

Blackthorn Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 July 2024 at 7.30pm in Blackthorn Village Hall.

Councillors Present: Mrs J. Lamont (JL) Chairman, Cllrs. Mr R. Rue (RR) Vice-Chairman, Mrs A. Stevenson (AS), Mr E. Burborough (EB), R. Lamont (RL) and Mr R. Burden (RB).

In Attendance: T. Charlesworth Clerk/RFO

24.109 Apologies: None.

24.110 Declarations of Interest:

- Cllr. E. Burborough declared an interest in 24.117-a-i Project Reports: Drainage/Flooding

24.111 Public Participation: None.

24.112 Minutes: To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13 June 2024 at 7.30pm previously circulated and taken as read.

RESOLVED: Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held 13 June 2024 at 7.30pm were approved and signed by the Chairman Cllr. J. Lamont.

24.113 Reports:

- a. **Chairman's Report:** No report.
- b. **Clerk's Report:** No report.

24.114 Vacancy/Co-option:

- a. **Vacancy:** No applications.

24.115 District or County Councillors: None present..

24.116 Governance:

a. **Policy:**

- i. **Training:** Having previously agreed not to adopt a training policy and completed the Code of Conduct training; Clerk to remove from agenda.
- ii. **Biodiversity:**
 - **To note what action they are already taking to conserve and enhance biodiversity:** Noted that the PC does not spray; maintenance contractors cut the grass (helps prevent ticks); reviewed as part of planning where applicable; there are Bat Boxes in the woodland area.
 - **To agree what further steps the PC should take to conserve and enhance biodiversity:** Policy and objectives reviewed a draft policy to be prepared and circulated for consideration at the next meeting.

b. **Data Protection Regulations:**

- a. **Generic Emails:** Set up information provided.

c. **Website: To consider having FAQ's on the website:** It was also noted that it may become compulsory to have a .gov.uk website/email addresses.

RESOLVED:

- Not to have a FAQ'S section on the website.

d. **New Model Financial Regulations:**

RESOLVED:

- To adopt the New Financial Regulations 2024, deleting non-applicable paragraphs and editing figures to match the current Financial Regulations.

e. **Risk Assessment:** To be reviewed.

f. **GDPR:** The following to be consolidated to form one document using applicable information from the Data toolkit; draft to be circulated for review at next meeting; to include consent forms.

- i. **Freedom of Information Scheme**
- ii. **Data Protection Policy**
- iii. **Retention and Disposal of Documents Policy.**
- iv. **Privacy Policy:**
- v. **Consent Forms:**

24.117 Project Reports:

a. **Drainage/Flooding:**

- i. **River Bank Repairs/Network Rail:** Noted that Network Rail has carried out some but not all the work as promised; concerns to be raised with new MP. Thames Water has sealed three manholes at Elm Tree Close and the pumping station and three or four by Weir Pond.

b. **Blackthorn Brook:**

- i. **Last 15m:** No update on hand over to O.C.C.

- ii. **Clearance:** Clerk to remind contractors to make arrangements to carry out clearance as per quote previously accepted.
- c. **Village Plan: Review of proposals:**
 - i. **White Traffic Calming Gates:** Gates to be reviewed and prioritized: C/fwd.
 - ii. **Proposed new gate on Station Road at the Junction of Weir Lane:** To consider any information relating to an application for permission of proposed new gate: See above.
 - iii. **20mph Application: O.C.C. - Blackthorn: 20mph Limits –** No confirmation received as to when the limit will come into force. Clerk to write to O.C.C. as part of the agreement was that the VAS signs would be changed reflect the 20mph limit.

24:118: Play Area:

- a. **RoSPA – Playsafety Inspection:** The following High Risk was raised immediately Asset - Agility - Trim Trail; Finding Details; Risk Score: 14 (High); Name: Timber - decay, Timber is decayed; Notes: The inspector recommends a resistance penetration test is carried out on the remaining timbers; Trevor Stewart Play Equipment attended site to access the equipment and provide a quote for the works; the equipment has been taped off.

RESOLVED:

- That the quote for £296.00 (excl. of VAT) was approved.
- To request quote for resistance penetration test.

24:119: Finance:

- a. **Payments prior to the Meeting:** To record and approve any invoices paid prior the meeting as listed on the payment schedule:
 - i. Salary – June 2024 - £299.00 (Incl. HMRC deductions) - Local Government Act 1972 - Section 112.
- b. **Receipts:** To record and approve any receipts received as listed:
 - i. Allotment Rent – Plot 'Z' - £15.00.
 - ii. O.C.C. – Grass Cutting Grant - £1,066.72

c. Payments:

i. Salary(s):

- HMRC – £17.20..
- Salary July 2024 – £299.00 - Payment approval required for end of July.

RESOLVED:

- To approve payment for end of July; to be verified at next meeting. Following submission to HMRC -PAYE.

RESOLVED: To accept and approve payment of invoices listed on the payment schedule:-

- ii. Expenses/Home Working Allowance June 2024: Total £41.55.
- iii. M.R. & J.S. Cross – Inv. No's: 263 - £348.00 (Grass cutting Play Area 4.6.2024/28.6.2024) –Power to spend: Public Health Act 1875, Section 164 - 264 - £792.00 (Grass cutting verges 28.6.2024/29.6.2024) Power to spend: Highways Act 1980, section 96 – Total £1,140.00
- iv. Lisa Wilkinson – Internal Audit 2023/24 – Inv. June 2024 - £150.00: Power to spend under: Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 CHAPTER 2 - PART 2-Section 4.
- v. Navitas Design Ltd – Inv. No: INV-31757 - £83.99 - 1 year web hosting and domain name registration - blackthornparishcouncil.org.uk. Renewal date 31 August - .co.uk No Web Hosting - blackthornparishcouncil.co.uk - Additional Mailbox space added November 2023 – Due date: 15 July 2024 – Power to spend under: Local Government Act 1972 – Section 142.
- vi. Trevor Stewart Play Equipment – Inv. No: TS227 - £270.00 – Quarterly Play Area Inspection April 2024: Power to spend: Public Health Act 1875, Section 164 - 264
- d. **Payroll:** To record submission to HMRC: Up to date.
 - i. **Bank Reconciliation:** Presented prior to the meeting: To accept the Bank Reconciliation 1.4.2024 - 30.6.2024 (Barclays issue date 19.6.2024):

Balance B/fwd	£22,490.56
Add Total Receipts	£ 8,106.84
Less Total Payments	£ 6,658.07
Balance C/fwd	£23,939.33

f. Budget Comparison:

RESOLVED:

- To accept the budget comparison up to the 11 July 2024: Noted that everything is currently within budget apart from VAT which is not budget for.

g. Financial Controls:

- i. Quarterly check to be completed and signed off by Internal Control and RFO: Completed and signed by Internal Controller and RFO/Clerk.
- h. **VAT Spreadsheet:** Presented prior to the meeting; was accepted, showing an outstanding amount of £59.00 up to 11 July 2024.; Claim submitted for £781.31 to end of June.
- i. **Quotes:**
 - i. **Traffic Calming Gates:** Quote to be obtained for the spraying of wooden gates: C/fwd.
 - ii. **Traffic Calming Gates – Spraying:** C/fwd as above.
- k. **Grants/Funding:** To consider any relevant applications for funding:
 - i. **Flood risk management funding opportunity from Oxfordshire County Council** - Please submit expressions of interest by 30 April 2024: The Parish Councils application had not been successful.

- ii. **Climate Action Fund - fund will be open for applications Friday 03 May until midday 28 June 2024 (OALC members update April 2024):** No application made.
- I. **End of Year Accounts 31 March 2024:**
 - i. **The Certificate of Exemption:** To note acknowledgement of receipt by Moore Smaller Authorities Team.
 - ii. **The Exercise of Public Rights:** To note publication.
 - iii. **Publication:** To note all documents published on the website as required by the Audit and Transparency Regulations
- 24.120 **Allotments: 'Tenancy Agreement' – Reviewed rental charges:** Outstanding agreements and payments followed up.
- 24.121 **Planning:**
 - a. **Planning: Applications:** To consider all recent applications received from Cherwell District Council detailed below and any other planning applications submitted and published on the CDC planning portal between the agenda being published and the meeting:
 - i. **22/01978/DISC**
Applicant's Name: Harrow Estates (Part of Redrow Group)
Proposal: Discharge of Condition 10 (Masterplan and Design Code) of 16/01268/OUT
Location: South East Bicester, Wretchwick Way, Bicester
Parish(es): Launton
Details of amendment Amended Design Code July 2024 This is a re-consultation on the above proposal, following the receipt of amendments.
Comments by 2 August 2024
RESOLVED:
 - No comments or objections.
 - b. **Decision Notices:** The following were noted:-
 - i. **Application No: 22/02455/OUT**
Appellant's Name: L&Q Estates
Appeal Reference APP/C3105/W/23/3335940
Proposal: Erection of up to 55 new dwellings including affordable homes; formation of new 24/00010/REF access; formation of new vehicular access from Blackthorn Road; landscaping and associated works
Location: Land West Of Church Ley Field Adjacent To, Blackthorn Road, Ambrosden
Parish(es): Ambrosden
Appeal Start Date: 19 March 2024
Appeal Date: Will now NOT go ahead on 26th June 2024 as previously advised
 - c. **Appeal Notices:** None noted.
 - d. **Withdrawal Notices:** None noted..
 - e. **Planning Matters:**
 - i. **Network Rail:** Noted that D. Hughes has been appointed CEO of EWR.
 - ii. **Oxfordshire County Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Consultation:** Is now live.
 - iii. **O.C.C. - Formal Consultation On The Proposal By Oxfordshire County Council To Designate Certain Streets As Traffic-Sensitive:** No comment.
 - iv. **Heyford Park Neighbourhood Plan - Decision Statement:** Noted.
 - v. **Draft Community Infrastructure:** Public consultation will commence on the draft CIL Charging Schedule on Thursday 11th July 2024 for a period of 6 weeks. The consultation will close at 11.59pm on 24 August 2024: To be reviewed.
- 24.122 **Clerk's Contract:** Draft presented to Clerk for review.
 - a. **To consider and approve Clerk's updated contract based on the NALC Model 2011:** Updated with amendments; draft policies to be reviewed.
 - b. **Upon acceptance and approval to be signed:** C/fwd.
- 24.123 **Village Maintenance Tasks:** Review of proposed job role: With no-one to fill the role:
RESOLVED:
 - That the tasks will be completed by volunteers; insurance to be checked for cover.
- 24.124 **Community Emergency Plan Survey – 2024 - O.C.C. - FOR ACTION:** - Deadline for return is April 1st 2024:
 - a. **Emergency Plan:** To review; to include amendments M3/2024-24.55-a: C/fwd to next meeting.
- 24.125 **Changes to website accessibility compliance to WCAG 2.2AA:** To be followed up with Navitas Design.
- 24.126 **Footpaths:** The Footpath Warden to be contacted about the sign for the footpath from the B4011 heading towards Ambrosden.
- 24.127 **O.C.C. - OCC Engagement Team walk and talk:**
RESOLVED:
 - Not to accept offer for Team Walk and Talk.
- 24.128 **Training:**

- a. **To consider any further training:** Offered by OALC, SLCC and NALC: None noted.
- i. **OALC - Training in July and new date for the AGM:** Noted.

- b. **To put in place a training programme for councillors and staff:** See 24/116-a-i:

RESOLVED:

- Not to put in place a training programme but to pick up interest in training through emails.

24.129 Attendance at Meetings: No attendance recorded:-

- a. **SLCC** - Planning Themed Summit - The themed summit, the fourth in our series for 2024, will take place on Wednesday 10 July from 9:55am – 4:00pm: No attendance.
- b. **Biodiversity:** Clerk reported that she had attended an online, free, biodiversity seminar.
- c. **O.C.C.-** July Parish Transport Representatives' meeting – to be held virtually on Tuesday July 16th commencing at 1.30pm: No attendance.

24.130 Correspondence/Emails: B.P.C. 318/319: Comments to be considered and any matters for the next agenda not already considered as part of this agenda:

- a. **BPC318(42)** 20.6.2024 O.C.C. - Spruce up your signs!
- b. **BPC318(63)** 28.6.2024 O.C.C. - Exciting Update: Our Digital Infrastructure Oxfordshire Website is Now Live!
- c. **BPC319(15):** 4.7.2024 O.C.C. - T14299 Lower Road, Blackthorn MU11300445261-00000004-01 - Lower Road, Blackthorn - Road closure required to repair 2x urgent cover replacements in the cway by Thames Water, expected to finish on 4/7/2024: The work had been completed without having to close the road.

24.131 Village Matters:

- a. **Facebook: Matters for Parish Council consideration raised through the village Facebook page:** The Parish Council review matters on the Facebook page and advise authors to raise matters for the agenda through the parish council clerk:
- b. **Publication:** To consider approve matters for publication through the Parish Council website or village Facebook page:
 - Oxfordshire County Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Consultation.

24.132 Matters for Further Information or Discussion at the Next Meeting:

- a. **Matters for Further Information:**
 - **Speeding:** Clerk to write again to the Governor of the prison requesting a response to concerns raised about prison vans speeding through the village.
 - **Bridge at Botley Road:** Permanently blocked.
- b. **Matters for Discussion at the next meeting:**
 - **Policy:** Reviews.
 - **Financial Regulations:** New model.
 - **Biodiversity:**
 - **GDPR Documents:** Reviews.
 - **Microsoft 365:** Consider upgrade.
 - **A41:** Reduction of speed limit progression.

24.133 Date of Next Parish Council Meeting:

- a. **5 September 2024 at 7.30pm:** Parish Council Meeting to be held in Blackthorn Village Hall.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9pm.
Draft Minutes subject to Confirmation

Minutes approved: 5 September 2024
Minute Ref: M7/2024-24.147
Signed by Chairman: *J. Lamont*