

COMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 8th November 2023 - Approved

Present

Deborah Phillips (DP) – Chair, Elena Softley (ES) – Vice Chair, Michael Green (MG), Denise Cripps (DC), Alan Revell (AR), Peter Sloan (PS)
Cllr Graham (OCC), Cllr Sumner (WODC)
Julia Sharpe – Clerk

Members of the Public – 4

137/23 Apologies

There were no apologies received.

138/23 Questions from the Public

Requests to cut the weeds along Alma Grove footpath and road side of playpark wall and to remove the wet leaves outside Winthorpe, Akeman Street were discussed. **Action – Clerk to arrange.**

Four members of the public attended to raise concerns regarding mobile telephone masts and electric vehicle charging points; ranging from radiation issues, fire hazards and the impact they would have on the beauty of the village. The Chair assured them that although the two issues were currently being evaluated and researched, the investigations were at an early stage and no decisions would be made without extensive consultation, including an assessment of need, with the whole village.

139/23 Register of Interests

None

140/23 Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 11th October were read and signed as correct.

141/23 Clerk's Report and Progress on Actions

Firework feedback – Don Slatter attended for this item. The Chair thanked Don and the team of volunteers for organising the event so successfully. Don reported that the evening had gone to plan with no major difficulties. A total of around £1,300 had been collected/donated for next year's display. AR reported that the pop-up bar run by the VH&RG committee had been very successful, raising around £400 in profit.

Kidlington Airport update – DC reported that further communication regarding the amount of air traffic had been received from a village resident, and confirmed that letters have been sent to the airport and flying schools. It was agreed to monitor the situation prior to attending the consultative meeting in January.

SID – The Clerk confirmed that the replacement device for the Akeman Street SID is on order and is scheduled to be installed in December.

Repair to War Memorial – The Clerk confirmed that a Listed Building Planning Application has been submitted to WODC.

Speedwatch update – AR said that he was still waiting for people to set up Speedwatch sessions around school times but that due to the darker mornings and evenings this may now not happen until the spring.

Electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) update – AR reported that he had attended a meeting organised by Community First to discuss EVCPs and solar panels and that he would circulate the notes for information.

Footpaths update – DC reported that a number of suggestions for footpaths not currently identified on the map had been received and that she is now working to produce a consolidated map before deciding how best to take suggestions forward with the appropriate landowners.

Mobile telephone mast update – AR/PS – see Questions from the public.

Playpark update – The Clerk reported that there are no new issues in the playpark.

Inconsiderate parking – ES, PS and the Clerk met with the PCSO to discuss parking issues around the village. The PCSO provided leaflets to put on offending cars and advised calling 101 for incidences of obstruction. A big contributing factor is the number of football matches held in the recreation ground on a

Saturday morning. **Action – AR to discuss matter with Combe Junior Sports with a view to limiting the number of games at any one time.**

Remembrance Sunday – MG agreed to lay the wreath on behalf of the Parish Council.

142/23 To Approve Payments and Note Sums Received

Payments	Gross	VAT
J. Sharpe – Clerk’s wages – October	£253.63	
HMRC (PAYE – October)	£507.27	
VDS Printing	£125	
WODC – Grass cutting – September	£257.28	£42.88
P. Merry – Church Walk	£110	
Royal British Legion – poppy wreath	£25	
Received		
Insurance	£3140 to be confirmed	
Bonfire donations	£1053.48	
E-reader donations	£248.80 to be confirmed	

143/23 Planning Applications

None

144/23 Report from County Councillor

Cllr Graham reported that Oxfordshire are leading the table of County Councils in addressing climate change. OCC are in the process of reviewing the 2024/25 budget and are planning to raise the Council Tax by the maximum amount of 4.99%. Some headway with rural buses is being made and for December the single fare will be reduced to just £1. **Action – DC to update poster with new fare and bus timetable.**

145/23 Report from District Councillor

Cllr Sumner urged the Council to respond to the District Council’s consultation on biodiversity plans. He also advised that Community First are running seminars during December looking at the lack of affordable housing.

146/23 Playpark Update

A quote of £187 (ex VAT) from Trevor Steward to repair one wooden post and spray all surfaces to remove algae was considered. ES proposed that the quote be accepted, DC seconded the proposal, all were in agreement and a Resolution passed. **Action – Clerk to notify Trevor Stewart.**

147/23 Schedule 101 of the OCC Grass Cutting Agreement

A request from OCC to sign a revised schedule reducing the number of verge cuts from 2 to 1 per year was discussed. It was agreed not to sign the agreement at this time and to ask OCC for further clarification. **Action – Clerk to contact OCC and add to December agenda.**

148/23 CPRE Membership Renewal

A request from CPRE to renew the annual membership at an increased subscription rate of up to £60 (up from the previous year’s subscription of £36) was discussed. The Chair proposed that the membership be renewed but with a subscription rate of £45, PS seconded the proposal, all were in agreement and a Resolution passed. **Action – Clerk to raise cheque for payment at the December meeting.**

149/23 Courier Donation

A request for the annual donation to be raised from the previous £150 to £200 was discussed. It was agreed that the Courier provides the Parish Council with a valuable communication route to the community and is an important village service. PS proposed making a donation of £200, ES seconded the proposal, one councillor opposed the proposal, one councillor abstained from voting, four members agreed to the proposal making the majority in favour. The proposal was approved and a Resolution made. **Action – Clerk to raise cheques for payment at the December meeting.**

150/23 2024/25 Budget

The proposed figures for the 2024/25 budget were discussed. An increase in the Clerk's wages to reflect the Local Government Services Pay Agreement from April 2024 was approved. The final budget, together with the precept for 2024, will be agreed at the December meeting.

151/23 2024 Meeting Dates

The dates for the Parish Council meetings and provisional dates for the PIP/TDC planning meetings were agreed. Action – **Clerk to circulate**.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of Combe Parish Council will be on Wednesday 13th December at 7.30pm in the Reading Room, Combe.