LAUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on **Thursday 5 September 2024** at 7.30pm in Launton Parish Hall

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

In attendance: The Clerk, Mrs Jane Olds; Chair of the Launton Plotters; 10 members of the public

Apologies: None

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
   No Councillor apologies were received.

2. **Requests for Dispensations, Declarations of Interest, Gifts and Hospitality**
   Nothing was declared.

3. **To facilitate public participation with regard to items on the agenda**
   Ten members of the public were in attendance. Members of the public expressed concern about the Parish Hall project and the apparent lack of progress.

4. **East West Rail** – to receive a progress report from the EWR Liaison Officer
   Ms Sa'id was no longer working on the EWR project. The Clerk had asked the EWR team for a new contact and invited a representative to future meetings.

5. **Reports from District and County Councillors**
   Cllr Coton (CDC) had sent a written report. A new consultation (open until 1 October) on the Housing Allocation Scheme was available on the CDC website and an updated who's who at CDC had been provided.

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

6. **Minutes** – to confirm the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 1 August previously circulated
   The Council **RESOLVED** that the Minutes from the meeting on 1 August be accepted as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

   The Council **RESOLVED** to note the typographical error in the minutes from April to July for the mobile 'phone charge which had changed to £7.61.

7. **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 Member Officer Protocol had been updated and published.

   b. **Internal Audit**
      The appointment has been confirmed with Catherine Camp.

c. **Oxfordshire Charter**
The Clerk had confirmed the adoption of the Charter with OALC.

d. **Campaign for the safety of lithium-ion batteries**
The Clerk had confirmed taking part in the campaign.

e. **Parish Online Mapping**
The Clerk had set up the mapping account and offered Councillors logins.

f. **Bins**
The bins were still to be ordered.

g. **Hall Electrical Check**
The Electrical Installation Condition inspection had been confirmed with Austin Electrical. A date was due to be arranged.

8. **Governance and Consultations**

a. **Councillor Co-option** – to consider any applications received
The Clerk confirmed that an election had not been requested and that the vacancy had been advertised on the website and on social media.

One member of the public expressed an interest and would submit an application for the October meeting.

b. **Policy Review** – to review the policies

i. **Standing Orders**
The Council considered the Standing Orders and **RESOLVED** to agree that no changes were necessary and to adopt the document.

ii. **Dignity at Work / Bullying and Harassment Policy**
The Council considered the policy and **RESOLVED** that no changes were necessary and to agree to adopt it.

c. **OALC Subscription Increase**

i. **Proposal** - to consider the proposal and make a response
The Council considered the proposal and **RESOLVED** to accept the 7% increase in subscriptions for next year.

ii. **7 October Meeting** – to consider whether to submit the response in person at the meeting or via a postal vote
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to submit the response by postal vote. The form would be completed.

d. **Parish Remuneration Report** – to note that the report and figures from CDC for 2024/25 was yet to be announced
The Council noted that the CDC Democratic and Elections team were awaiting the results of the NJC pay settlement before compiling the report. Due to complexities with the Unions, it was unlikely to be announced soon.

e. Website Review – to receive a report from the Councillors about the website
Councillors Briant and Webber reviewed the website and reported that overall the website was easy to read, but some areas would benefit from an update and some of the articles in the news section could be removed or archived.

9. Finance

a. To receive the Finance Report

As at 16 August, the Accounts stood at:

Co-op Current Account	£8,576.00
Co-op Deposit Account	£2,000.45
Co-op 35-Day Deposit Account	£63,963.00
Lloyds Current Account Parish Hall	£1,903.71

Outstanding Payments

O2 Mobile August contract	£7.61
EDF Energy 19 June – 31 July	£125.36

Income to Lloyds Bank Account

April Hall Lettings	£294.00
May Hall Lettings	£224.00
June Hall Lettings	£198.00
July Hall Lettings	£189.00

Income to Co-op Current Account between 18 July and 16 August

Hall Lettings	£1,173.00

Standing Orders to note:

Date Cleared	Payee and reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Payment
1/8/24	Clerk's July salary (monthly)	Staff salary	7/12/23 9.c.	£822.25
5/8/24	Launton Lines (monthly)	Launton Lines	10/11/22 10.	£170.00

Direct Debits to note:

Date Cleared	Payee and reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Payment inc VAT
22/7/24	O2 Mobile July contract	Admin Costs	4/4/24 10. d.	£7.61
18/7/24	Castle Water June usage	Parish Hall Utilities	4/4/24 10. d.	£26.86

b. Internal Financial Control – to receive a report from the Councillor responsible for Internal Financial Control
Councillor Briant and the Clerk met on 2 September. Councillor Briant reported that everything was in order, but as mentioned at Item 6, the Clerk had omitted to update the amount of the mobile 'phone charge from £6.99 to £7.61 from April.

Councillors were urged to check the amounts.

c. **Bank Statements** – to acknowledge scrutiny and acceptance of the previously circulated bank statements
The bank statements were reviewed and accepted.

d. **Deposit Account** – to receive a progress report
The Clerk confirmed that she had made the transfer of £63,963.00 on 6 August.

e. **External Auditor Report and Certificate** – to receive the report and certificate for the 23/24 financial year
The Council received the report and certificate for the 23/24 financial year and **RESOLVED** to note the comments regarding the Statement of Variance which had not included enough detail about the staff salary and the suggestion that the Petty Cash line should not be included in the bank reconciliation. The Clerk had only included the zero petty cash line to indicate to the Auditors that it was recognised that no petty cash was held.

f. **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 Dowman would authorise.

Payment Method	Payee and reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Net Payment	Payment inc VAT
Bank Transfer	Calber Facilities Management Ltd for August grass cutting (invoice number CL474048)	Urban grass cutting	6/10/22 14.	£237.00	£284.40
Bank Transfer	HMRC NICS Employer Contribution (Month 5 August to September)	HMRC / NI	Statutory	£8.87	£8.87
Bank Transfer	Geoxphere Ltd for Parish Online Mapping (invoice no: 38UB042-0003)	Subscriptions	1/8/24 8. d.	£63.00	£75.60
Bank Transfer	OALC Training – Good Governance and Transparency (2 places) (invoice no: W-3451)	Training	1/8/24 10. a.	£100.00	£120.00
Bank Transfer	Moore for External Audit Fee (invoice no: 325509)	Audit	10/11/22 9. e.	£210.00	£252.00

The following payment was agreed at item 12. b.

Payment Method	Payee and reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Net Payment	Payment inc VAT
Cheque no: 200810	J P Ball for replacement kitchen door to Hall (emergency requirement)	Parish Hall Maintenance / Servicing	5/9/24 12. b.	£395.00	£395.00

The Council noted the Debit Card transaction.

Date Paid	Payee and reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Net Payment	Payment inc VAT
13/8/24	Zoom – August Subscription	Meeting costs	6/6/24 9. f.	£12.99	£15.59

10. 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 Clerk had booked two places on the OALC Good Governance training, but Councillor Webber was now unable to attend. The Clerk would request a refund of one place.

The Council noted that the Clerk would be attending the SLCC Finance Webinar on 11 September and the SLCC National Conference on 8 and 9 October.

9.25pm The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to extend the meeting until 10pm.

11. 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: 24/02006/F
Proposal: Extension to rear of garage to provide annex accommodation
Location: Apple Cottage, 37 West End, OX26 5DF
The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to agree that there were no comments or objections to the proposal.

ii. Application Number: 24/02038/ADV
Proposal: Retrospective - Erection of six poles with associated advertisement banners
Location: Bicester Heritage, Buckingham Road, OX27 8AL
The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to agree that there were no comments or objections to the proposal.

iii. Application Number: 24/02146/F and 24/02147/LB
Proposal: Bicester Heritage, Building 137, Bicester Heritage, OX27 8AL
Location: Change of Use of Building 137 from Class B8 to Sui Generis to provide indoor e-karting centre and attached annexes to Class E with associated repairs and conservation works
The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to agree that there were no comments or objections to the proposal.

iv. **Application Number: 24/02032/F**
Proposal: Variation of Condition 2 (plans) of 23/03036/F - Design amendments
Location: Salamanca, Bicester Road, OX26 5DQ
The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to agree that there were no comments or objections to the proposal.

v. **Application Number: 24/02166/F**
Proposal: Single storey rear extension and garage conversion
Location: 2 Coppice Way, OX26 5AQ
The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to agree that there were no comments or objections to the proposal.

vi. **Application Number: 24/00770/F (re-consultation)**
Proposal: Proposed building to garage vintage/collectable cars. Building to provide protection and storage, not maintenance or restoration.
Location: Ash Grove House, West End, OX26 5DF
The Council considered the application and **RESOLVED** to agree that there were no comments or objections to the proposal.

b. To note notices of decision

i. **Application Number: 24/00912/F**
Proposal: Erection of a garden building in front of the dwelling with a sliding door and composite decking on the front and a high-level vent window on a right side elevation. The one-room insulated building will measure 3.8 width, 3 m depth, and 2.5 m at the highest point.
Location: 4 The Glades, OX26 5ED
Refusal of permission for development (1 August)

ii. **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
Permission for development subject to conditions (12 August)

iii. **Application Number: 24/01664/F**
Proposal: Change of Use of Building 116 from Sui Generis MOD use to Class E/B8 to create office and storage, with associated alterations
Location: Building 116 , Bicester Heritage, Buckingham Road, Bicester
Permission for development subject to conditions (15 August)

iv. **Application Number: 24/01607/CLUE**
Proposal: Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use for existing building with mixed Class Use: Mews 7B - class use E(c)i; Mews 7C - class use E(c)ii; Mews 7D - class use E(c)iii; Mews 7E - class use B2; Mews 7F - class use B2; Mews 7G - class use B2
Location: Mews 7 Grange Farm, Station Road, OX26 5DX
Refusal of lawful development certificate for an existing use or operation or activity including those in breach of a planning condition (19 August)

v. **Application Number: 23/01667/F – Appeal Ref: APP/C3105/W/23/3331379**
Proposal: Replacement windows and external doors
Location: West End Farm House, 56 West End, OX26 5DG
The Council noted the report.

The Parish Hall Project and the Allotments were discussed during public participation.

12. Parish Hall Project

a. **Revised quotation for roof works** – to consider the quotation
The Council considered the revised quotation. In view of the unexpectedly high increase in cost from the original £47,000 to the revised quotation of £134,931.00 + VAT, the Council **RESOLVED** to agree to take further advice from the architect about whether the costs could be reduced and whether the roof could be considered a stand-alone project.

b. **Progress report** – to receive a report
The outside kitchen door had been damaged beyond repair. In order that the Hall security could be maintained a replacement door had been sourced and a carpenter had been asked to undertake the work. Unfortunately, it had not been possible to include the quotation on the agenda and the work had already taken place.

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree that the work should have been completed and agreed the invoice of £395 for the replacement door and fitting.

c. **WI redecoration project** – to receive a report
The Council thanked the President of the WI for organising support to get the Hall smartened up. 27 villagers came to help.

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to make a formal vote of thanks to the WI and the villagers for their valued contributions.

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to waive the hire charge for the WI to hold a community coffee morning on 12 October.

d. **Grants Group submissions** – to receive a report
The Council received the report which had been considered as part of the general discussion during public participation about the way forward for the project.

13. Allotments

a. **Tenants** – to receive a report from the Launton Plotters
The Launton Plotters' Chair attended the meeting and reported that the East West Rail project team had vacated the land which had been needed for the construction of the rail project in September 2023 and that all was in order.

While 10 plots were lost to the railway construction, there were a total of 79 plots with 47 Plotters, some of whom had more than one plot. The rent was currently £15 a year.

The Plotters asked the Council to request whether it would be possible to plant fruit trees on the site as part of the revised Lease; the Clerk would take this forward with the land owners.

b. **Councillor Representative** – to consider the appointment of a Councillor representative on the Plotters committee
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree that any Councillor who was available to attend the Plotters' Committee Meetings (which took place every quarter) would be the representative on an ad hoc basis.

c. **Asset of Community Value** – to consider a request to register the allotment land as an asset of community value
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree await the response from the landowner before taking the proposal further.

14. Climate Emergency

a. **Report** – to receive a progress report
No further progress had been made. The Launton Environmental Society's AGM was scheduled for 13 September.

15. Village Matters

a. **Highway and Traffic Issues**

i. **Speedwatch** – to receive a progress report
No report had been received.

ii. **Speed Indicator Devices** – to receive a report
The Station Road SID had been turned round to face the traffic. No further progress had been made on downloading the data.

b. **Remembrance**

i. **Poppy Wreath** – to consider the purchase of a new remembrance wreath or to make a contribution to the Royal British Legion if the current wreath is acceptable
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to re-use the current wreath.

ii. **Poppies** – to consider the purchase of poppies for the street lamps from the Royal British Legion
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to the purchase of 10 lamp post poppies from the RBL at a cost of £5 per poppy instead of the purchase of a wreath.

The Clerk would order the poppies.

iii. **Poppy Cascade** – to consider financial assistance with storage options
The Council considered the request from the informal Poppy Cascaders group for assistance with the purchase of some strong waterproof bags to store the nets of poppies which had been created by the group in order that the work could be re-used in future years.

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to the purchase of four bags from Amazon at a cost of £21.24 excluding VAT and delivery. These would then be made as an 'in kind' grant to the group.

c. **Launton Arms** – to consider nominating the venue as an Asset of Community Value
The Clerk had received conflicting advice from Community First Oxfordshire and Cherwell District Council about whether it was possible to nominate a pub when it was on the market.

Cherwell District Council – as the ultimate arbiters of whether an ACV could be approved – confirmed that it was possible, but that the ACV would still take eight weeks from receipt of a completed nomination. It was suggested to the villagers who enquired, due to the time constraints and before any more work was undertaken, that potential funding sources should be found should the ACV be successful and there was a moratorium on the sale. A formal business plan would also need to be provided.

10.00pm The Council **RESOLVED** to extend the meeting until 10.10pm.

d. **Winter Preparedness** – to consider whether any more grit bins or salt was required
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree that no further grit bins or salt was needed.

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

17. **Attendance at Meetings and Reports from meetings / courses**

a. **OALC Cyber Security Training** – 5 August
Councillor Turner attended the training which, it was felt, was aimed at larger organisations rather than parish councils.

In view of this, OALC had offered one free place on the Cyber Protection session on 25 September which Councillor Turner would attend.

b. **OALC Councillor Forum** – 13 August at 7pm and 10 September at 9.30am, 8 October at 12noon and 12 November at 2.30pm – to receive a report from the August meeting and agree attendance at the future meetings
No Councillor was able to attend the August meeting.

The Council noted the dates of future meetings.

c. **OALC Extraordinary Meeting** - 7 October 12noon (online)
The Council **RESOLVED** to agree that it was not necessary to attend, but would send in the postal vote.

d. **CDC Digital Infrastructure Webinar** – 8 October (7pm – 8pm)
Councillor Turner confirmed his attendance.

18. **Reports**

a. **Chairman's Report**
The Chairman had nothing further to report.

b. **Clerk's Report**
The Clerk reported that she would be attending the SLCC National Conference on 7, 8 and 9 October.

19. **Items for information or next Agenda only** – all items for the next agenda to be submitted to the Clerk by Wednesday 19 September

20. **Date of next meeting** – Thursday 3 October 2024 at 7.30pm in Launton Parish Hall.

The meeting closed at 10.07pm.

Signed………………………………………………….. Dated**……………………………………………….**