

Great Oxendon Parish Council

Village Hall, Main Street, Great Oxendon

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 13th September 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Steedman (Chair), Cllr Barker, Cllr Patel-Brown, Cllr Rumsey, Cllr Lindsay-Smith

Also Present: Cllr Parker, Cllr Harris

- 13. Apologies for Absence were received:** Cllr Hogarth, Cllr Irving-Swift
- 14. Declaration of Personal and Prejudicial Interests** under the Councils Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda – None received.
- 15. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 12 July 2021 and 23 June 2021** (Corrected since previous meeting). Approved. Prop: Cllr Barker, Sec: Cllr Patel-Brown
- 16. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meetings held on 12 July 2021**
- i. **(2507) Asset Register** – Clerk has updated the Asset Register since the last meeting and circulated to all councillors on 12th August for any further comment.
Approved. Prop: Cllr Barker, Sec: Cllr Lindsay-Smith
 - ii. **(2507) Policy Documents** – Appendix 1, List of policy documents recommended by NCALC reviewed at previous meeting is still yet to be reviewed by the new clerk. To be deferred to next meeting to allow sufficient time to compile for approval.
 - iii. **(2508) Recruitment of new Parish Clerk** – Resolution to confirm appointment of Mrs Sarah Smith to the position of Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.
Approved. Prop: Cllr Lindsay-Smith, Sec: Cllr Rumsey
- 17. Open Forum** – No members of the public in attendance.

Cllr Harris introduced himself and offered his support to the Parish Council. Contact details for Cllr Harris can be obtained via the Clerk.

Cllr Parker provided an update on an Ofsted report published on 9 Sept 2021 regarding a Children's Services monitoring visit to West and North Northamptonshire Councils which began after Northamptonshire County Council was judged inadequate for children's social care services in June 2019. Monitoring visits, delayed due to Covid, will continue beyond the March 2021 deadline. The full report can be found on the Ofsted website under West Northamptonshire.

18. Council Vacancies and reassigning areas of responsibility

The Chair confirmed the resignation of Cllr D Jones and Cllr C Jones and asked Councillors for help in filling the vacant positions. It was agreed that an advertisement would be added to the village Facebook page. The Clerk has already added both vacancies to the parish website. The Chair to write a letter of appreciation to the two Councillors thanking them for their work. Noted.

19. Reassignment of areas of responsibility are as follows:

Highways – Cllr Rumsey
Environment: TBC

Community Engagement and Communication – Cllr Patel-Brown
Audit and Compliance – subject to reviewing Internal Controls at next meeting, this will be done on a rota basis

20. Bank Mandate

Due to Councillor resignations a new signatory will be required for the bank account. Cllr Adam Lindsay-Smith agreed to become a new signatory. Clerk to prepare and submit paperwork.
Approved. Prop: Cllr Rumsey, Sec: Cllr Patel Brown

The Clerk will review the Internal Controls and the bank account security after the recent audit criticisms. To be added to future agenda.

21. Oxford-Cambridge Arc Consultation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/creating-a-vision-for-the-oxford-cambridge-arc> - Survey/Comments Closing date **12 Oct 2021**.

A short introduction to the Oxford Cambridge Arc Consultation was given by the Clerk. The 58-page Government document and the NCALC summary were circulated to all Councillors via email ahead of the meeting.

The question was to whether the council should give a collective opinion on proposals made or at this stage leave to individuals within the community. After a short discussion, it was decided that due to the short timeframe in which there would be to canvass opinions from the residents of the village, that at this stage it would be left to individuals to respond to the survey.

Clerk to publish on the village website.

22. Finance:

- i. Resolution to approve the monthly payments (listed below)
Approved. Prop: Cllr Rumsey, Sec: Cllr Barker

Date of Meeting: 13th Sept 2021

Payments to be Approved not yet Paid

| DATE | PAID TO | DESCRIPTION | NET | VAT | TOTAL |
|------------|-------------------------------|--|----------|--------|----------|
| 17/07/2021 | West Northamptonshire Council | May21 Elections Fees | 75.00 | 15.00 | 90.00 |
| 01/08/2021 | Leicestershire Gardens | Mowing of Grass Inv 21/129 | 230.00 | 0.00 | 230.00 |
| 14/04/2021 | NCALC | Missing Inv 1228 - Year end Accounts & Audit | 30.00 | | 30.00 |
| 16/07/2021 | Eon | LED Lantern Replacements | 3,738.25 | 747.65 | 4,485.90 |
| 11/08/2021 | Mrs Sarah Smith | Parish Clerk Salary - Jul-Sept21 + Expenses | 665.39 | 0.00 | 665.39 |
| 28/08/2021 | Mrs Sarah Smith | Expenses - BullGuard Antivirus for Laptop | 21.00 | 4.20 | 25.20 |

Payments to be Approved - Paid via Direct Debit

| DATE | PAID TO | DESCRIPTION | NET | VAT | TOTAL |
|------------|---------|---|-------|------|-------|
| 11/08/2021 | BT | Broadband & Telephone - Direct Debit | 29.95 | 5.99 | 35.94 |
| 30/07/2021 | HMRC | HMRC PAYE/NIC Jun21 - Tax re R Stafford | 9.60 | 0.00 | 9.60 |
| 30/07/2021 | HMRC | HMRC PAYE/NIC Jul21 - Tax re R Stafford | 9.60 | 0.00 | 9.60 |

- ii. **Receive the accounts to 31st July 2021**
 - a. Receipts
 - b. Expenditure
 - c. Bank Reconciliation
 - d. Statement of Reserves
 - e. Neighbourhood Plan Grants Expenditure
 - f. Spend v Budget
 - g. Copy of Payments to be Approved
 - h. HSBC Bank Statement – Community Account
 - i. HSBC Bank Statement – Reserve Money Manager Account

Confirmation was sought by the Clerk regarding the Statement of Reserves. The street lighting project, now complete, originally had a budget of 7k. The invoice, received at this meeting, will be offset in this account. The remaining balance will temporarily remain in reserve and reallocated at a future date.

The CIL money must be spent within 3 years of receiving. Clerk to investigate and confirm remaining time left.

Spend v Budget

A new document was presented at this meeting. The Chair had a query on the website and bus shelter budgeted. A short discussion was had on quotes obtained for bus shelter repairs and to whether there was enough budgeted to cover this spend.

There was short pause while the accounts were viewed.

All Accounts were signed and approved. Prop: Cllr Rumsey, Sec: Cllr Lindsay-Smith

- iii. **Scribe Accounting Software Package**

The Scribe software was signed off by the council on 12 April 2021, requested by the previous clerk in the position until 17 July 2021. An annual subscription was paid to Scribe in July. On review of the package by the new Clerk alongside discussions with Councillors who deemed it unnecessary expenditure, it was decided that the software would never be fully utilised due to the fact the Parish Council receives a very small number of transactions and the full suite of reports would never be required. The new Clerk also holds the Association of Accounting Technicians qualification and has a business background working within finance. For this reason, it was brought to the full council meeting to resolve to resort back to the original excel spreadsheet way of working.

The Clerk contacted Scribe, who despite signing an annual contract, negotiated a partial refund of £189 which would leave the account active but reduce the cost to the council to £99 per year. The account would then be cancelled at the end of the financial year.

The Council were satisfied with the financial reports produced for September. The resolution was approved. Prop: Cllr Rumsey, Sec: Cllr Lindsay-Smith

iv. **Audit 2020/2021**

The incorrect documents were submitted to external auditor PKF Little John in June this year. The Parish Council is exempt from a limited assurance review as gross income and expenditure was £25,000 or less so required a submission of AGAR Part 2 rather than Part 3. The new Clerk was given the opportunity to resubmit the correct report by September 17th 2021 to avoid the limited assurance review.

All new documents were resubmitted to the Council for approval and signature.

- i. Resolution to approve Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2020/21
- ii. Resolution to approve Section 2 Accounting Statements 2020/21
- iii. Resolution of approve Certificate of Exemption

Approved and Documents Signed. Prop: Cllr Lindsay-Smith, Sec: Cllr Patel-Brown
The new Audit document can be found on the Parish Council website.

23. Planning and Licensing Consultations:

- i. **WNC Consultation – Loss of Town and Parish Council ‘Call In’ - Survey deadline 31 Aug 2021** (<https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com>) concerning the WNC deletion of Parish Councils automatic option to have Planning Applications ‘Called In’ in the event of their objection to any individual Planning Application. Noted.
- ii. **WND/2021/0502 – Removal of tree subject of Tree Preservation Order DA 277 – Oxendon Hall, Main Street, Great Oxendon, LE16 8ND – deadline for comment 17 Sept 2021.** Noted.

The Chair advised that the tree in question was located in the grounds of Oxendon Hall and unfortunately was suffering from ash dieback disease and so had to be removed. A question was asked to whether it had to be removed. It was noted an assessment had been carried out by a consultant who confirmed it needed to be removed.

- iii. The following is an application that was submitted after the agenda deadline but required a response by 1st October 2021.

WND/2021/0068 Listed Building Consent for replacement windows – Hemsby House 29, Main Street, Great Oxendon, Northamptonshire, LE16 8NE – deadline for comment 1st Oct 2021.

Noted.

An application that was received on 11.09.21 was discussed by the council. It was understood that the replacement windows were to be the same as the house already renovated next door and that the same contractor had been consulted to carry out the work. As there were no objections no extraordinary meeting would be required. Noted.

24. Update from Councillors with regards to Areas of Responsibility

i. Planning and Neighbourhood Plan – Councillor Hogarth

Cllr Hogarth was absent from the meeting however email correspondence was received so the Chair gave an update on his behalf.

In regards to the Neighbourhood Plan, the next committee meeting would be held on 23rd September 2021 to review the framework of the draft of the NP document template and discuss plans to hold an Open Event for all to attend on the 2nd October 2021. The project moves forward as expected.

Cllr Hogarth also gave an update via email on the planning application for Hemsby House, WND/2021/0068 Listed Building Consent for replacement windows. Cllr Hogarth was aware of the work as the house adjoins his own and knows that work will be undertaken by the same carpenter that did his own. The understanding was that it would be like for like. Cllr Hogarth has not yet been able to view the detailed plans but will do so on return from holiday and does not anticipate any issues with this application. Any views will be received before 1st October deadline.

ii. Highways: Roads, Footpaths & Trees – reassigned Councillor Rumsey

Due to a Councillor resignation, there was no update for this meeting. Cllr Rumsey agreed to take on the responsibility of Highways.

A short discussion was had about the quality of the recent grass cutting and that it had been satisfactory. The Chair pointed out the potholes that required reporting and a short discussion was had on the inconsiderate parking on the grass verges which were believed to be due to overflow parking from the local pub. It was agreed that as the winter approaches Councillors would keep an eye on this issue.

iii. Public Rights of Way – Councillor Barker and Councillor Lindsay-Smith

The Chair updated the Council on the state of the path up to the Church. It was overgrown and appeared that the farmer may not have been putting his animals in the field which would have previously helped to control the weeds. The entrance to the footpath by the Village Hall to the Church was also very overgrown. The Councillors discussed that it would be a very low agenda item for Highways to deal with and previously the path had been maintained by the Council. Cllr Lindsay-Smith volunteered to trim back the weeds.

Cllr Barker updated the Council. He had recently received an informative email regarding paths and public rights of way. Cllr Barker walked the 'closed footpath' discussed at the previous meeting and confirmed that the sign had been removed, it was currently clear, and the gates were not locked.

Cllr Rumsey updated the Council after she was approached by a resident to ask if the Council could tidy up an area of the village at the top of the Tunnels. Email correspondence between Councillors said that responsibility for the path lay with the landowner as it appears it was part of the Midshires/Jurassic Way however this section crosses with the Brampton Valley Way. It then transpired that the part of the path in question was not at the 'track' level of the Brampton Valley Way and members of the public were possibly walking along the parapet of

the tunnel as a shortcut which is dangerous. It was agreed that the resident would be advised on the dangers of walking this unauthorised route.

iv. **Police & Community Safety** – Councillor Barker

Cllr Barker provided an update on the Police and Community Safety and confirmed he will attend an upcoming Police, Fire and Crime virtual councillor meeting.

It was reported that in June 2021, 546 crimes were reported in the West Northamptonshire Area, previous year 683 and July 2021, 556 crimes reported down 150 from last year.

In Great Oxendon, in June 2021, 2 crimes were reported, a burglary on Braybrooke Road and a sexual offence on Main Street. In July 2021, 1 crime reported, sexual offence on Main Street.

An update was given on the crime statistics of the surrounding villages and attention drawn to the latest Neighbourhood Watch email circulated by the Clerk regarding distraction burglaries. All crime figures are available to view on the Northants Police crime map which can be found online.

v. **Environment** – TBC

vi. **Community engagement and communication** – Councillor Patel-Brown

Cllr Patel-Brown confirmed the distribution of a few Welcome Packs to new residents of the village.

vii. **Lighting** - Councillor Patel-Brown

Cllr Patel Brown confirmed all new streetlamps had now been installed and the project was now complete. The invoice was received and confirmed as correct at this meeting. The Clerk has also received email correspondence from Western Power confirming an update to the inventory for the parish and new certificates had been received and filed all of which have been forwarded to the supplier to be able adjust bills accordingly.

viii. **Audit and Compliance** – rota basis

A new Internal Controls document will be updated and circulated to Councillors prior to the next meeting in October for resolution. It was decided that this area of responsibility would be carried out on a rota basis.

25. Urgent Matters for report only (Notified to the Chairman before the meeting)

The Chair advised that quotes had been obtained by Cllr C Jones before her departure to replace/repair the bus shelters on Main Street. It was advised that both bus shelters required cleaning and repairs were required to the roof and gutters as well as remove overgrowing vegetation.

Cllr Barker shared the details of quotes received previously and advised the council that J Reedman, having done previous work, would be suitable. Because this was not an agenda item and cannot be resolved, it was agreed that the contractor will be contacted to discuss availability and the item added to the next agenda in October for final resolution.

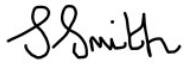
Cllr Steedman to engage with M King regarding the cleaning of the shelters with additional work to have them properly cleaned prior to the winter by a professional cleaner of public buildings. Added to next agenda.

26. Date and Time of Next Meeting – The next meeting will be held on Monday 11th October 2021, 7:30pm at the Village Hall, Great Oxendon.

For Note - Dates of Future Meetings

Monday 11th October 2021
Monday 8th November 2021
Monday 13th December 2021
Monday 10th January 2022
Monday 14th February 2022
Monday 14th March 2022
Monday 11th April 2022

27. The meeting was closed at 8:59pm.



Mrs Sarah Smith, Parish Clerk
Great Oxendon Parish Council

Email: parishcouncil@greatoxendon.org
Web: <http://www.greatoxendon.org>

Date & Signature of Chairman

.....

16.09.2021