



## Botley & North Hinksey Parish Council



Miss Emma Gordon, Clerk to the Parish Council  
E-mail: [clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk)

Tel: 01865 861922 or 07494 054581  
Parish Office, First Floor, 5 Church Way, Botley, Oxford OX2 9TH

### Minutes

**of the Botley & North Hinksey Parish Council Meeting  
held at 7.30pm on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
in the Seacourt Hall and via video conference**

Key  
Agreed = green  
Motion not passed = grey  
Action = yellow

#### Those Present:

Cllrs Berrett, Rankin, Spooner, MacKeith, Johnson, Church, Kay, Barnes, Davis, Gholami-Babaahmady, Keily

#### In Attendance

In person: Emma Gordon – BNHPC Clerk  
On Zoom: 1 member of the public

#### 23/067: Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Bastin, Dowie and Jones, Judy Roberts, Emily Smith

#### 23/068: Declarations of Interest

Cllrs MacKeith, Church & Keily – declare a Non-Registerable Interest as they are representatives on the Pavilion Trust.

#### 23/069: Approval of Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

Cllr MacKeith already fed back on a minor omission. Minutes under discussion include this amendment.

Cllr Berrett highlighted an item in the minutes that was disallowed and updated to Councillors how the Chair and Clerk are working with OALC & SLCC about correct processes and procedures going forwards.

*Proposal by Cllr Berrett:* “To approve the minutes for July.” Seconded by Cllr MacKeith.

*Vote:* In favour (Unanimous) - **PASSED**

#### 23/070: Matters raised by Members of the Public: - None

#### 23/071: Reports from County & District Councillors

District councillors don't do a report for Sept because of the August holidays.

There was a note to say that the District Councillors are have a Surgery on Saturday in Sunningwell and that they have not had any responses from Mace regarding the pedestrianisation of Church Way.

County Council Report was reviewed. Issues drawn out in more detail were:

- Cllr Davis contested the assertion that John Mason was the only school in Oxfordshire affected by the RAAC issues and wanted to know more about this and hospitals.
- Cllr Church would like to know if Cllr Roberts would be invited to the revised planning committee meeting where they are discussing the HIF1 scheme? He contested the use of the word refusal in her report. There was general concern on this issue as it will increase traffic on A34.
- Councillors discuss the A34 road works that commenced this week – Questioning why they are so bad. Cllr Berrett has read that they may be considering a change of layout for the road works that may improve the situation.
- Consultations on social care – Cllr Davis shared that the Labour party will be responding to this consultation.

### 23/072: Clerk's Report (Paper 1)

Clerk outlined her report as well as giving the floor to Cllr Spooner to update on the progress of the improvements of the basketball hoops at the MUGA. Cllr Spooner had met with the member of the public to discuss this further. Next steps would be to talk to G.Sillman about possibilities and **invite the member of the public to the next R&A meeting**. The Clerk also brought the Councillors attention to a new Action Review Sheet that will become an accessible document to track progress on action items from meetings. Cllr Kay reminded the Clerk that Cllr Davis, Dowie and Kay are delegated to help her produce the EDI Policy for the parish, but that volunteers are needed for the Safeguarding Policy. Cllrs Gholami-Babaahmady, Davis and Kay volunteered.

### 23/073: Council Motions

**a. Louie Memorial Playing Fields Line Marking** (See paper 2 for context on each motion + 2x confidential papers regarding salary costs.)

Cllr MacKeith gave the context for this motion, expanded on by Cllr Berrett. Cllr Church wanted to combine the motions into one, which was not possible. Cllr Rankin supported the new management arrangements as they had been much more ad-hoc before.

#### 1. Blue line marking on the playing field

*Motion proposed by Cllr MacKeith, seconded by Cllr Berrett:*

"That the Grounds Person's employment contract should be increased by 1.5hrs per week to include painting the blue lines on the Louis Memorial Playing Fields."

Cllr MacKeith questioned her requirement to abstain from the vote. Cllr Berrett shared her conversation with OALC and SLCC earlier that week, who had advised that trustees should abstain. She explained the concept in terms of "primary concerns" and "perceived" conflicts – stating that it is better practice to abstain.

**Vote:** In favour (9) Abstentions (2 -Cllrs Keily and MacKeith) - **PASSED**

#### 2. Line paint purchasing

*Motion proposed by Cllr MacKeith, seconded by Cllr Berrett:*

"That the Parish Council resume responsibility for purchasing the line paint for the Louis Memorial Playing Fields."

Amendment:

*Amendment to motion two proposed by Cllr Kay proposed:* "That the Parish Council *temporarily* resume responsibility for purchasing the line paint for the Louis Memorial Playing Fields, *up to the end of this calendar year, with the matter being reviewed in the December Full Council Meeting.*" Seconded by Cllr Davis.

**Vote:** In favour (4) Against (5) Abstentions (2 -Cllrs Keily and MacKeith) - NOT PASSED

Original Motion:

**Vote:** In favour (9) Abstentions (2 -Cllrs Keily and MacKeith) - **PASSED**

#### 3. Supplier of line paint

*Motion proposed by Cllr MacKeith, seconded by Cllr Berrett:*

"That the Parish Council take up the offer to purchase a longer lasting, better quality paint from the Grounds Person, via his trade account."

**Vote:** In favour (9) Abstentions (2 -Cllrs Keily and MacKeith)- **PASSED**

#### 4. New second hand electric line marker required

*Motion proposed by Cllr MacKeith, seconded by Cllr Berrett:*

"That the Parish Council take up the offer to purchase a second hand electric line marker from the Grounds Person."

**Vote:** In favour (9) Abstentions (2 -Cllrs Keily and MacKeith) - **PASSED**

**b) Landscape Recovery Bid** (See Papers 3, 4, 5)

Item deferred to later in the meeting as Adam Bows not yet in attendance.

**Item tabled after 23/073 c**

Presentation given by Adam Bows of Freshwater Habitats Trust – He described the funding they are applying for and what role the council will have in the partnership. He outlined the benefits of the scheme to the environment and the council – highlighting biodiversity enhancement and securing the carbon in the Fenn. He described the financial model - where private finance will be paying for ecosystem services. He outlined the timeframe and asserted that there was very little risk to the council, who could still opt out at a later date if they wanted to.

Cllr Davis questioned if the bid had been shared with the North Hinksey Conservation Volunteers (NHCV) – Cllr Berrett confirmed that the Playing Field Management Group, which included representatives of the NHCV were included and that Voirrey Carr had responded to the email about the proposal. Cllr Davis still expressed a concern about level of input from NHCV.

*Motion proposed by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Church:*

“B&NHPC agrees to join the bid to the Government (DEFRA) Landscape Recovery Scheme and agrees the text of the bid as prepared on behalf of BNHPC by Adam Bows, Catchment Officer, Freshwater Habitats Trust.”

*Vote:* In favour (Unanimous) - **PASSED**

**Action Clerk:** To check in with Adam Bows the following day and to update the name to include Botley to the bid for submission before Thursday.

**c) EV Charging point in the Lower LMPF car park**

The Planning committee would like to recommend to the council that BNHPC complete an Expression of Interest Form (deadline for submission 14<sup>th</sup> Sept) for 2x EV charging points in the Lower Louis Memorial Playing Fields car park. (Paper 6&7)

Cllr Rankin gave some context from the Planning Committee. This prompted a discussion around reservations, location, practicalities and who would use it.

*Vote:* In favour (8) Against (1) Abstention (1) - **PASSED**

Adam Bows arrives mid way through discussion – Meeting returns to item **23/073 b**

**23/074: Finance**

1. Review of the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Reports for sign off. (See finance folder)

Cllr Kay highlighted a number of issues with the documents including

- Wrong dates on the earmarked reserves.
- Budget summary still showing Environment working group as having a budget when it should not

Cllr Keily questions the reserves balances on the New Community Hall. Cllr Berrett confirmed this meant the building where the meeting was currently taking place. Cllr Kay pointed out that the balance was referring to 2021 because of date error in the document - so not relevant to this financial year.

*Proposal by Cllr Kay:* “To defer this item to the F&GP and review both Q1 and Q2 again in October” Seconded by Cllr Mackeith

*Vote:* In favour (Unanimous) - **PASSED**

2. To approve minor additional spend on bench repair work – G.Sillman. (J1033)

*Motion proposed by Cllr Church:*

*Vote:* In favour (Unanimous) - **PASSED**

3. To approve IT expenditure for new RFO set up. (Paper 8)

*Motion proposed by Cllr Berrett, Seconded Cllr Church*

*Vote: In favour (Unanimous) - PASSED*

4. Approval of Receipts and Payments since last Full Council Meeting. (Orders of Payment)

Cllr MacKeith questions bills from JK Garden Maintenance that have been allocated to "Memorial Garden Maintenance" but should have been allocated to the "Nature Reserve." *Action Clerk:* To inform RFO.

Councillors did question the invoice amounts for JKGM and the quality of their work. A review of contracts is on the horizon.

It was noted that invoices relating to Orders of Payments were not uploaded into Dropbox folder.

Regarding the question on where the Jessop and Cooke architectural invoices were agreed. Invoice relating to WS4 were approved in a planning meeting, while the invoice for £1100 was confirmed by the Architects to be for "documents for the discharge of the planning conditions." There was agreement at the May FC Meeting that work towards discharge of planning would be undertaken, subject to planning permission being granted.

Proposal by Cllr Church: To approve the Orders of Payment. Seconded by Cllr Berrett.

*Vote: In favour (Unanimous) - PASSED*

5. New RFO will be introducing a Purchase Order system to accurately record approved expenditure.

Clerk outline new process for purchase orders which will be – When an expense has been agreed at a meeting, a purchase order(PO) will be raised. This way Councillors will know that any expense on the Orders of Payment with a PO have been agreed at a prior meeting.

Cllr church left room 20:16. For 3 min,

6. Parish Online / Geosphere invoice – Contested invoice. (Invoice#38UE048-0002)

Clerk explained about the invoice being incorrectly issued by Geosphere, who upgraded us from a free account to a pay for subscription without our consent. It has now been reversed.

**23/075: Building Projects**

**a) Pavilion Project Update**

Update from Pavilion Fundraising Working Group, including request to approve Cllr Kay attending a NALC Fundraising for Councils training course on December 15th, cost £39.22 in VAT. (Paper 9)

Cllr Church: Reported that the two fundraising projects, Pavilion and Skatepark should liaise closely with one another.

They are in data gathering stage with a view to updating the business plan in October. They are liaising with the Pavilion Trust to develop clearer Memorandums of Understanding. He explained the beginning of the fundraising plan - Looking at three strands. 1.Big and Medium sized grants. 2.Corporate sponsorship and 3. Community led fundraising. Highlighted the need for a more detailed fundraising strategy, which will form part of the business plan.

Relating to the NALC fundraising training proposal for Cllr Kay to attend "Fundraising for Councils training course" Councillors discussed who should attend. Wish to also include a representative from the Skatepark fundraising group.

*Cllr Church proposes an amendment: "For two attendees to the training course." Seconded by Cllr Rankin*

*Vote: In favour (Unanimous) - PASSED*

*Amended proposal by Cllr Church: " To allocate two places on the fundraising course for Cllrs Kay and Jones."*

*Seconded by Cllr Berrett.*

*Vote: In favour (Unanimous) - PASSED*

Cllr Berrett informed the council of a judicial review of the District Council over the planning permission for the pavilion. BNHPC have been named as an “Interested party.” The Vale of White Horse (VOWH) have appointed a barrister in response to the claim and will keep us up to date. They suggested that we pause on attempting to discharge planning conditions in the interim.

#### **b) Skatepark Working Group (SPWG) Update**

Cllr MacKeith: Planning permission has been granted. She is very frustrated with Canvas Spaces who have not engaged on fundraising since the news. The working group needs reconfiguring to suit fundraising rather than design - currently has 4x councillors involved, three others interested plus two who would be good for local initiatives. She outlined the beginnings of a fundraising plan acknowledging the need for big grants but also an intention to “keep the issue live all the time” by running local events. First event will be running the café on 24<sup>th</sup> Sept at the Pavilion Trusts AGM. Cllr MacKeith and Cllr Johnson to organise this. Noted that the Skatepark has a campaign behind and could build on this to find more people for the fundraising group.

### **23/076: Working Groups Updates**

#### **a) Public Arts Working Group (PAWG) Update**

##### **1. Westway Mural.**

Cllr Berrett: Has fed back to Nor who is of course disappointed and suggested parting ways. PAWG met and came up with a revised brief to go out to local based artists. EOI due in middle of October ready for next FC meeting.

##### **2. Turner Drive Public Art.**

Cllr Berrett: They held a pop up consultation event with SOHA. Well attended by organisers and 10% engagement from the 100 or so houses despite rain. Talked to the families that came about locations and types of art. Good engagement from the children especially. District Arts Officer Abi writing findings up for the next stage of consultation. Climable/Interactive art was a popular theme. It is a challenge to get hold of the landholder in order to get permission for the art.

A conversation was had about the Brookes piece of land just beyond Turner Drive. Brookes are looking to leave Harcourt hill, which could have a big impact on the parish. – Cllr Davis asking what they are doing with it. To be discussed in the Environment Working Group.

#### **b) Environment Working Group (EWG) Update**

Cllr Church: Gave a detailed update.

First meeting was last Monday 11<sup>th</sup> with 4x councillors present where Cllr Bastin was elected as chair. Outlined their plans to build on past work, and develop a Local Environment Action Plan (LEAP) For the LEAP they will consult widely and seek active collaboration from numerous groups including the VOWH. Initially focused on stakeholder mapping with a “ladder of engagement” approach. They have identified 7 key topics for the LEAP: 1) Nature, Greenspace and Wildlife 2) Energy 3) Pollution and Waste 4) Transport 5) Climate Change 6) Health & Wellbeing 7) Food & Waste. He noted that the BNHPC itself has little executive scope, so actions would be for individuals, community groups, and all three tiers of county government.

Cllr Church expanded on the 6-page document the EWG have produced, which will be shared with councillors. It contains a list of parish nature spaces. They **ask councillors to** please add more if they have missed any.

The EWG have agreed to invite 4 external groups to join - Friends of Rally Park, North Hinksey, Conservation Volunteers, Sustainable Botley and Hinksey Heights Nature Trail – with the next meeting proposed for Oct 9<sup>th</sup>. They hope to start engaging the public in events soon, perhaps over the winter at Tree Week in November.

### **23/077: General**

#### **a) CPRE Event Report back from Cllr Church.**

Cllr Church: Attended the event primarily about the District Joint Local Plan and the New Local Plan (NLP) that will take them to March 2041. The NLP will apparently be “different, rather than more of the same kind of development” and “will focus on delivering homes to meet the actual local need.” Which could represent a possible shift. CPRE reported on a consultation with parishes, which highlighted issues around - Housing and the green belt, renewables, hedgerows, water quality, housing density and footpaths and access. It was mentioned at

the event that they are creating to the tune of 780 workspaces on the Botley road but no new homes. Therefore we could expect issues around commuting as a result. There will be a next stage of Local Plan consultation in the autumn looking at preferred options for where to put the housing. The final plan will be put up for consultation next summer.

He is not sure how much our parish will be affected as we don't have much room for big development but it might threaten our smaller spaces. He did identify a field near Cumnor Hurst, which is on the green belt and is currently being marketed as having potential for development.

It was suggested that the **Planning committee recognises the process** and keeps a watchful eye.

Cllr Kay left room

#### **b) Deep Clean – Locations (Paper 10) (Deadline 9<sup>th</sup> October)**

Call for more locations to be identified – We are reaching out for suggestions on Facebook.

Locations suggested include:

- The footpaths under the A34 flyover on both sides of the road and especially along the separated walk way.
- Arnolds way – pavements on both sides between the two fields. Especially where the litter has blown into hedges.
- The bike path along side of the A34 that stretches from Stanley close, all the way into the A34 underpass. Lots of rubbish from passing cars. As well as the underpass itself- needs a good clean sweep.
- The footpath between Laburnum Road and Yarnells Hill.
- The footpath between Eynsham Road and Cumnor Hill Road.
- The copse on Cedar Road –Litter builds up inside the copse.

**Action Clerk:** To submit these to the Street Cleanse services.

Cllr Kay returned to the room midway through item.

#### **c) Allotments Update (Paper 11)**

Paper reviewed. A formal inspection took place in August, with 13 plots deemed to need to be given notice. There was general agreement that untended plots are bad for everyone. It was thought that plot holders identified in the inspection as needing to be “given notice” meant they should be engaged in a dialogue to find out why they are struggling, before any notice is formally given, to give people a chance to improve.

*Proposal by Cllr Kay:* “**For Clerk to** contact the 13 plot holders to state our concerns regarding the condition of their plot and to invite them to explain whether they intend to continue to cultivate their plot. Also to state that if we do not see any improvement by the end of the financial year, the plot will be reallocated to someone on the waiting list.” Seconded by Cllr Berrett.

*Vote:* In favour (Unanimous) - **PASSED**

It was also expressed that we require a more formalised process for how allotments are reviewed with specifically dates.

- Looking for authorisation of G.Sillman (Q1040) for gate post replacement.

*Proposal by Cllr Church:* “To authorise Q1040” Seconded Cllr MacKeith.

*Vote:* In favour (Unanimous) - **PASSED**

#### **d) Website and Email**

- Clerk will be checking/confirming working group memberships, to update website.

**Clerk to update** memberships. Cllr Berrett asks **chairs of working groups to check** memberships are correct once this is done.

- Email and domain change update.

We are ready to make the switch and have asked for it to be done Mon 25<sup>th</sup> and Thurs 28th Sept. Cllrs will be sent new passwords. Emails will be forwarded on from the old account. The website work has been done just not yet live.

- Looking for authorisation of a £75 spend to renew the old domain to cover change over period.

It was only possible to renew for two years which is £75. Otherwise all emails would bounce after November.

*Proposal by Cllr Berrett:* "To approve £75 spend." Seconded by Cllr Rankin.

*Vote:* In favour (Unanimous) - **PASSED**

#### e) Councillor training

- Data Protection training booking imminent.

All councillors are required to do GDPR training. We still have some credits from previous council. **Clerk to arrange** this with councillors who have not yet attended. **Clerk also asked** to dig out recording of Code of Conduct training to be circulated again.

#### f) Lower Louis Memorial Playing Field

- Issue of trees overhanging electricity lines and lamp posts. (Paper 12)

Brought to the Clerk's attention by a member of the public - An on-going issue that keeps recurring. The member of the public and G.Silman both advise pollarding and a drastic approach. Cllr Rankin referred to a spread sheet of maintenance tasks by G.Silman and Cllr Rankin that identifies these trees as needing maintenance. Although small branches close to the electricity lines it was not deemed an imminent Health and Safety risk at this stage.

**Action Cllr Church:** To contact the tree surgeons who volunteer at the Hinksey Heights to see if they would advise on a 5 year plan for these trees.

**Action Clerk:** To investigate if the Electricity Company will cut back the growth in the meanwhile.

*Proposal by Cllr Berrett:* "To suspend the Standing Orders because the meeting had reached the two hour mark." Seconded by Cllr Kay

*Vote:* In favour (Unanimous) - **PASSED**

- New bench replacements. (Q-Bench)

Clerk brought the condition of the benches at the lower LMPlaying Field to the councillors attention. They are at a point of needing to be completely replaced. BNHPC Financial Regulations requires 2 more comparable quotes to be sought. Councillors agree that the concept of value of money is not just about the cheapest price, but also about durability, quality and life cycle of items.

*Proposal by Cllr Berrett:* "To action Clerk to find two more comparable quotes for full bench replacements and in the meantime ask the Groundsperson to monitor the benches on a weekly basis. And bring these quotes to the October meeting" Seconded by Cllr Kay.

*Vote:* In favour (Unanimous) - **PASSED**

- Authorisation for drop bolt to playground gate. (Q1042)

*Proposal by Cllr MacKeith:* "To accept Q1042"

*Vote:* In favour (Unanimous) - **PASSED**

#### g) Issue of attendance at Council Meetings

- Apologies.

Clerk highlighted the importance of sending apologies for meetings, stating the six month rule and the potential to lose one's seat.

- Quorum issues

Important for committee meetings, which might suffer from not being quorate if not enough members attend. In particular we are having attendance issues at the Planning Committee

Cllr Davis asked why this was not possible to have blended meetings. Cllr Berrett and Kay said that this has been requested but OALC have confirmed that it is still not possible legally. This rule was suspended during COVID, but this was not extended post COVID. Cllr David highlighted some of the difficulties that people with illness or disability would have in attending meetings. Cllr Davis would like the council to pursue this issue.

**23/066: Questions raised by Councillors:** None

**23/067: Other Documents & Letters Received:**

Flood Alleviations scheme deadline in September –BNHPCs position has not changed.

Cllr Spooner checked process for responding to graffiti removal request.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 9:53pm