

LAUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

Members of the Parish Council and the Parish Clerk had been available before the start of the formal meeting from 7.00pm to meet the public. All plans and correspondence were available for viewing and comment via the website.

Minutes of the meeting held on **Thursday 7 January 2021** at 7.30pm online via Zoom as permitted in the *The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 ("the 2020 Regulations")* due to the COVID19 Coronavirus crisis

Councillors Present: Mr James Allpress (from 7.47), Mrs Lizzie Chisholm, Mr Chris Fox, Mr Mike Murphy, Mr Ed Sanders, Mrs Lesley Thompson, Mr Simon Turner (Chairman)

In attendance: The Clerk, Mrs Jane Olds; Cllr Ian Corkin (OCC) (from 7.30pm to 8.05pm); 6 members of the public

Apologies: None

1. To receive and accept apologies for absence

No apologies had been received.

2. Requests for Dispensations, Declarations of Interest, gifts and hospitality

No requests or declarations were made.

3. To facilitate public participation with regard to items on the agenda

Six members of the public attended the meeting.

4. East / West Rail – to receive a progress report and welcome the EWR Liaison Officer

No representatives were available to attend the meeting. However, Mr Golla had attended a meeting earlier in the week to update members of the Parish Council about the various road closures including the re-alignment of Charbridge Lane and the temporary closure of the (Launton) Bicester Road at the railway bridge for eight weeks from 1 February to 1 April.

5. Reports from District and County Councillors

Councillor Corkin (OCC) reported on the COVID status and the concern that hospital admissions were higher than March and rising with the likelihood that they would increase further. The vaccine rollout was taking place at Bicester Heritage.

Both the County and District were currently consulting on the budget with a big response to the District consultation.

The flooding before Christmas had caused great distress and had a big impact on society in the many affected areas. The general consensus was that the infrastructure in the whole area was overwhelmed. Locally, the pumping station was working at full capacity but simply could not cope with the sheer quantity of water. This would be followed up with Thames Water.

The bus service (mentioned later in the meeting) was a six-month measure which would be under review.

The Parish Hall car park boundaries had been investigated with the Assistant Director for Estates at OCC. They had looked at the map provided in the 1971 agreement and believed that the school had been receiving a regular sum for maintenance of the area. However, it was not clear when this started, how much it was and whether the school knew about the purpose of the payment. Councillor Corkin recommended that the School or Diocese wrote directly to the Assistant Director.

7.47: Cllr Allpress joined the meeting during Cllr Corkin's report

8.05: Cllr Corkin left the meeting.

6. To confirm the Minutes of the previous meetings held on 3 December 2020, previously circulated
The Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted as a true record and would be signed by the Chairman on resumption of in-person meetings.

7. Update on progress from the Minutes – the Clerk / Chairman to report on progress of outstanding items which do not require further decision

a. Local Council Administration

The publication had been received.

b. Parish Remuneration Report

The report had been published on the website and would be posted on the noticeboards in due course.

c. Financial Regulations, Social Media Policy and Expenses Policy

The policies had all been updated and published.

d. Bus Shelters

The contractor had completed the work to the Station Road shelter and would be working on the Bicester Road (Sherwood Close) shelter on 9 January.

8. Finance

a. To receive the Finance Report

As at 23 December, the Accounts stood at:

Co-op Current Account	£29,936.44
Co-op Deposit Account	£22,402.41

Outstanding Payments

None

Standing Orders

		Date Cleared
Clerk's November salary (monthly)	£529.20	1/12/20
Launton Lines (monthly)	£110.00	4/12/20
Information Commissioner renewal	£35.00	10/12/20

Income

None received

The Budget Monitoring Report had been circulated and published.

b. To acknowledge scrutiny and acceptance of previously circulated bank statement

The bank statement was reviewed and accepted.

c. Draft Budget – to consider the draft budget for 2021/22

The Clerk presented the draft budget which the Council considered.

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to a budget increase of 2.65% to £37,243.00 with the proviso that it might have to be revised slightly by the beginning of the new financial year.

d. Precept – to consider and agree the setting of the Precept level for 2021/22

CDC had informed the Parish that the estimated Tax Base for 2021/22 would be 536.3 (previous year 541.4). There was no CTRS Grant this year.

Having agreed the budget, and taken the Reserves and surplus into account, the Council considered the Precept request and **RESOLVED** to agree to an increase of £593.00 on the previous year to £22,996.00. The annual cost to a Band D household would be £42.88 – an increase of £1.50 over the whole year. The Clerk would inform CDC of the decision and publicise the information in *Launton Lines*.

e. Grant applications – to consider any grant applications received

i. St Mary's Church – for assistance with grass cutting

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to the request for support with the churchyard grass cutting of £1,260 – the same level as the previous year – using the Local Government Act 1972 s214(6) power.

ii. CPRE Oxfordshire – contribution to help keep local voices at the centre of planning for the countryside

The Council considered the request and **RESOLVED** to agree not to make a contribution at this time.

iii. Open Spaces Society – contribution to the 'Saving our lockdown spaces' fund

The Council considered the request and **RESOLVED** to agree not to make a contribution at this time.

f. To consider and approve invoices for payment itemised on the Payment Schedule

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the following invoices for payment via Bank Transfer which Councillor Chisholm would authorise:

Payment Method	Payee and reason	Budget	Amount
Bank transfer	Glasdon UK for dog bin repair fixings for the Glades	Dog and litter bins	£82.97

Payment Method	Payee and reason	Budget	Amount
Bank transfer	Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils for GDPR and Data Protection Refresher course for Simon Turner and James Allpress	Training	£120.00

9. Governance and Consultations

a. Policy Review

i. Emergency Plan – to consider revision of the plan

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to defer consideration for a future meeting.

ii. Communication Policy – to review and consider the Communication Policy

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree the revised policy.

b. Ethical Standards – to consider the consultation

The Council considered the consultation and discussed the questions in depth. Following the discussion, the Council **RESOLVED** to agree that the Clerk would co-ordinate the response and circulate it prior to submission.

c. Census – to consider appointing a Councillor to be responsible for liaison and promotion of the 2021 Census

The Clerk had responded to a questionnaire about the village to assist the Census team. The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to await further information before making a decision.

10. Training – to consider attendance at OALC Courses

a. OALC Courses – to consider attendance

Councillors Allpress and Turner were booked on the GDPR course on 9 February. Caversfield would pay for the Clerk to attend.

No other courses were of current relevance.

11. Planning

a. Planning applications – to consider all recent applications received from Cherwell District Council detailed below and any other planning applications submitted between the circulation of this agenda and the meeting

i. Application Number: 20/03296/F

Proposal: First floor extension (over existing ground floor extension)

Location: Hawthorn Cottage, Bicester Road, OX26 5DP

The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** that there were no objections or comments on the proposal.

b. Notice of Decision

The Council noted the following Notice of Decision:

i. Application Number: 20/02824/F

Proposal: Demolition of existing front extensions. Construction of new single-storey front extension. New door opening in existing side elevation.

Location: Crows Nest, 70 West End, OX26 5DG

Permission for development subject to conditions (29 December)

12. Village Matters

a. Parish Hall Lease

i. To consider and agree the Agreement to Lease and the final Lease

The final amended lease was still awaited.

ii. To receive a general progress report

The Clerk had signed and returned the S106 agreement document for the furniture funding. The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to place the order with Morleys for:

- 16 x 150cm Zown folding tables
- 2 x 180cm Zown folding tables
- 2 x table transport trolleys
- 1 x storage strap for table trolley
- 60 x blue affinity chairs
- 2 x chair transport trolleys

at a total cost of £2,462.00 plus VAT on the understanding that the invoice would need to be paid by the Parish Council and then the funding requested from CDC with proof of payment.

b. S5 Bus Route – to note the potential loss of the S5 bus route from the village and consider further action

Councillor Corkin had been instrumental in ensuring that the village continued to have a Stagecoach bus service into Bicester. The S5 had been discontinued to the village, but the new 28 service would run from 4 January and would be reviewed in six months' time.

9.30pm: The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to extend the meeting for a further 20 minutes.

c. Noticeboards for the bus shelters – to consider quotations

Due to time constraints, the Council **RESOLVED** to defer discussion to a future meeting.

d. Speed and traffic monitoring – to consider quotations for a VAS device

Due to time constraints, the Council **RESOLVED** to defer discussion about a VAS device to a future meeting.

Regarding parking at the crossroads and yellow lines, OCC Highways had looked at the situation and reported that it was unlikely that access protection lines or 'Keep Clear' markings would be observed but that yellow lines would be possible. While the physical lines were not prohibitively costly, the Traffic Regulation Order would cost in the region of £3,300 which would have to be met by the Parish. In due course a public consultation would need to be undertaken to consider the expenditure and the appearance to the village.

e. Grass and verge cutting – to consider the contracts and quotations for the village grass cutting and the rural verge cutting

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to extend Calber's contract for a further year at a total cost of £1,150 + VAT to be invoiced over five months at a cost of £230 + VAT per month.

The work would comprise a bi-weekly service between the months of April to August to carry out the grass cutting as per the plan given during previous years. The grass to be collected on each visit and composted with all pathways cleared of grass cuttings and the areas left clean and tidy.

The Clerk was still awaiting a quotation for the rural verge cutting.

f. Yew Tree Path – to consider a suggestion from EWR

Unfortunately, it had not been possible to take up EWR's offer of the hardcore. The OCC Footpaths Officer had advised that filling the gap with aggregate without addressing the ditch issue first could result in the flooding and mud getting worse over a larger area. The Clerk had asked Cllr David Hughes for help as Yew Tree Field was the responsibility of CDC.

g. Trees – to consider applying to the Woodland Trust for a tree pack to be planted in the village in March 2021

A villager had suggested that the Parish may like to get involved in applying for trees from the Woodland Trust, probably in the autumn, which was the next availability. There were different packages of trees available. The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to look into the project further with Councillor Chisholm leading for the Parish Council; the villager would write an article for *Launton Lines* to gauge interest. The project would be considered further in August.

h. Village Support Group – to receive a progress report and note any actions or expenditure necessary

With the advent of the third lockdown, the group was ready to help wherever necessary. A new leaflet would be written and printed; the Council **RESOLVED** to agree to apply for COVID funding should it be necessary to have it printed professionally.

The Volunteer Driver Service North Oxfordshire was already set up to help transport people, if necessary, to the vaccination centre at Bicester Heritage. It was felt that there was no need for additional funding as the Bicester Good Neighbour Scheme, the Food Bank and the Community Fridge were set up already to support Bicester and the Launton community.

9.50pm: The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to extend the meeting for a further 10 minutes.

13. Correspondence – to note correspondence received not otherwise on the agenda where decisions are not required

- a. Healthwatch** - updates
- b. Cllr Hallchurch** – various CDC updates
- c. TVP Rural Policing Team** – Winter Burglary Campaign and shed break-ins
- d. Rural Services Network** - bulletins
- e. Grendon Underwood Parish Council** – re new prison proposal at Grendon Underwood
- f. NALC** – Chief Executive's bulletins
- g. CDC** – Parish updates
- h. Villager** – re mud on the roads
- i. OCC** – Climate Action Framework
- j. OALC** – December update
- k. Villagers** – re inconsiderate parking outside Blue Texel and West End
- l. Police and Crime Commissioner** – December update
- m. CPRE** – Countryside Voices magazine (would anyone like to read it?)
- n. PS Gavin Staniland** – Rural Police Annual Report

14. Attendance at Meetings and reports from meetings / courses

a. Mulberry Homes – 18 December

Councillor Turner reported that members of the Parish Council and CDC Planning Officer had met with the Mulberry Homes Managing Director and Head of Land. A list of questions had been received from villagers which had been compiled by the Clerk. Some of these were answered at the meeting and the more technical ones would be sent on to be answered more fully. A full account would be available shortly.

The company had to supply a suitable Flood Risk Assessment to the Environment Agency regarding any flooding and they were responsible directly to the EA. There was also a planning requirement that the developers had to ensure that appropriate steps were taken not to make the situation worse. To this end, attenuation and balancing ponds were planned for the site.

Thames Water had already agreed that the pumping station was adequate at the original planning stage. However, the Parish Council had asked for assistance to ensure that the pumping station was working effectively.

The development of the north west corner of the site had been halted because of the revised floor levels. The rest of the development had been agreed with a 'partial discharge' of planning conditions.

A query had been raised about the traffic cones on the verge opposite the development: it was explained that these had been requested by villagers to ensure that the vehicles entering and exiting the site did not damage the verge. A no right turn sign which had been positioned to inform all drivers to exit left on to Blackthorn Road had been regularly removed from its place on the verge opposite and returned to the site.

In conclusion, the meeting had been reasonably constructive and the Mulberry representatives were open to an online village meeting with the proviso that questions be submitted prior to the meeting. This would be arranged in due course.

10.00pm: During the Mulberry Homes report, the Council **RESOLVED** to agree to extend the meeting for a further 10 minutes.

15. Reports

a. Chairman's Report

The Parishes Against Wolf group had asked the Chairman if the Parish would like to support the group in objecting to the water park appeal. The Council agreed that it would be happy to have the Parish name added to the group. The Clerk would respond.

10.10pm: The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to extend the meeting for a further 10 minutes.

b. Clerk's Report

OCC Highways had been asked to clean Station Road with the gully machine.

CDC Street Cleansing Team had been asked if they could programme in the clearance of the rubbish from the ditches beyond Grange Mews to the crossroads.

16. Items for information or next Agenda only

a. Next Agenda

The Clerk requested all items for the next agenda be submitted by Thursday 21 January.

17. Date of next meetings

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to meet on Thursday 4 February 2021 which would be online at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/76605157135> (meeting code: 766 0515 7135). It would also be possible for members of the public to dial in with a telephone.

The meeting closed at 10.15pm.

Notes on declarations of interest

Any Member arriving after the start of the meeting is asked to declare pecuniary interests, as necessary, as soon as practicable after their arrival, even if the item in question has been considered.

National rules about pecuniary interests are set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and in secondary legislation made under the Act, in particular The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

Signed.....

Dated.....