

MARCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Marcham Parish Council held on Wednesday 14th October, 2009 in the residents' lounge, Duffield Place, Marcham at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

Mr. M. Denton (Chairman), Mrs. J. Allan, Mr. C. Bough, Mr. W. Cumber,
Mrs. M. Evans, Mrs. C. Ricketts, Mrs. S. Turney, Mr. D. Walton
Clerk: Mrs. L. Martin
9 members of the public
Mrs. W. Robinson, MacIntyre Trust

Prior to the commencement of formal business Mrs. Robinson from the MacIntyre Trust outlined the potential scenario for a shop in the village. She spoke regarding the work of the charity which offered life long support for people with learning disabilities. Government proposals were such that all youngsters would receive education until the age of 18 including those with learning disabilities. Funding was available to set up enterprises to give such students work experience. The vacant Post Office shop in Marcham provided an opportunity for the foundation learning course. Should the project go ahead it would need the support of the community, as it was unlikely to be commercial, and would be run on the lines of a community shop with volunteers as well. The Post Office was committed to keeping a service in the village and a business manager for the shop would also be the postmaster. A questionnaire seeking comments from the village would be circulated should the idea progress. It was likely that a final decision would be made in January, when the project, if supported by the relevant organisations would move ahead quickly.

The Chairman thanked Mrs. Robinson for her presentation and she then left the meeting.

2009/183

Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

The building's fire alarm sounded, and the Chairman adjourned the meeting. The Chairman re-opened the meeting after 15 minutes.

2009/184

Casual Vacancies – 2 seats

The Clerk summarised the co-option procedure and the legal requirement to have an absolute majority in order to select a candidate. 4 candidates had put themselves forward and their details had been provided to members.

Mr. Cumber proposed, seconded by Mrs. Allan, that the co-option proceed by way of secret ballot.

Voting took place for the first seat with one candidate emerging with an absolute majority, it was then

RESOLVED:

that Mr. Rowe be co-opted to join the Council until the next election.

Voting took place for the second seat with one candidate emerging with an absolute majority, it was then

RESOLVED:

that Miss Mander be co-opted to join the Council until the next election

2009/185

Declaration of Acceptance

Both Mr. Rowe and Miss Mander made and signed the declaration of acceptance and joined the meeting.

2009/186

Declarations of Interest

Mr. Cumber declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the agenda item relating to the Post Office/Shop in that he was a director of a company which owned the building.

The Clerk advised that although the Members Code of Conduct did not relate to officers, and there being no Code of Conduct for officers in operation, she, none the less would leave the room during the agenda item relating to the planning application for Dove Cottage as this property was immediately to the rear of her property, and also for the agenda item in relation to the premium bus routes in that the County Council was proposing to permanently site a bus stop at the front of her property.

2009/187

Minutes of the meeting held on 9th September, 2009

These were agreed and signed as a true record of the proceedings.

2009/188

Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th September, 2009

Demolition of Wall

Council noted that the demolition of a wall as raised by a parishioner at the last meeting, did not require planning permission unless in a conservation area or if it were a listed structure. Widening a driveway would require consent from the County Council and also the involvement of the Vale of White Horse District Council as planning authority where it opened onto a classified road.

Morland Road - Pothole

Council noted that this pothole had now been repaired.

Best Kept Garden Competition

Council noted receipt of a letter of thanks from Cllr. Rooke, Chairman of the Vale of White Horse District Council for the invitation to present the garden competition prizes. It also noted receipt of a letter of thanks from one of the winners who had been unable to attend the presentation evening.

2009/189

Public Participation

Planning Application 7 Anson Close

Mr. Butt spoke regarding the planning application for an extension to 7 Anson Close and a new house adjacent. He sought the support of the Parish Council in objecting to the application on various issues including the inaccuracy of the drawings, the over dominant nature of the building, the loss of daylight and sunlight and the proximity to the culvert.

Planning Application Dove Cottage

Mr. Martin spoke regarding the planning application for an extension to Dove Cottage, Abingdon Road and a new garage block and store. He sought the support of the Parish Council in raising concerns about the garage and store block. He referred to the inaccuracy of the drawings, the impact on his property as it was sited close to living accommodation, and the proposed materials to be used as they did not relate to the closest building.

Article MAD News

Mr. Buckingham spoke regarding the Anson Trust's article in MAD News which stated that the Council had been collaborating with the Trust regarding the Trust's proposals. He reminded the Council that they should first have a mandate from the people. The Chairman appreciated his concerns, as Council members too had been surprised to read the article. This was to be discussed as an agenda item later.

Mr. Cumber left the room.

Village Shop

Council discussed the presentation by Mrs. Robinson. It appeared to be a practical solution for an empty shop and an innovative opportunity. It was understood that the Church would like to be involved. Mrs. Robinson needed for her reports, some ideas as to what the village required

RESOLVED:

that a working party comprising Mr. Denton, Mrs. Evans, Miss Mander, and Mrs. Ricketts be set up to pursue the idea of the charity using the empty shop premises to start a community shop, and to bring reports to Council.

Mr. Cumber rejoined the meeting.

2009/190

Planning Applications

a) Decisions on previous applications

MAR/SAH/1841/38 Erection of a two storey boarding accommodation block and associated car parking
Cothill House School, Cothill
Refused 23rd September, 2009

b) Applications dealt with prior to the meeting

MAR/2394/10 and MAR/2394/7-LB Proposed rebuilding of the former gables to the now roofless Tithe Barn at Tithe House and to reinstate roof.

Tithe House, 15 Church Street

For: Mr. J. Duffield

Comments: Council had no objections, but asked that trees be protected if access was required from the Churchyard. Access to the Churchyard should be maintained for services, funerals etc.

MAR/2394/8 and MAR/2394/9-LB Proposed reinstatement of the former roof form to the dovecote

Tithe House, 15 Church Street

For: Mr. J. Duffield

Comments: Council had no objections, but asked that trees be protected if access was required from the Churchyard. All works vehicles to be parked off street to enable access to the Churchyard for services, weddings etc.

c) Applications for consideration at the meeting

Council agreed to take these applications in an order different from the agenda.

MAR/3793/5 Demolition of existing kitchen and conservatory. Internal alterations. Extension to provide new dining area, kitchen, conservatory, bedroom and shower room

Cothill Farm House, Blackhorse Lane

For: Mr. J. Hoek

Comments: Council had no objections

The Clerk left the room for the following item. In the absence of the Clerk, the Chairman took the notes and drafted the following minute

MAR/10588/2 Erection of two storey side extension, alterations to property

Dove Cottage, Abingdon Road

For: Mr and Mrs. N. Lawrie

Comments: Council was concerned that the representation of existing buildings was inaccurate. The scale of the proposed garage and store should be reviewed and it should be relocated closer to Dove Cottage. No concerns regarding the extension to the dwellinghouse.

The Clerk rejoined the meeting.

MAR/20996 Extension to existing house and erection of new detached house with associated fencing and driveways.

7 Anson Close

For: Mr. M. Dearing

Comments: Council objected to the development for the new house in that it would result in a cramped form of development and be an over development of the plot, lacking in amenity space. Council objected to the erection of the 1.8m fence as the remainder of the street scene was open plan. It considered the development would cause impact on neighbouring properties and would over look those in Anson Close and Hyde Copse. Flooding was a potential problem should the culvert be affected by the development, and local drainage could be affected . As for the extension to the existing dwelling, the Council had concerns that it could cause overlooking of the properties to the rear.

Council expressed concern generally that two of the applications considered at this meeting had incorrect drawings in that they did not accurately represent boundaries, the proximity to buildings and the accurate location and size of adjacent buildings.

RESOLVED:

that the Clerk write to the Vale of White Horse District Council advising of the Council's concern and requesting that future drawings for consultation accurately represent the position on site.

2009/191

County Councillor's Report

Cllr. Brown referred to the following items:

Oxfordshire County Council - Budget

The budget for 2010/11 was about to be considered. This would be a difficult budget owing to the general economic situation.

A34 diamond North Abingdon

There was support for the "on" "off" slip roads both North and Southbound at the A34 Abingdon North, but the question was the funding of the works.

Parish Plans

Cllr Brown made reference to community led planning. He was aware that East and West Hanney were preparing a plan, and suggested that Marcham might like to think again about a plan.

SCOTS – Southern Central Oxfordshire Transport Study

The findings on this were to be made public soon. The proposals would be

dependent on developer funding from Wantage.

Speed Limit Review

There were no surprises as far as speed limits were concerned for Marcham. The 30 mph section of the A338 through Hanney would remain.

Thames Water - Reservoir

A 5 week public inquiry was going to be held. The County Council together with the District Council was considering hiring a barrister to represent the authorities.

Minerals Plan

There was no formal adopted policy on minerals at the moment, other than policies brought forward from a previous plan and Cllr. Brown was pushing for one to be formally adopted to ensure officers had firm guidelines for recommendations.

Larkmead School

Government had allocated funding for "Better Schools for the Future". Larkmead School had been identified for funding.

Flooding

Cllr. Brown referred to funding which was available for flood groups. A grant application has already been lodged for Marcham. He passed on the thanks from residents of Hanney to Mr. Cumber for digging out the ditch in the area. He also referred to the fact that 200 properties had been removed from the Environment Agency's flood plan. The Chairman commented that Marcham flood group's members were attending a forum meeting at the end of the month.

2009/192

District Councillor's Report

Cllr. Hanna reported that since the last meeting the District Council's Development Control committee had refused permission for the extension to Cothill School.

The working group set up by her had met the previous week. The group was concerned that its purpose appeared to be misunderstood. The sole purpose was to encourage the widest consultation on plans which may be submitted in due course. The group had no control over what went into the plan. Once it was known what was proposed then a survey would be planned and a public meeting held. The group had felt it was unfortunate that the word "collaborate" was used in the Anson Trust's article in MAD News. The group had invited the Trust to be represented at two of its meetings in order to receive an update on the time lines of what the Trust was planning, so it could plan its consultation. As for the public meeting arrange for Friday 16th October, it was unclear who was arranging this, and she had not received any invitation as the

Chair of the working group, or the District Councillor. She had intended to speak from the floor about the planning process and the official consultation that would take place.

Colin Bough, as a Trustee of the Anson Trust, asked to speak. He stated that the word “collaborate” which appeared in the article was unfortunate and it should have said “co-operation”.

2009/193

Anson Trust – proposals for new village facilities – article in October MAD News regarding public meeting on 16th October.

Members discussed their surprise at seeing the meeting advertised in the village newsletter, and wondered whether there was any advantage in a public meeting until it was known what the Trust’s plans were. The meeting appeared to be led by the members around the field group in co-operation with the M.P. The members were astonished to read in the newsletter the article from the Trust stating that it was collaborating with the Parish Council. This was not the case. The Council was independent of any organisation, and had representatives on the working party set up by Jane Hanna, so that planning could take place on how the District Councillor and the Parish Council could seek the views of the residents on any proposals put forward by the Trust. Council discussed whether it should have a formal role in the planned meeting.

Mr. Bough, as a Trustee explained how the meeting had come about.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Council strongly refutes the suggestion that the Anson Trust had been collaborating with the Parish Council.
- (i) that an article be placed in the next edition of MAD News confirming this position
- (ii) that the Council not have a formal role in the public meeting on Friday 16th October.

2009/194

Recreation – Longfields Play Area

Council noted that the cost of a new installed litter bin to match others in the village would be approximately £400. Council also noted that fencing with a vehicular access gate and two self closing pedestrian gates identical to the play area fencing in the Anson field would be in the region of £3500. Council noted that the chain link fence with wooden top and bottom needed to be more substantial.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that a guppy litter bin be purchased from Glasdon together with the ground rods for installation at a cost of £350.00
- (ii) that the Clerk take steps to have this installed
- (iii) that the Clerk obtain estimates for the cost of replacing the chain link fencing and repairing the existing fence at the Longfields play area.

2009/195 Vale of White Horse District Council – Gambling Act 2005
Council noted the consultation documents on the Statement of Licensing Policy. It noted that the Vale of White Horse District Council had agreed not to have a casino in the district.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Parish Council had no substantial comments to make on the policy
- (ii) that a letter be sent to the Vale of White Horse District Council applauding the decision not to have a casino in the district.

2009/196 Oxfordshire County Council – National Highways and Transport Network questionnaire
Council noted that the County Council was taking part in the National Highways and Transport Survey, and that the Parish Council had been asked to find the time to produce a collective response to the questionnaire. Responses could be given to the Clerk outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED:

that the response to questionnaire be delegated to the Clerk in consultation with members

The Clerk, having indicated that she would leave the room, was asked to stay, as comments were likely to be general and did not relate exclusively to the permanent siting of a bus stop outside her property.

2009/197 Oxfordshire County Council – Bus Routes 31 and X30 – Formal Bus Stop Markings – Consultation
Council considered the proposals for formal marking of the bus stops put forward by the County Council. Concerns were raised about the build out in the layby opposite Longfields, and also the proposal to site a stop outside the Post Office. These two proposals would severely restrict the on street parking which currently took place, and could affect the viability of the shop should this re-open. Whilst the Council had previously supported the introduction of real time information and the marking of stops, it had not appreciated that it might result in the moving of stops. It was thought that a site meeting was necessary to further consider the situation. The Chairman, Miss Mander and Mr. Walton offered to visit the bus stop sites.

RESOLVED:

that the Clerk arrange for a site meeting to take place with the County Council.

2009/198 Sustainable Communities Act
Cllr. Brown indicated that he had supported a motion at the County Council. The proposal was for Government to devolve down. Council discussed the letter received from Local Works.

RESOLVED:

that no formal Council response be sent.

2009/199

North Street – opposite New Road – Complaint regarding overhanging flowers and narrow path

Council discussed concerns raised that the hollyhock and other flowers overhanging the footway made it difficult for residents to pass by when the flowers were wet, as the footway was particularly narrow.

RESOLVED:

that a letter be sent to the occupier of the property asking that they be tied up and properly managed otherwise the County Council could ask for them to be removed.

2009/200

Correspondence

- a) Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association – Annual General Meeting 21st October at Islip Village Hall
- b) Campaign to Protect Rural England – Oxfordshire Briefing. Following a legal challenge to the South East Plan the Secretary of State conceded that insufficient consideration had been given to alternatives to the proposed extension in the green belt of Grenoble Road.
- c) Thames Water Utilities Ltd – Draft Water Resources Management Plan
The revised plan was available at www.thameswater.coluk/wrmp
- d) Oxfordshire County Council – Use of Road Safety Team’s Mobile Information Unit. Council noted that the Road Safety Team had a mobile exhibition unit which could be used for fetes, roadside events with the police and engagement with the public.
- e) Training event on common land, village greens. 9th November at Minster Lovell
- f) Oxfordshire County Council – exhibition of the County Council’s proposals for the new crossing over the River Thames at Newbridge on 26th, 27th/28th November at the Rose Revived PH, Newbridge.

2009/201

Accounts

Council noted the list of cheques numbered 2035– 2043 to be signed and authorised payments totalling £5020.88 in respect of administration costs, play area/maintenance, grass cutting, and grant awarded

2009/202

Matters Raised by members for information

New mobile fish and chip van

The Council’s attention was brought to a new mobile fish and chip van which visited the village on Wednesdays. An “A” board had appeared at the end of Howard Cornish Road, and the van had started stopping at Longfields. The Clerk was asked to ensure that the business was aware of the village newsletter where he could advertise his business.

Oxfordshire County Council – Street Lights

The Clerk was asked when selected street lights in the parish would be turned off . The Clerk indicated she had not heard specifically from the County Council, and would make enquiries.

Marcham Primary School – opening of new classroom

Cllr. Brown said that the new classroom at the school would be officially opened on Thursday 15th October. Mr. Denton as Chairman, knew about this and would be attending.

Churchyard

Mrs. Allan stated that a branch had come down and essential works to the trees in the Churchyard were required. Mrs. Allan had met with one contractor who had summarised the works needed and provided one quotation. The Clerk confirmed that other quotations had been sought. The funding may have to come from reserves, with the Council adding the cost to the precept for the next financial year.

Litter Blitz

Miss Mander said that it was noted during the village tidy up that many cigarette butts were in Haines Court. She suggested a litter bin might help. Thought could be given to this for the future, but many cigarette butts were thrown out of the windows at the flats, so a bin may not help.

War Memorial

The Chairman produced a sketch of some proposed alterations to the surroundings to the war memorial. These would enable a ramp to be installed. This could be a matter for discussion at a future meeting.

2009/203

Items for MAD News

Council noted the list of items for inclusion in the village newsletter.

2009/204

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council would be held on Wednesday 11th November, 2009 in the residents' lounge, Duffield Place at 7.30 p.m.

The Chairman moved, that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the remainder of the business, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

Remainder of the meeting – Staffing matters

The meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.

Signed Date