

**Appleton with Eaton Parish Council (AWE PC) Parish Council Meeting**

**held in the Village Hall**

**Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025 7:15pm**

**DRAFT Minutes**

**Councillors present:** Councillors Mary Carey (MC), John Adams (JA), Chris Mitty (CM), Valentina Brito-Marquez (VBM) and Liz Gilkes (LG) (arrived at item 24/160)

**In attendance:** Allison Leigh (Clerk)

**24/149: To elect a Chair for the meeting:** The council elected MC as chair of the meeting.

**24/150: Apologies for Absence:** Chairman Stephen Day, Sue Sternberg (SS), District Councillor Mark Coleman (DC)

**24/151: Declarations of interest:** None

**24/152: Public questions and statements:** A member of the public was in attendance to note that there is a new amendment to planning application P24/V2605/FUL. They believe this to be a minor amendment which doesn't change their view of the application. The Council noted that this isn't on the agenda and they will schedule another meeting to discuss, if needed.

The resident thanked AWEPC for their comments on this application.

**23/153: Reports from District and County Councillors:**

**Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)**

The County Councillor was not in attendance but send a report. See Attachment 1.

**Vale of White Horse District Council (VoWHDC)**

The District Councillor was not in attendance but sent the following information:

*The government has announced that VoWHDC will not be amongst the first authorities for devolution and local government reorganisation.*

*In a letter to leaders of the local authorities in Oxfordshire, the government said it expects authorities to make '... every effort to work together to develop and jointly submit one proposal for unitary local government across the whole of your area. The proposal that is developed for the whole of your area may be for one or more new unitary councils and should be complementary to devolution plans'*

*We are required to submit an interim plan by 21 March and a full proposal by 28 November.*

*The Council is holding an additional meeting on 19 February, to receive a paper on local government reorganisation (covering the mayoral strategic authority and unitary process).*

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**24/154 Minutes of the last meeting:** The Council approved and signed the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 as a true record with one edit.

**24/155: Clerk's report:** The Council noted the Clerk's Report.

**24/156: Finance:**

**a. Recurring payments:** The Council RESOLVED the following payments for 2024:

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Element</u>	<u>Review Date</u>	<u>Approximate Amount for 24/25 (exclusive of VAT)</u>
Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils	Membership	April 2025	170.55
Society of Local Council Clerks	Membership	April 2025	95.20
Dark White Digital	Web hosting and WordPress Updates	April 2025	30.00/month
Lloyds	Bank fee	April 2025	3.00/month
Unity Service Charge	Bank fee	April 2025	6.00/month
Executive Alarms	Intruder alarm and emergency light check for Pavilion	April 2025	300.00/annually
Lebara	Council phone	April	6.95/month
EDF	Electricity at the sportsfield	April 2025	80.00
Mailchimp	Subscription for shout outs	April 2025	13.00
Microsoft	Subscription to 365	April 2025	1.66/month
Google	Storage	Cancelled as of 12/2/25	1.59/month
Moore	External Audit	April 2025	210.00/annual
Information Commissioner's Office	Membership	April 2025	35.00/year

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Starboard Systems	Accounting and booking software	April 2025	55.00/month
Constantin Express Cleaning Ltd	Cleaning of Pavilion	April 2025	80.00 every 2 months
AWBS	Bark for Jubilee Park	April 2025	700.00 annually
Confirm S137 expenditure 23/24	S137 (donations) allowable spend	N/A as the Council has the General Power of Competence as of May 2024	£10.81 x electorate of 760 = £8,366.94

**b. Website work:** The Council noted the agreement by the Chairman and Clerk for Dark White Digital to carry out work for the Pavilion Questionnaire, assistance with councillor emails and maintenance to the shout out subscription and calendar on the website.

**c. Finance Report:**

i. Payments authorised

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Total</u>
28/02/2025 - 28/02/2025	Confidential	Staff costs	744.03
15/01/2025	Council phone	Lebara	6.95
15/01/2025	Microsoft	Microsoft	1.99
15/01/2025	Google subscription	Google	1.59
15/01/2025	Ink	HP	49.49
15/01/2025	Mailchimp subscription	Mailchimp	12.57
15/01/2025	Lloyds fee	Lloyds	3.00
17/01/2025	Electricity at the sportsfield	EDF	71.46
02/01/2025	Sportsfield booking system	Starboard Systems	24.00
02/01/2025	Scribe accounts subscription	Starboard Systems	42.00
27/01/2025	Sportsfield booking system	Starboard Systems	24.00
24/01/2025	Donation to the Village Hall Committee	Village Hall Committee	1,200.00
24/01/2025	Stone for the Sportsfield	AWBS	55.02
10/02/2025	Website maintenance and Pavilion Questionnaire	Dark White Digital	250.47
10/02/2025	Website hosting and WordPress Updates	Dark White Digital	30.00
10/02/2025	Clerk expenses	Allison Leigh	26.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>2,542.57</b>

ii. Receipts: There were no receipts from 1/1/25 – 31/1/25.

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iii.

**Bank Reconciliation at  
31/01/2025**

Cash in Hand 01/04/2024 51,721.28

**ADD**

Receipts 01/04/2024 - 31/01/2025 40,940.80

92,662.08

**SUBTRACT**

Payments 01/04/2024 - 31/01/2025 25,060.96

**Cash in Hand 31/01/2025 67,601.12**

(per Cash Book)

Cash in hand per Bank Statements

Petty Cash 31/01/2025 0.00

Unity Current Account 31/01/2025 2,090.03

Unity Instant Access 31/01/2025 65,511.09

Account

Lloyds Card 31/01/2025 0.00

**67,601.12**

Less unrepresented payments

67,601.12

Plus unrepresented receipts

**Adjusted Bank Balance 67,601.12**

- d. Transfer to current account:** The Council resolved to transfer £5000 from the instant access to the current account.
- e. Training Courses:** No training courses were requested.
- f. Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) Membership:** The Council resolved to proceed with a membership to CFO.

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**g. Asset Register**

- i. To consider the Asset Register and inspections:** The Council considered the Asset Register and inspections. The following actions were discussed:
- The Clerk will investigate work to the noticeboard outside the village shop as damp is getting in.
  - CM will speak to the resident who has been mowing the Remnant of the Great Green and form a working group to do some works.
  - CM will investigate the Land Registry information for the Land at Bablock Hythe
- ii. To consider a minimum amount for items on the Asset Register:** The Council resolved for items on the Asset Register to have a value over £100 and a lifespan beyond 3 years.

**24/157: Planning:**

**a. Planning applications:**

**a. [P25/V0129/HH](#)**

38 Oaksmere, Appleton

Erection of a single oak frame timber garage

AWEPC has no comments on this planning application.

- b.** It was noted that a planning application is imminent for The Plough Inn. If approved, the pub would be closed during the works.

**24/158: Working Groups:**

**a. *Friends of Jubilee Park:*** See Attachment 2 for a report.

**b. *Pavilion Working Group (PWG): Surveys:*** MC reported that the survey is live and asked all Councillors to remind as many people as they can to complete the survey. The Clerk will do further shout outs and Facebook posts. The survey closed on 28/2/25 and the PWG will meet following that to tabulate results.

**c. *Leisure and Recreation Working Group:*** JA reported that gravel had been put down in the card park of the pavilion to fill holes.

**24/159: Policies:**

**a. **Updated Financial Regulations:**** The Council resolved to adopt the Financial Regulations.

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**24/160: VE Day:** It was noted that the following groups have expressed interest in involvement in VE Day events: Green Appleton, WI, Church. The possibility of event in the pub garden was discussed. LG will arrange a meeting in the pub for Wednesday the 26<sup>th</sup> February at 7:30pm.

It was noted that the book of photographs stored in the church needs attention. LG will investigate restoration and contact BBC – The Repair Shop about this.

**24/161: Correspondence:**

- A note had been sent regarding potholes on Church Road.
- LG noted that the volunteer who has been tending to the Remnant of the Great Green would like to speak to CM about next steps. CM will contact them per minute reference 24/156 g.
- A letter had been received about school parking. The Council asked the Clerk to write to the Headteacher asking about putting out the school children pavement signs.

**24/162: Website and Advertiser:** The Council would like the following in the Advertiser:

- Request for volunteers for VE Day celebrations
- Request for anyone interested in a litter pick in March. The Council would like a litter pick on the March agenda.
- A note to say the Council is trying to further the repair of the potholes church land
- A note to say that the PWG will be tabulating the survey results.

**24/163: Matters for report:** The Clerk will circulate the amendment for 91 Eaton Road to the Council and, if comments are required, look to arrange another meeting.

**24/164: Date of the next meeting:** The date of the March meeting was confirmed as Monday the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7:15pm.

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**Attachment 1**

**County Councillor Juliette Ash REPORT- All parishes- Jan 25**

**GENERAL OCC REPORT**

**OCC BUDGET 2025/26**

The minority Liberal Democrat/Green administration at OCC has now published its Budget proposals for 2025/26. Details can be found here. Despite receiving more Government funding than expected, the administration intends to keep the proposed Council Tax rise at 5%. The Conservative Opposition will be putting forward proposals that limit the rise to 4.5% but by sweeping away vanity projects would enable the council to spend over £6m more on infrastructure, roads and flood measures. Full Council will vote on the proposals at the Budget meeting on 11th February.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION AND DEVOLUTION**

OCC's response to the Government's white paper on devolution was agreed at a meeting of the Cabinet last month. OCC has sent a letter to central government requesting that Oxfordshire is fast-tracked for local government reorganisation. The Conservative Opposition broadly supports the concept of Unitary government for Oxfordshire but has concerns about a Mayoral Strategic Authority. The decision on whether to postpone local elections in May is due to be announced by the Government today, the 3rd Feb, but has just been delayed until at least 5th Feb. Current OCC Leader Liberal Democrat Liz Leffman has stated: *"I have been holding constructive conversations with leaders in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire for several weeks. My preference is for us to be able to form a strategic mayoral authority with those councils, but we have not yet reached an agreement."*

**MPS WHO HAVE RETAINED COUNCIL POSITIONS SINCE BEING ELECTED**

Liberal Democrat County Councillors Calum Miller and Freddie van Mierlo have come under media scrutiny for failing to resign their positions since being elected as MPs. ITV News reported that Calum Miller attended 57% of county council meetings and Freddie van Mierlo just 25%. Freddie van Mierlo is also a District Councillor where he has attended 17% of meetings.

**NETWORK RAIL TO DELAY REOPENING BOTLEY ROAD UNTIL AUGUST 2026**

Network Rail has revealed that the redevelopment of Oxford Station, which has seen Botley

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Road closed to through traffic for 22 months, is further delayed. The new programme will see Botley Road reopen in August 2026, two years after it was due to be completed. OCC will now assess the impact of this on the timing of its own schemes, including the sectorisation plan.

**SESRO**

OCC wide responses to the ongoing plans to the South East Strategic Reservoir Option (SESRO) and other responses to significant consultations can be found here:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/planning/council-planningresponses>.

There is ongoing, significant concern around the impact of the development for local residents and the Council questions if the development is the right solution for the increased requirement for water provision in the South East.

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**JUST TWO 20MPH FINES EVERY WEEK ACROSS THREE COUNTIES**

Thames Valley Police covers over 2,200 square miles and three counties: Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. The BBC reports that on average just two fines for exceeding 20mph are issued each week across this entire area, so perhaps less than one a week in Oxfordshire. This data adds weight to the views of opponents of the scheme who say it is a waste of money, and infuriates supporters who say the scheme is clearly not being enforced.

**OCC COMMITS TO LONG-TERM MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING**

OCC has committed to continuing to fund its share for mental health services in the region for the next decade. At a meeting of the Cabinet on Tuesday 21 January, councillors agreed to contribute £6.2 million each year, for the next ten years, into a pooled budget with health care partners, under plans to bring together existing mental health service contracts.

**BADGER CULLING**

OCC has requested continued opposition to badger culling for the purpose of reducing the spread of Bovine TB, citing that recent studies that show no correlation between badger culling and a reduction in Bovine TB.

**SMART INFRASTRUCTURE PILOTS PROJECT - OXFORD CITY**

The Smart Infrastructure Pilots Programme is an initiative funded by the Department for



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Science, Innovation and Technology, has funded the installation of new smart lighting columns from Oxford Rail Station into the City Centre, benefiting workers and visitors.

**OCC FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY APPROVED.**

OCC's cabinet approved the new local flood risk management strategy (LFRMS), which it was required to develop in its role as lead local flood authority.

<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/flood-risk-management-strategy-approved/>

**CONSULTATIONS**

**Home to school transport policy and post 16 transport policy statement (2025).**

OCC is seeking views on proposed changes to home to school transport policy (for young people required to be in full-time education) and our post-16 transport policy statement (for pupils in post-16 education). We're also holding some online information events where residents can find out more about what we're proposing to do differently. You can read all the documents, have your say, and register for an event on Let's talk Oxfordshire. The survey closes on Sunday 2 March.

All best,

Cllr Juliette Ash

03/2/25

*Please refer directly to Cllr Ash for additional verbal reporting on your top 3 priorities by Parish*

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**Attachment 2: Report from the Friends of Jubilee Park**

Jubilee Park remains a pleasant and welcoming corner of our community. There haven't been any major developments over the past year, but the usual "little and often" maintenance keeps the park in good shape. Some of the park's equipment is beginning to show its age, having mostly been installed at the inception of the park, but the Friends intervene quickly to address any issues that carry a safety implication or pose a risk of degradation. On the whole though, the facilities are in good, robust order.

Thanks go to the small, but committed Friends of Jubilee Park for undertaking maintenance and inspections throughout the year. We've said farewell to a few of our group, some of whom were involved in the conception of the park, but have welcomed new members along the way too. We would always welcome extra willing volunteers, whether as a fully-fledged member of the Friends (for an hour or so a month), or just as helping hands for our maintenance days.

Thanks also go to the community for using the park respectfully, and for turning out at fundraising events to show their support. Our recent "all-age" bingo was true to its name, and enjoyed by a capacity crowd at the Village Hall, raising over £800 towards the upkeep of the park.