

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF STEEPLE BARTON PARISH COUNCIL
Monday 15th July 2024
THE ALICE MARSHALL HALL, MIDDLE BARTON

Councillors Present: Roger Tyers (Chair), Kate Carter-Windle (Vice), John Parry, Jane McRobie, Steve Rogers, Andy Barry, Graham Cox

Clerk: Annette Fowler

Public: 5 + Cllr John Howson, Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young, OCC

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Prior to the council meeting commencing there will be an opportunity of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to make comments and to ask questions of the Parish Council.

A member of the public mentioned that the footpath off Worton Road down into Holliers Field needs clearing. The Clerk to report to the Foot Paths Warden.

1582 **To receive apologies for absence.**
The Council received apologies from Andy Hinton.

1583 **Declarations of Interest**
To receive declarations of interest in accordance with the council’s Code of Conduct (and section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992).

Cllr Tyers declared an interest in item 9 below.

1584 **Minutes of the last meeting**
The minutes from the meeting held on **17th June 2024** were approved and signed as an accurate record by Cllr Roger Tyers.

1585 **To receive updates on the action points from previous minutes –
Home to School transport brought forward –**

Cllr McRobie read out the statement that had been posted on the village Facebook page on 12th July –

OCC have decided to withdraw the school bus for children who do not meet eligibility criteria, qualifying for free transport to school. Their new policy is that children will get free transport to their nearest school. Children attending other schools and qualifying for free transport essentially have either statements of need arising from mobility or other safeguarding issues, or their parents qualify for income related benefits.

Signed

Date.....

STEEPLE BARTON PARISH COUNCIL

Currently there are 54 children needing to get to Chipping Norton School and living within the Bartons Ward who do not have transport to school. This does not include children outside of the Bartons Ward who may in the past have also used this transport. 8 children are eligible and will have free school transport to Chipping Norton. Additionally, children living in the Bartons Ward and using other arrangements: 6 children are eligible for free school transport to Heyford Park 4 children are eligible for free school transport to The Marlborough school 3 children attend The Marlborough school and use the spare seats scheme (although I understand that there may be an issue with the Marlborough bus) OCC have decided to ask a local bus company to provide a commercial bus to fill the gap for the 54 children in need of transport, but the proposed cost is £1100 per year per child. Several parents have more than one child needing this arrangement and the costs for many parents are too high to make this a viable option if there is any alternative.

Of course, in Middle Barton there is no alternative public transport and so the realistic options are parents running a transport system themselves or taking their own children to school. This is the least environmentally sustainable option, presents a significant time sacrifice for parents, and means that the options for children to fully engage with the school are more limited than they already are.

First and foremost, it is not clear that the proposed alternative will in any way be reliable. Pulhams have stated that the service may be withdrawn at any time, presumably if the route is not financially viable.

However, subsequent to a meeting with OCC on 12 July, there is a development here: OCC are clearly anticipating that parents will avail themselves of the new bus arrangements and that one large bus will still run between Middle Barton and Chipping Norton school. In many ways this means that the only thing that has changed is the cost.

We recognise that cost is not an insignificant issue, and the stakeholders will be exploring options to support parents. OCC advise any parents who may be eligible for free school meals to get in touch with them.

Furthermore, OCC have advised that this situation is specifically for this year, as transport provision will be reviewed for the next period (5 years or so) next year.

Whilst the situation is less satisfactory, it does seem to offer a more reliable option than previously thought. OCC are to issue a clarifying letter w/c 15th July but provide this information for parents:

Signed

Date.....

Families on low income

We provide free transport where pupils are entitled to free school meals, or their parent receives the maximum level of working tax credit and if the child is:

- aged 8-11 and the nearest suitable school is more than two miles
- aged 11-16 and the school is between 2-6 miles (and there are not three or more suitable nearer schools)
- aged 11-16 and the school is between 2-15 miles and is the nearest school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief.

CLlr Howson talked about a meeting due to be held tomorrow to approve the cost of £1,100 per year per child, and stressed that this is the discounted price that Pulham’s are charging. The current policy is that transport is only paid for to the nearest school.

Questions/comments raised –

OCC subsidise normal bus journeys for £2 but not the school bus.

If Heyford School was full and children went to Chipping Norton, then places would have to be paid for.

Could Chipping Norton School have their own bus service.

1586 Reports from County and District Councillors (Appendix A)

Full reports can be found on the PC website www.steeplebartonparishcouncil.org

Councillor Andy Graham –

The EU Summit is being held at Blenheim Palace on the 18/19th, this will have a severe impact on the area and disruption to the local bus service. The Game Fair is 28th/29th July.

Councillor Dave Jackson –

POSSIBLE MEETING WITH CHRIS GRAIN (Highways Officer)

As I mentioned at the June meeting, Chris suggested he might be able to meet with members of the P.C. sometime this month. I have written back to him to ask if he could pick a suitable day and time. I also asked if he thought it would be a good idea to invite any other councillors from our neighbouring smaller parishes in the Bartons ward. I mentioned the next SBPC meeting and asked if he could find a date/time ASAP so I can let you know.

BLOCKED DRAINS

After recent heavy rain, the drains at the junction of Kiddington Road and Fox Lane are again blocked, and the road was completely flooded all the way across for most of the next day.

I was going to do a post on Fix my Street (FMS), when I read a "SuperUser" newsletter, which said that I am now allowed to schedule the action for blocked drains on FMS.

I am also going to stress the need (yet again) to get the kerb clearing team to come and scrape off all the mud/silt/gravel round the drains, which simply washes into the drains as soon as they have been cleared. So I am going to do that before the next meeting.

Signed

Date.....

VERGES

I had two requests from residents a couple of days apart regarding the verges between the village and past the allotments and onwards past Barton House. The resident at Barton House showed me the dangers of them turning into their drive from a westerly direction with cars speeding round the bend, and their visibility obscured by the tall grass on the verge. Another resident asked if the hedge alongside the pavement from the Cinnamon Stick to Bartongate could be trimmed back. So, I did both requests on a FMS post, suggesting they cut all the verge, both sides, not just those locations. At the same time, I reminded them that the awkward pothole just past the allotments on the bend has still not been fixed, despite numerous postings from me and others. I wrote a separate e mail to Chris Grain to ram home the point!!

POTHoles and KERBS

I am hoping during the next spell of settled sunny weather to do another round of SuperUser pothole logging as I have noticed they are re-appearing in the usual places where the tarmac is weak, e.g. Kiddington Road, Mill Lane, Jervis Close. I will do a grand tour including areas in Sandford St Martin. (Nether Worton, Worton and Ledwell have no speed limits, so frustratingly I cannot mark them). I am also going to schedule action to mend the granite kerbstones at the junction of Frances Road and Worton Road, and any others I discover on my "tour".

1587 Village Matters

a) Floods – We are obtaining three quotes to upgrade the highways drain at the school to 9". OCC have a flood risk management strategy consultation, more details via link below – <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/local-flood-risk-management-strategy>

b) ANPR – No further progress, bring forward to September.

c) PC Trees - quotes for work required to 20 PC trees – one received so far for £630.00. Clerk to chase up the other two quotes and include in the September agenda.

d) Home to School Transport – see minute point 1585 above.

e) Proposed housing development for 500-1000 houses in Woodstock – Cllr McRobie asked Cllr Graham if there would be S106 money to build a new surgery. Cllr Graham confirmed that money for a new surgery had not been allocated. However, there could be a supercentre in Begbroke. Discussions are ongoing.

1588 Donation request from Middle Barton School towards the cost of a new reading scheme- total cost £4,000 – In principle the PC would be happy to support but asked for more detail of why the books need to be replaced, and what has been thrown away and why. It has been brought to the PC's attention that books in perfect condition have been thrown away (this may be that they are outdated). The Clerk will request further details for the next meeting.

Signed

Date.....

1589 Reports

(a) Highways (Cllr Barry)

Potholes towards Barton House have been repaired but not correctly. Cars are driving up to 30 miles an hour but the average speed is 23.9.

(b) Drainage and Flood Protection (Cllr Tyers)

See above minute reference 1587(a).

(c) Sports and Social Club/Playing Fields (Andy Hinton), Bowls Club Andy Barry

No report

1590 **Planning Applications**

22/02947/OUT - Land East Off Worton Road, Middle Barton

Cllr Tyers left the room. Cllr McRobie had produced a statement that had been circulated to all Councillors before the meeting. The following statement was read by Cllr McRobie -

The development at the top of the Worton Road will be examined at a 'Hearing' at WODC by an Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate in the forthcoming weeks. This is the next stage in the process as there was an 'Appeal' lodged against WODC's decision to refuse permission to develop.

As a consequence, the Parish Councillors have been consulted regarding their current views about this development. Note, Cllr Tyers has not been involved on this matter, having declared an interest.

The current proposal is for 28 dwellings of diverse type and yielding accommodation for many types of occupancy including elderly, singles and families. The promoter has worked hard to present the development as sensitive to the local area and designed to service local need. A proportion of the homes will be 'social housing' and we are given to understand that people with local connections to Middle Barton will be given priority for such housing.

This development is smaller in size than others, so proposes less impact in terms of an influx of residents, and offers a number of benefits to the Parish, including attracting more pupils for the school.

Environmental concerns for this development are minimal.

The council therefore are proposing to support this development as it offers enhanced opportunity to service the local need.

Signed

Date.....

However, we have a number of points:

- a. We do want to ensure that priority is given to people with links to the village, particularly in relation to ‘social housing’
- b. We understand there will be an attenuation pond for surface water drainage and will seek assurance that this will not contribute to flooding either in the area adjacent, the Worton Road, or to the Cockley Brook SSSI
- c. We have some concerns about water pressure, and we are aware that for residents in the Marshall Crescent/ Hillside Road area the water pressure drops at peak times. We will seek assurance that the water authorities will make suitable mitigation for both the new development and existing homes
- d. We will be seeking assurance that the sewerage system will be able to cope with the proposed new homes
- e. There would need to be suitable traffic management plan during the construction phase

1591 Finance

(a) Accounts for Payment

- i) To consider and approve accounts for payment (*Appendix B to agenda*)
- ii) Accounts not on Appendix B submitted by 8pm on **15th July 2024**

Payment Method	Purpose	Payee	Amount
BACS	Clerk Salary (Jun)	Annette Fowler	£327.10
BACS	PAYE Q1	HMRC	£245.20
BACS	Flower box planting	Eric Probbitts	£275.00
D/D	Xmas tree electricity supply	SSE	£ 17.40
BACS	Payroll preparation Apr-Jun 24	T P Jones & Co LLP	£ 59.40
BACS	Laptop reboot & new hard drive	Computerpro	£114.00
D/D	Electricity standing charge	SSE	£ 17.44

1592 To receive items for next agenda.

Items to be emailed to the Clerk.

1593 For Information only

1594 Date and location of next meeting

To confirm the date of the next meeting, this is scheduled for **Monday 16th September 2024** at the Alice Marshall Hall, Middle Barton at **8.00pm**.

Signed

Date.....