



# HARWELL PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of a meeting of Harwell Parish Council

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 19:30, Harwell Village Hall

### Members Present:

|         |                         |
|---------|-------------------------|
| Chair   | Cllr T Pearson (TP)     |
| Members | Cllr C Convery (CC)     |
|         | Cllr P Luper (PL)       |
|         | Cllr M Fox-Davies (MFD) |
|         | Cllr R Hughes (RH)      |
|         | Cllr M Bajre (MB)       |
|         | Cllr L Lacy (LL)        |
|         | Cllr S Peacock (SP)     |
|         | Cllr A Dearlove (AD)    |
|         | Cllr V Humphries (VH)   |

### Officers Present:

Responsible Financial Officer Mrs L White (Attended Virtually and took the minutes)

**Public and Press:** At least 2, including DCllr James.

Meeting started at **19:31**

### 226/24 Public participation

**MoP1:** Raised that the Council discussed hedge planting in November, but there has been no progress. The Chair confirmed that this would be entered on the next Lands Committee meeting. It was further raised that the Harwell News adverts are no longer local adverts for local people and with there being less adverts, did the income warrant the Clerk's time to manage the invoicing.

### 227/24 Apologies for absence

None.

### 228/24 Declarations of interest

#### 228.1.To receive declarations of interest for items on this agenda

CC – Knows one of the applicants of the planning application.

### 229/24 Co-option of Councillors

#### 229.1.To consider applications received for the position of Parish Councillor to fill the current vacancy.

Four candidates were present.

#### 229.2.To invite candidates to address the council.

Each of the candidates addressed the council in turn.

S Peacock: Chair of Western Valley PC, offering to help whilst the council has a number of vacant seats.

A Dearlove: Previously on Didcot TC and SODC, currently a Cllr at Western Valley Parish Council



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V Humphries: Cllr at Western Valley Parish Council and previously at Blewbury PC and Thame TC

L Lacy: Lived a long time in the Village and want to give back to the village now retired, can help with marketing and advertising and a hefty skillset in technology.

## **229.3.To consider and vote on the co-option of Councillors.**

It was proposed and seconded that all four candidates be co-opted to fill the four vacant seats.

**Resolved:** Approved Unanimously to co-opt Lucy Lacy; Simon Peacock; Anthony Dearlove & Vaughan Humphries.

## **229.4.To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office from the successful candidate.**

All four newly co-opted councillors signed their declaration of acceptance of office, each declaration was witness / co-signed by two existing councillors.

## **230/24 To approve the minutes of previous council meetings:**

### **230.1.Parish Council Meeting on 10 December 2024.**

It was approved unanimously the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting and they were duly signed.

### **231/24 To receive minutes of Committees:**

None.

### **232/24 District and County Councillor Reports - Appendix A**

Comments in addition to the report highlighted by DCllr S James

- White paper on devolution, talks of unitary, but maybe expanding outside Oxfordshire, but a different combination of places, not to be confused with BOB which deals with our healthcare currently.

### **233/24 Chairmans Report**

The Chairman gave a verbal report including:

- That Cllr Hawthorne has resigned today and the Vice-Chair will be reappointed at the next meeting.
- The Chair highlighted that they were considering stepping down at the end of March, and at this point unsure if that would be stepping down as Chair, or as a Councillor completely.

### **234/24 Clerks Report – Appendix B**

The Clerk's report was NOTED.

### **235/24 Allotment Locks: To approve the estimate (TBC) for the replacement allotment locks and to give the Clerk the authority to proceed with placing the order.**

To defer to the next meeting, as a quote has not been provided.



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## 236/24 Planning Matters

### 236.1.Planning Applications

[P24/V2608/HH](#) & [P24/V2609/LB](#) – Princes Manor Farm Church Lane Harwell Didcot OX11 0HA

Minor internal and external works to Prince's Manor Farmhouse and the adjacent outbuilding, formerly the granary.

**Resolved:** Approved Unanimously to submit the response NO OBJECTIONS.

### 236.2.Planning Decisions to note – Appendix C

The planning decisions as per Appendix C were NOTED.

## 237/24 Finance Matters - Appendix D

### Finance 2024-2025

#### 237.1.To approve payments list for January 2025

**Resolved:** Approved unanimously the payments list as detailed below.

#### January 2025 – List from the appendix.

| Voucher No | Date       | Net               | VAT             | Total             | Description                                        | Supplier                         |
|------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 212        | 16/01/2025 | £ 720.00          | £ 144.00        | £ 864.00          | Grounds Maintenance                                | Me My Spade and I                |
| 211        | 16/01/2025 | £ 100.00          | £ -             | £ 100.00          | Website Support                                    | Eyelid Productions Ltd           |
| 210        | 16/01/2025 | £ 413.15          | £ 82.63         | £ 495.78          | Playground repairs                                 | Ava Recreation Ltd               |
| 209        | 16/01/2025 | £ 680.00          | £ 136.00        | £ 816.00          | Grounds Maintenance                                | Oxford Exteriors                 |
| 208        | 16/01/2025 | £ 28.61           | £ 5.72          | £ 34.33           | Maintenance Sundries                               | TradeUK                          |
| 207        | 16/01/2025 | £ 96.64           | £ 19.33         | £ 115.97          | Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)                | TradeUK                          |
| 206        | 16/01/2025 | £ 48.29           | £ 9.66          | £ 57.95           | Machine Maintenance                                | Lawncare Garden Machinery Ltd    |
| 205        | 17/01/2025 | £ 18.66           | £ -             | £ 18.66           | Water - Staff Building                             | Castle Water Limited             |
| 201        | 10/01/2025 | £ 46.71           | £ 9.34          | £ 56.05           | Fuel                                               | BE Fuel Cards Ltd                |
| 200        | 26/01/2025 | £ 147.04          | £ 29.41         | £ 176.45          | Waste Collection                                   | Biffa Waste Services Ltd         |
| 199        | 09/01/2025 | £ 13.34           | £ 2.67          | £ 16.01           | Waste Collection                                   | Biffa Waste Services Ltd         |
| 198        | 12/01/2025 | £ 6.67            | £ 1.33          | £ 8.00            | Mobile Phone Charges                               | GiffGaff Ltd                     |
| 196        | 21/01/2025 | £ 10.30           | £ 2.06          | £ 12.36           | Microsoft 365                                      | Microsoft Ireland Operations Ltd |
|            |            | £ 3,522.67        | £ -             | £ 3,522.67        | Total Staff Costs, Inc PAYE deductions paid in Feb |                                  |
|            |            | <b>£ 5,852.08</b> | <b>£ 442.15</b> | <b>£ 6,294.23</b> | <b>Total</b>                                       |                                  |

A further invoice was presented to the council during the meeting, Harwell News Printing, £136 no VAT, for edition 249 in December, which was approved as part of the list.



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## 237.2.To note receipts to 31st December 2024

The receipts were NOTED as below.

**December Receipts**, NOTE Co-op Bank Statement only available to 12<sup>th</sup>December, more receipts may have been received before the end of the month which will be reported on a future agenda.

| Voucher No | Date       | Net     | VAT   | Total   | Description    | Customer      |
|------------|------------|---------|-------|---------|----------------|---------------|
| 103        | 12/12/2024 | £225.00 | £0.00 | £225.00 | Burial Fees    | M & J DIDCOCK |
| 101        | 10/12/2024 | £16.09  | £0.00 | £16.09  | Allotment Fees | G Hawthorne   |
| 102        | 10/12/2024 | £16.09  | £0.00 | £16.09  | Allotment Fees | G Hawthorne   |
| 100        | 02/12/2024 | £30.96  | £0.00 | £30.96  | Allotment Fees | Chris Storch  |

## 237.3.To note the reconciled bank balances to 12th December 2024.

The Reconciled Bank Balances were NOTED as below:

Reconciled to the 31<sup>st</sup> December

- **Petty Cash: £0** – No petty Cash held, cannot delete cash account in Scribe.
- **Unity Trust Current: £49,641.89**
- **Unity Trust Savings: £0**, all savings in Co-operative, advise moving some when access is available.

Reconciled to the 12<sup>th</sup> December

- **Co-operative Current: £69,632.72**

Not recently reconciled – awaiting paper statements which arrive infrequently

- **Co-operative Savings: £30,699.73**, anticipate interest has been earned, awaiting updated bank statement.
- **Cambridge: £61,851.07**, statement received only once per year, interest should have been applied in December, awaiting access / statement to arrive.



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|          |                                                     |           |                   |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| <b>A</b> | <b>Bank Reconciliation at 31/12/2024</b>            |           |                   |
|          | Cash in Hand 01/04/2024                             |           | 165,732.08        |
|          | <b>ADD</b><br>Receipts 01/04/2024 - 31/12/2024      |           | 145,240.82        |
|          | <b>SUBTRACT</b><br>Payments 01/04/2024 - 31/12/2024 |           | 310,972.90        |
|          | <b>Cash in Hand 31/12/2024</b><br>(per Cash Book)   |           | 99,159.85         |
| <b>B</b> | <b>Cash in Hand 31/12/2024</b><br>(per Cash Book)   |           | <b>211,813.05</b> |
|          | Cash in hand per Bank Statements                    |           |                   |
|          | Petty Cash 31/12/2024                               | 0.00      |                   |
|          | Co-operative Current Account 12/12/2024             | 69,632.72 |                   |
|          | Co-operative Savings Account 30/09/2024             | 30,699.73 |                   |
|          | Cambridge 31/05/2024                                | 61,851.07 |                   |
|          | Unity Trust Current 31/12/2024                      | 49,641.89 |                   |
|          | Unity Trust Savings 31/12/2024                      | 0.00      |                   |
| <b>B</b> |                                                     |           | <b>211,825.41</b> |
|          | Less unrepresented payments                         |           | 12.36             |
|          |                                                     |           | 211,813.05        |
|          | Plus unrepresented receipts                         |           |                   |
| <b>B</b> | <b>Adjusted Bank Balance</b>                        |           | <b>211,813.05</b> |
|          |                                                     |           |                   |
|          | <b>A = B Checks out OK</b>                          |           |                   |

**237.4.A motion without notice was made to close the meeting due to the nature of the business about to be transacted – regarding staff salaries in the budget.**

**RESOLVED:** Approved Unanimously to close the meeting and exclude the public and press.

**237.5.A motion without notice was made to re-open the meeting prior to approving the budget.**

**RESOLVED:** Approved Unanimously to reopen the meeting.



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## Finance 2025-2026

### 237.6. To approve the budget for Financial Year 2025-2026

The draft budget had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

**Resolved:** Approved Unanimously the budget for 2025-2026 as below:

|      | 2023-2024                       |           | 2024-2025    |           | 2025-2026    |          |                    |
|------|---------------------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------|----------|--------------------|
|      | Receipts                        | Payments  | Receipts     | Payments  | Receipts     | Payments |                    |
| 1000 | Actual                          | Actual    | Budget       | Budget    | Budget       | Budget   |                    |
| 1010 | INCOME / RECEIPTS               |           |              |           |              |          |                    |
| 1010 | Precept                         | 109043.00 |              | 119900.00 | 129368       |          | 2024-2025 Tax Base |
| 1020 | Grants                          | 536.45    |              |           | 0            |          | 1358               |
| 1030 | CIL                             |           |              |           | 0            |          |                    |
| 1040 | Allotment Fees & keys           | 802.46    |              | 950.00    | 950          |          |                    |
| 1050 | Bank Interest                   | 1512.63   |              | 500.00    | 500          |          | 2024-2025 Band D   |
| 1060 | Cemetery Fees                   | 4078.98   |              | 11000.00  | 10000        |          | £ 88.29            |
| 1070 | Grass Cutting Contribution      | 1637.24   |              | 1364.00   | 1364         |          |                    |
| 1080 | Harwell News Advertising        | 1092.17   |              | 300.00    | 1000         |          |                    |
| 1090 | Property Income (inc Wayleaves) | 5878.68   |              | 5000.00   | 5000         |          |                    |
|      | £ 124,581.61                    |           | £ 139,014.00 |           | £ 148,182.00 |          | 2025-2026 Tax Base |
|      |                                 |           |              |           |              |          | 1378               |



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|      | EXPENDITURE / PAYMENTS                  |  |                    |  |                    |                    |
|------|-----------------------------------------|--|--------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| 3000 | <b>ADMINISTRATION</b>                   |  |                    |  |                    |                    |
| 3010 | Audit Costs                             |  | 325                |  | 745                | 1000               |
| 3020 | Bank Charges                            |  | 18                 |  | 72                 | 72                 |
| 3030 | Chairman's Allowance                    |  |                    |  | 0                  | 0                  |
| 3040 | Elections                               |  | 400                |  |                    |                    |
| 3050 | Expenses - Stationery                   |  | 1384.56            |  | 500                | 1000               |
| 3060 | Hall Hire                               |  | 702.71             |  | 1000               | 1000               |
| 3070 | Harwell News Printing                   |  | 679                |  | 900                | 1000               |
| 3080 | Insurance                               |  | 2964.28            |  | 3510               | 4500               |
| 3090 | IT Support & Software & Phone           |  | 2475.82            |  | 2200               | 2500               |
| 3100 | Legal                                   |  | 12                 |  | 500                | 2500               |
| 3110 | Office Equipment                        |  | 1873.47            |  | 350                | 500                |
| 3120 | Office Hire                             |  | 2476.39            |  | 1852               | 2000               |
| 3130 | Staff Costs (All Staff, HMRC & Pension) |  | 74247.93           |  | 56000              | 69000              |
| 3140 | Subscriptions (OALC, SLCC, ICO)         |  | 1646.18            |  | 1500               | 1600               |
| 3150 | Training                                |  | 720                |  | 2000               | 2000               |
| 3160 | Website                                 |  | 1652.95            |  | 500                | 600                |
| 3170 | Locum Services                          |  | 4200               |  | 16500              | 7500               |
|      |                                         |  | <b>£ 95,778.29</b> |  | <b>£ 88,129.00</b> | <b>£ 96,772.00</b> |
|      |                                         |  |                    |  |                    |                    |

|                             |
|-----------------------------|
| 2025-2026 Band D<br>£ 93.88 |
|-----------------------------|

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Precept Increase<br>7.90 | % |
|--------------------------|---|

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Band D Increase<br>6.33 | % |
|-------------------------|---|



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|      |                                               |  |                     |  |                     |  |                     |
|------|-----------------------------------------------|--|---------------------|--|---------------------|--|---------------------|
| 4000 | <b>RECREATION &amp; LAND</b>                  |  |                     |  |                     |  |                     |
| 4010 | Allotments                                    |  | 300.37              |  | 1500                |  | 800                 |
| 4020 | Cemetery                                      |  |                     |  | 0                   |  | 500                 |
| 4030 | Fuel                                          |  | 1441.1              |  | 1500                |  | 2000                |
| 4040 | General Maintenance                           |  | 1630.03             |  | 1000                |  | 1000                |
| 4050 | Grass; Hedges; Trees and Fencing              |  | 17.11               |  | 22000               |  | 25000               |
| 4060 | Inspections                                   |  | 350.73              |  | 305                 |  | 310                 |
| 4070 | Machinery & Tools -<br>Maintenance/Repair/New |  | 2544.68             |  | 3600                |  | 3000                |
| 4080 | Play Equipment Area                           |  | 271.22              |  | 7500                |  | 4500                |
| 4090 | PPE                                           |  | 153.02              |  | 300                 |  | 300                 |
| 4100 | Renewals                                      |  |                     |  | 7300                |  | 7000                |
| 4110 | Staff Building                                |  | 1385.26             |  | 1200                |  | 2000                |
| 4120 | Waste Collections                             |  | 3395.52             |  | 3000                |  | 3000                |
|      |                                               |  | <b>£ 11,489.04</b>  |  | <b>£ 49,205.00</b>  |  | <b>£ 49,410.00</b>  |
|      |                                               |  |                     |  |                     |  |                     |
| 5000 | <b>OTHER PROJECTS &amp; GRANTS</b>            |  |                     |  |                     |  |                     |
| 5010 | Grants (Including S137 & Little<br>Pipins)    |  | 250                 |  | 1680                |  | 2000                |
| 5020 | In year projects, undefined                   |  | 536.45              |  |                     |  |                     |
|      |                                               |  | <b>£ 786.45</b>     |  | <b>£ 1,680.00</b>   |  | <b>£ 2,000.00</b>   |
|      |                                               |  |                     |  |                     |  |                     |
|      |                                               |  | <b>£ 108,053.78</b> |  | <b>£ 139,014.00</b> |  | <b>£ 148,182.00</b> |

**237.7. To approve the precept request for Financial Year 2025-2026.**

**Resolved:** Approved Unanimously the Precept Request for Financial Year 2025-2026 as £129,368.

Discussion on the Clerk's comments regarding internal financial controls on the agenda were deferred to the next meeting.



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## **238/24 Active Travel Roundtable – Appendix E**

To discuss and make any recommendations on topics affecting Harwell.

Appendix E was discussed, it was proposed to put further discussion on this matter on a future agenda. CC to propose directly to the Clerk.

## **239/24 To discuss parish meeting representation at County and District level**

Concerns were raised that the some Parish Councillors feel that the DCllrs and CCllrs aren't serving the parishes as well as they could be, and that their council meetings are very hard to follow / comment on, even when you do attend as a member of public.

It was further commented that perhaps the questions should be raised to the DCllr and CCllr reports prior to the Harwell PC meetings, as it is difficult to query things on the day.

**[ACTION]** PL to draft a proposed letter to DCllrs and CCllrs regarding engagement with the parish and how their reports and information they share could better support the parishes they represent.

## **240/24 Full Parish Council Meeting Schedule**

To discuss and approve the proposal to move full Parish Council meetings to a different day.

Deferred / not discussed.

## **241/24 Matters for future discussion**

It was agreed to place the following items on the next Agenda:

- Land at the back of the Recreation Ground, used to be a sheep farm, consider whether to bid to buy to extend the Recreation Ground
- MP's proposal for a cycle path to Milton, do we need another cycle path, when £10m was spent on a new bus lane and cycle path already?
- Appointment of a new Vice-Chair
- Appointments to Committees noting the new Co-options
- Internal Controls Statement, including Checklist.
- Purchase of conference microphone/speaker/camera to support remote attendance of staff at meetings, budget approximately £260.

## **242/24 Confirm the date and time of the next Council Meeting**

It was confirmed the next meeting would be held on 11 February 2025.

There being no further business to be transacted, the Chair closed the meeting **20:39**.