

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Wroxton & Balscote Parish Council held on
Monday 6th November 2017 at 7.30 pm
at Balscote Village Hall**

Present Cllr Michael Robarts
Cllr Duncan Collins
Cllr Mark Harris
Cllr Nicky Hodges
Cllr Suzie Bates

67/17 Apologies

Cllr Daly, Cllr Ker and the Clerk, Jacqui Harris

Cllr Harris agreed to take the minutes of the meeting in the Clerk's absence

68/17 Declarations of interest

Cllr Harris declared an interest in Decision (e) relating to Balscote village hall

69/17 Approval of Minutes

To sign and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 4th September 2017

Proposed by Cllr Collins Seconded by Cllr Hodges

70/17 Public Participation

Cllr Robarts asked whether any members of the public in attendance had any questions or issues to raise. In response, there was a question whether the traffic calming measures in Wroxton had yet had any impact. A brief discussion suggested that there had been some improvement but it was too early to be certain. It was proposed that in due course a follow up survey of residents should be carried out

71/17 Finance

a. Copies of the bank reconciliation had been distributed to all Councillors. The reconciliation statement as at 01 November 2017 was signed by Cllr Roberts in front of the Council, to be signed later by the RFO Jacqui Harris

b. Cllr Harris pointed out that the Grass Cutting subsidy from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) had not yet been received. Cllr Roberts confirmed that the contract had been returned to OCC and payment was expected

72/17 Decisions

a. Council Governance

(i) Resolution to establish a Staffing Sub-Committee and approval of its terms of reference

Cllr Bates had distributed a written proposal to all Councillors. The Council agreed an amendment that the Sub-Committee should consist of 3 members and have a quorum of 2 members. It was proposed that the Staffing Sub-Committee and the amended terms of reference should be adopted

Proposed by Cllr Collins Seconded by Cllr Hodges

(ii) Nomination and appointment of Cllr Bates as Chair of the Sub-Committee

Proposed by Cllr Roberts Seconded by Cllr Collins

(iii) Nomination and appointment of other members of the Sub-Committee

Cllr Daly was nominated for appointment

Proposed by Cllr Collins Seconded by Cllr Hodges

Cllr Harris was nominated for appointment

Proposed by Cllr Collins Seconded by Cllr Hodges

(iv) Formal adoption of additional Parish Council policies, as discussed at previous meeting

Cllr Bates had distributed three draft policies to all Councillors. These were a Disciplinary Policy, a Grievance Policy and a Dignity at Work – Bullying and Harassment Policy. The Council requested that the final versions should have clear page and paragraph numbering. Also, the Grievance Policy should be amended at paragraph 3.2 and following, since the Staffing Sub-Committee will not be large enough to appoint further sub-committees. It was also suggested that all policies should contain references to the template documents on which they are based. The Council agreed to adopt the three policies, subject to these amendments being made

Proposed by Cllr Roberts Seconded by Cllr Collins

b. Stonepit 5 on Ironstone Lane

Following the withdrawal of the Lonsdale Foundation as potential buyers of this land, Cllr Roberts reported that he had entered negotiations with Mr Robert Syngé. In order for the Council to establish title, it was proposed that the Council would lease the land to Mr Syngé in return for an annual rental payment. When title is finally established, Mr Syngé would have the option to purchase the land at a price of £11,000 less the amount already paid in rent. It had not been possible to reach agreement on future payment of an overage if the value of the land were to increase due to development

The Council discussed the proposal and agreed that a better deal was unlikely to be forthcoming, particularly if additional costs had to be incurred. It was therefore proposed that the sale of the land should proceed on the discussed terms. It was also agreed to appoint the Bicester office of Spratt Endicott as our solicitors to handle the sale in order to reduce costs

Proposed by Cllr Collins Seconded by Cllr Harris

c. Stonepit 6 – Licence for Wood Business

Cllr Roberts explained that the licence had expired on 31st May 2017 but a new licence had not yet been issued. It was proposed to renew the licence for a further 3 years including a rent increase in line with RPI backdated to June 2017. The new licence was signed by Cllr Roberts and Cllr Collins, and was witnessed by Cllr Doug Webb

Proposed by Cllr Harris Seconded by Cllr Bates

d. Castle Water

Proposal to pay invoices for water supplied to the cemetery by Direct Debit.

Proposed by Cllr Harris Seconded by Cllr Roberts

e. Balscote Village Hall

A request for funding had been received from the village hall committee to erect fencing between the hall and the pub car park. This would ensure that the village hall site and particularly the children's playground would again be secure following removal of an overgrown hedge. The cost was expected to be no more than £350

Proposed by Cllr Hodges Seconded by Cllr Collins

73/17 Updates

a. Domain and website for Parish Council

An update was not possible due to the absence of Cllr Daly

b. Wroxton traffic calming measures

Cllr Roberts reported that 30mph repeater signs had now been painted on the A422 through Wroxton. The Council will receive a 10% discount from OCC since only 9 out of the planned 10 signs had finally been painted. OCC has given written assurance that the existing road markings will be repainted (most likely in the Spring) from their own budget.

Cllr Webb suggested that in due course it might be worth carrying out a further speed measurement exercise to assess the impact

c. Situation regarding telecoms mast leases at Stonepit 6

Cllr Roberts informed the Council that the September rent had not yet been paid by Airwaves. The explanation given was that the lease had expired. Subsequently, the solicitors handling the lease renewal confirmed that the lease had been renewed and Airwaves confirmed that payment would be made. It was proposed that the Clerk should set a reminder each quarter to ensure that the rental payment is received

d. Widening of Chapel Lane, Balscote

Cllr Robarts reported that OCC had agreed that something should be done and that this would most likely consist of erecting stone facing on the bank to protect it. A cost estimate is awaited and if it is excessive, OCC may ask the Council for a contribution.

A member of the public commented that farm vehicles had not used Chapel Lane while the road had recently been closed for the installation of water pipes, and questioned why the farm vehicles could not continue to take alternative routes. Cllr Robarts reemphasised that farm vehicles are legally entitled to use Chapel Lane and that the Council has no authority to prevent this

74/17 Planning

Following questions raised by local residents about 17/00335/TCA, the Council requested that in future the Clerk should make it clearer on the agenda which applications relate to tree work rather than buildings

75/17 Correspondence

It was not possible to discuss the correspondence from the Council for the Protection of Rural England due to the Clerk's absence

76/17 Any Other Business

a. Wroxton Sports Pavilion

Cllr Robarts reported that the Sports Club had requested details of how much money the Council is still holding for it

b. BT Broadband

Cllr Robarts informed the meeting that he had received notification that Fibre optic broadband was now available in Balscote. Interested residents should contact BT for information about the new tariffs/speeds available.

c. Complaint about blocked footpath in Wroxton

Cllr Robarts relayed a complaint which had been received by Cllr Ker about blocked access to a track leading from near the Apollo site towards Horley. The local Scouts group had apparently erected a barrier to prevent access to the track for walkers because of the amount of litter and dog mess being left behind. The Scouts use the area regularly and have a lease on the land involved. Cllr Robarts confirmed that the Scouts have a right to block the track which is not in fact a public footpath

d. Wroxton Conservation Area Consultation

A member of the public reported that letters had been received saying the consultation was completed. Cllr Collins commented that he had seen the updated map of the Conservation Area and that the Parish Council suggested variations had not taken place

The meeting closed at 20.32

Date of next meeting 7.30 pm Monday 8th January 2018 in Wroxton Village Hall