

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 1 April 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, Mr Chris Fox, Mr Mike Murphy, Mr Ed Sanders (from 19.56), Mrs Lesley Thompson, Mr Simon Turner (Chairman)

In attendance: The Clerk, Mrs Jane Olds; Thaina Sa'id – East West Rail (until 7.43); Cllr Ian Corkin – CDC (until 8.00pm); 6 members of the public

Apologies: Mrs Lizzie Chisholm

1. To receive and accept apologies for absence

The Council accepted Councillor Chisholm's apologies.

2. Requests for Dispensations, Declarations of Interest, Gifts and Hospitality

Councillors Thompson and Turner declared a non-pecuniary personal interest in Agenda Item 12. a. v. and agreed to leave the meeting for the discussion.

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

Six members of the public attended parts of the meeting.

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

Ms Sa'id reported that the focus was now on the 'civils' for the earthworks and the structures. Once the 'civils' had been completed the track would be laid and then the additional wiring and signalling, anticipating a completion of spring 2024. A number of the bridges along the route had to be strengthened and repaired.

The current works at Charbridge Lane include digging and installing the pile caps. The current works at Station Road had continued. The sides of the bridge would not be started until the road was closed which was due to take place from 12 April. The road would be dismantled to facilitate the building of the embankment and then the road would be completely realigned; however, there would still be access to the old Station Master's house.

The project was due to install portable Variable Message Signs (VMS) at various points and would welcome thoughts on the suggested messages due to be displayed.

Further controls would include Traffic Behaviour Ambassadors who would be deployed to key junctions and areas to ensure that the site traffic was monitored.

A manager had been appointed to ensure that the impact on the state of the roads around the area from the works was mitigated. The team was still being engaged.

A further newsletter would be published towards the end of April.

It was understood that, while the Bicester Road bridge had re-opened, there was some further work needed and Councillor Turner asked Ms Sa'id to clarify that Bicester Road was not to be closed at the same time as Station Road. Ms Sa'id agreed to clarify this.

7.43pm: Ms Sa'id left the meeting

5. Reports from District and County Councillors

No reports from the District Councillors had been received.

Cllr Corkin reported that the Banbury Road Roundabout Consultation was currently under way. An A41 Corridor review was taking place from Junction 9 of the M40 roundabout to the Buckinghamshire border, but the Parish Council had only been invited to the stakeholder meeting shortly before the scheduled meeting and no one could attend; it was understood that the meeting had then been postponed until after the election.

Councillor Corkin had received a request from a villager about whether it would be possible to continue to have the traffic lights at the A41 junction with the Blackthorn Road; he had sent it on to the OCC Officer responsible for comment.

The Oxford – Cambridge Expressway had been formally cancelled. However, the A34 and south of Milton Keynes section of roads were still a challenge.

Community Orchards had received some interest within Launton and Cllr Corkin would be interested in discussing progressing this if land could be found in due course.

Mention was made of virtual meetings and whether it would be possible for parishes to continue to do so in the future.

Cllr Corkin had been pleased to provide some of his Priority funding allowance for Launton groups between 2018 and 2021. The Village Rock Chorus had received a grant of £335 and Launton Lines had also received £335; the Friends of Launton School had received a grant for outreach into the Community of £1,290 and the fund had also helped with £2,000 of the funding for the Bicester Road School 20mph Zone (the Parish Council paying £3,270). Councillor Corkin and the Clerk had worked together with the OCC Highways team to have a pavement from car park to the Hummingbird centre installed with no charge to either Cllr Corkin's fund or the Parish Council.

Cllr Corkin also raised the importance of Parish Council elections within local democracy and made a plea for villagers to come forward to stand for election.

7.56pm Councillor Sanders joined the meeting during Cllr Corkin's presentation.

8.00pm Cllr Corkin left the meeting

6. To confirm the Minutes of the previous meetings held on 4 March 2021, previously circulated

The Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted as a true record.

7. 7 January 2021 Minutes – to clarify a statement made in the 7 January Minutes regarding the Parish Hall Roadway under Cllr Corkin's report - Item 5

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to note clarification of the wording of the fifth paragraph of the Minute for Item 5 of the 7 January Meeting (County Councillor's Report), to note that it was not the case that the school had been receiving a regular sum for maintenance of the car park.

The wording in bold and italics was agreed:

The ***maintenance of the Parish Hall roadway*** 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 ***part of the roadway***. 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.

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

a. Policies

The Training and Development Policy and the Policy for Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure had been updated and published.

b. Local Transport and Connectivity Plan

The Clerk had sent the response to OCC.

c. CDC Local Plan Review

The Clerk had sent the response to CDC.

9. Finance

a. To receive the Finance Report

As at 16 March, the Accounts stood at:

Co-op Current Account	£26,001.82
Co-op Deposit Account	£22,402.41

Outstanding Payments

None

Standing Orders

		Date Cleared
Clerk's February salary (monthly)	£529.20	1/3/21
Launton Lines (monthly)	£110.00	4/3/21

Income

		Date Cleared
Hethe Parish Council contribution to Zoom use	£9.00	1/3/21
Launton WI contribution to Zoom use	£9.00	15/3/21

The annual letter from the External Auditor had been received.

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

The bank statement was reviewed and accepted.

c. 2020/21 Unspent budget items – to consider a virement of items budgeted to the new financial year

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree a virement of the following budget items which had been previously agreed and budgeted for at meetings during 2020/21:

Community First Oxfordshire Subscription	£70.00
The Poplars tree work	£1,455.00
Sherwood Close February border and flowerbed maintenance	£45.00
White Gate Painting	£465.00
Parish Hall Project	£2,000.00
Grants (residue from 2020/21)	£296.00

d. Regular Payments – to consider and approve the list including standing orders and direct debits
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree the following regular payments:

Launton Lines: monthly - £110 by Standing Order

Parish Hall: quarterly - £42: April, July, October, January by Standing Order

Dog bin emptying: twice yearly - March / April and September / October

Information Commissioner: annual by direct debit in December

External Auditor: annual

Website domain name (with Fasthosts)

Website hosting and SSL (with Navitas Design)

Dropbox subscription renewal

Subscriptions: annual

- i. Society of Local Council Clerks
- ii. Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils
- iii. Community First Oxfordshire
- iv. Open Spaces Society
- v. CPRE

e. Staff Salary and Expenses

i. To agree continuing payment of the Clerk's salary by standing order

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to continue to pay the Clerk's salary by standing order.

ii. To agree to confirm the rates for the Clerk expenses

The Council **RESOLVED** to confirm the Clerk's expenses. Printing: Double sided A4 – 11p per sheet; single sided A4 – 6p; single sided A4 colour – 10p; single sided A3 colour – 20p; postage: standard advertised cost of stamps; stationery: DL envelope – 7p; C6 envelope – 5p; C5 envelope – 6p; C4 envelope – 11p; mileage at 45p per mile as per HMRC guidelines.

f. CDC Containing Outbreak Management Fund – to consider projects appropriate for application
Councillors considered five applications on Thursday 18 March based on the criteria provided by Cherwell District Council and the Parish's own Grants Policy. The three strongest applications,

which were felt to have the greatest benefit to the wider community and were most likely to be successful, were put forward to CDC on 24 March.

The total grant allocation was £3,625 and the successful applicants were:

- i. Community Café Support Worker (£1,275)
- ii. Parish Hall Reopening (£1,250)
- iii. Friends of Island Pond Wood – Quiet Reflection Area (£1,100)

The two unsuccessful applicants were:

- iv. Launton Plotters Composting Toilet
- v. Outreach Support Worker

Emails had been sent to all applicants.

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to make the payments as soon as the remittance had been received from CDC.

g. Grant applications – to consider any grant applications received

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to the request for support with the Congregational churchyard grass cutting of £210 using the Local Government Act 1972 s214(6) power and to award a grant of £384 to the Friends of Island Pond Wood for the grass cutting.

The payments would be made when possible.

h. 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	Community First Oxfordshire for Annual Subscription	Subscriptions	£70.00
Bank transfer	St Mary's PCC for Grass Cutting Grant	General Grants	£1,260.00
Bank transfer	Society of Local Council Clerks membership subscription (shared with Caversfield)	Subscriptions	£108.00

The Council noted the following debit card transaction

Date Cleared	Payee and reason	Budget	Amount
2/3/21	Fasthosts Internet Ltd for 2 years domain name registration (Invoice no: 60351819)	Website Hosting and Domain Name	£73.20

10. Governance and Consultations

a. Risk Assessment – to consider and agree the Risk Assessment for 2021/22

The Council considered the Clerk's recommended amendments and **RESOLVED** to agree the updated Risk Assessment.

b. Information Logs – to review and note:

The Council **RESOLVED** to review and note the following logs:

i. Freedom of Information Disclosure Log

ii. Gifts and Hospitality Log

iii. Training and CPD Log

The Clerk would publish them on the Finance section of the website.

c. Policy Review

i. Standing Orders – to consider the slight revisions to Section 5

The Council considered the revisions and **RESOLVED** to agree to update the Standing Orders.

ii. Gifts and Hospitality Policy – to review and re-adopt the policy

The Council considered the policy and **RESOLVED** to agree to adopt it as no changes were necessary.

iii. Complaints Policy – to review and re-adopt the policy

The Council considered the policy with the addition of the vexatious communications section and **RESOLVED** to agree to adopt it.

d. CDC Parish Remuneration Report for 21/22 – to consider the report and allowances

The Council received the report and **RESOLVED** to agree that members would not claim any of the allowances except for mileage to external meetings where necessary. A note to this effect would be included in the public notice.

e. Elections – receive an update

The Clerk reported that the Notice of Poll was published on 29 March and the Elections Team would receive nomination papers from Tuesday 30 March until 4pm on Thursday 8 April.

11. Training

a. OALC and SLCC Courses – to consider attendance

The Council noted the dates of future courses and **RESOLVED** to agree that the Clerk could book any suitable courses in consultation with the new Councillors as soon as possible after the election.

12. 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: 21/00563/F

Proposal: Minor amendments to approved application 20/02758/F to include additional South-East facing roof light over dressing area

Location: 37 Yew Tree Close, Launton, OX26 5AE

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

ii. Application Number: 21/00634/F

Proposal: A new temporary tensile structure is required directly behind building 1B. Landscaping works are required to the rear of buildings 1A and 1B, which involve concreting over the existing square gravelled areas and adding a new concrete ramped area for lorry vehicles to drive over.

Location: Arrival Automotive UK, 11 Longlands Road, Launton, OX26 5AH

The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to object to the proposals on the grounds that the applicant had stated that the structure was temporary but there was no clear date for removal. The Council was not able to make a judgement because of this.

Additionally, there was no indication as to the use of the structure and whether there was any likelihood of any noise nuisance from it as the noise assessment did not appear to take into account the likely noise which would emanate from the structure.

The Council was also concerned with the loss of visual amenity to the adjacent Care Home and the impact of any noise on the Care Home residents.

If the Planning Officer was minded to approve the application, a time limit should be included in the conditions for the removal of the temporary structure.

iii. Application Number: 21/00635/F

Proposal: Arrival Automotive UK is a manufacturer of purpose build electric vehicles for commercial customers. This site will be used as an automotive manufacturing plant and the following proposed MEP equipment is required: 2 No new private transformers to the front of buildings 1A and 1B and to the rear of these buildings 4 No HVAC units and ducting attached to the buildings, 1 No water test booth, 1 No pump house, 1 No sprinkler tank and 1 No guard hut

Location: Arrival Automotive UK - Plot 1A, 10 Longlands Road, Launton, OX26 5AH

The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to object to the proposals on the grounds that it was not persuaded by the Environmental Noise Assessment that there would be no significant increase in noise, particularly from the HVAC units, that would affect the Care Home residents.

The operational hours had also not been determined. There would be a great difference in impact on the residents of the Care Home between a 9-5 Monday to Friday operation and a 24 hour a day, seven day a week operation.

Concern was also raised that the Care Home had apparently not been consulted on the application, but had on application 21/00634/F.

iv. Application Number: 21/00744/F

Proposal: Change of use from Sui Generis MOD use to Class B2 / E to create workshop and office space

Location: Building 118, Bicester Heritage, Buckingham Road, OX27 2AL

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

8.57pm: as requested, Councillors Thompson and Turner left the meeting for the discussion. Councillor Fox took over as Chairman for the following item.

v. Application Number: 21/00602/F

Proposal: Proposed demolition of existing conservatory and erection of single storey extension to front of existing bungalow

Location: 31 Ancil Avenue, OX26 5DL

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

9:03pm Councillors Thompson and Turner re-joined the meeting and Councillor Turner resumed the meeting as Chairman.

vi. Application Number: 21/00937/F (Received 26 March)

Proposal: Demolition of existing rear conservatory and lobby, erection of new single storey rear extension. Removal of existing roof and dormer, new first floor added

Location: 13 Blackthorn Road, OX26 5DA

The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to object to the proposals on the following grounds.

The application was considered an overbearing, over-development of the plot and was out of character with the surrounding street scene with the increase in height at odds with the surrounding properties. There were concerns about the overlooking of the neighbouring properties with the two sets of triple bedroom windows on the new first floor. The choice of materials, particularly the slate roof, was also not in keeping with the street scene.

9.27pm: The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to extend the meeting until 10.00pm

b. Notice of Decision – to note

i. Application Number: 21/00137/F

Proposal: Rear extension with infill to ground floor area and new first floor extension, extend parking area and adapt and extend vehicle access to highway with removal of part of boundary wall

Location: 35 Sherwood Close, OX26 5DR

Permission for development (15 March)

ii. Application Number: 21/00212/F

Proposal: Proposed two storey and part single storey rear extension to dwelling

Location: Crossways, Blackthorn Road, OX26 5DA

Permission for development (16 March)

iii. Application Number: 21/00213/F

Proposal: Proposed extension to existing garage

Location: Ash Grove House, West End, OX26 5DF

Permission for development (17 March)

iv. Application Number: 20/02497/F

Proposal: Re-consultation - Amendments: Area of grasscrete and associated landscaping to form an extension to the Orchard Car Park.
Location: Orchard Car Park, Bicester Heritage, Buckingham Road, OX27 8AL
Permission for development (19 March)

c. Banbury Road Roundabout consultation

The Council had been informed of the consultation. The Councillors and villagers had been encouraged to respond personally.

13. Village Matters

a. Parish Hall Lease

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

Councillor Turner reported that the PCC's Solicitor required that some of the changes which had been requested by DT(O)L were not satisfactory; there were also sensible changes suggested to the Agreement to Lease. The Working Group was content with the suggested changes, so Councillor Turner would circulate a final document to the Parish Council and the Parish Council's Solicitor.

Unfortunately, it had not been possible to complete the new changes in time for the meeting and so the Council **RESOLVED** to agree to hold an additional meeting on 29 April at 7.30pm to finalise the Lease.

ii. To receive a general progress report

There was nothing further to discuss.

b. Mulberry Homes – to receive a progress report

A list of questions had been sent to the developers and the response awaited. An invitation to attend the Annual Parish Meeting had also been sent.

c. Verge Cutting – to consider and agree the contract

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to the quotation of £220 per cut (for three cuts) from Richard Wise in Fringford. The Clerk would write to confirm.

d. Yew Tree Field – to receive a progress report

The Clerk had been in contact with the Planning Office and was awaiting further advice.

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

Councillor Thompson confirmed that there had been no expenditure but that the Group was continuing and working well.

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

a. NALC – Chief Executive's bulletins

b. Volunteer Driver Service – thank you for the grant funding

c. Rural Services Network - bulletins

d. Healthwatch Oxfordshire - updates

- e. **OCC** – superfast broadband update
- f. **Villager** – back garden in Sycamore and ditch flooding (trying to progress with Planning Enforcement)
- g. **Various** – East West Expressway cancelled (Signs could now be removed)
- h. **Police and Crime Commissioner** - updates
- i. **CDC** – parish bulletins
- j. **BBOWT** – Thames Water Pollution response
- k. **Villager** – Community Orchards (arrived too late for the agenda)
- l. **OALC** – March update including broadband offer to Parish / Village Halls
- m. **OALC** - information about virtual meetings
- n. **Villager** (to Cllr Corkin) – re extending A41 temporary traffic lights
- o. **Villager** – regarding BT unable to accept houses for *Fibre to the Cabinet* in the village because there was no space available in the cabinet; Chairman / Clerk to investigate further.

15. Attendance at Meetings and reports from meetings / courses

- a. **NALC Leaders Talk: why representation in local councils matters** – Report 23 February
Councillor Thompson reported that the talk was extremely useful and that she had implemented the advice by advertising the elections widely to the village.
- b. **SLCC International Women's Day talk** – 8 March
The Clerk attended an SLCC International Women's day event on 8 March at which the guest speakers were coach Becky Walsh, Jackie Weaver from the Cheshire Association of Local Councils and comedian Deborah Frances-White.
- c. **OALC talk with Unity Trust Bank** – 22 March
OALC had organised a discussion with Unity Trust Bank. While Co-op was adequate for the Parish's current needs, it was worth keeping Unity Trust in mind for the future.
- d. **Bicester Police Rural Community Resilience Group** – 24 March
Councillor Sanders attended the meeting. All the villages reported similar problems: speeding, cold calling on the elderly and vulnerable and fly tipping. The next meeting would take place in Piddington Village Hall on 8 September.
- e. **SLCC Meeting** – 25 March with Oxfordshire's Monitoring Officer
The presentation was useful. It outlined the new Code of Conduct which was felt to be better than the current Code, but it would be improved with meaningful sanctions which were not possible at the moment.

It was intended that if adopted, it would be recommended, as in 2012, that the Oxfordshire County, Districts and Parishes all adopt the same text to avoid unnecessary confusion, but this was unlikely to take place until May 2022 at the earliest.
- f. **A41 Corridor Study: Options and Objectives Workshop** – 26 March
The Council was invited, at very short notice, to this workshop, which was subsequently cancelled. The Clerk would request that more notice be given in the future.
- g. **Healthy Bicester Stakeholder Meeting** – 22 April: 10 – 12.30
Councillor Sanders hoped to attend.

16. Reports

a. Chairman's Report

The Chairman wished to acknowledge that the meeting would be the last ordinary meeting for four of the current Councillors. He thanked Cllr Fox for 11 years' service and the other members, Cllrs Chisholm, Murphy and Allpress, for all their valuable and dedicated service.

b. Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported that the virtual meetings provision would finish on 6 May unless a review at the High Court of the Local Government Act 1972 was successful. The Clerk had written to Victoria Prentis MP about the loss of provision which would impact on forthcoming Parish Council meetings, particularly between 6 May and 21 June when it was envisaged that meetings indoors could once again take place.

The Clerk thanked the Council and looked forward to welcoming a new Council in May.

17. Items for information or next Agenda only

a. Next Agenda

The Clerk requested all items for the next agenda be submitted by Thursday 20 April.

b. Road Closures

With so many road closures currently, the Clerk was keeping the Road Closure section of the website as up-to-date as possible.

c. Expressway Signs

Councillor Thompson agreed to take down the signs.

d. Bicester Road

OCC Highways had informed the Clerk that it had not been possible to resurface the Bicester Road while it was closed as there was no budget, but that it would take place in the new financial year.

e. Sherwood Close

David Moore had completed the gardening work in Sherwood Close.

18. Date of next meetings

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to have an additional meeting on Thursday 29 April 2021 at 7.30pm 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.

It was hoped that the Annual Parish Council Meeting to be held in May would be either 13 or 20 May depending on when legislation would allow.

The meeting closed at 9.56pm.

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.....