LAUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on **Thursday 4 April 2024** at 7.30pm in Launton Parish Hall

Councillors present: Mr Andrew Briant, Mrs Abigail Dowman, Mr Ed Sanders (Vice Chairman), Mr Simon Turner (Chairman), Mr Richard Walker, Mrs Jaqueline Webber

In attendance: The Clerk, Mrs Jane Olds; 1 representative from Greencore Homes (left 8.07pm); 11 members of the public (7 left 8.32pm)

Apologies: Mrs Lesley Thompson,

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
   The Council received Councillor Thompson's apologies.

2. **Requests for Dispensations, Declarations of Interest, Gifts and Hospitality**
   Councillor Walker made a pecuniary declaration of interest regarding planning application 24/00414/F and agreed to leave the meeting while the item (item 4. a. ii.) was discussed.

   Councillors Turner and Webber made a non-pecuniary declaration of interest regarding planning application 24/00523/F and agreed to leave the meeting while the item (item 4. a. iv.) was discussed.

3. **To facilitate public participation with regard to items on the agenda**
   11 members of the public were in attendance.

   One member of the public gave a brief presentation regarding planning application reference 24/00414/F – item 4. a. ii.

   The representative from Greencore Homes answered questions during the planning discussion regarding planning application reference 24/00780/OUT under item 4. a. i.

To accommodate the members of the public who had joined the meeting for the purpose of hearing the planning consideration, the Council **RESOLVED** to agree to move all the planning matters to the beginning of the meeting.

4. **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 circulation of this agenda and the meeting
      i. **Application Number: 24/00780/OUT** (received 27 March)
         Proposal: Removal of condition 26 (live-work dwellings details) of 21/04112/OUT
         Location: OS Parcel 2778 Grange Farm North West Of Station Cottage, Station Road, Launton, Oxon
         The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to respond that there were no objections to the proposal. However, a comment would be made to ensure that the design for the dwellings should be kept as was previously proposed.

8.07pm: the Greencore representative left the meeting

8.08pm: Councillor Walker left the meeting for the following discussion

ii. **Application Number: 24/00414/F**
Proposal: Change of use to community coffee shop
Location: The Old Poolhouse, 59 West End, OX26 5DG
The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to respond with support for the proposal. However, the Council wished to clarify the Oxfordshire County Council Highway Officer's response regarding the road area at the bottom of West End; this area was a turning circle and not a parking area. The Council also wished to have clarification as to the change of use classification.

8.32pm: Councillor Walker rejoined the meeting and 7 members of the public left

iii. **Application Number: 24/00514/F**
Proposal: Construction of a living lab vertiport for research and development, Final Approach and Take Off (FATO) area / safety area and aircraft stand with associated access and landscape works.
Location: Land Forming Part Of Airfield, Skimmingdish Lane, OX26 5AD
The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to object to the proposal on the grounds that there should be no development on the protected open flying field as it would harm the heritage value of the site.

8.48pm: Councillors Turner and Webber left the meeting and Councillor Sanders chaired the following item

iv. **Application Number: 24/00523/F**
Proposal: First storey extension over existing dining area (no increase in building footprint)
Location: Apple Cottage, 37 West End, OX26 5DF
The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to respond that there were no comments or objections to the proposal.

8.52pm: Councillors Turner and Webber returned to the meeting and Councillor Turner resumed the Chair

v. **Application Number: 24/00549/F**
Proposal: Variation of Condition 3 (natural stone) of 22/02973/F - change the exterior finish from stone to block and K render to match the neighbouring property
Location: 12 Sharpes Cottages, Station Road, OX26 5BU
The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to respond that there were no comments or objections to the proposal.

b. **To note notices of decision**
None received.

5. **East West Rail** – to receive a progress report from the EWR Liaison Officer
No report had been received. However, the EWR representative had been invited to the Annual Parish Meeting.

6. **Reports from District and County Councillors**
Cllr Coton was unable to attend.

No report had been received from Cllr Corkin (OCC).

7. **Minutes** – to confirm the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 7 March previously circulated
The Council **RESOLVED** that the Minutes from the meeting on 7 March be accepted as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

8. **Update on progress from the Minutes** – the Clerk / Chairman to report on progress of outstanding items which do not require further decision
   a. **Policy Review**
   The Health and Safety Policy had been updated and published.

   b. **Weed Spraying**
   The quotation had been confirmed with the contractor.

   c. **Bus Shelter Sweeping**
   The quotation had been confirmed with the contractor.

   d. **New Bins**
   The Clerk had not had the opportunity to arrange the order of the bins.

9. **Governance and Consultations**
   a. **Policy Review** – to review the policies
      i. **Internal Financial Control Policy**
      The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to adopt the Policy.

   b. **Risk Assessment** – to consider and agree the Risk Assessment for 2024/25
   The Council considered the Risk Assessment and **RESOLVED** to agree to adopt it. However, it was recognised that further work would need to be done to include the Parish Hall risks in due course.

   c. **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 the logs on the 2023/24 Finance section of the website.

   d. **Webhosting** – to confirm the webhosting, email and SSL Certificate renewal for 2024/25
   The Council **RESOLVED** to agree the annual cost of £74.99 plus VAT for hosting and SSL together with £10 for additional mailbox capacity with Navitas Design.

e. London oxford airport airspace change proposal - acp-2023-033 - cap 1616 design principles – stakeholder engagement – to consider whether to take part in the engagement exercise
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree that no response was necessary.

f. Website Review – to receive a report from the Councillors about the website
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to defer the consideration.

10. Finance

a. To receive the Year End Finance Report and Budget Monitoring Report
As at 16 March, the Accounts stood at:

Co-op Current Account	£19,085.04
Co-op Deposit Account	£42,700.15

As at 31 March, the Accounts stood at:

Co-op Current Account	£19,079.86
Co-op Deposit Account	£42,700.15

Standing Orders		**Date Cleared**
Clerk's February salary (monthly)	£822.25	1/3/24
Launton Lines (monthly)	£170.00	4/3/24

Direct Debits		**Date Cleared**
O2 Mobile February contract	£7.00	21/2/24
O2 Mobile March contract	£7.00	21/3/24

Income		**Date Cleared**
OALC from overpayment of subscription*	£10.00	15/3/24
Caversfield Parish Council for data projector hire	£30.00	25/3/24
SumUp Transfer from defibrillator training day	£157.28	26/3/24

*The OALC subscription payment was incorrectly keyed for £10 more than the invoice. This was not picked up by the Councillor authorising the payments, but was noted by OALC and refunded.

Access to the SumUp account had been obtained and the transfer for the SCAS contributions made before the year end.

The Budget Monitoring Report had been published.

b. Bank Statement – to acknowledge scrutiny and acceptance of the previously circulated bank statement
The regular bank statement and downloaded statements for the year end were reviewed and accepted.

c. 2023/24 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 2023/24.

Village Upkeep budget for contribution to WI for refreshments for litter pick	£50.00
Grants Budget	£1,390.00
Website update (to top up 24/25 budget)	£250.00
Solicitors Fees (Parish Hall Project)	£500.00

d. Regular Payments – to consider and approve the list including standing orders and direct debits
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to the following list, noting that it was not possible to add figures to some of the items.

Launton Lines: monthly Standing Order	£170.00
Parish Hall Rent (as per Agreement for Lease)	£300.00
Information Commissioner: annual by direct debit in December	£35.00
O2: monthly by direct debit	£13.00
External Auditor: annual	
Website domain name (with Fasthosts)	
Website hosting and email (with Navitas Design)	
Dropbox subscription renewal	
Subscriptions: annual	
Society of Local Council Clerks	
Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils	
Community First Oxfordshire (including hall support)	
Open Spaces Society	
CPRE	
Parish Hall	
Castle Water	
EDF Energy	

e. Budget – to agree the budget for 2024/25
Following the close of the 2023/24 year, the Council **RESOLVED** to agree the budget expenditure total of £54,944 and anticipated income of £59,068.

f. Reserves – to confirm the reserves for 2024/25 and consider the Policy
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to the policy and the following reserves:

3 months' running costs	£9,750.00
Sherwood Close maintenance (s106)	£5,651.78
Glades open space maintenance	£3,572.00
Parish Hall Contingency	£20,000.00
Asset replacement fund	£4,375.00
Road Safety	£2,526.00
Election expenses	£1,600.00
Insurance excess	£300.00
External Audit contingency	£200.00
Clerk sickness / overtime contingency	£1,400.00
General Contingency funds	£3,500.00
Defibrillator Contingency	£605.00
Bus shelter contingency	£4,000.00
Trees contingency	£5,000.00

Fete contingency	£1,000.00
Professional Fees	£2,000.00

g. Staff Salary and Expenses

i. To agree to continue 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 confirm the rates of the Clerk's expenses and home working allowance
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
- Laminating: A3 – 70p per sheet, A4 – 40p per sheet
- Postage: standard advertised cost of stamps
- Envelopes: DL envelope – 8p; C6 envelope – 5p; C5 envelope – 6p; C4 envelope – 13p
- Mileage at 45p per mile as per HMRC guidelines.
- Home working allowance of £6 per week to be paid three times a year (£104) to cover heating, broadband and electricity. But no storage.

h. Dog Waste Bin Charges – to note the charges for the emptying of the dog bins
The Council **RESOLVED** to note that as no update had been received from CDC that the charges for emptying the bins would continue at £1.80 per bin per empty (for parishes with more than five bins).

i. Grants – to consider any further grant requests

i. Launton Over 60s Club
The Council considered the grant request and **RESOLVED** to agree to a grant of £165 to be made from the General Grants budget.

j. Invoices for payment – to consider and approve invoices for payment itemised on the Payment Schedule

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree the following payments which Councillor Webber would authorise.

Payment Method	Payee and reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Net Payment	Payment inc VAT
Bank transfer	OALC for Managing Projects Training for Cllr Turner and Clerk (invoice no: W-3223)	Training	7/3/24 11. a.	£100.00	£120.00
Bank transfer	Launton WI for contribution to refreshments for litter pick	Village upkeep and weedspraying	1/2/24 15. c.	£50.00	£50.00
Bank transfer	St Mary's PCC for grass cutting contribution	Village upkeep and weedspraying	7/12/23 9. d.	£1,500.00	£1,500.00

Payment Method	Payee and reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Net Payment	Payment inc VAT
Bank transfer	Society of Local Council Clerks for annual subscription – total £183.00 shared with Caversfield (invoice no: MEM248654-1)	Subscriptions	6/4/23 9. d.	£143.79	£143.79
Bank transfer	Community First Oxfordshire for Halls support subscription	Subscriptions		£50.00	£50.00
Bank transfer	Castle Water for water use in Hall from 4 January – 29 February	Parish Hall Utilities		£46.69	£51.24
Bank transfer	HMRC NICS Employer Contribution March to April	HMRC / NI	Statutory	£8.87	£8.87
Bank transfer	CDC for half yearly dog bin emptying (invoice no: 20014927)	Dog bin emptying	6/4/23 9. h.	£566.28	£679.54

The Council noted the payment made between meetings

Payment Method	Payee and reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Net Payment	Payment inc VAT
Bank Transfer	SCAS for attendee contributions from defibrillator training day	Defibrillator Training	1/2/24 15. b. ii.	£165.00	£165.00

The Council noted the Debit Card transactions.

Date Cleared	Payee and reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Net Payment	Payment inc VAT
5/3/24	Argos for kettle for Parish Hall kitchen	Parish Hall Project		£9.00	£9.00
7/3/24	Toolstation for First Aid kit for Hall	Parish Hall Project		£14.15	£16.98
26/3/24	Launton Village Store for cleaning products for Hall	Parish Hall Project	1/2/24 12. c. i.	£27.46	£27.46

11. Training

a. NALC, OALC and SLCC – to consider any further training offered by OALC, NALC and SLCC
The Clerk provided a list of training from OALC, NALC and SLCC.

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to the purchase of one ticket for the NALC webinar – Emerging Trends in Local Government Finance on 24 April at a cost of £30 plus VAT.

12. Parish Hall Project

a. Management Committee – to consider the membership of the Committee and appoint two Councillors
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to appoint Councillors Turner and Webber to the Committee. An advertisement had been placed in *Launton Lines* and on the noticeboards.

b. Community Ownership Fund application – to receive the Round 3 notification and consider further action
Notification had been received that the initial application to the Community Ownership Fund had not been successful.

However, feedback had been received giving indications on the areas for improvement together with an invitation to make a new submission to the fourth round.

It was not possible to obtain advice from MyCommunity and therefore, the Council **RESOLVED** to agree to take advice from Michael Deegan a specialist in making applications, at a cost of £300 per day for up to three days.

c. Further financial advice from Parkinson Partnership – to consider a quotation for further advice regarding VAT implications for taking on responsibility for the Hall
There was nothing further to report.

d. Progress report – to receive a report
As previously noted, the Lease was finally engrossed on 29 January. There was a 14-day window on the registration with HMRC for the Stamp Duty form and unfortunately, this was missed by two days so a penalty charge of £100 had been incurred. This would be added to the solicitor's invoice.

The Clerk had had ongoing communications with SSE (the suppliers of electricity to the Parish Hall Management Committee). The Clerk had registered the new 'ownership' with SSE in February but following a system update, it was understood that their backlog was more than eight weeks. As no confirmation had been received, SSE suggested that the form was completed again, particularly as the EDF contract could not be started while there were outstanding issues on the SSE account.

However, having had a meeting with the Parish Hall Management Committee Treasurer and having spoken to SSE with the Treasurer's authority, it appeared that the situation had been clarified, photographic evidence of meter readings provided with final bills to the old committee sent. Once the SSE account had been closed, the Parish Council would be able to start the energy contract with EDF at more preferential rates.

The Bookings Secretary was managing the bookings on behalf of the Council and had been provided with paying in books and envelopes for cash and cheques for the Parish Council current account in order that payments can be made at the Post Office in Costcutter.

Once the energy account had been finalised, the Bookings Secretary and the Clerk would calculate how much the Parish Council owed the Hall Management account for the energy provision from 29 January to whenever the new contract was started, balancing that against how much all the bookings have taken in.

As the Lease had been obtained, the Parish Hall Working Group had been disbanded. The Parish Hall Management Committee would take its place.

9.28pm: the Council **RESOLVED** to agree to extend the meeting until 9.50pm

e. Broadband connection – to receive a progress report
Unfortunately, the appointment for 2 April was not recorded in the correct part of the Gigaclear system and the installation did not take place. A further date of 5 June had been arranged and confirmed by email.

13. Climate Emergency

a. Report – to receive a progress report
No further progress had been made.

14. Village Matters

a. Highway and Traffic Issues – to receive a general update

i. Bicester Road Resurfacing – to receive a progress report
The Clerk had received confirmation that the road was scheduled to be resurfaced from the railway bridge to the 'white gates' on Blackthorn Road. Dates were yet to be arranged, but the Clerk reminded OCC officers that access to the school must be taken into consideration.

ii. Speed Indicator Devices and Traffic management – to receive a general update
The SIDs were installed on 2 April and were working.

iii. Blackthorn Road 'Gates' – to receive a progress report
The white gates had been ordered, received and paid for by OCC. However installation would be the responsibility of the Parish Council.

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to the OCC Officer's recommendation that Oxfordshire County Council contractors undertake the work at a cost of £1,221.24 from the Road Safety Budget; the quotation included the required traffic management procedures.

iv. Speedwatch – to receive a progress report
The report had been provided and published on the website. The Clerk would publicise the Speedwatch group to encourage more volunteers.

The teams had been out regularly and had been supported by the Cherwell Thames Valley Police.

b. Rural Verge Cutting – to consider a quotation
The Clerk had asked the contractor again for a quotation.

c. Flooding in Village – to receive a report
The Clerk apologised for not having had the opportunity to follow this up.

d. Annual Parish Meeting – to note 18 April as the date for the Annual Parish Meeting
The Council noted the date.

15. Correspondence – to note correspondence received not otherwise on the agenda where decisions are not required
The Council **RESOLVED** to note the correspondence.

16. Attendance at Meetings and Reports from meetings / courses

a. OALC / OCC County Day – 20 March at County Hall
Councillor Thompson and the Clerk attended the meeting. It commenced with an update from the CEO, Martin Reeves, then Sean Rooney gave a presentation about highways issues. Following a break there was a presentation about nature recovery and after lunch a presentation by the Gypsy and Traveller Service. The final presentation was about the Local Transport Connectivity Plan and active transport.

b. OALC Managing Projects Training – 26 March
Councillor Turner and the Clerk attended the training.

c. OALC Councillor Forum – 9 April at 7pm and 14 May at 9.30am
The Council noted the dates of the forum meetings.

d. CDC Parish Liaison Meeting – 12 June (in person)
The Council noted the date.

17. Reports

a. Chairman's Report
The Chairman wished to thank all those who had been involved in the Parish Hall Working Group for the time and efforts they had put into the project.

b. Clerk's Report
The Clerk reported that she had completed the year end and was awaiting an appointment with the Internal Auditor.

18. Items for information or next Agenda only – all items for the next agenda to be submitted to the Clerk by Thursday 17 April

19. Date of next meeting – Thursday 2 May 2024 at 7.30pm in Launton SCHOOL Hall

The meeting closed at 9.47pm.

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**……………………………………………….**