**DRAFT MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF BISHOP’S TACHBROOK PARISH COUNCIL ON THURSDAY, 9TH FEBRUARY 2023 AT 7.30PM AT ST. CHAD’S CENTRE**

**Present:** Cllrs. M. Greene (Chair), C. Brewster (until 9.25pm), L. Carter, S. Deely, M. Drew, C. Herbert, K. Wellsted and County Cllr. J. Matecki (until 8.15pm).

3 members of the public.

**1. Apologies**

Cllr. R. Bullen (illness) and District Cllr. A. Day.

**2. County Highways**

The Chair explained that a representative from Highways was unable to attend this meeting but will be attending the March meeting.

1 resident left the meeting.

**3. Public Session**

A resident mentioned the drop kerbs which are being installed on Farm Walk. Residents received little notification. Residents will be losing 1 or 2 parking spaces. County Cllr. Matecki explained the reasoning behind the short notice period and said residents should not be parking where the drop kerbs are being installed. The Chair said we will be looking at parking and have now identified the person to liaise with at County Highways. County Highways have said they are not in a position yet to install EV chargers.

The resident asked if there had been an update on the planning application for The Leopard as he had seen people on the land. The Chair said we haven’t received a planning application or an update.

1 resident left the meeting.

**4. Declarations of interest**

Cllr. Wellsted declared a personal interest in item 15(iv) as the editor of the magazine. The Chair reminded councillors of his dispensation for item 16(ii).

**5. Acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting**

The clerk had circulated, prior to the meeting, the draft minutes. Cllr. Deely proposed we accept these minutes, seconded Cllr. Wellsted and carried unanimously. The Chair signed the minutes.

The Chair asked if the agenda could be rearranged to accommodate the resident who was attending on behalf of the PTA. There were no objections.

**16. Financial Administration**

(iii) To consider a request by the PTA for S137 funding for solar panels to be offset against the Deed of Gift for green projects

The clerk had circulated, prior to the meeting, the completed application form together with details of the PTA’s accounts. The clerk explained that the Deed of Gift is specifically for the installation of rooftop solar, environmental enhancements or energy saving initiatives within the parish up to £70,000. It will be paid when Ashorne Solar Farm construction work starts which is estimated to be in the first quarter 2024/25. The Parish Council has sufficient funds in the general fund to offset this cost until the Deed of Gift is paid. There is partial funding (£21,000) in the S137 budget in 2023/24. The Chair said he believes it is important to assist communities when help is required. We are facing both a cost of living and energy crisis and providing the funds for this work now will benefit residents. It is also more financially beneficial and, will create less disruption for the children, to arrange for the work to be carried out whilst contractors are on-site building the new classroom at the school to cope with the increase in children because of the delay in building Oakley Grove primary school. Heathcote Primary School is a new build and was built as an energy efficient school so does not require this funding. The clerk further explained the funding restrictions on S137. Cllr. Wellsted proposed we grant £15,000 to the PTA in March as an initial payment to commission the work with a further £40,000 when the project has been completed, seconded Cllr. Drew and carried unanimously. The clerk to write to the PTA.

**6. Planning Matters**

(i) Planning notice 22/1930 – 64 Holt Avenue; granted

(ii) Planning application 23/0104/LB – The Grove, Oakley Wood Road

Cllr. Wellsted briefly outlined the application. He said this application would help in meeting BT12 and proposed we support the application, seconded Cllr. Deely and carried unanimously. The clerk to respond.

(iii) Planning application 22/2005 – Asps Farm, Banbury Road

Councillors agreed no representation.

(iv) Planning application WDC/22CC010 – Bishop’s Tachbrook CofE School

Cllr. Wellsted explained that the school is a protected asset under BT8 in the neighbourhood plan. The sustainability statement is in conformity with BT12. He proposed we support this application, seconded Cllr. Brewster and carried unanimously. The clerk to respond.

**7. County and District Council Matters**

(i) To receive reports

County Cllr. Matecki updated the meeting on the progress of the additional classroom at Myton School. Oakley Grove is on schedule to open in September 2024. On 1st March secured school places will be notified to parents. Council tax will increase by 3.94% this is less than the maximum permitted. The District Council has frozen their council tax payments and there is financial assistance available for the most vulnerable. Rents are increasing by 7%. Offices will be moving from Riverside House. Covent Garden car park is going to close. Riverside House will be redeveloped. Cllr. Deely updated Cllr Matecki on the request for approval for the planting of the Jubilee Tree. Cllr. Matecki said he would follow up on this.

8.15pm County Cllr. Matecki leaves the meeting.

(ii) Footpath to Oakley Wood

No new report.

(iii) SWLP Issues and Options Consultation; to agree a response

It was agreed that Cllrs. Deely and Wellsted would meet to draft a response and circulate to councillors for comments.

(iv) Additional Licensing Public Consultation; to agree a response

Councillors agreed that a response was not required as they didn’t believe this is relevant to this parish.

(v) Officer support from WDC

No new report.

(vi) Officer support for identifying additional parking areas

The clerk reported that she is liaising with the officer who can assist with identifying additional parking areas but not EV chargers. The County Council are currently unable to install EV chargers on public roads. She has made the officer aware of issues with Kingsley Road, Millway Drive, St. Chads Road/Mallory Road and Farm Walk.

**8. Chair Matters**

(i) To receive report

No new report.

(ii) To consider requesting an increase in councillors to 12

To accommodate an increasing electorate Cllr. Wellsted proposed we increase the number of councillors to 12, seconded Cllr. Drew and carried unanimously. The clerk was asked to write to the monitoring officer.

**9. Country Park**

(i) To receive report

Cllr. Deely briefly updated the meeting. He explained that the southern car park would be removed from the plans due to issues with the landowner. Land transfers haven’t happened but surveys are going ahead.

(ii) To consider Memorandum of Understanding

The clerk had circulated, prior to the meeting, the draft Memorandum of Understanding and advice from our solicitor. It was agreed that the Chair, Cllr. Deely and clerk would respond to the questions raised by our solicitor.

**10. Technology and Digital Matters**

(i) To receive report

Cllr. Brewster reported that the automation of the agenda as a Facebook post has happened. Main items of interest on the website: roadworks, St. Chad’s Centre and the magazine. Cllr. Wellsted asked about updating the website and Cllr. Brewster advised that we could add expiry dates when we load the documents. The clerk reported that she had attended a meeting on parish on-line. She has sent the presentation to Cllrs. Brewster and Wellsted. Both said they thought it would be good for the parish. She was asked to send the presentation to all councillors. The clerk to investigate whether we could receive free subscription for a year through our insurance company.

**11. Neighbourhood Development Plan**

(i) To consider the Housing Needs Survey Report

Cllr. Wellsted briefly updated the meeting. A draft report was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr. Wellsted explained that he has asked WRCC to link the comments to the areas in the parish. The response (11.5%) was lower than in 2019 which was disappointing. A revised draft will be circulated in the next couple of weeks.

**12. Traffic and Road Community Safety**

(i) To receive report

No new report.

(ii) Roadworks associated with Oakley Grove School

Cllr. Carter reported that he has asked County Highways if they could please start improving the footway. The speed signs have been sprayed over. The road is open so these signs now need cleaning. The clerk to write to County Highways.

**13. School Matters**

(i) To receive report

Cllr. Deely said he has spoken to the County Council about a youth club at the school. They are unclear as to whether this will be their responsibility or the responsibility of the trustees.

(ii) To consider Stowe Valley Multi Academy Trust email

The Chair explained that Stowe Valley are bidding for a local primary school and have asked the Parish Council for a letter confirming that they worked with us. Cllr. Deely proposed we agree this request, seconded Cllr. Herbert and carried unanimously. The Chair and clerk to respond.

**14. Climate Change Group (TRACC)**

(i) To receive report

Cllr. Drew briefly updated the meeting.

(ii) To consider a maximum quote of £15,000 for green energy to the Bullen Building

Cllr. Drew reported that one quote has been received for £8000. It is very difficult to obtain quotes for off grid solar panels. Quotes were requested from 2 companies but only one has responded. This includes solar panels and 3kw of storage. This should power a light and charge a battery for power tools used by the working party. The clerk explained that this funding could be deducted from the Deed of Gift when it is received. The Chair proposed we authorise this work, seconded Cllr. Wellsted and carried unanimously. The clerk to instruct the company.

(iii) Tree planning scheme

Cllr. Drew reported that the fruit trees will be delivered in February and planted by the Working Party. The WI are asking if the replacement Oak Tree could be planted shortly. Councillors agreed that the 2 Oak Trees for St. Chad’s Green could be planted in April. Cllr. Wellsted proposed purchasing 2 bare rooted trees or container grown trees, seconded Cllr. Drew and carried unanimously. The clerk to order the trees and arrange delivery to Cllr. Wellsted with the fruit trees.

(iv) WCC Sustainable Futures Focus Group; to agree representation

It was agreed that Cllr. Drew should attend.

**15. Amenities Matters**

(i) To receive report

No new report.

(ii) Car Park on the Meadow update

Cllr. Herbert said following the resignation of Cllr. Hunt we need to revisit how to take this forward. She will investigate.

(iii) S&SC driveway update

The clerk reported that the potholes have been filled, vegetation removed and she has asked if the fencing panels could be removed.

(iv) Magazine; to consider legal fees in setting up an independent company

The clerk reported that our solicitor has requested a meeting to discuss this further. It was agreed that the Chair should meet with the solicitor. The clerk to arrange.

9.20pm the resident leaves the meeting.

(v) Play area inspection reports

The clerk reported that the company who installed the play equipment has inspected the gate and has confirmed that they will be fixing it. The second gate needs a replacement spring which our contractor will fit shortly. Minor issues have been identified and we have asked our inspector to look at them.

(vi) Storage facilities update

The clerk will be asking our contractor if he can clear the garage. The garage can then be returned to the District Council.

(vii) Allotments; removal of a shed

A note has been placed in the magazine to inform residents that the shed will be removed as ownership is unknown. Our contractor will be looking at the shed to see if he is able to remove it.

(viii) Tree maintenance work update

The planning application has been submitted.

(ix) S&SC entrance update

The clerk reported that she has received a quote of over £4000 for tidying, fitting mesh and laying bark. Councillors agreed that this quote was too expensive. She has spoken to our contractor and will be meeting with him next week to discuss further. The Club has advised that they would like to continue using a noticeboard at the entrance to The Meadow. They would like the noticeboard to be two panels with three posts and to be visible from Kingsley Road. The clerk said County Cllr. Matecki has provided £900 of funding towards this project. She has requested a quote for a double sided noticeboard which fits between 2 existing posts as she believes this will be the best value option. Councillors agreed that we should obtain quotes for 2 options. Cllr. Herbert said there are no noticeboards on the new developments. Councillors agreed that this should be an item for March agenda.

(x) Working Party update

Cllr. Wellsted reported that the working party would be planting fruit trees in February.

9.25pm Cllr. Brewster leaves the meeting.

(xi) Warm hubs update

Cllr. Herbert reported that the St. Chad’s Centre has a coffee morning and there are warm hubs in Whitnash.

(xii) New allotments; work required

Cllr. Wellsted said he believes the new allotments need the paths clearing and mown and the area tidied. The clerk said she is meeting with our contractor to see if he can do this work.

(xiii) To consider permitting a bench on St. Chad’s Green

The clerk reminded councillors that there is already a memorial bench on this green with 2 planters. Councillors agreed that there would be space for one more bench only. This bench would need to be a similar style to the existing bench with the wording on a small plaque to be agreed by the Parish Council. The bench would need to be maintained by the residents installing it. The clerk to respond to the resident.

(xiv) King Charles III Coronation; to consider events

The clerk said she had received a request for a cake stall on the Village Green. She informed the resident that the Parish Council requires a risk assessment and public liability insurance. The resident is arranging the stall to raise funds for a local charity. Paying for public liability insurance would reduce the funding available for the charity. The clerk explained that the Parish Council has public liability insurance but would need to be responsible for managing the event and carrying out the risk assessment. Cllr. Herbert asked about providing a S137 grant but the organiser would need to be a community group with a bank account. Councillors were very supportive of the event. Cllr. Deely reported that a resident had asked if the Parish Council were organising a volunteering event on the Monday. It was agreed that Cllr. Deely and Brewster would try and find out events planned in the parish and try to help make residents aware. Cllr. Herbert agreed to liaise with the community groups.

(xv) Allotments; school visit

The allotments manager has reported that a class from Bishop’s Tachbrook Primary School wishes to visit the allotments later this year. Councillors agreed that this is a good idea and were very supportive.

**16. Financial Administration**

(i) Bank balances

The following balances were reported:

Current account: £510,726.28 (includes Sports and Social Club grass cutting plus grants for picnic tables and trees)

Investment account: £63,569.49

Allotments rent of £504.00 has been received.

(ii) Deed of Easement update

No new update.

(iv) On-line banking update

Cllrs. Carter and Herbert to liaise with Cllr. Brewster to arrange on-line access.

(v) Investment update

No new update.

(vi) Councillor resignation

The Chair reported that Cllr. Hunt has resigned for personal reasons. The clerk was asked to notify the District Council. She confirmed that the vacancy would not be advertised due to elections being held in May.

(vii) Income and expenditure training update

The clerk reported that this was informative. She will change the Parish Council system of accounting, as recommended by the external auditor, in April.

(viii) King Charles III Garden Party invitation

Cllr. Deely nominated the Chair, seconded Cllr. Carter and carried unanimously. The clerk to inform WALC.

(ix) Community Policing update

The clerk reported that she has written to the Police and Crime Commissioner and his office have agreed to forward our request for a representative from the Police to attend our March or April meetings to the neighbourhood team. Our inspector has written to us saying that it will not be a problem for Police to be present at a community event. He is, however, moving to a different role imminently and a new inspector has been appointed.

(x) To appoint an internal auditor

The Chair proposed Accounting Data Services Ltd, seconded Cllr. Deely and carried unanimously.

(xi) Passing of following accounts for payment:

**RESOLVED: that the following accounts be approved for payment (proposed the Chair, seconded Cllr. Deely) and carried unanimously**

 Mrs. C. Hill – salary (February)

 Mr. D. Herbert – play area inspection - £200.00

 Melt Creative Ltd. – website - £90.00

 Pro-Surfacing Ltd. – repairs to driveway - £960.00

 WALC – play area inspection training (Herbert plus clerk) - £84.00

 Bishop’s Tachbrook Sports and Social Club – removal of tree - £60.00

**17. Date of next meeting**

Thursday, 9th March 2023.

The Chair closed the meeting at 10pm.