

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL OF
OGBOURNE ST GEORGE HELD ON
THURSDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2011 IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM

Those Present: Mr P Willis (Chairman)
Mrs C Manos
Mrs C Mudge
Mr K Macdonald
Mr K Wallace
Mr C Freeman (Clerk)
Mrs J Milton (Wiltshire)

Apologies were received from Mr M Grove & Mr P Rouse

5 residents were present

Election of Chairman In the absence of the Chairman and vice-chairman Cllr Willis was nominated, seconded and unanimously elected as Chairman of the meeting. He read and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before the Proper Officer.

Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting, having been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising: **Clerk's review** – Cllr Macdonald stated that the two Councillors had been unable to attend rather than one as recorded in the previous minutes. The minutes of the recent meeting, September 1st, of the Clerk's remuneration sub-committee, previously sent to the Clerk, were distributed to the Councillors by Cllr Wallace. The minutes reported: **Background** *This sub-committee was formed in March this year to review the Clerk's remuneration following the Chairman's statement at that meeting, that the volume of work carried out by the Clerk should be reviewed. This followed comments by the Clerk that regularly exceeds the 3 hours per week for which he is paid. Due to a number of reasons this Sub- Committee was not able to meet until the 1 September.* **Current Clerk's Salary** *The Clerk is paid under LC1 (profile) at Spinal Point 21. Annual salary for Spinal point 21 based on the 2009 pay scale was £19126 per annum. The hourly rate based on 37 hours per week is £9.94 per hour, equating to £29.82 per week for a 3 hour week. The Clerk's salary equates to approximately 34% of the current precept. An increase of one hour's payment per week would incur a further £517 per year and would raise the percentage to 46% of the current precept.* **Debate** *Two options were discussed: Option 1: To raise the remuneration of the clerk to a level, which meets the current workload. Option 2: To delegate to Councillors additional responsibilities with the objective of reducing the Clerk's workload, therefore avoiding additional expenditure.* **Conclusion** *The meeting concluded that further investigation of the Clerk's workload and the percentage of time spent for each regular activity was required before both options could be evaluated. The Chairman was to request that the Clerk prepare details of his workload as described and attend the next meeting of the sub-committee. It was also decided that it would be beneficial to ascertain the current situation regarding the change to a PAYE system.*

The Clerk read a statement he had prepared in response to the minutes. He said that he rejected the sub-committee's report because this issue was first mooted at the PC meeting on 13 January; that it is unacceptable that it has taken this long to get only to this point; that it is

unacceptable to him that Cllr Wallace is on the sub-committee as it must be well known that he has no confidence in his integrity, and that it was made completely clear to the Chairman by Cllr Milton that it would be wholly inappropriate for Cllr Wallace to be involved. The Clerk had endorsed that opinion. Furthermore the suggestion that some of the Clerk's work could be done by Councillors is completely undermined by the committee's ineptitude and delay in coming to this conclusion. The minutes did not reflect that any information has been taken on board, especially not the detail contained in the March 2011 Clerk's report; that the response is centred around the PC's costs rather than the proper employment terms and conditions for the Clerk by a responsible employer. Cllr Willis asked if the terms of reference for the remuneration committee were clearly defined; did it include all the issues? Noting the conclusion of the remuneration sub-committee minutes Cllr Willis requested that the Clerk confirm his agreement to meet with the Chairman to set out the current status of his workload. He was keen to determine how the Council might approach this issue but was reminded by Cllr Wallace that the Council has to be mindful of the proportion of its resources being paid in salary. Cllr Macdonald stated that the sub-committee had met with the honest intention of improving the Clerk's conditions. Cllr Milton suggested that the matter be deferred to ask Cllr Grove to reconvene the sub-committee as soon as possible, certainly prior to the next meeting. Cllr Willis endorsed this suggestion and it was agreed. Cllr Wallace stated that as he would not be available over the next 3-4 weeks he would resign from the committee.

Rights of Way – The Clerk reported that he had followed up his email to Richard Broadhead at Wiltshire Council who had referred the issue of the stepping stones to Esther Daly. In turn she reported that she was not sure that even the stepping stones were actually on the line of the definitive map and was in the process of researching the whole issue. They would respond further as soon as possible.

Chantry Meadow – The Clerk asked that the minute be altered to explain that, whilst the stable is sold as mobile, Wiltshire Council has deemed it a permanent structure and the applicant has stated it will remain in that position and, therefore, it requires permission. However the Council considered the existing minute was not misleading and could stand. The Clerk reported that the Environmental Officer had determined that the manure dump must be moved but further progress on the determination of the application was awaited.

Coronation Garden – It was agreed to thank Matthew Coplestone for arranging the repair of the Coronation Garden brick wall.

Coronation Garden Bench – Cllr Macdonald had researched various domestic and 'street' grade wooden benches for the Coronation Garden. He asked for an amount to spend on it. It was suggested that an application from the 'Friends of the Coronation Garden' be made to the Area Board for a grant to fund a new bench. Timothy George, from the floor, agreed to join Cllr Macdonald as a Friend and submit an application to the Area Board manager, Julia Densham, in time for its next meeting on November 1st.

Website – Cllr Macdonald had updated the site with latest copies of the Dragon and would add a link to the Area Board minutes.

Cycle path – A new support group 'Friends of the Railway Path' had been formed and were launching various initiatives with a ride from Coate to Marlborough on Saturday 10th September. The Council supported all initiatives to retain and improve the Cycle path.

Village Hall Lease – The Clerk had discussed the various alternative plans with the Parish Council’s Solicitor to reduce the overall cost of the new village hall leases. The Clerk would report back when further information was available.

Finance:

Payments - A current statement of the financial position of the Parish Council was distributed by the Clerk. The Clerk explained he had received an erroneous letter from the Auditor stating that the Annual Return had not been received and therefore the Council would be charged an administrative fee of £20+VAT. The Clerk spent some time checking that a correct Annual Return had been sent in a timely fashion and had contacted the Auditors with the detail to be told it was an error. He asked the Council to approve deducting £20 +VAT from the Auditor’s remuneration as compensation which it agreed.

The following payments were approved:

Bawden	£607.20
Scottish Power	£74.00
Printing of Dragon – 1 month	£12.00
Clerk’s Salary	£258.47
Mazars Audit	£120.00

Planning:

6 St Georges Close – No Objection - Granted

Chantry Meadow – Parish Council had submitted a response that approved the change of use and conditioned the possible call-in of this application if it was to be approved without conditions. Response awaited.

10 Jubbs Lane – No Objection

Home Farmhouse Trees – It was agreed to have a public site meeting which the Clerk would arrange immediately.

Emergency Planning:

Cllr Mudge had recently received the Emergency Planning Template from the Chairman via the Clerk. It had been delayed as the original had been rejected by the new Parish Forum and then rewritten by them. Cllr Milton suggested it could wait until further guidance and examples had come from other parishes via the Forum.

New Recycling Plans:

Although leaflets had been distributed to households many electors were not fully cognisant of the new bins and collections. Cllr Macdonald would put details and links on the website.

Parish Plan:

The Chairman of the Parish Plan committee reported that they had created the questionnaire and it was now in pilot awaiting preliminary feedback in two weeks. It would then be distributed round the village.

Community Area Plan:

The Community Area plan update had been distributed to Councillors and Parish Plan committee members for completion. It was expected that it would take longer than the September 12th deadline and the Clerk would advise the Parish Forum appropriately.

Area Board:

Cllr Wallace reported on his attendance at the Area Board. There were just 18 attendees which he felt was a poor turnout. Full details of the meeting would be available in the minutes but he was keen to emphasize both the Wiltshire Warm and Well scheme and that the current funding available for projects was still £49,000 which would not be carried over to the next financial year. Interested parties should

contact Julia Densham, the Area Board Manager.

- Village Hall: Cllr Willis was keen to assist the Village Hall management committee to obtain Area Board grants for improving the hall. Mrs Frost, from the floor, accepted his involvement.
- School: It was noted that chaos often existed outside the school at leaving times. Cllr Milton would bring it to the attention of the new area beat manager, PC David Tippetts.
- Concern: Cllr Wallace enquired whether the statement about him that the Clerk had made earlier in the meeting would be in the minutes and when told it would be, stated that he would be taking it up with the Chairman.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.45. The next meeting would be held on 17th November 2011.