

Upper Rissington Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting

held on 14 March 2018, 7:30pm at Upper Rissington Village Hall

Councillors present: Matt Barley, Marc Buffery (Chairman), Brian Hanks, Robert Hazard, Martin Johnstone, Dawn Laird, and Amos Peek.

In attendance: District Councillor Mark MacKenzie-Charrington, Pauline Rigby (Clerk) and 8 members of the public at the start of the meeting.

Cllr Hanks had stepped down from the office of Chairman, so the Vice Chairman opened the meeting. He thanked the outgoing Chairman and welcomed new councillor Bob Hazard.

1. **Apologies:** County Councillor Nigel Moor was unable to attend.
2. **Declarations of Interest and Applications for Dispensation:** Cllr Barley declared a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) in item 14, the airspace consultations.
3. **To Elect a Chairman:** Councillors **resolved** to elect Cllr Buffery as Chairman. This creates a vacancy in the office of Vice Chairman, which will be considered at a future meeting.
4. **Public Session:** The following questions and comments were received.
 - Has a shredder been purchased? The Clerk said no, not yet.
 - Has the former Acting Clerk returned all paperwork to the office?
 - Could residents inspect the land registry titles for land owned by the Parish Council?
 - With regards to the field in Great Rissington Parish that is included in the Victory Fields development, can this Parish Council own and manage land situated in another parish?
 - When the open spaces come up for adoption under the S106 agreement, will the Parish Council be able to pick and choose which open spaces it takes on?
 - Will the Parish Council, via its Clerk, sign up for Neighbourhood Watch alerts?
5. **Local Police Report:** Unable to attend.
6. **County Councillors Report:** Cllr Moor was unable to attend but sent a written report.
 - The County Council budget previously mentioned has been approved.
 - The programme to replace street lighting with LED lights is progressing well.
 - Residents reported that the street lights on Smith Barry Road, Crescent and Circus don't work, and that they can't see the potholes at night. The Clerk was asked to follow up.
7. **District Councillors Report:** Cllr MacKenzie-Charrington reported the following:
 - The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has approved the Chesterton development at Cirencester.
 - If Upper Rissington would like a grant towards the purchase of a defibrillator then funding is still available. First, a suitable location needs to be identified, with an electric power supply, and permission obtained from the landowner. Residential premises are usually not suitable. The old Co-op, the new shops and the old phone box in the north of the village were suggested. Cllr Barley agreed to do some research and report back.
8. **Minutes:** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7 February 2018 were approved as a true record, with one correction under Item 13(a). The manuscript was corrected, and Cllr Buffery duly signed the minutes. **Motion carried;** those not present at the February meeting abstained.

9. **Clerk's Report:** The Clerk reported the following matters arising:

- Cotswold District Council (CDC) has approved a Community Governance Review to increase the number of councillors to be elected in the parish to 9 or 11, and consider warding the parish. The consultation phase will start soon, when CDC will write to electors in the parish.
- Does the Council wish to organise summer youth activities? Last year organised activities were provided by World Jungle for the parishes of Great, Little, Upper and Wyck Rissington. The Clerk was asked to investigate and add the item to the agenda for consideration in April.
- A cheque, to replace one lost in the Christmas post, had been signed between meetings, once an effective stop had been placed on the original. The bank charged £10 to stop the cheque.
- What has happened to the application to Unity Bank? Councillors agreed to discuss banking arrangements outside the meeting, and then the topic will be revisited.
- The Clerk's pay for March exceeds the lower earnings threshold for automatic enrolment, and the Council will be required to offer a workplace pension if so requested.
- The planning applications to consider the public open spaces (17/04151/FUL) and regularising materials (17/04950/FUL) could go before CDC's Planning Committee on 11 April. The date has not been confirmed, but if it is then the Parish Council will have an opportunity to make a representation. More details will be communicated when known. The group of objectors may also be invited to send one speaker to make a representation, and between now and 11 April could start working out what they would like to say. The Parish Council's response to these planning applications was previously discussed, and its representation would be consistent with the agreed response [which is available to view on the planning portal].
- Residents were unhappy that they had been encouraged to object to the application on regularising materials without knowing all the facts (17/04950/FUL). They didn't realise that the homeowners would be the target of the enforcement action, and felt this should have been made clear from the start.

10. **Neighbourhood Plan:**

- a) Now the Neighbourhood Area has been designated, the group is moving on to apply for grants. A project management 'supremo' has joined the task team. The team will start considering specific topic areas, and coming back to consult with residents. The next meeting will be held tomorrow, Thursday 15 March. The Clerk was asked to include the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in the preparations for the GDPR.
- b) The expenses claim for SurveyMonkey was discussed. A monthly subscription was purchased, then upgraded to an annual package, before additional users were added at extra cost, but the claim was only for the initial month and annual fee, with the resident absorbing the rest. Councillors **resolved** to pay £429 towards the costs incurred. Cllr Hanks and Laird asked for it to be recorded in the minutes that they abstained.

11. **Staffing Committee:** Currently, the Parish Council as a whole considers all matters relating to employment. In recent months, there has not been time to consider employment matters at monthly meetings, and some councillors are concerned that they are not meeting their responsibilities as an employer. The Clerk sought advice from GAPTIC, who said councils usually appoint a smaller group to manage staff. A Terms of Reference had been drafted to describe how such a committee could function, with delegated responsibility for day-to-day staff management. Councillors **resolved** to form a staffing committee; Cllr Hanks and Laird asked for their objection to be recorded in the minutes. Cllrs Barley, Buffery, Johnstone and Peek were appointed to the committee with Cllr Peek as its Chairman. Councillors requested more time to consider the Terms of Reference.

12. **Community Liaison Committee:** The following points were reported:

- The meeting of 16th February with CDC, Linden-Bovis and Highways was reviewed. The group representatives felt that the process was too tightly controlled by CDC; they weren't allowed to step outside the prescribed agenda, and were left with the impression that there were unlikely to be any more meetings. Concerns were also raised that the executives from the developers didn't know the site well enough, and thus weren't able to provide meaningful responses. Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP may be available in May to attend a meeting.
- The District Councillor said he hoped that, by the next meeting, there will be a report to say what measures will be put in place with a timeframe for delivery. CDC is aware of residents' concerns, and is committed to the process. Consideration of the application that deals with the landscaping will be crucial; that aspect of development is in limbo because the developer doesn't want to move forward only to find they are not compliant with the final scheme.
- He added that the planning authority is keen that the issues are properly noted down and sent in to them on weekly or monthly basis. If the Parish Council could consolidate and channel the information about areas of concern, that would make it much easier for them to manage. Councillors were concerned that the Clerk did not have time to coordinate the list, but it was agreed that the Clerk would submit the list of concerns; the process for communicating with the Liaison Committee is to be agreed with them.

13. **Planning**

- a) No new planning decisions had been made.
- b) Councillors considered planning application 18/00475/FUL, Full Application for Erection of single-storey front extension at 26 Grebe Square Upper Rissington, GL54 2NH, and **resolved** to submit a response of 'no objection'.
- c) CDC's consultation on the Local Plan modifications was noted.

Cllr Barley had declared a DPI, so left the room for consideration of the next item.

14. **Airspace Consultation:** Brize Norton and London Oxford Airport are proposing to extend the controlled airspace around each airport, and are holding parallel consultation on these proposals. Cllr MacKenzie-Charrington explained that the proposals are to enhance safety around the airports, as there are more aircraft, and the airspaces were set out in the 1930s. Cllr Hanks reported that, while there will be improvements for military and civilian use, it could create problems for general aviation who don't like entering controlled airspace, and like even less going into military controlled airspace. Brize Norton's proposal would see the northern limit of the controlled airspace extended to just south of Little Rissington Airfield. So-called Cat 8 airspace would potentially force a lot of light aircraft to fly outside the controlled airspace, which puts it over our village. This will mean more air traffic flying by visual sight concentrated into this region, with a consequent higher risk of collisions. Gliders that operate from the airfield may also be restricted as the launch height would put them into controlled airspace. Councillors had real concern that the proposals will affect the village and general aviation. Councillors **resolved** to respond to the consultations, citing the concerns raised by the General Aviation Authority.

The District Councillor was excused from the meeting.

Cllr Barley returned to the room.

15. **Winter Action Plan:** The refilling of the grit bins was noted, authorised by the Clerk under emergency powers in consultation with the Snow Warden. A builder had collected 1.5 tonnes of grit from the Highways' depot to refill the bins; there will be an invoice in due course.

16. **General Data Protection Regulations:** The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has advised that the Clerk should not be the Data Protection Officer (DPO), and has issued a 60-page toolkit to help local councils prepare for the new regulations. GAPTC's advice is to wait to see whether a sector-specific service will be set up, and they have arranged a training course that the Clerk would like to attend. Councillors **resolved** that the Clerk could attend the GDPR training course organised by GAPTC on 26 April at a cost of £40.

17. **Certificate in Local Council Administration:** The Clerk is expected to work towards the CiLCA qualification. Councillors **resolved** that the Clerk enrol on CiLCA mentoring course run by GAPTC, at a cost of £395, and authorised the Chairman to sign the 'Learning Agreement'.

Cllr Peek departed from the meeting.

18. **Office Broadband:** The Council is now able to upgrade its broadband connection to faster speeds, but the current contract runs until August, meaning that the Council would incur penalty charges to move to a different supplier. Councillors **resolved** to enter into a new 24-month contract with BT for a 'superfast' broadband product with 50GB download limit. The £20 charge to change the name on the account was questioned; the Clerk was asked to write to BT to clarify the situation.

Cllr Hanks left the meeting during the previous item; and Cllr Laird left at this juncture, 9:56pm.

19. **Finance:**

- a) Councillors **resolved** to pay telephone and broadband costs by variable direct debit.
- b) The £10 bank charge was noted.
- c) The payments list was reviewed, and councillors **resolved** to pay the bills presented.

Payee	Date of invoice	Details	Total	Relevant minutes	Authority
HSBC	26-Jan	Bank charge (cheque stop)	£10.00	Agreed with Chairman	LGA 1972 s.111
GAPTC	14-Feb	Better Councillor Course	£95.00	08/11/17 - 17	LGA 1972 s.111
Town & Country Trees	15-Feb	Aboricultural Services (Harris Gardens)	£570.00	07/02/18 - 16	HA 1980 s.96
Fraser Morphew	20-Feb	Neighbourhood Plan expenses	£429.00	14/03/17 - 10(b)	Localism Act 2011
Grant Thornton	09-Jan	External Audit	£706.80		LGA 1972 s.111
PATA	01-Mar	Payroll (Q4, Jan, Feb, Mar)	£22.50	28/04/17 - 7	LGA 1972 s.111
Pauline Rigby	01-Mar	Clerk's salary, March 2018, overtime	██████	08/11/17 - 29	LGA 1972 s.112 (2)
HMRC	01-Mar	PAYE	£338.62		LGA 1972 s.112 (2)
GAPTC	01-Apr	Membership 2018	£426.50	22/05/17 - 20	LGA 1972 s.143
GAPTC	15-Mar	CiLCA Mentoring Course	£395.00	14/03/17 - 16	LGA 1972 s.111

- d) There was no income other than bank interest.
- e) The bank reconciliation was reviewed and accepted.
- f) Councillors reviewed the expenditure for the year to date, and noted several codes where the budget had been exceeded. As the payment to GAPTC is for membership in 2018-19, it was agreed to hold back the cheque until April. For the office expenses and training codes, it was agreed to make a virement from the contingency budget to meet the additional costs. The Active Together code will be reviewed at a later date. **Motion unanimously carried.**

- g) The internal checks had not been carried out this month. Councillors **resolved** to carry out the checks quarterly going forward.
 - h) Councillors **resolved** to add Cllr Hazard and the Clerk as signatories to the bank mandate.
20. **External Auditor's Report:** Not discussed as Cllr Hanks was not present.
21. **Children's Play Park:**
- a) The monthly play park inspection did not reveal any new concerns; no actions required. Councillors agreed that inspections of the remaining equipment should continue.
 - b) Councillors had met with a consultant, who advises parish and town councils on new playground schemes. As part of his service, he could provide advice on the main considerations in such a project, write the tender documentation, meet with potential suppliers, and help with the tender analysis, with the aim of securing best value for money. Councillors unanimously **resolved** to appoint the services of Michael Carter of Sports and Play Consulting in Cheltenham to manage the tender for new play park equipment, with the intention of having new equipment installed by the summer holidays, though it was acknowledged that this was a demanding timeframe. The scope of the play park renovations was discussed, and councillors unanimously **resolved** that for the purposes of preparing the tender documentation the value of the project would be £50,000 in two stages: £25,000 in the coming financial year, and £25,000 in 2019-20 (with the intention to secure grant funding for the second stage), and accepted the **consultancy fee of £1,750**. Cllrs Barley, Johnstone and Hazard agreed to form to a working party to meet with the consultant and take the project forward. The Neighbourhood Plan group asked to be involved in the process.
22. **Annual Parish Meeting:** Councillors **resolved** to spend up to £150 on refreshments for the meeting, to include tea, coffee, and cake. Cllrs Buffery and Hazard agreed to organise.
23. **Correspondence:** Not discussed due to lack of time.
24. **To resolve to move in to a Confidential Session to discuss Separate Business, pursuant to s.1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and Standing Order 19a.** Not required.
25. **Clerk's Interim Appraisal:** Not discussed due to lack of time.
26. **Overtime:** Not discussed due to lack of time.
27. **Clerk's Holiday Request & Work Plan:** Councillors unanimously **resolved** to approve the Clerk's holiday request for March. The Clerk's work plan was not discussed due to lack of time.
28. **Items for Future Meetings:** Not discussed. Housing Needs Survey, Youth Council, disciplinary and grievance policy, and tree management plan previously noted.
29. **Date of Next Meeting:** Councillors **resolved** to hold the next meeting on Thursday 12 April 2018. The meeting closed at 10:30pm

Signature of Chairman upon approval of the Minutes 12 April 2018

Copies to:

County Councillor Nigel Moor

District Councillor Mark Mackenzie-Charrington