



Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 14th December 2023

Councillors in attendance: Cllr Berrett (Chair) Kay, Bastin, Dowie, Rankin, Keily, Spooner, MacKeith, Church (arrived 20:04), Jones (arrived 20:48).

Others present: Emma Gordon (BNHPC Clerk) and 2x members of public.

On Zoom: Cllr Emily Smith, Alice Handscomb Retallack (BNHPC RFO) and 1x member of public.

Meeting started 19:42

23/110: Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Davis (ill), Johnson (Work commitment) and Barnes (Work commitment)

23/111: Declarations of Interest

Cllr Dowie declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as an allotment holder.

23/112: Approval of Draft Minutes of the

- Parish Council Meeting held on 16th November 2023.

Comments had been received and updates made prior to the minutes being shared.

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Kay: "To accept the minutes."

*Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: **PASSED** [For 8 / Against Cllr Dowie]*

- Communications Committee Meeting held on the 30th November 2023

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Kay: "To accept the minutes, subject to amendment of typos."

PASSED [Approved by Communications Committee members only]

23/113: Matters raised by Members of the Public (Max 5 mins / question, 15 mins total) None.

23/114: Questions from Councillors (Max 5 mins / question, 15 mins total)

Question by Cllr Dowie: At the full Parish Council meeting on 16 November 2023 Councillor MacKeith stated that she had a DPI (disclosable pecuniary interest) in relation to item 23/109 (Confidential Section). What is the pecuniary interest?

Answer by Cllr MacKeith: She is my tenant.

Clarification question: When you say tenant does that mean there is a written tenancy agreement that includes the names of all parties involved.

Answer by Cllr MacKeith: We don't have a tenancy agreement. It is all done on trust.

23/115: Reports from County & District Councillors (10 minutes)

Cllr Smith summarised her report. She highlighted the out of hours emergency number which is 01235 422 420 and asked **BNHPC to share** the Christmas waste collection information. She invited councillors to get in touch with her to express their views on the Botley West Solar Farm. She also informed the meeting that she had asked a formal question about the lack of coordination of the traffic works in the area and was told that "Officers can coordinate but have not power and National Highways are very difficult to deal with on the communications front."



23/116: Review of Action Sheet (See Paper 1 Action Sheet Dec23) Noted

23/117: Clerk's Report (See Paper 2 Clerk's Report Nov23) Noted

23/118: Council Motions

Motion 1.

Proposal by Cllr Rankin, seconded by Cllr Kay: "To update BNHPC's Standing Orders (Section 4 – Committees and sub-committees) with the following wording, to allow other councillors to attend committee meetings in order to make them quorate, where a apologies have been accepted."

Item 4.d (between item vii & viii)

Chair's Authority to Make Up Numbers:

In the event that a committee meeting does not achieve quorum as per the stipulated requirement in Item 4d(vii), the Chair of the committee shall have the authority to invite other members of the Parish Council to attend the meeting for the sole purpose of reaching quorum.

Attendance Record:

The names of additional members invited by the Chair to achieve quorum shall be duly recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Notification of Absence:

Committee members unable to attend a meeting are expected to notify the Chair and the Clerk in advance, whenever possible, to facilitate alternate arrangements for achieving quorum.

Review of Standing Order:

This standing order shall be subject to periodic review and may be amended by resolution of the Parish Council.

Cllr Rankin decided to withdraw this motion to come back with a revised one at a following meeting.

Cllr Dowie had concerns that the motion as it stood may not be legal – Clerk to share OALC's advice that had been sought on the motion to Cllr Dowie.

There was a discussion around attendance at the Planning Committee meeting in particular. Cllr Rankin has emailed persistent absentees to see if they are likely to continue or stand down. If they stand down other members would then need to join that committee.

Motion 2.

West Way Public Art

As reported in previous meetings a call was put out for alternative mural design ideas with a deadline extended to end of November. One proposal received is from the mosaic artist Clare Goodall who produced the panels for the first part of the project. Clare's proposal draws on the existing work she did with the community in the earlier phase including drawings by local primary school children. Her proposed artwork would be a different style to the previous panels and incorporate other materials.

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Keily: "To vote on adopting one of the following 2 options."

- a. Take forward Clare Goodall's proposal as outlined with a projected Spring completion date. (See Paper 3- Westway Statement of interest)
- b. Retain the EMR of £11,431.70 to combine with c.£9k due to be allocated to artworks after the completion of phase 2 West Way Square. This would then be used for a landmark artwork at the front of the development (corner of West Way and Westminster Way) to be commissioned in 2025.

Cllr Church arrives 20:04

Cllr Berrett explained the background for the motion. Various councillors expressed their opinions.



Proposal by Cllr Bastin, seconded by Cllr Kay: "To adopt option A."

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: **PASSED** [For 9 / Abstention Cllr Dowie]

23/119: Finance

a) RFO Report. (See [RFO Report](#))

RFO via zoom runs through her report. Some questions are posed by councillors.

Chair moves meeting onto Item 23/120 at this point

23/120: Matters arising from the Personnel Committee meeting of 30th November:

Addressed prior to

- a) **Extension of working hours.** To consider and approve a request by the Clerk and RFO for an increase in working hours by 2 hours per week for each role for a period not exceeding 3 months, to be reviewed at the end of that period in line with recommendations by the Personnel Committee. To note – extra hours would be covered by budgeted salary in both this and next year. (See Confidential papers section: Staff hours log-Nov23 and Staffing and Structure Review-Dec22)

Proposal by Cllr Bastin, seconded by Cllr Dowie: "To amend the proposal time limit from 3 months to 12 months."

PASSED [For 9 / Abstention Cllr MacKeith]

There was come discussion between Councillors and Clerk. Workload and childcare were primary factors for consideration.

Proposal by Cllr Bastin, seconded by Cllr Dowie: "To approve the extra 2 hours a week for each role, for a period not exceeding 12 months. **PASSED** [For 9 / Abstention Cllr MacKeith]

- b) **RFO FILCA training.** To approve a request for [FILCA training](#) for the RFO in line with recommendations by the Personnel Committee at a cost of £120+VAT.

Proposal by Cllr Church, seconded by Cllr Kay: "to approve the request." **PASSED** [Unanimous]

c) **SLCC membership for the Clerk.**

- i. To approve a request for Council to pay for SLCC membership for the Clerk and to consider membership of relevant bodies for other staff members in line with recommendations by the Personnel Committee. Membership costs £237 per year.

Proposal by Cllr Church, seconded by Cllr Kay: "to approve the request." **PASSED** [Unanimous]

- ii. To note what the equivalent memberships for RFO and Groundskeepers would be. (See paper 4 – [Equivalent memberships](#)) and discuss if they also would require these.

Action Clerk: to ask Groundskeeper if there is a membership that he feels would benefit him in the work he is doing for the parish. RFO was satisfied to access information on SLCC via the Clerk.

- d) **EDI Policy.** To agree the recommendation of the Personnel Committee that the new EDI Policy should incorporate the use of Equality Impact Assessments "for every decision, policy, practice and event that the council undertakes." So that those processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation and do not disadvantage any protected groups under the equalities act.

Proposal by Cllr Bastin, seconded by Cllr Church: "To defer this item to the next meeting" **PASSED** [Unanimous]



Chair returns meeting to item 23/119 b at this point.

23/119: Finance

- b) 2024-25 Budget.** To consider the draft 2024-25 budget and either to agree the budget and precept request in full or ask the RFO to request from the District Council an extension of the precept request deadline to 22nd January 2024. (See [Draft Budget](#) and [Precept information 2024-25](#))

Cllr Kay suggests the following amendments to the draft budget:

- Advertising should be decreased to £400
- Insurance should be decreased to £3000
- Office equipment should be decreased to £1250
- SLCC membership to be added to Subs and Membership
- Nature reserve cannot be £0, this needs to be more

Proposal by Cllr Bastin, seconded by Cllr Kay: To agree to Cllrs Kays' suggestions and to defer the budget approval to next the next Full Council meeting following the next F&GP meeting. **PASSED** [Unanimous]

- c) To approve the Orders of Payment** (See [OOP Dec23](#))

Proposal by Cllr Kay, seconded by Cllr Bastin: "To approve the orders of payment." **PASSED** [Unanimous]

23/121: Matters arising from the Communications Committee meeting of 30th November.

- a) Training materials on the BNHPC website.** Request from the Clerk for Councillors to forward any available training materials obtained through courses undertaken as a Councillor for inclusion on the password protected page of the BNHPC website.

Noted. There are two on there at present.

- b) Sprout articles.** Council to review and approve the draft calendar of Council articles for the Sprout. (See Paper 5 - [Sprout article timetable](#)) Noted

- c) 2024 Parish Council Newsletter.** Councillors to note the draft timetable for production of the 2024 Parish Council Newsletter and to provide the Clerk with ideas for topics to be included. Content to be reviewed at a subsequent full Council meeting. (See Paper 6 - [Draft newsletter timetable](#) and the [Newsletter folder](#) for last 2 years of newsletters)

Draft copy deadline is the 4th January. **The Chair and Vice Chair** will take responsibility for pulling the content together. Articles to be no more than 200 words and text will be agreed at the January meeting.

Articles topics and people assigned to write them were:

1. Botley Green Weekend – **Cllrs Church and Bastin**
2. Skatepark – **Cllrs MacKeith and Johnson**
3. Pavilion – **Cllr Berrett**
4. Arts – **Cllrs Kay and Keily**
5. New Staff – **Clerk**
6. Traffic – **Cllr MacKeith**
7. Buy it in Botley – **Cllr Church**
8. Chairs overview - **Cllr Berrett**, which will include latest info / links to the Flood Alleviation Scheme and Botley Solar Farm.



- d) **Backup access to online accounts and new Instagram account.** Council to approve the setting up of a new Instagram account with primary access and backup access for that account plus the Council's YouTube account to be in line with that for the Facebook account. (See Paper 7 - [List of accounts and users](#))

Cllr Jones arrives – 20:48

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Bastin: "To open an Instagram account with content uploaded primarily by the Clerk."

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: **PASSED** [For 9 / Against Cllr Dowie]

- e) **Noticeboards.** Councillors to volunteer as Council noticeboard representatives.

Cllr Kay will do the Field House board while Cllr Church will continue to do the Crabtree Road board.

23/122: Working Groups

Verbal reports from working groups.

Cllr Church updated on Buy it in Botley –The working group has been circulating ideas online but are yet to meet. They have discovered that there will be a new charity shop opening in February where Barclays Bank used to be and that a cash and carry style shop is potentially opening next to the pharmacy.

Cllr MacKeith update on the Skatepark Working Group fundraising activities - The FCC grant is submitted and a decision will be made end of March and there are plans for a Roller Disco event in January. No further large grants have been identified.

Cllr Berrett updated on Public Arts - The Turner Drive Arts brief will go out to artists for expressions of interest soon.

23/123: General

Cllr Dowie left the meeting

- a) **Allotments.**

Clerk to report back on progress. (See Paper 8 - [Allotment Report Dec23](#))

Councillors confirm that Clerk should continue to commission Good Gym's help to cut the path. They agree for her to spend time but not money to find a way to help plot holders who are struggling to meet the ¾ cultivation requirements. This could include exploring community payback and approaching the scouts for assistance.

Cllr Church left the room 21:06

- i) To approve the quote for replacing 42/43 numbered posts that need replacing on the plots. (See [Q1057](#))

Proposal by Cllr Rankin, seconded by Cllr Bastin: To commission the recycled plastic posts." **PASSED** [Unanimous]

Cllr Dowie returned to the meeting

- b) **Communications.**

Business Cards. Following the successful completion of the name, email and domain changes. To consider whether to order business cards for any councillors who would like them and for the two administrative members of staff . (See Paper 9 - [Business Cards options](#))

Cllr Church returns 21:09

Councillors did not feel they needed them particularly.

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Rankin: "To order 250 business cards for the Clerk for a sum not exceeding £25." **PASSED** [Unanimous]



c) Policies.

Council to agree a timetable for individual Policies to be reviewed with all to be completed before the Council's Annual Meeting in May 2024 (See Paper 10 – [Policy renewal dates](#))

The majority of the policies for renewal were with the Personnel Committee. It was generally felt that there should be designated councillors assigned to work on particular policies. Clerk is to enquire with the chair of Personnel committee when another Personnel committee meeting can be scheduled.

Responsibility for updating or producing the following policies were assigned to:

- Email and Social Media - Cllr Berrett & Church
- Climate Change Policy - Environment Working Group
- Graffiti - R&A Committee
- Flexible working hours and TOIL - Clerk
- Staff training and Development policy - Clerk
- GDPR Policy - Clerk to source existing City/County/Vale and NALC policies for councillors to review.

d) Events.

- i) **Botley Green weekend.** To hear from the Environment Working Group about their plan to deliver a weekend of green events in the local area.

Cllr Church explained the intention - This will be a weekend in April (14/15.) Sat morning will be a bus stop walk to key green spaces. The afternoon will be workshops and Sunday there will be try your hand at conservation activities. Several local nature groups have responded favourably to being involved.

- ii) **All in one room.** Report back on event.

Cllr Berrett gave brief update – around 60 people attended. The event came in under budget.

23/124: Local Issues.

- a) **South Hinksey Parish Council Letter of Support.** To agree to send a letter of support for a cycleway/footpath connection from the bottom end of Betty Lane to the road outside the Oxford Garden Centre. (See Folder-[South Hinksey Cycle Way](#))

Some concern expressed by Cllr Dowie around land permissions. Generally felt that was not this Parish's concern.

Proposal by Cllr Rankin, seconded by Cllr Dowie: To include the words "supports this in principal". **PASSED** [Majority]

Proposal by Cllr Church, seconded by Cllr Rankin: "To agree to send a letter of support." **PASSED** [Majority]

- b) **Joint Local Plan.** To appoint councillors to meet and propose a response on behalf of the council. To bring to the January Full Council meeting for approval. Note that South and Vale will be accepting comments between the 10th January and 21st February. (See [Joint local plan letter](#))

Cllr Kay, Church and Rankin all volunteered to meet and propose response for next Council meeting.

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Rankin: "To suspend the Standing Orders to extend the meeting by maximum of 30 minutes." **PASSED** [Majority]

- c) **Botley Traffic Advisory Group.** Report back from meeting held 6th December.

Cllr Mackeith gave a detailed update of the meeting. Attendees included Keir rep for Network Rail, National Highways, bus and gas companies and Thames Water. The meeting revealed that the bus companies were unaware of the Thames Water timelines on Osney Bridge. Both the meeting and follow up interactions revealed a need for



better centralised coordination between the organisations. **The Clerk will** make the notes available on the website. A follow up meeting will be scheduled in February and both Cllr Susanna Pressel and the residents' associations at the Osney end of Botley Road will also be invited to attend.

Proposal by Cllr Church, seconded by Cllr Berrett: "For Cllr Church to send a letter to Cllrs Susanna Pressel and Judy Roberts, copying in the Chair of the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), highlighting BNHPCs continued concern about the poor coordination and bad management of various road works. He will note that while OCC are not directly responsible for them, they are the only ones that cover all areas. He will request that OCC mandate their transport department to nominate an individual to be a point of contact for ALL parties in an effort to both minimise the impact on residents and to advance BNHPCs request for a temporary bus shelter." **PASSED** [Unanimous]

23/125: Other Documents & Letters Received.

- a) **Monitoring Officer.** To note that BNHPC's Monitoring Officer Patrick Arran recently passed away and that we have been assigned an interim replacement – Vivien Williams.

Noted and condolences extended to his family.

- b) **Landscape Recovery Bid.** To note that their bid has been successful. **Noted**

23/126: Confidential Section

The Council is required to pass the resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Section1,
extended by the Local Government Act 1972, Section 100, as the following items are considered confidential.

Members of the public left the meeting

a) **Probationary review of the RFO.**

- i) To note the Personnel Committee's assertion that due process has been followed.
ii) To approve the Clerk's recommendation that she be offered a permanent position.

Proposed by Cllr Church, seconded by Cllr Kay: "Clerk to write to the RFO to offer them a permanent position."

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie **PASSED** [For 9 / Abstention Cllr Dowie]

a) **Probationary review of the Groundskeeper.**

- i) To note the Personnel Committee's assertion that due process has been followed.
ii) To approve the Clerk's recommendation that he be offered a permanent position.

Proposed by Cllr MacKeith, seconded by Cllr Kay: "Clerk to write to the Groundskeeper to offer them a permanent position."

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie **PASSED** [For 9 / Abstention Cllr Dowie]

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 18th January 2023 at 7.30pm

Meeting ended 21:42.