

Minutes of a Meeting of East Challow Parish Council

Held on Wednesday 21st June 2023 at 19:30, East Challow Village Hall

Public Session

No Comments

Members Present:

Chairman	Cllr V A Bosley (VB)
Vice-Chairman	Cllr F Webb (FW)
Members	Cllr B Miller (BM)
	Cllr S Terry (ST)

Officers Mrs L White (LW) Locum Clerk and RFO for the purposes of Audit.

Public & Press At least 2, including District Cllr Y Constance (YC)

Meeting Started: 19:33

110/23 To receive apologies for absence. [LGA 1972 s85(1)]

Apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Cllr Barrow & Hayes.

It was further noted that due to failure to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, Cllr Bentley's seat was now vacant and the appropriate process to advertise the vacancy will now be followed.

111/23 Declarations of Interests [LA 2011 s31]

111.1/23 To receive declarations of interest for items on this agenda

- S Terry – Beaver or Cubs
- B Millar – Save Mission Group

111.2/23 To consider requests for Dispensations [LA 2011 s33]

None.

112/23 To approve the minutes of previous council meetings [LA 1972 Sch 12. Para 41(1)]

112.1/23 Meeting held on 17th May 2023

It was agreed the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting editing 96/23 to say "ECPC has been informed we need to purchase the pads." instead of "She has been informed they are aware "pads" need to be purchased. Having made this correction, the minutes were duly signed.

112.2/23 Matters arising from the minutes not elsewhere on the agenda.

Rail at the end of Old School Lane has been logged on Fix My Street. The no cycle signs will be taken off the railings to prevent them being taken away if OCC remove the railings.

100/23 the parish noticeboard located at Windmill Place, is now accessible after a good clean.

113/23 Chairman's Announcements

None.

114/23 Staffing Matters

Appendix A

The Chairman gave a brief history of the vacancy, and proposal to split the two roles.

Points raised:

- Clarification of hours split between Clerk and RFO
- Expenses – Where do the NJC Rates come from – confirmed published nationally.
- Who will complete staff appraisals – the Locum Clerk advised there should be a Staffing Committee, which would then complete the Clerk appraisal, the Clerk would then do the appraisals for the other staff members as their line manager.

114.1/23 To approve splitting the Role of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to split the two roles and recruit for them separately.

114.2/23 To approve using the NALC model contract for both positions, updated for 3 months' notice period and 6 months' probation period.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to adopt the model contract, including amendments as attached in Appendix A to the Agenda.

114.3/23 To approve Clerk Job Description, scale point, hours and advert.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to adopt the Job Description, to use the drafted advert, appointing at 6 hours per week, starting at scale point 18. 18 additional hours total also approved for use in the first 3 months of employment for the purpose of training and handover.

114.4/23 To approve Responsible Financial Officer Job Description, scale point and hours.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to adopt the Job Description, at an annualised 2 hours per week, starting at scale point 19.

114.5/23 To consider a proposal to appoint L White as RFO, effective 22nd June 2023 or advertise the position.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to appoint L White as Responsible Financial Officer.

114.6/23 Subject to the decision regarding item 114.5/23, to consider approving additional hours for the RFO to support the Chairman in completing the duties of the Clerk until such time as one is appointed, maximum 10 hours per week, including RFO duties.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously a maximum 10 hours per week for the RFO to support the Chairman in completing the duties of Clerk and recruiting a Clerk until one is appointed.

114.7/23 To approve uplift to the salary of the Litter Picker to National Living Wage.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, uplift to National Living Wage, £10.90 and back pay to 1st April 2023.

114.8/23 To approve purchase of 2-off laptops, maximum budget £650 per machine for Clerk and RFO

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, total maximum budget £1300 for 2 machines, and approve disposal of asset for old machine.

114.9/23 To approve purchase of 1-off smart phone for the Clerk, maximum budget £250

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, total maximum budget £250 for 1 phone.

114.10/23 To approve purchase of Microsoft Office 365, £80 per year, ongoing cost.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, £80, ongoing yearly cost.

114.11/23 To approve SLCC membership for the Clerk on appointment, maximum budget £100.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, £100, ongoing yearly cost.

115/23 Governing Documents

115.1/23 To approve updated Standing Orders, to the latest NALC Standard Appendix B

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to adopt as written and bring any revisions to a future council meeting.

115.2/23 To approve updated Financial Regulations, to the latest NALC Standard Appendix C

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to adopt as written and bring any revisions to a future council meeting.

115.3/23 To approve updated Code of Conduct, to the latest VoWHDC Standard Appendix D

[Action to check content of bottom of P13 in the pdf]

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to adopt as written and bring any revisions to a future council meeting.

115.4/23 To approve the Risk Register 2023, suitable for use for the 2023/24 year Appendix E

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to adopt as written and bring any revisions to a future council meeting, specifically references to pandemic and social distancing to be reviewed.

115.5/23 To approve communications and media policy, and approve approach to Parish Council Facebook presence. Appendix F

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to adopt as written and bring any revisions to a future council meeting.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to change to a Parish Council “PAGE” rather than “GROUP” to represent the Council, switching off comments. Clerk and RFO to both be administrators.

115.6/23 Grants Policy Appendix G

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to adopt as written, amending “Goring” to “East Challow” in paragraph 1 and bring any revisions to a future council meeting.

116/23 Finance 2021-2022 Appendix H

116.1/23 To receive the External Auditor Report, and agree actions

Resolved: The report was unanimously received, and noted that the documents should be signed before being presented to the Council, the RFO confirmed this has been done this year.

116.2/23 To approve Notice of Conclusion of Audit, including inspection during July and August 2023 by appointment.

Resolved: The Notice of Conclusion of Audit was approved, including dates and the notice will be placed in the noticeboards tomorrow.

117/23 Finance 2022-2023 Appendix I

117.1/23 To re-approve the Payments and Receipts Lists for the entire FY 2022/23, after corrections by the Locum Clerk & RFO in preparing the Accounts for Audit

The RFO gave a brief summary of the changes which had to be made, including:

- some budget code corrections,
- updating the descriptions, should not all be “Deposit”
- updating PAYEE for correct VAT accounting
- removing VAT reclaim for Clerk expenses – too costly to update each line item.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, the revised lists for Payments and Receipts for FY 2022-2023.

117.2/23 To approve transfer from general reserves to earmarked reserves to remove negative reserves.

- Transfer £190.29 to “IT Support” and £6215.90 to “Neighbourhood Plan”

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, both transfers.

117.3/23 To note the reconciled bank accounts as of 31st March 2023.

The balances were noted:

Barclays: £25,765.77

Co-operative: £57,861.38

Unpresented Cheques: £6,164.30

Balance £77,462.85

	Bank Reconciliation at 31/03/2023		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2022		53,477.39
	ADD Receipts 01/04/2022 - 31/03/2023		68,743.26
			122,220.65
	SUBTRACT Payments 01/04/2022 - 31/03/2023		44,757.80
A	Cash in Hand 31/03/2023 (per Cash Book)		77,462.85
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash 28/02/2023	0.00	
	Cooperative 31/03/2023	57,861.38	
	Barclays 31/03/2023	25,765.77	
			83,627.15
	Less unpresented payments		6,164.30
			77,462.85
	Plus unpresented receipts		
B	Adjusted Bank Balance		77,462.85
	A = B Checks out OK		

117.4/23 To review and approve the Asset Register as of 31st March 2023.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, Asset Register total: £114,570.87

117.5/23 To approve the annual accounts for 2022/2023, including:

- variances report
- reserves balances
- budget variations
- cash and investment reconciliation – Bank Summary

Resolved: All 4 reports as part of Appendix I were Approved Unanimously.

117.6/23 To receive the Internal Audit report, consider recommendations and agree actions.

Resolved: Unanimously Approved to receive the report, RFO to create an Action Tracker to monitor recommendations of the Auditor, and have a standing agenda item to review progress.

117.7/23 To agree content and approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Section 1 “Annual Governance Statement” 2022/2023

It was approved to tick all as Yes, with exception of Item 7 as “No” and Item 9 as “N/A”

Delegated to the RFO write short report for the “No” response, being No effective clerk, acknowledge the issues and put in place corrections for this year.

Resolved: Unanimously Approved the Governance Statements, ticking Yes for the remaining items, and it was duly signed.

117.8/23 To approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Section 2 “Accounting Statements” 2022/2023

Resolved: Unanimously Approved the Accounting Statements, and it was duly signed.

117.9/23 To approve the dates for the public rights of inspection: 23rd June – 03rd August 2023, being 30 working days including the first 10 working days of July.

Resolved: Unanimously Approved, dates of 23rd June – 03rd of August, the RFO to sign and notices to be posted tomorrow, 22nd June 2023.

117.10/23 To approve the CIL Report

Resolved: Unanimously Approved the CIL report, [ACTION] RFO to send to VoWHDC.

118.1/23 To approve the payments lists for April, May & June 2023

Resolved: Unanimously Approved, the Cheques for June were verified and signed.

Cllr Bosley abstained from the follow vote.

Resolved: Unanimously Approved to inform VH Grant request of £2000 successful and provide a cheque for half now, however to include note to say expect all meetings to have zero cost going forward.

Total Staff Costs, including HMRC:

April Total: £321.17

May Total: £70.00

June Total: £931.84

April and May Payments (Less Staff Costs)

Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
Cooperative	403022	Village Hall Hire	East Challow Village Hall	X	10.00		10.00
Cooperative	403022	Village Hall Hire	East Challow Village Hall	X	20.00		20.00
Cooperative		Website	Ionos	S	15.00	3.00	18.00
Cooperative		Website	Ionos	S	15.00	3.00	18.00
Cooperative		Water - Allotments	Castle Water	S	115.90	23.18	139.08
Cooperative	403024	Expenses - Nigel Langford	VistaPrint	S	28.78	5.76	34.54
Cooperative	403026	Election Expenses	Vale Of White Horse District	X	200.00		200.00
Cooperative	403027	Grounds Maintenance	Jeremy Hanham	X	390.00		390.00
Cooperative	403027	Grounds Maintenance	Jeremy Hanham	X	490.00		490.00
Cooperative	403028	Grounds Maintenance	Wise Garden Maintenance	X	1,020.00		1,020.00
Cooperative	403029	Hedge Trimming	Westwood Trees	X	280.00		280.00
Cooperative	403030	Allotment Fencing	Pepler Fencing	S	5,500.00	1,100.00	6,600.00
Cooperative	403031	Electricity - Pavilion	SSE Southern electric	L	281.94	14.10	296.04
Cooperative	403032	Insurance	BHIB Councils Insurance	X	914.63		914.63
Total					9,281.25	1,149.04	10,430.29

June Payments (Less Staff Costs)

Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
403034	Village Hall Hire	East Challow Village Hall	X	20.00		20.00
Direct Debit	Website	Ionos	S	15.00	3.00	18.00
403038	Expenses - Various	Laura White	X	40.03		40.03
403039	Expenses - Various	Vanessa Bosley	X	17.55		17.55
403040	Expenses - Various	Frances Webb	X	36.73		36.73
403041	Annual Stipend	East Challow Village Hall	X	1,000.00		1,000.00
403042	Audit Fees	Do The Numbers Ltd	X	400.00		400.00
403043	Grass Cutting	Jeremy Hanham	X	413.00		413.00
403043	Grass Cutting	Jeremy Hanham	X	540.00		540.00
403044	Grounds Maintenance	Wise Garden Maintenance	X	1,560.00		1,560.00
Total				4,042.31	3.00	4,045.31

118.2/23 To note the receipts lists for April and May 2023.

All were noted.

05/04/2023	Precept	Vale of White Horse	£20,000.00
13/04/2023	Grass Cutting	Oxfordshire County Council	£1,161.53

118.3/23 To note the reconciled bank accounts for 30th April and 23rd May 2023 (latest bank statement)

The **April 30th** balances were noted:

Barclays:	£25,765.77
Co-operative:	£75,478.44
Unpresented Cheques:	£2,969.00
Balance	£98,275.21

The **May 23rd** balances were noted:

Barclays:	£25,765.77
Co-operative:	£72,152.36
Unpresented Cheques:	£10,115.21
Balance	£87,802.92

Both Bank Reconciliations be countersigned at the end of the meeting.

118.4/23 To consider spend to date, and if thought fit approve the fully updated Budget for FY 2023/2024, including lines for income and updated cost codes.

The RFO handed all Councillor present copies of the proposed budget and gave a summary of the changes proposed, including updating Reserves Balances and advising the Council it is not correct practice to just have any end of year surplus building up in the banks without appropriate consideration of their future use.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously the proposed budget, RFO to implement the changes in Scribe

118.5/23 To approve updates to the bank mandate, and consider approving to use online banking for transactions, with two Councillor authentication.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to add both the future Clerk and the newly appointed RFO to the bank mandate to have full access to the accounts including digital access and ability to set up online payments, plus the following 3 Cllrs as signatories: VB; FW BM. The future Clerk will also be a signatory for emergency payments only. Online banking access to be applied for everyone listed.

Resolved: Approved to move to online payments with 2 signature approval once everyone has digital access.

Resolved: Approved to update both bank addresses to home of RFO.

119/23 To receive reports from District and County Councillors

119.1/23 Oxfordshire Council Councillor

Appendix K

YC was invited by the Chairman to make further comments in addition to their report, these comments included:

- Asked for the District and County reports to be much earlier meeting
- It was confirmed that a S38 requirement is required for the rain garden, and the proposer has been advised to make a representation to this Council at the 12th July 2023 meeting.
- 20 is plenty, further out of the village has been asked for by a member of public near the station, but it was confirmed that section is West Challow and to refer to them.
- Children using the very rutted bridle path walking to school, dangerous and wet particularly in winter – there may be options to purchase seats on buses, but will be expensive and parents may not wish to pay for full year use. **[ACTION]** to contact West Challow about the state of the Childrey Bridle Path.

119.2/23 Vale of White Horse District Councillor

Appendix L

District Cllr P Burrow was unable to attend the meeting and sent their apologies.

120/23 Planning, to agree response to requests for consultation on applications:

120.1/23 P23/V0488/HH - Windmill House, Ickleton Road, East Challow, Wantage, OX12 9JB - AMENDED

Proposed New Outbuilding comprising garden store, well being fitness studio and home office/ leisure space (amended plan received 26 May 2023)

ECPC Previous Response: NO OBJECTION

Resolved: the comment submitted on the 19th June was Ratified Unanimously, NO OBJECTIONS

120.2/23 **P23/V1145/HH - Field View, Canal Farm Lane, East Challow, Wantage, OX12 9YQ**

Single storey extension.

To approve the response submitted on 12th June: East Challow Parish Council notes that modifications have been made to the plans for this single storey extension, therefore registers a response of no objection to this proposal.

Resolved: the comment submitted on the 12th June was Ratified Unanimously.

121/23 **To consider a flood alleviation proposal adjacent to LJ & CA Cannings on Common Land CL98**

The proposer will attend the 12th July Meeting, all email responses to the proposer to include that a Commons Act 2009 s38 consent needs to be in place.

122/23 **Standing Agenda Items, to receive update and agree actions**

122.1/23 **Parish Cemeteries**

Disappointment as to the the standard of the upkeep of the Vicarage Hill cemetery was noted. [ACTION] Chair to speak with contractor.

122.2/23 **Traffic / Highways including**

- 20 is plenty
 - It was confirmed East Challow will be in the 3rd tranche for this project to be consulted on and implemented if approved by OCC.
- Speedwatch
 - There will be a meeting of the working group, but struggling to get people together to discuss it – proposed a Wednesday evening, on a meeting separate to a Parish Council meeing.
- HGV's using Vicarage Hill
 - The route being complained about is a registered diversion, it was advised to apply for an exclusion of HGV's, but it may not be possible due to its status as a registered diversion, similar to the high street in Shrivenham – this is a County Council issue, YC to advise ECPC on who to contact at OCCH to discuss this further.

122.3/23 **Neighbourhood Plan**

It was confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan had now been “Made” in a special meeting of VoWHDC and was now part of the policies VoWHDC now refer to when considering future planning applications.

[ACTION] RFO to ask VoWHDC if CIL portion now goes up on previous approved application which have a CIL component.

122.4/23 Grounds Maintenance

WISE Contractors are now strimming the edge of the tarmacked footpath which leads along the Park. An issue was raised as to the quality of the strimming here as well as adjacent to the allotment fence.

In addition, issue was raised that the edges of the village greens are not being adequately attended to outside Longs Cottages. **[ACTION]** Chair to speak with contractors.

[ACTION] RFO and/or Clerk to review contracts for all maintenance and all schedules, contract renewal dates, and bring to council for approval of new tender request to advertise for future contractor.

122.5/23 Public Art (Cllr Hayes)

Comments have been passed to the artist and asked for a resubmission prior to the July meeting for approval so that work may proceed. Artwork to include one windmill.

122.6/23 St Nicholas School Governor (Cllr Hayes)

School keen to be involved with the Time Capsule.

122.7/23 Waste Recycling (Cllr Barrow)

Cllr Barrow was absent – no update given.

122.8/23 The Mission – Update Parish Council

Research in to the ownership of the land is ongoing, the title plans and deeds have been downloaded for the land surrounding the mission as the mission has never been listed. Noting approximately 20% of land in England is not listed. Research ongoing in to the ownership of the land (rather than the building).

122.9/23 Motion without notice – 10 minutes extension, Unanimously Approved.

122.10/23 Recreation Area Pavilion Project

PB has provided drawings to be passed around to Cllrs. Working Group to meet to discuss before bringing a formal proposal to the Council for consideration.

Tennis Nets: Have not been reinstalled because the pavilion was vandalised and the nets are locked inside the pavilion. **PROPOSAL** to bring to next meeting a formal proposal for a sign asking people to be considerate of other users – and consider the potential for a booking system. It has already been approved to unlock the gates, but this has not yet been actioned.

122.11/23 Motion without notice –extension to 10pm only, Unanimously Approved.

Allotments: Sign is coming. Complaint re: overgrown allotment has been noted.

123/23 Matters for Future Discussion

- Recruitment of Clerk
- Parish Council e-mail addresses – compulsory requirement.
- New Noticeboard.
- Rain Garden – near the start of the meeting along with district and county reports
- Tennis Court – signage and booking system.
- Co-option of a councillor
- General Waste Bin(s) – NB to discuss collection.
- **[ACTION]** RFO to purchase Defib Pads – to ratify at July meeting.
- To approve asking highways for a sign for Circourt Road.

124/23 To agree list of items from this meeting to be included in the next edition of Challow News

- The date of the September meeting – 13th September
- 20 is plenty – look out for the consultation.

It was agreed to consider further items for the September edition at the July 12th Meeting.

125/23 To agree date of the next meeting: 12th July 2023

Confirmed.

There being no further business to be transacted, the Chairman closed the meeting at 21:57

Signed Chair.....