

# *WOODCOTE PARISH COUNCIL*

**MINUTES** of a Parish Council meeting held in the Committee Room, Village Hall Woodcote 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010, commencing 7.30pm.

## **PRESENT**

Chairman	Mrs. M. Edmonds
Vice Chairman	Mrs. D. Hadaway
	Mr. J. Lynch
	Mr. C. Edwards
	Mr. A. Allen
	Mr. K. Grady
	Mr. R. Pierce
	Mr. P. Tyler
	Mr. D. Sexon Oxfordshire County Councillor
Parish Clerk	Ms. Jenny Welham

## **1.To Receive Apologies For Absence**

Mr. Peter Stevenson, Mrs. S. Harrison

## **2. To Receive Declarations of Interest**

None.

## **3. Public Forum**

8 members of the Public present, the majority were present to speak regarding the proposed closure of Woodcote Library.

County Councillor Mr. D. Sexon introduced Mr. K. Stenning our Highways Area Steward.

The following members of public addressed the Parish Council;

Gill Amos currently employed to manage Woodcote Library expressed her strong objection to the closure commitment to fight to keep the library open.

Kathleen Oliver addressed the Parish Council voicing her strong protest to the proposed library closure emphasising that the library is also the school library for Langtree, Woodcote Primary School and the Pre School, and that the Schools help to fund some of the library. She also made the point that the building is an Educational building.

Councillor Lynch read out comments from Mrs. Bentley who was unable to attend the meeting, but she wished to express that she is willing to start and run the Woodcote Friends of the Library Group to work on fighting the closure. Mrs. Bentley's other points were that the library should remain to be run by professional staff and not by volunteers who had little knowledge of how a library should operate, that Woodcote library was more accessible following changes to the buses and lastly that it currently helps people with learning/reading difficulties. Councillor Hadaway also expressed that her husband Mr. R. Hadaway would be willing to help on such a group.

Mr. C. Quinton noted that Sonning Common library is also marked for closure and that Goring library which is smaller is not one marked for closure, he felt that Woodcote should remain open as it was in between these two villages and therefore accessible. He also expressed that the detail of how much funding is required for Woodcote library needs to be investigated and that he has already emailed OCC to obtain this figure.

John Ballinger agreed with Mr. Quinton's comments and also stated that a lot of people in the village use the library hub for the internet and emails etc as they do not have PC equipment in their homes.

County Councillor Dave Sexon addressed the meeting with the following update regarding the proposed library closures, he stressed that at the moment they are a proposal to close 20, the ones with the lowest usage are being looked into, the figures showing usage of 82% are the ones marked to stay open and 18% usage are marked to be closed, Woodcote being in the lower use category. These usage figures for Woodcote library were generally questioned by the meeting. Cllr Sexon currently did not have details of funding but stated that he has asked for the detail and will keep chasing for the figures. He confirmed that the proposal has started and the timeline is, Consultation period will be March – May 2011, with a report to the Cabinet being September 2011, and 3 month staff notices will not be issued until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011, funding finally removed June 2012.

Councillor Pierce addressed the meeting pointing out that some years ago the Mobile Library that served Woodcote was totally inadequate given the high usage and that Woodcote was first to get a library opened that was for joint public and school use, also at that time the building was owned by Langtree school. He also stressed that the actions should be to remove Woodcote Library from the proposed closure list.

**It was resolved** that a Friends of Woodcote Library should be set up and that a meeting should be held early in January to invite the village residents to attend to view their opinions and the Group be set up. Mr. Quinton agreed to publicise the meeting in the next Correspondent. The Clerk to book suitable date.

#### **4. To Approve Minutes of Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

Approved.

#### **5. Matters arising from those Minutes not on the Agenda Elsewhere**

Councillor Grady noted that the December Correspondent had a planning application listed with an incorrect result, this was the application for a two storey house at the rear of 4 Goring Road, it stated Approved, which is incorrect, this Application had been withdrawn.

#### **12. County Councillor's Report**

Mr. Keith Stenning (previously introduced) addressed the meeting giving an update. He is the Area Steward for OCC Highways for our area. He advised that their budgets have been cut by 50% Capital and 40% Revenue, the revenue budget being the one used for Highway repairs. His main responsibility is for highway repairs, in particular potholes and minor civil schemes such as dropped kerbs. For these schemes he has to put in bids so any information and support from the Parish Council will help to win such bids. He is based at Drayton and can be contacted on 08453 10 11 11.

Councillor Lynch asked if because of current public spending cuts if the Parish Council are prepared to help fund repairs on a 50/50 basis with OCC would this be of interest? Mr. Stenning said yes this would be considered but repair is done on a priority of most hazardous so help with funding will not necessary increase the time line of repair.

Councillor Sexon commented that the Parish Council are not allowed to carry out their own repairs to highways. Mr. Stenning advised that the B471 has been upgraded to a priority route for gritting, this is an big improvement on last year as it was not graded as priority.

He stated that salt boxes in the village if not already filled should be filled within the next week, Woodcote does have some boxes, The Chairman asked Councillors to check on their designated areas of the village.

#### **6. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman advised that the HSBC Bank in Goring was being closed and that she had been in touch with the Reading HSBC Branch to express concern. The Goring branch has the nearest 24 hour cash point for Woodcote. Reading HSBC have written to Goring Parish Council asking where they can install a cash point. The Chairman requested support for a letter to be sent to Goring Parish Council supporting the request made by HBSC for a cash point, Councillors **agreed**.

Chairman stated that the proposed Library closure had been well covered earlier.

The Chairman advised Councillor's that the Clerk will be on holiday from 20<sup>th</sup> December 2010 returning on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2011, arrangements for the January 5<sup>th</sup> meeting Agenda to be circulated have been made.

#### **7. Planning**

##### **7.1 Applications**

None

##### **7.2 Applications Granted by SODC:**

P10/E1526 Two Storey side and rear extension Denver House Beech Lane Woodcote RG4 9LS  
GRANTED.

##### **7.3 Applications Refused BY SODC:**

NONE.

#### **7.4 Other Planning Matters.**

**P10/E0920/DA** Chiltern Park Aerodrome, Icknield Farm, Ipsden.

A letter from SODC Planning has been received regarding the appeal to this application which they refused, advising that the hearing will be 6<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Noted.

**P10/E1793** Bungalow to rear of 4 Goring Road, Woodcote. The Clerk advised that this is a new application just received Councillor Grady and Lynch to inspect plans and site as soon as documentation received.

Councillor Tyler reported that he had been to a Conservation Group Meeting and they have concerns regarding the appeal to the planning application for the development of the Old Reservoir, this application has been refused but has gone to appeal. To assist the Parish Council the group have agreed to conduct a hydrological report of the area to show the effect to the water levels and ground. They have requested that cost of £50 be funded by the Parish Council. **It was resolved** that this amount be added to the grant the Council give to the group.

Councillor Lynch had read the previously circulated email from the Clerk regarding a Planning Journal available from Navigus Planning at an annual cost, **it was agreed** by Council that this was not required.

#### **9. Finance - To Approve Payments**

Cheque	Payee	Amount £)	Date	Reason
3218	SODC	£239.76	1.12	Dog Bin collection
3219	Chilton Waste Services	£186.00	1.12	Skip allotments
DD	CPRE	£29.00	1.12	Annual Subscription
3220	K. Smallbone	£25.00	1.12	War Memorial
3221	K. Knight	£150.00	1.12	Litter Picking

#### **Approved**

#### **To Note Receipts**

None.

#### **9.1 Quotations/Grants received for approval**

Request from Woodcote Conservation Group for Annual Grant.

The amount in budget is £300, Council suggested to increase to £350, which will cover the report previously discussed under other planning matters. **Agreed**, Clerk to present cheque at next meeting.

Request from St. Leonard's Church for contribution to Graveyard maintenance asking if this amount could be increased this year. Budget figure is £800, this amount to be paid. **Agreed** clerk to present cheque at next meeting.

#### **10 District Councillor's Report**

Councillor Peirce reported on a full SODC Council meeting he had attended regarding the Core Strategy, which relates to housing development in the area. Larger developments in Thame, Wallingford and Didcot were discussed. However he stated that the Southern area of AONB had been raised and that limited incursion into the AONB had been detailed and considered justified to develop as it would make for stronger communities. 3 Villages in the AONB were mentioned one of which was Woodcote He strongly objected to this and said that extra housing would overstretch current infrastructures, and that villages in the AONB should be treated differently, and already were strong communities. The amount of development has now changed and they are marginally less as the proposal is now 740 houses across 12 villages.

He also reported that the Leader of SODC had put forward a motion for a Boundary review of District Wards with a view to reducing District Councillors from currently 48 to 30. If this was carried it is probable that Woodcote would lose their own District Councillor and be incorporated into a wider Ward. He had questioned this as it goes against the Government's objectives of the Big Society and passing more decision making to local level.

**13. Other Matters to be raised with the Chairman**

Councillor Tyler reported that the Village Green committee wanted to place a plaque on the back of the War Memorial to commemorate the special 70 year celebration service held. Council agreed.

Councillor Tyler advised Council of the book launch at the Woodcote library on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December of the new Stilehopper book detailing walks around Woodcote village and area.

The Clerk reported that a resident in Lackmore Gardens was still requesting work be carried out to the Sycamore Tree close to his house. It transpires that this tree was planted by the residents and is not a Parish Council tree, suggested that the Clerk advise the tree work should be carried out at the residents cost.

Councillor Edwards requested if the tree on the vision splay on the corner of Goring Rd and Bridle Path could be attended. Clerk to speak to OCC.

**14. Correspondence**

1. Email from Marilyn Maddock – Re ivy on Larch Trees Wood Green.

The reply detailed who ran the Wood Green group responsible for the upkeep of their green and trees. Clerk suggested a letter asking them to attend to the ivy. The Clerk will check with SODC Tree Officer regarding ivy growing on such trees so that the comments from the tree officer can be incorporated in the letter. Council agreed.

2. Email from Highways – re 40mph speed limit on A4074.

A reply to the letter from the Clerk had been received and due to the current severe budget cuts, the new speed limit is on hold while all priorities are reviewed.

3. Email from Came & Co – re insurance position, advice re gritting during cold weather.

Noted, circulate to Councillors.

4. Email from OCC – Re Broadband for All.

Noted, circulate to Councillors.

**15. To note date of the next meeting: Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2010.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman/Date \_\_\_\_\_