

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Tetsworth Parish Council
Held in the Memorial Hall
at 8.00pm on Monday 9th March 2015**

Present: Cllr. Karen Harris (KH) – Chair
Cllr. Hazel Bottone (HB)
Cllr. Alan Martin (AM)
Cllr. Marjorie Sanders (MS)

Officer: Sarah Pullen / John Gilbert

Members of the Public: There were 6

041/15 Apologies for Absence
Cllr David Nixey was unable to attend due to sickness.

042/15 To receive Declarations of Interest
To receive any declarations of interest from Councillors relating to items to be considered at the meeting in accordance with the provisions of the Councils Local Code of Conduct.
There were none.

043/15 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 12th January 2015 to be signed as a correct record.
035/15
Resolved: That these minutes are a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman –
UNANIMOUS.

044/15 Matters arising from the minutes (not on the agenda)
There were none.

045/15 Public Questions
David Ullathorne, Chief Exec of Rectory Homes requested to speak at this meeting to fully understand the issues of the Parish Council with regards to access to the ditch adjacent to Victoria Gardens and The Village Green. This follows recent negotiations with Dan Moore from Rectory Homes.

With regard to the ownership of the land between the Green and Victoria Gardens, Rectory Homes state that this land is not in their ownership. It is outside their planning application area and whilst they are happy to pay for the one off tree works, they are not prepared to continue to maintain. TPC also maintain that the land between the ditch and Victoria Gardens is not in their ownership either.

Resolved: To write to Rectory Homes to confirm:

1. Rectory Homes will liaise with Devey Tree Care, regarding the agreed tree works. The felling of the large Willow is no longer required, which should be pollarded by 50%. The owner of 4 Victoria Gardens will maintain this tree going forward. A more radical approach to the pruning is required as Rectory Homes do not agree with further maintenance as previously agreed.
2. On completion of the works to the satisfaction of the Parish Council, following a written request from Rectory Homes, the TPC will allow the placement of the head wall, de silting to the depth of one metre, from the top of the ditch, along a 40 metre length of ditch and placement of 150mm thick stone bed to the base to be carried out. The date of these works must be confirmed with the Parish Council prior to commencement.
3. The written request to go onto the Village Green must include assurances that Rectory Homes will remove all spoil and debris created during the de-silting of the area, and not to be left on the green or opposing side of the ditch to work its way back in. Any damage to the Green should be made good and reinstated. No vehicles are to drive onto the football pitch.

046/15 Update of the Actions List

Ref.	Action required	Resp.	Progress
197/14	Contact Adrian Duffield at SODC to discuss enforcement issues.	Clerk	Clerk has sent further emails.
218/14	To prepare a tender document for grass cutting contract.	Clerk/AM	To be finalised to send out prior to April/May meetings.
222/14	Glen Marriott to start works on the skatepark.	HB	On agenda.
009/15	Organisation of Parish Meeting	Clerk	Ongoing

047/15 County Councillor's Report
 There is ongoing financial pressure on Local Government for the provision of a service to Oxfordshire residents from ever decreasing financial support from Central Government. A full report will be submitted to the Clerk for the Parish Meeting.
 Area Stewards will be arranging area meetings after the Council elections in May. These will be an ideal opportunity for Parish Council representatives to raise local issues. The Area Steward for Tetsworth is Keith Stenning.

Cllr Wilmshurst was pleased to note the recent installation of the 'Village Only' finger-post opposite Back Street.

048/15 District Councillor's Report
 There was no report.

049/15 To receive the Monthly Financial Report
Community-Led Plan Statement of Account
 The ORCC require a statement of account following their grant to Tetsworth CLP to support expenditure incurred. There are still some transactions to add to this report and it appears that a fee has been paid twice for a seminar attended.
Resolved: The Clerk to finalise the statement and forward to John Gilbert for submitting.

FY2015/16 Precept
 The Precept has been approved at £14056.00 with the initial payment due on 1 April 2015.

Risk Assessment
 The Clerk is updating this as per previous discussion.

Appointment of Internal Auditor
 The Clerk has contacted Roger Symes who is happy to continue as the Internal Auditor.

Insurance Policy Review
 The Forest School access bridge should be added to the Asset Register once payment has been made.

Tetsworth Senior Citizens' Party
 A request had been received from the organisers for a S137 grant to support this event.
Resolved: To add to the next agenda for discussion.

050/15 To approve Expenditure and sign the following cheques:
 Sarah Pullen – Clerk £350.00
 M40CEG – Grant £500.00

Resolved: To accept the above expenditure and to pay by BACS/Cheque as required – UNANIMOUS

Forest School Bridge
 Payment for the Forest School Bridge has already been agreed, and a pro-forma invoice for £2257.20 has been received. MS will advise the Clerk when payment can be made following successful delivery. This is anticipated on or before 28 March 2015.

051/15

PATCH/ Skatepark.

Refurbishment

Heather Ashton, who is leading the project to refurbish PATCH, briefed the Council on potential design schemes which could replace the current play facility. Such schemes could prove very expensive, and various funding is being investigated. Accounts for this project should be managed by the Parish Council. A meeting for residents interested in the PATCH upgrade project will be held in the Memorial Hall on 18 March 2015.

Report from Hazel Bottone

HB reported that there is a hole in the side of the Skatepark and Glen Marriot has stated that due to the weather, he is unable to get onto the Green yet. HB will monitor this.

PATCH is satisfactory.

HB will attend the refurbishment meeting.

052/15

Memorial Hall

AM reported that the upstairs office suite had now been let.

053/15

Planning

Planning Applications

Appeal: APP/Q3115/W/15/3003089 – Oxfordshire Golf Club

Resolved: Clerk to send written appeal as emailed to Councillors. (attached to minutes)

Planning Decisions:

There were none.

Planning Correspondence:

Bund – Manor Farm

Minutes recording the reasons for rejection of this application had been received. An appeal against the decision had been raised.

SSE Electricity Supply to BT Cabinet

SEPD has had a request from Carillon, acting on behalf of BT to provide an electricity supply to a new BT cabinet as part of BT's Fibre Optic Broadband programme.

Resolved: To approve these works. Clerk to clarify proposal for retaining wall stated on the plan submitted by email.

054/15

Village Environment

Tree Preservation Orders

AM, is preparing an updated map of all trees with photographs, which are the responsibility of the Parish Council. The trees on the left hand side of Marsh End need to have ownership clarified and it is suggested that following our report we write to SOHA for this.

A full report will be available at the next meeting.

Trees Adjacent to The Green

KH reported that she has met with Mr Leach from 4 Victoria Gardens to discuss the Willow trees.

Mr Leach has confirmed that he is happy with the felling of the Willow closest to the footpath that runs beside his garden (T3). He has also confirmed that he is happy with the plan to pollard, as opposed to fell, the much larger tree immediately adjacent to the boundary (T2), on the basis that he will accept the cost of maintaining the tree annually going forward.

Devey Tree Care have applied to SODC for these works to be carried out, and permission has been approved.

- 055/15 Forest School Project
MS reported significant progress on this project with plans for site clearance (19/3/15) and access bridge-building working parties (28/3/15). TSSC have agreed to make their facilities available to participants at these events. David Nixey has offered to help with his trailer for the bridge building event.
MS has emailed a 'draft' tenancy agreement to Councilors for review today and is currently checking insurance. It was reported that Melanie Kinghan has also applied to TOE for a grant towards a composting toilet.
- Resolved:** To review the tenancy agreement for discussion.
- 056/15 Land at Knap Cottage/Turning Circle
Knap Cottage
AM reported that he has met with Mr and Mrs Armstrong to agree on the exact area to be agreed in the transfer of land to them.
- Resolved:** AM to complete a drawing of the land to transfer and to obtain a valuation from White Lion Estate Agents.
- 057/15 Correspondence
An email has been received from Mike Bradley to enquire whether there are any plans for a defibrillator in the village. The Clerk reported that she has replied that the Parish Council are not currently looking at this, but that it is understood that the TSSC are investigating.
- 058/15 Other Matters for Discussion
Clerk Position
A local resident had withdrawn her initial interest in the post. However, John Gilbert had agreed to undertake the duties of 'Minutes Clerk' on a voluntary, unpaid basis.
- South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 Consultation**
John Gilbert had attended on behalf of the Council and provided a feedback report. The key issues for Tetsworth are a proposal to allow small villages more flexibility to accept additional housing development, and a new M40 Junction 7 settlement of up to 3,600 houses featuring as an SODC candidate site to address Oxford City's unfulfilled housing requirement. The consultation window closes on 2 April 2015.
- Tetsworth Parish Council Website**
The Clerk reported that the Parish Council website has now been transferred to SKP Solutions to maintain.
- Parish Council Elections**
The Parish Council elections will take place on 7 May 2015. Nominations are required by 9 April 2015.
Resolved: Clerk to advertise locally to encourage new members to come forward.
- 059/15 Date of Next Meetings
7.30pm - 13th April 2015
- Annual Parish Meeting**
7.30pm – 27th April 2015
- THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.41pm**

Actions List

Ref.	Action required	Resp.	Progress
197/14	Contact Adrian Duffield at SODC to discuss enforcement issues.	Clerk	This has been delayed due to the fire at SODC. Clerk to try again.
218/14	To prepare a tender document for grass cutting contract. Clerk to send information to AM who will prepare.	Clerk/AM	To be finalised to send out prior to April/May meetings.
222/14	Glen Marriott to start works on the skatepark.	HB	Waiting to get onto the Green due to weather. HB chasing a start date.
002/15	Amend Risk Assessment as per discussion, and distribute. Add to next agenda for approval.	Clerk	In hand
004/15	Insurance/Asset Register – Include the new bridge on the Asset Register.	Clerk	In hand
007/15	MS to order the bridge for the Forest School and to initiate legalising agreement.	MS	Bridge ordered, due delivery by 28 Mar 15.
009/15	Organisation of Parish Meeting	Clerk	Ongoing
010/15	Prepare a list of TPO trees.	AM	
011/15	KD to contact solicitor to verify map supplied for Turning Circle.	KH	
012/15	To ensure Transparency Code is implemented before audit.	Clerk	
013/15	Write to Rectory Homes setting out PC understanding of actions to resolve Victoria Gardens planning issues	Clerk	
014/15	Forward CLP Statement of Account to John Gilbert (for ORCC)	Clerk	
015/15	Submit PC view on Oxfordshire Golf Club lighting planning appeal by 19 Mar 15	MS	
016/15	Obtain revised valuation of Knap Cottage land transfer and instruct solicitors to raise transfer documentation	AM	
017/15	Submit PC view on SODC Local Plan consultation by 2 Apr 15	KH/MS	
018/15	Advertise local council elections.	Clerk	

The Oxfordshire Golf Club – Appeal.

REFERENCE:

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)

NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING APPEAL

Location: The Oxfordshire Golf Club Rycote Lane near Tetsworth OX9 2PU

Development : Retention of 6 x 70w security lights to car park

Appellants name : The Oxfordshire Golf Club

Appeal reference number : APP/Q3115/W/15/3003089

Appeal start date: 13th February 2015.

Summary

The security lights at the Oxfordshire golf club were originally installed without planning permission. SODC considered retrospective permission at a planning committee hearing in February 2014. At the committee SODC were asked to consider that, if at the time of installation planning permission had been sought for this style of lighting, would permission have been granted? The answer was a resounding no from councillors. The golf club is now asking that a *fait accompli* be accepted in view of compliance with the SODC decision. .

The local community is not asking for the lighting to be removed, just that more appropriate lights are installed in the car park. The new type of lights should be low level and fitted only with down lighters that provide targeted illumination in the car park. Lower poles with down-lighters would be less intrusive, less intense and more sympathetic to neighbours and the surrounding very rural countryside. The nearby Oxford Belfry Hotel has installed appropriate lighting without compromising guests' safety.

It is hoped that the planning inspector visits the surrounding areas after dark, including driving on that stretch of the motorway to see the intensity of the current lights and the nuisance value they are inflicting on local residents.

Discussion

Since the construction of the hotel the car park lights at the Oxfordshire Golf Course and Hotel have been causing nuisance to neighbours over a considerable area.

Although the retrospective application was for only six poles, the photograph accompanying the application showed 6 poles with 4 large lights per pole, not the 70 watts claimed. In addition there are also low level stick lights surrounding the area, which do not cause a nuisance.

The worse affected houses to the east of the hotel are at a lower level than the car park and have endured the battery of lights from dusk to dawn every night for a number of years. The lights shine out over the landscape with nothing to screen them. Each pole is considerably taller than the car park trees. The trees are deciduous so that in the winter, when a screen is most needed, they will not perform any protection from the lights, even when the trees become mature.

It is appreciated that the location of the car park for the hotel and golf course necessitates car park lighting. But the lights as installed are inappropriate for the environment and location.

The Parish Council appreciates that lights are necessary as claimed in the retrospective planning application paragraph 4.2 *“The lighting of the car park is essential in order to ensure safety and security of users, their possessions and their cars”*. However Tetsworth Parish Council and the residents of Morton do not agree that the existing style of lighting is the only solution. The assertion paragraphs 4.3 & 4.4 that *“The use of low level lighting does not achieve the required security and is easily interfered with and damaged to reduce its effectiveness”* are contested.

SODC Policy EP3 requires proposals for new “floodlighting” to be provided with adequate mitigation measures. Because of the pole heights the claim of *“angling the existing floodlights downwards, towards the car park and cars”*, does not provide a solution to preventing light pollution as the experience of the residents shows.

Paragraph 7.1 of the retrospective permission document claims: *“The provision of lighting to the existing car park at The Oxfordshire Hotel and Golf Club will be a significant advantage in terms of Crime and Community Safety.”* Lower level lights would still protect the car park without causing such nuisance to neighbours.

Local police records show that the area has a low crime rate. The hotel is further protected by being accessed by only a one entrance roadway. The Oxford Belfry, on the A40 at Milton Common and serviced by the same motorway junction is much more visible and has a car park which also requires security lighting. The choice of appropriate lighting at the Belfry gives the safety and protection the hotel requires, without interfering with residential properties close by. The community and Tetsworth village has no street lighting of its own and does not feel the need to install any.

Paragraph 5.1 of the retrospective planning application states: “The lighting pillars are of an appropriate design and style for their purpose and are located some distance from any buildings or other structures and consequently do not have to match existing features.” The Parish Council believes the height of the poles and the excessive numbers of lights per pole are inappropriate for a rural location.

The South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008 page 60; 3.6 Public Realm makes three statements that are relevant here:

- Lighting should be designed to prevent a nuisance to neighbouring properties.
- Ensure that lighting designs and light sources are in keeping with the character of the area.
- Avoid light pollution and such as sky glow and glare particularly in sensitive dark rural areas.

The appellant, in response to the question; *“Can the site be seen from a public road, public footpath, bridle way or other public land?”* The responder has ticked NO. This might be true during daylight hours but after dark, the lights are clearly visible from the motorway and could be a welcome homing beacon to felons drawn to investigate the facilities the lights are designed to protect.

Conclusion

The local community is not asking for the lighting to be removed, just that the lights are changed to be less intrusive and more sympathetic to neighbours and the surrounding very rural area.

For the comfort and future enjoyment of those directly affected by the lights Tetsworth Parish Council asks the inspector that if approval is given, the lighting be changed to lower level poles fitted only with down-lighters. . The current car park lighting materially alters light levels outside the development. These are adversely affecting the use and enjoyment of nearby buildings and Tetsworth village. Local residents are experiencing the effects of these lights now. In the future the existing lights even partially shielded by more mature trees but these will not provide a satisfactory screen, particularly in the winter when the screen is most needed. There are no trees protecting the properties most affected by the lights.