

# COMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 – Approved

## Present

Deborah Phillips (DP) – Chair, Elena Softley (ES) – Vice Chair  
Denise Cripps (DC), Alan Revell (AR), Michael Green (MG), Peter Sloan (PS)  
Cllr Graham (OCC), Cllr Sumner (WODC)  
Julia Sharpe – Clerk  
Members of the Public – None

## 1/24 Apologies

None

## 2/24 Questions from the Public

None

## 3/24 Register of Interests

None

## 4/24 Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023 were read and signed as correct.

## 5/24 Clerk's Report and Progress on Actions

**Speedwatch and SID update** – AR reported that a new series of Speedwatch session will take place in the spring. The Clerk reported that the replacement SID is in the process of being constructed.

**Electric vehicle charging points** – AR and PS reported that they are to meet with representatives from the Hook Norton and Kirtlington implementation teams to discuss their implementation processes and they will draft a separate article for the Courier to evaluate the level of need within the village. **Action: AR/PS to draft Courier article.**

**Footpaths update** – DC reported that she was in the process of putting the comments together and drafting a map for further consideration.

**Playpark update** – The Clerk reported that there were no new maintenance issues.

**Parking along Park Road for football** – AR reported that the issue was on the agenda for the next VH&RG committee meeting.

**War Memorial Grant update** – The Clerk reported that the War Memorial Trust have considered the initial application and have graded it as very low priority and unlikely to be successful unless further work is included. It was therefore agreed to fund this repair from the Parish Council reserves. **Action: Clerk to notify contractor.**

**Verge erosion outside Blacksmiths Cottage** – The Chair reported that Cllr Graham attended a site meeting before Christmas and that he had agreed to request OCC Highways to undertake a survey to establish whether or not the road was suitable for a priority right of way system.

**Flooding under railway bridge and potholes** – The Clerk reported that Cllr Graham had been requested to escalate both issues as high priority with OCC Highways.

**Draft Oxfordshire County Council's Charter** – The strategic aims of the Charter are to establish stronger partnership working between Oxfordshire Councils and enhance local democracy. All agreed to the main principles outlined in the Charter. An important part of this is to encourage more young people to participate in local democracy. It was agreed that the Chair would complete the survey on behalf of the Parish Council and to discuss approaches to engaging young people at the February meeting. **Action: Chair to complete survey, Clerk to add to February Agenda.**

**Repair to village green** – It was agreed to ask Paul Merry to repair the grass and verge. **Action: Clerk.**

## 6/24 To Approve Payments and Note Sums Received

### Payments

J. Sharpe – Clerk's wages – December

### Gross

£253.63

### VAT

HMRC – PAYE	£507.27
P. Merry – Village maintenance	£45.00
Reading Room Hire	£60.00
<b>Received</b>	
VDS Books x3	£18.75

## 7/24 Planning Applications

None

## 8/24 Report from County Councillor

Cllr Graham confirmed that a request to survey the road outside Blacksmiths Cottage has been made but that in his opinion the options are limited and would be low priority.

A meeting between OCC and the Blenheim has been arranged to discuss the ongoing maintenance issues of the ditches and grips to establish a proper maintenance plan within the existing resources.

MG questioned whether it was OCC policy to not maintain the roads or clear the grips, which has resulted in the flooding and potholes. Cllr Graham said that this was not the OCC policy and that all work was being done within the current funding constraints.

AR asked if there was any information to show the effectiveness of the new 20mph zones. Cllr Graham said that the information was not available yet and that more time was needed for people to take ownership of the limits and to change their driving behaviour.

## 9/24 Report from District Councillor

Cllr Sumner reminded members to complete the online Stop Botley West survey and the WODC Leisure Services survey. He also reaffirmed his belief in the importance of communities and villages and the important and vital role of Parish Councils.

## 10/24 Third Quarter Accounts and Summary Payments

The third quarter financial reports consisting of the accounts and summary payments were circulated prior to the meeting, The Chair proposed that the financial reports be approved and accepted, PS seconded the proposal, all were in agreement and a resolution to accept the financial reports was passed.

**Action: Clerk to add reports to the PC website.**

## 11/24 2024/25 Grass Cutting Tender Document

The grass cutting tender document for the seasons of 2024 and 2025 was considered. It was agreed that the current schedule of 14 cuts for the main areas and 7 cuts for side roads was adequate and that the schedule and level of work complied with the Parish Council's policy on biodiversity issues.

**Action: Clerk to invite a minimum of 3 contractors to apply.**

## 12/24 WODC Biodiversity Consultation

Under the 2021 Environment Act the Parish Council has a statutory duty to consider, agree and act on policies and specific objectives to conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the Parish. It was agreed to review the plans for the management of land for which the Parish Council is responsible and to liaise with other village organisations so as to form an overall policy for the whole parish.

**Action: Clerk to contact organisations and add to February Agenda.**

## Next Meeting

The next meeting of Combe Parish Council will be on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7.30pm in the Reading Room, Combe.