

## MARCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a virtual meeting of Marcham Parish Council held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2021, commencing at 7.30 p.m. held virtually via Zoom, under powers granted by the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus)(Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings)(England and Wales) Regulations 2020

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Present:

Sheena Bigden, Caroline Garvey, Sandra Hill, Michael Hoath, (Chairman),  
James Plumb, Tanya Rosenfeld

Clerk: Mrs. L. Martin

Public: Dr. James Asher, Dr. Eric Dunford and Mrs. Sheila Dunford  
Joined by Ruth Mander at 7.34 p.m during the presentation.

Prior to the commencement of formal business, Dr. Asher gave a brief presentation on the Churchyard conservation project. This had been running for 20 years, and was a tripartite arrangement between the Parish Council, who had assumed the responsibility for the closed churchyard, the Parochial Church Council and Marcham Society. A survey of the whole Church site had been undertaken in 1992 together with a botanical survey in 2002 when 130 species were identified. A display panel had been erected with the support of a grant from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment. An Award from the Diocese and Bucks Berks and Oxon Wildlife Trust, as part of the Living Churchyard Projects had been received in 1999. Grass was cut only twice in a season with the aim of enhancing the biodiversity of the Churchyard. As the grass was not collected, a group of volunteers had raked the grass when required. A point was made that they required to know well in advance when the grass was due to be cut as they could then arrange raking. They were also considering further ideas such as mowers with grass collecting boxes. General comments and questions followed.

Dr. Asher was thanked for his presentation. He, Dr. Dunford and Mrs. Dunford then left the meeting.

2021/23

### Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Tony Mackelworth and Cllr. Catherine Webber (District Councillor), and Cllr. Richard Webber (County Councillor).

The Chairman announced that he had, that day, received a letter of resignation from Kieran O'Leary. The Clerk would take steps to declare a casual vacancy.

2021/24

### Declarations of Interest

Michael Hoath and Ruth Mander both declared an interest in the planning application regarding 9 Tower Close in that one of the applicants served on a village committee elsewhere, of which they too were both members.

Sandra Hill declared an interest in the planning application regarding 9 Tower Close in that the applicants were her daughter and son in law.

- 2021/25      Resignation of Peter Steere  
Council noted that Peter Steere had resigned from the Parish Council and that a casual vacancy had been declared.
- 2021/26      Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2021  
The draft minutes, including the budget annexed, were approved as a correct record of the meeting.  
The Minutes to be signed as soon as practicable.
- 2021/27      Matters Arising from the minutes  
Harding Way – Public Open Space  
Council noted that the Agreement, between Vale of White Horse District Council and the Parish Council for the commuted sum, had been completed and the sum of £79710 was due to be transferred to the Council's current account.
- Access into Barrow Close – Wall at 5 Morland Road / Thomas Homes Sign  
Council noted that planning consent for a wall/fence in the current location had been given at the time the property was built. The height had not been specifically determined, but it had been in situ in its present form for many years. It was noted that the Thomas Homes advertisement board for the new houses had been removed.
- 2021/28      Public Participation  
There were no members of the public present.
- 2021/29      Marcham Churchyard – grass cutting schedule  
Council noted the presentation by Dr. Asher regarding the reasons for conservation in the Churchyard.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Council continues to work with the Parochial Church Council, Marcham Society, and the maintenance contractor, in regards to maintaining the conservation areas within the Churchyard, and the appropriate grass cutting schedule.
- (ii) that the contractor be asked to notify the Parish Council, as far as possible in advance, of the date of cutting the conservation areas so that arrangements can be made for volunteers to rake the grass.

2021/30      Planning Matters

a) Decisions on previous applications

P20/V3330/PDH Single storey rear extension  
4 Barrow Close

No planning application required

27<sup>th</sup> January 2021

b) Applications dealt with under delegated powers prior to the meeting

P20/V3330/PDH – Single storey rear extension

4 Barrow Close

No formal consultation required, but notification of application to determine whether prior planning consent was required.

Comments: Council did not comment

c) Applications considered at the meeting

P21/V0123/HH Part demolition of existing attached garage and replacement with new side and rear extension

9 Tower Close

The Chairman called for a show of hands for those in favour of the proposal

In favour	Against	Abstention
4	2	1

Comments: Council had concerns regarding the covering over of the garden and creation of water run off areas.

P21/V0124/HH Demolition of single storey side extensions, removal of rear roof at first floor. Proposed single storey side extension and two storey side and rear extensions

11 North Street

The Chairman called for a show of hands for those in favour of proposal

In favour	Against	Abstention
7	0	0

Comments: Council had no objections to the application, but required materials to be sympathetic with, and in keeping with the conservation area

P21/V0189/HH Porch to front

Sheepstead Folly, Sheepstead Road

The Chairman called for a show of hands for those in favour of proposal

In favour	Against	Abstention
7	0	0

Comments: Council had no objections

MW.0005/21 Details pursuant to condition 19 – Water

Monitoring data on application MW.0019/15 – Sand extraction off A338

Upwood Quarry

Comments: Council had no substantial comment to make.

Comments previously made regarding exceedances should be restated. Monitoring should continue and steps taken to mitigate the effect of increases if found necessary.

R3.003/21 Erection of 1.8m high and 2.7m high fencing to the front of the school. Installation of 2 new doors to replace existing windows to the north and south elevation, and the installation of approx. 27sq. m ground mounted kitchen air handling equipment.

Marcham Primary School, Morland Road

Comments: Council had no objections provided access to the public defibrillator on the front wall of the plant room was maintained.

d) Planning Issues – Willow Farm flooding

Council noted that over the weekend of 30<sup>th</sup> /31<sup>st</sup> January, following heavy rainfall, flooding took place in Willow Farm roadway. Council received a report from the Clerk and also the Chairman in regards to this. Both the sustainable urban drainage scheme and mains drainage were beyond capacity. The Clerk had reported this to the District Council, and taken up the matter of the 90 houses on the adjacent site with the planning officer and drainage officer, as well as alerting the County and District Councillors. A letter from Peerless Properties, the property management company acting for the Directors of Willows Farm Management Ltd, had been sent to residents and also, just prior to the meeting, to the Parish Council. This would be circulated to members and the District and County Councillors.

Concerns were raised by members in regards to the drainage from the Mactaggart Mickel site to the north of the village and how the sewer system was going to manage.

RESOLVED:

that the situation be kept under review

2021/31 County Councillor's Report – Cllr. Richard Webber  
No report from Cllr. Richard Webber was available.

2021/32 District Councillor's Report – Cllr. Catherine Webber  
No report from Cllr. Catherine Webber was available

2021/33 Community Facilities - Artwork  
Council noted that Marcham Community Group had advised that, in turn, they had been advised that planning consent was required for the artwork. As the Parish Council was the landowner where the artwork was to be sited, it had been suggested that the Parish Council be the applicant and MCG act as agent in regards to the application. MCG would consult separately with the Parish Council, as landowner and landlord, in regards to the fixing of the artwork.

RESOLVED:

that Marcham Parish Council be named as applicant in regards to any planning  
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- 2021/34 Review of Council policies, standing orders and regulations  
Council reviewed the following policies, standing orders and regulations:  
Financial Regulations  
Standing Orders  
Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice  
Complaints Procedure  
Grants Policy  
Asset Register  
Investment Policy

Council noted that the village hall, muga site acquired in June 2020 had been added to the asset register, as well as the Leases in connection with the adjacent playing fields.

RESOLVED:

that the above polices, standing orders and financial regulations be approved and adopted by Council.

- 2021/35 Review of the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit/Risk Assessment  
Council received a report from the working party that had undertaken a review of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit and had checked the draft Risk Assessment as instructed by Council at the last meeting. This had concluded that it believed that the Council's system for internal financial control was satisfactory, and that the internal audit met the standards for scope, independence, competence, relationships, planning and auditing as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as well as the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance recommendations.  
The audit plan and terms of reference were reviewed, as well as the risk assessment. It was suggested that regulations relating to Covid be included in the risk assessment.  
Council considered the formal recording by electronic means, of gifts and noted the donation of a Christmas tree for the Council for the village green.  
Council received a report from the Personnel Committee. This recommended that until a full evaluation could take place, that the clerk's contract in its present form be resigned.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the audit plan and terms of reference be accepted
- (ii) that the report and recommendations of the audit review working party be accepted
- (iii) that IAC Audit and Consultancy be appointed internal auditor for the account year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

- (iv) that the risk assessment be adopted subject to adding an item regarding Covid regulations.
- (v) that a new electronic record (excel spreadsheet) be created to record any gifts to Councillors or the Council.
- (vi) that the Christmas tree donated to the Council in December 2020 be added to the register with an approximate value of £60.
- (vii) that the contract of employment with the clerk be re-signed in its present form.

2021/36

Correspondence

- a) Reminder – Oxfordshire County Council – Public Transport Representatives’ meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> February at 1.30 p.m.
- b) OALC- Notification of vacancy for Chair of Trust for Oxfordshire’s Environment.
- c) OALC – January newsletter
- d) Oxfordshire County Council – Military Covenant
- e) Abingdon Bridge – Newsletter
- f) Vale of White Horse District Council – Street Cleansing in Marcham. Request for information as to areas to be cleaned.

RESOLVED:

that paths and alleyways linking the main roads in the village be tidied, as well as the path 12-28a Packhorse Lane, and others where vegetation overgrows.

2021/37

Accounts

Council noted the list of cheques numbered 3386 to 3390 and authorised payments in the sum of £1975.39 in respect of administration costs, play area inspections, and litter pick.

Council considered locations for the deposit of the commuted sum of £79710 for the Harding Way public open space, and considered adding it to the account currently held in Newbury Building Society. In view of the balance in that account, and FSCS protection limit of £85,000, it was considered that investigation into different accounts would be preferable.

Council also received the bank reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. This had been checked alongside the bank statements and accounts by the Chairman. Council also received the budget monitoring report. There had been a slight overspend on water costs on the allotments, and also on consultant fees, however there had been an underspend on anticipated consultants’ costs in 2019/20 which had been taken back into general reserves.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that further research be undertaken for

other appropriate accounts for the Harding Way commuted sum, in order to spread the financial risk.

- (ii) that the bank reconciliation and budget monitoring report be noted.

2021/38 Matters raised by members for information

Vaccinations against Covid

It was thought that Wiltshire County Council was supporting the vaccination of volunteers such as foodbank staff. A question of whether volunteers such as those working in Marcham shop could be vaccinated was raised. The Chairman advised that the question be directed to the District and County Councillors.

Frilford Road Recreation Ground/Arboretum

A request was made for a dog waste/litter bin near the BT telephone exchange. This question had been considered previously. The Clerk would check when the matter was last debated.

2021/39 Items for Marcham and District News

The Clerk would prepare an article for MAD News.

2021/40 Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Council would be held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 at 7.30 p.m. via Zoom unless owing to the Covid-19 virus, arrangements changed.

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.

Signed ..... Date .....