

Minutes of the Littlemore Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 27th September 2022 at Littlemore Village Hall

The meeting began at 7.08pm.

Present: Councillors Maggie Willis (Chair), Susie Aldridge, Michael Evans, Sadiea Mustafa-Awan, Jan Pullen, Sue Stewart. Tiago Corais arrived later.

In attendance: Daniela Harrison (Assistant Clerk), Geoffrey Ferres, (Responsible Finance Officer), Judith Godsland (Editor) Littlemore Local.

Members of the Public: Geoff Leitch, Pete Carter, Anne Stares, Dorian Hancock.

FC 51/22 Chair's Welcome

Cllr Willis welcomed everyone to the meeting.

FC 52/22 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Paule and Cllr Railton. The Council **agreed** to accept the reasons for absence given. No updated information regarding absence has been received from Cllr Haywood.

FC 53/22 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Willis declared her position as Deacon of Littlemore Baptist Church.

FC 54/22 Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th July were **agreed** and signed.

FC 55/22 Minutes of Council Committees

Minutes from the Finance Committee, Thursday June 30th and July 28th were noted.

Minutes from the Planning Committee Thursday June 30th and July 28th were signed.

FC 56/22 Chair's Update

Tree Survey September 2022 – A tree survey will be undertaken by Oxford Direct Services on Thursday October 29th. Cllr Willis has met with all residents who have raised concerns regarding the growth of trees surrounding our parks. Residents from Dudgeon Drive asked if the size of their trees could be reduced when the Council's work is undertaken. Cllr Willis has explained that work on private land is the responsibility of the owner. However, an introduction to ODS has been facilitated for Dudgeon Drive residents to commission an independent survey of their trees.

Active Oxford – Fifteen children and young people enjoyed a free BMX event on the Herschel Crescent Recreation Field in late August, organised in conjunction with Active Oxfordshire. A letter of thanks for use of the field has been received from Hayley Sanders, Access Sport Oxfordshire Manager.

Rugby Club Fun-day -A report has been received from Littlemore Rugby Club regarding the success of their Fun Day held on the August Bank Holiday, attended by 600 people. Thanks were expressed for their £500 grant provided by the Parish Council. This was used for setting up costs and First Aid services. The event has raised awareness of opportunities to play rugby, with new young players starting to attend regularly. It is hoped that this event will be repeated next summer.

FC 57/22 Assistant Clerk update

No update

FC 58/22 Correspondence

Southern Electricity - A request to contact Southern Electric has been received regarding proposed works on the Oxford Road Recreation Field.

Lawrence J. Ellison Institute – All Councillors are invited to a presentation regarding the development at Littlemore House and Plot 18 of the Science Park on Wednesday 12th October at 7pm.

Heritage sculpture on the Village Green – Maintenance of the sculpture, as agreed in 2019, has not been carried out. Cllrs Willis and Evans will meet the artist on September 28th to discuss restoration. Prior to any repairs commencing, a risk assessment, safety measures and a maintenance plan identifying materials to be used and handover sheet are required.

FC 59/22 Finance Update

- (i) No report was presented by the Chairman of the Finance Committee.
- (ii) Geoffrey Ferres, RFO, explained the purpose of the 2021-22 Internal and External Audits. He reported that the Internal Audit identified areas for improvement, which the Full Council acknowledged with a commitment to address. However, the Auditor commended the Parish Council for continuing to work without a Clerk in post. The Full Council **accepted** this report.
- (iii) The Council confirmed Geoffrey Ferres, Responsible Finance Officer, as Proper Officer for Finance. **Agreed**

Geoffrey Ferres left the meeting

FC 60/22 Small Grants

The Small Grants Working Group recommended the following:

Rosehill and Donnington Advice Centre - £500 to be awarded to assist with the running costs. **Agreed.**

Littlemore Fresh Food Collective – Cllr Willis left the room.

£500 to be awarded to purchase supplies when there is a shortage of free surplus fresh food. Use of these funds will be held within a separate funding stream within the Littlemore Baptist Church accounts. Professional referrals are made on behalf of beneficiaries. The project aims to support 60 people. **Agreed.**

Other matters:

Growing Minds – A request has been received asking for an extension of the closing date for applications. A reply has been sent to remind this organisation that the funding guidance document states that a report on the use of a previous grant must be received before a further application can be accepted. The closing date cannot be extended. However, a further round of funding opportunities will be advertised on the Council's website.

Mutual Aid – An email has been received from Mutual Aid Food Bank asking if the Council would consider an application from them. This organisation serves all areas of Oxford and does not meet the Council criteria requiring 75% of beneficiaries to be Littlemore residents. Discussion followed. Cllr Willis will contact the organisation to find out more about their operations and report to Council.

Small Grants Round 2. There will be a second round for applications to be advertised on the parish noticeboards and website. The closing date will be Wednesday 30th November – **Agreed.**

FC 61/22 Code of Conduct

The new Code of Conduct has been circulated to all Councillors. It is recommended that it is adopted by the Parish Council – **Agreed.**

FC 62/22 Working Group Terms of Reference

The following Working Group Terms of Reference were considered:
Community Engagement and Climate and Biodiversity Group – **Agreed.**

(6 votes for, 1 Abstention).

Estates and Maintenance – **Agreed.**

Transport and Connectivity – **Agreed.**

FC 63/22 Herschel Crescent Recreation Field development proposal

Councillors have received answers to the questions put to the developers in July and gave positive feedback regarding the development proposals. Both the Community Engagement and Estates and Maintenance Working Groups have recommended continued negotiation with Ox Place. **Agreed.**

The Planning Committee was asked to explore the differences regarding retaining green open spaces between the Oxford 2040 and 2036 Plans. **Agreed.**

Cllr Stewart expressed a wish to step down from this Group. Cllr Railton, Cllr Aldridge and Cllr Evans expressed an interest in attending future meetings.

FC 64/22 Working Group Updates

(i) Community Engagement & Climate and Biodiversity (CE&C&B)

Reports of meetings held in July and September were noted.

Neighbourhood Plan –A team has been assembled to continue work on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Notice Boards –Purchase and positioning of new notice boards has been decided. Permission has been granted to place boards in the Sandford Road bus shelter and the shelter outside Cardinal House.

Littlemore Community Map – The Littlemore map has been printed and delivered to every home in the Parish.

Biodiversity Project – A Community Tree Pack has been received from the Woodland Trust. This pack will be used to supply hedging on two sides of Little Park.

The meeting was extended at 9.02pm

(ii) Estates and Maintenance (E&M)

The following recommendations were made at a meeting September 5th:

Survey report on the Oxford Road Workshop – The poor condition and limited life of the building was observed. Maintenance will be ongoing to ensure a safe and secure premises.

Spiked railings along the boundary of Hershel Crescent Recreation Field – The Parish Council is required to maintain boundary fences under the terms of the lease. A letter to the City Council has been prepared raising questions relating to the liability to modify or replace the spiked railings if the design is now considered potentially hazardous.

FC 65/22 Closed sessions – Exclusion of Public and Press

- (i) The Council **agreed** the Assistant Clerk’s request to reduce her hours to 5 hrs/week.
- (ii) The Council **agreed** to advertise for a joint Clerk/RFO to work an average of 25 hrs/week.
- (iii) The Council **agreed** the following timetable for the Clerk/RFO appointment process:
 - Advertisements posted by 10th October
 - Closing date for applications 24th October
 - Short listing Tuesday 25th October
 - Interviews early November
- (iv) The Council **agreed** the Co-option of Peter Carter, Dorian Hancock and Anne Stares as Parish Councillors, subject to confirmation of meeting eligibility criteria.

FC 66/22 Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 11th October at 7.00pm at the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.29pm.

Signed as a true record:

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Cllr Maggie Willis
Chair, Littlemore Parish Council
Tuesday 11th October 2022