

HARBURY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
Thursday, 23 January 2025 at 7.30pm
Harbury Village Hall

Present

Cllr Tim Lockley (Chair)	Cllr Keith Thompson
Cllr Kate Gard (from 7.35pm)	Cllr Chris Bradley
Cllr Alex Potter	Cllr Samantha Allen
Cllr Julie Balch	Cllr Edward Mulley
Cllr Robert Stockdale	Cllr Alan Knowles

Absent

None

In Attendance

Alison Biddle, Clerk to the Council
County Cllr Chris Kettle
District Cllr Susan Ostrander

Public

8 members of the public

25/001 Apologies

None

25/002 Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Allen declared a personal interest in agenda item 6 relating to a grant application from Harbury School PTA as her children attend the school.
- Cllr Stockdale declared a personal interest in agenda item 14.4 relating to a quotation for field mowing from Frank Mann Farmers as he sometimes uses this contractor himself.

25/003 Dispensations

There were no dispensation requests.

25/004 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the parish council held on 28 November 2024 as a true and complete record of that meeting.

25/005 Public Participation

Anti-social Behaviour

A resident complained about the longstanding and ongoing problem of anti-social behaviour in Rainbow Crescent. He asked for the parish council's assistance in dealing with the problem. The chairman explained that the parish council was not the relevant authority and that all

incidents needed to be reported to the police. District Cllr Ostrander is very aware of the problems and has already discussed them with the resident but it might be helpful if the PC could lend its support. The PC chair agreed to write to Orbit and Southam SNT to ask for more support for residents and action to improve the situation.

Planning

What does the parish council know about the new South Warwickshire Local Plan (SWLP)? The PC chair explained that this was on the agenda for discussion later in the meeting.

25/006 Community Grants

- 1 Application from Harbury School PTA**
The grant application has been withdrawn.

25/007 Other Organisations

- 1 Harbury Library**
The new heating system is now installed and working.
- 2 Harbury School Governors**
A new caretaker is now in post.
- 3 Southam College**
No report.
- 4 Twinning Association**
The council noted the recent passing of Ken Stephenson who was a founder member of the twinning association and also a former chairman of the parish council.
- 5 Village Hall**
Nothing to report.
- 6 Harbury Future Energy**
There has been no further progress regarding the main project at the car park and playing field. WCC issued the tender documents before Christmas but did not receive any response. Nothing further has been heard from WCC since.

Members of the group are training to use the new thermal imaging camera. They intend to place an article in the HL News and start using the camera in February. The work has to be carried out in cold weather. The group will acknowledge the support of the parish council in its publicity.
- 7 Harbury Village Club & Institute**
No report.
- 8 SDC & WCC**
County and district councillors reported as follows:

SDC

- The SWLP consultation re preferred options is now live. Sites local to Harbury are ranking quite low.
- The proposed re-organisation of local government and devolution has resulted in a number of different opinions on how this should be organised. They need to come to a decision quickly.
- Phase 2 of the Community Climate & Nature Fund has now opened.
- A new chief constable has been appointed.
- The first parish forum organised by SDC for parish and town councils takes place on 30 January 2025. The PC chairman and clerk will be attending.

WCC

- WCC has been informed that there will be no 2 tier authorities in 3 months' time. There are a number of ways to move forward under consideration. The council is minded to cancel the forthcoming elections scheduled for May this year.
- There is to be a review of the Local Government Pension Scheme's investments and funds management.
- Another storm is on the horizon. Advice on dealing with flooding is available from WCC.
- WCC has published a leaflet explaining their policy on potholes & repairs.
- Cllr Kettle has used his delegated budget to fund the jetting of gullies in Mill Street, High Street and Church Terrace/Hall Lane. This work has now been completed.
- The new 40mph road signs have now been installed in Bush Heath Road.
- The streetlights outside Henry's in Bush Heath Lane have still not been installed by the developer. WCC is now considering installing the lights using the developer's bond to pay for them.
- Cllr Kettle has seen the new sails for Chesterton Windmill. They are slightly shorter than previously so planning permission is required before they can be installed.
- Applications for primary school places are now closed.
- There are concerns that less able children are not being given the same opportunities at school as brighter students.
- Cllr Knowles asked if the footpath outside the old garage in Mill Street could be cleaned following the recent flooding. He also asked if traffic cones could be removed where they are no longer needed.

25/008 Planning

To consider the following planning matters:

- 1 [Planning ref 24/03146/REM - Land off Bush Heath Lane.](#)
Reserved matters relating to condition 2 details of the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of Plot 3 and Climate Change Checklist of planning application 20/02112/OUT (date of decision 16/11//2021)
It was **RESOLVED** to make no representation.

2 [Planning ref 24/02954/FUL - Western House, Station Road](#)

Proposed garden room for ancillary use.

It was **RESOLVED** to make no representation.

3 [SWLP Preferred Options Consultation](#)

Cllr Allen summarised the recent SWLP presentation she had attended.

- There is to be twice as much housing
- More building will take place on the green belt
- One of the local options is the Leamington Spa FC ground in Harbury Lane but this has previously been designated as a Gypsy & Traveller site. This option is in the top 3 out of 12.

It was also noted that the proposals are focussed on the rail network (but there are no stations in this area and previously Network Rail has refused to allow any). Other options include an expansion of the Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath development and also Long Marston.

In conclusion, the parish council would prefer to see new settlements served by good transport links, doctors and schools. Any new development must have joined up services and infrastructure to be deliverable. Currently, there are no rail stations in this area and the bus service is poor.

It was agreed that Cllr Lockley and Cllr Allen would draft a formal response from the parish council and would also look at responding online.

4 Appendix A – delegated responses
Noted.

25/009 Future Energy Project

1 Car Park Extension

The new path is now finished. This item can now be removed from the agenda.

2 Main Project

Please see HFE's report at min ref 25/007.6 above.

25/010 Properties

1 Hall Lane Allotments

It was agreed that the new access should not encroach on the verge but would be cut back from the wall into the allotments to create a suitable gradient with retaining walls either side. It would be necessary to include a bund or other measure to prevent any water run off onto the road. The clerk will consult with allotment holders and check whether planning permission is required for the repair work which is separate to the new access.

25/011 Environment

1 Replacement of stiles on SM64

Cllr Stockdale will liaise with the landowner and arrange a site meeting with the contractor to discuss the location of the stiles/design etc.

2 Bush Heath Road/Butt Lane Traffic

The new 40mph signs have now been installed. The clerk will enquire about the horse warning signs that were also promised as part of the improvements.

25/012 Climate Change

Cllr Gard explained that she was not able to continue as chair of this group because of time constraints. Cllr Stockdale is willing take on this role and was duly appointed. The clerk will send him a copy of the terms of reference for this group.

25/013 Finance & General Purposes

1 Budget report

Noted.

2 Bank Reconciliation Report for November & December 2024.

These had been prepared by the clerk and checked by Cllr Allen before circulating to members. All correct.

3 Reserve Transfer

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the use of £980.75 of the Eastfields Solar Farm community fund towards the cost of the car park extension. This represents the remaining balance of the £25k allocated for this project from this fund.

4 Review of Standing Orders

Standing orders were reviewed and it was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were necessary.

5 Review of Financial Risk Assessment

The risk assessment was reviewed and it was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were required.

6 Review of Treasury & Investment Policy

The policy was reviewed and it was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were required. It was noted that the council holds more than £85k in some financial institutions but it is difficult to find accounts that are open to parish councils. Some money could be transferred to the residual NS&I account but this only pays 1% interest. The council considered that the level of risk was low and that it was preferable to earn a higher rate of interest so funds should remain where they are for now. Cllr Allen will research possible new savings accounts.

7 Review of Statement of Internal Control

The statement had been reviewed and it was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were required.

8 Internal Audit 2025

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint IAC Audit & Consultancy as the internal auditor.

25/014 Budget & Precept 2025/26

1 Staff Salaries

It was **RESOLVED** to increase staff salaries by 3% from 1 April 2025 with the exception of the clerk's salary which is subject to the national pay agreement.

2 Councillors Allowances

It was **RESOLVED** that these would remain at their current levels for 2025/26, i.e. £800 per annum for the chair and £400 per annum for elected councillors.

3 Cemetery Fees

It was **RESOLVED** that cemetery fees would increase by £3.00 per item with effect from 1 April 2025 with a further increase of £2.00 per item taking effect from 1 April 2026.

4 Playing Field – Mowing Quotation 2025

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the quotation received from Frank Mann Farmers at a cost of £71 per mow plus VAT.

5 Reserves

It was noted that the general reserve is high. For this reason, the budget for 2025/26 includes two items totalling £17k which will be funded from the general reserve. There is also the possibility of transferring some money from the general reserve to the new cemetery fund.

6 Budget 2025/26

The draft budget had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the budget for 2025/26 without amendment as per appendix C.

7 Precept 2025/26

It was **RESOLVED** to approve a precept of £147,711 for 2025/26. This represents an increase of 6.24% on the Band D rate (or an extra 0.14p per week)

25/015 Consultations

- 1 [Proposed PSPO \(Dog Fouling\) Consultation | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#) (closes 24 January 2025)

It was agreed to make no comment.

- 2 [South Warwickshire Community Hospital Rehabilitation Bed Consultation](#)

It was agreed to make no comment.

25/016 Accounts for Payment

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the accounts paid in December 2024 and those payable in January 2025 as per Appendix B. Cllrs Potter and Allen will authorise the payments and confirm that they have checked the invoices by email.

25/017 Calendar 2025/26

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the meetings calendar with the exception of the July meeting which may have to be moved to an alternative date. To be discussed at the February meeting. It was noted that this year, the annual meeting of the parish council and the annual parish meeting will be held on the same evening.

25/018 Reports & Questions

- Next Councillors Corner is on Saturday. Cllr Lockley will attend.

25/019 Exclusion of Public & Press

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the public under Sec 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 in order to discuss the following confidential matter:

1 Tree Works

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the quotes received for tree works to include Y2 survey works, the cemetery limes pruning, and the maintenance of the hedge along the allotments track.

25/020 Date of Next Meeting

The next ordinary meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Thursday, 27 February 2025 at 7.30pm in Harbury Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Signed Chairman Date.....

APPENDIX A

Planning Applications – Delegated Responses

23 January 2025

- 1 [Planning ref 24/02880/FUL - Land adjacent to Northfields, Mill Lane](#)

Creation of outdoor riding arena 20m x 60m for private use.

No representation

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APPENDIX B
Accounts for Payment

Accounts for approval 24 December 2024				
Urgent accounts paid since the last meeting and requiring formal approval of the council				
Payee	Payment ref	Net	Vat	Gross
YU Energy (street lights) inv 02155865	d/debit	558.84	111.77	670.61
YU Energy (street lights) inv 02155867	d/debit	33.85	1.69	35.54
YU Energy (street lights) inv 02155868	d/debit	13.36	0.67	14.03
YU Energy (street lights) inv 02155870	d/debit	46.52	2.33	48.85
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Sub-total	652.57	116.46	769.03
Accounts for payment on 24 December 2024				
Payee	Payment ref	Net	Vat	Gross
Staff costs	241201	3,379.20		3,379.20
Arbscape Ltd (new tree planting)	241205	620.00	124.00	744.00
WALC (training - R Stockdale)	241206	35.00	7.00	42.00
A Biddle (expenses)	241207	14.00	-	14.00
H Drabble (memorial garden m'nance)	241208	62.50	-	62.50
S Allen (seasonal lights sundries)	241209	182.27	-	182.27
Rio Surfacing Ltd (car park extension)	241210	1,500.00	300.00	1,800.00
Adams & Munson (office rent)	s/order	460.33	-	460.33
Frank Mann Farmers (grds m'nance)	s/order	1,031.21	206.24	1,237.45
		-	-	-
	Sub-totals	7,284.51	637.24	7,921.75
	TOTALS	7,937.08	753.70	8,690.78
		-	-	-

APPENDIX C
Budget 2025/26

Budget Heading	2023-24	2024-25	2024-25 Spend				Net budget under/overspend	T/f to reserve	2025-26 Budget
	Actual Spend	Budget	Actual to 30/11/24	Forecast for 4 months ending 31/03/25	Funded from reserves	Total			
Open spaces									
Contract maintenance	4996	5560	3706	1853		5560	0		5560
General maintenance	1117	1000	0	0		0	1,000		0
Additional grass cutting	0	500	0	500		500	-		500
Tree maintenance	2880	1500	1560	2216		3776	(2,276)	0	3000
Purchase of new equipment/trees	0	1000	0	1000		1000	-		1000
Misc maintenance	685	500	0	1000		1000	(500)	0	1000
Litter bin emptying	555	800	586	250		836	(36)		800
Bus shelter & recycle bin cleaning	480	750	320	160		480	270		500
Memorial Garden	324	400	150	150		300	101		1000
Total open spaces	11038	12010	6322	7129		13451	(1,441)	0	13360
Playing fields & car park									
Contract maintenance	2159	2402	1601	801		2402	(0)	0	2450
Add grass cutting /m'nance/ trees/tracks	5050	2000	2589	2000		4589	(2,589)	0	4560
Equipment inspection/maintenance	489	5000	105	4895		5000	-		5000
Purchase of new equipment	0	2500	2252	0	749	1504	996	0	0
Grass cutting playing fields	1161	1632	1020	204		1224	408	0	1704
Car park	32878	1000	37320	1500	38211	609	391	0	1000
Car park extension (NOT HFE)						0			0
New Skate Park & BMX Track Fund	0	7500	0	0		0	7,500	7500	7500
Total playing fields & car park	41737	22034	44888	9400		15327	6,707	7500	22214
Non-estate roads									
Contract maintenance/leaf, litter clear	1769	1969	1313	669		1982	(13)		2008
Additional leaf clearance	0	150	0	0		0	150		150
		0	0	0		0	-		0
Total non-estate roads	1769	2119	1313	669		1982	137	0	2158
Grants & community support									
Community transport	0	0	0	0		0	-		0
General community grants	4484	5000	3128	1872		5000	-		5000
Special projects	0	0	0	0		0	-		0
Harbury Market	1302	1174	838	336		1174	-		1174
Total grants	5786	6174	3966	2208		6174	-	0	6174
Other Expenditure									
PC's Contribution to sinking fund	1874	1967	0	1967		1967	(0)		1967
Village assets/ improvements	10787	4000	0	1000	0	1000	3,000	0	1000
Seasonal lights			2366	200		2566	(2,566)		2500
Village tree planting	1,230	0	0	620	620	0	-		0
Total other expenditure	13,891	5,967	2,366	3,787		5,533	434	0	5,467
Salaries & Pensions									
Salaries	27,023	27,025	20,456	10,041		30,496	(3,471)		33,990
Employer's NI	2,310	2,500	1,934	1,000		2,934	(434)		3,825
Staff Pensions	5,425	5,500	4,217	2,108		6,325	(825)		6,800
Total salaries & pensions	34,757	35,025	26,607	13,149		39,756	(4,731)	0	44,615

Administration									
Printing & stationery	372	500	254	246		500	0		500
Advertising/website/ communications	1,695	1,000	107	893		1,000	-		1,000
Postages/Telephone/Broadband	701	750	556	300		856	(106)		750
Room hire	370	475	180	64		244	231		350
Insurance	1,331	1,500	1,423	0		1,423	77		1,500
Subscriptions	2,574	2,500	2,296	204		2,500	0		2,500
Audit fees	1,076	1,200	910	375		1,285	(85)		1,300
Office equipment	184	1,500	681	819		1,500	(0)	0	250
Bank charges	130	150	84	120		204	(54)		300
Training	417	1,000	105	500		605	395		1,000
Councillors' allowances	2,080	3,200	0	3,200		3,200	-		3,200
Travel expenses	8	50	20	30		50	0		50
Other expenses	3,940	500	315	200	0	515	(15)		500
NDP	0	0	0	0		0	-		0
Parish office	5,766	6,000	4,393	2,041		6,434	(434)		6,500
Election expenses	200	0	0	0		0	-		0
						0	-		0
Total administration	20,843	20,325	11,323	8,992		20,315	10	0	19,700
Allotments									
Rent	650	650	325	325		650	-		775
Repairs/maintenance/water charges	1,700	500	0	500		500	-		500
Allotments track hedge	760	760	0	800		800	(40)		0
Rent refunds	0	0	0	0		0	-		0
Well- being project	9,365	0	1,872	0	1,872	0	-		0
Hall Lane improvements		5,000	1,220	8,500		9,720	(4,720)		0
Total allotments	12,475	6,910	3,417	10,125		11,670	(40)	0	1,275
Cemetery									
Contract maintenance	2,196	2,444	1,629	815		2,444	(0)		2,493
Repairs/maintenance incl trees	3,727	2,600	1,700	2,100		3,800	(1,200)	0	3,400
Rates	1,898	1,000	0	0		0	1,000		1,200
New cemetery project	0	10,000	0	0		0	10,000	10000	10,000
Misc (includes memorial repairs)	284	500	887	500		1,387	(887)	0	500
Water charges	0	200	0	0		0	200		0
Green waste collection	230	225	0	225		225	-		225
Total cemetery & churchyard	8,336	16,969	4,216	3,640		7,856	9,113	10,000	17,818
Street Lights									
Electricity consumed	6,871	6,500	4,246	2,624		6,870	(370)		7,000
Maintenance of columns	5,447	8,000	5,387	2,500		7,887	113		8,000
Misc	40	0	5	0		5	(5)		0
Total street lights	12,358	14,500	9,639	5,124		14,763	(263)		15,000
Climate Emergency									
Hire fees/publicity/expenses	40	1,000	-	-		-	1,000		-
Total climate emergency	40	1,000	-	-		-	1,000	-	-
Vat payments									
Total Expenditure	163,030	143,033	114,056	64,224		136,828	10,925	17,500	147,781

