed to April meeting due to DW's absence*.
- Recreation ground – the PC planted saplings but they have died. The PC must now decide what to do with the space and what to replace the saplings with.
- Wild Flowers – the UK weather is always wet and where to put the cuttings? To reseed the corner with wildflowers would require being meticulous with maintenance. The area would be an enjoyable space for people to use. **Action:** TFM to look at the top end of the Rec and see what could be done.
- Moles on the Rec – TFM to provide a quote for the PC with the most humane way to get rid of the moles.
- Bike (Pump) Track for children – TFM are partners with ODS. TFM can put the PC in contact with ODS for a possible cycle track around the outside of the field. The village of Upton has a track on a similar size Rec to FH.

184. CEMETERY: to receive a report, updates and matters for consideration:

- Mowing and upkeep of the Cemetery – Cllrs to discuss which areas need to be cut more regularly and the costs – *to monitor the mowing this year and to consider cutting in the winter months – once a month?*

- Cemetery gates and repairs – update from DW – *postponed to April meeting due to DW's absence.*
- Asset Register – record title number for cemetery on asset register – update and plan going forward – *Clerk to write to Nat West and find out how to gain access to the documents stored and how to retrieve them.*
- Cemetery papers stored under the stage in the village hall - *there are no papers stored under the stage. The Chairman checked at the meeting. Clerk to write to Nat West.*
- Request for a wooden cross memorial for a grave from Funeral Directors – *this was agreed and Clerk to reply to the Funeral Directors.*

185. ALLOTMENTS: to receive any updates and matters for consideration:

- Allotment fees are due on 1.4.25 - *payable by bank transfer or cash*
- Invoice for allotment fees - *Clerk to prepare for the April meeting*
- Allotment Terms and Conditions – *to go with each invoice*
- Draft weeds letter - *redrafted at the meeting for Clerk to produce a final copy.*
- Request for an allotment plot – *forwarded to BD*

186. OALC / NALC - all updates previously circulated.

- OALC Membership invoice for 2025/26 - to approve for payment in April – *approved.*

187. INFORMATION and CORRESPONDENCE – all circulated when received:

- CM - Letter of Resignation and copy of Emergency Plan
- Community First Oxfordshire – Membership Subscription 2025/26 - *agreed not to renew the subscription.*
- Home-Start Oxford in your parish and request for financial support from Parish Council – *agreed not to provide financial support.*
- GCW - Does Your Parish /Community Want to Become Part of Oxford Unitary Authority? If Not, We Need to Act Now – draft letter to the Minister re Oxford City Unitary.

188. Notice of Casual Vacancy – see noticeboards and website. Closing date 24th March 2025.

189. Items for next Agenda: all items for the next agenda to be submitted to the Clerk by 1st April 2025.

190. DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING:

- Annual Parish Meeting followed by a meeting of the Parish Council on **Thursday 10th April 2025** at 7.00 pm in the Village Hall at Forest Hill.

- **Agendas and Minutes** are available on the notice boards and website:

[Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council | Home \(parish-council.com\)](http://parish-council.com)

- Meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

- **Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting:**

Chairman:

Date: