

**ROTHERFIELD GREYS PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE APM AND FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT 7.30PM ON MONDAY 14TH MARCH 2016
IN GREYS VILLAGE HALL, GREYS GREEN**

PRESENT:

Peter Lloyd (in the Chair)	PL
Susan Hems	SH
John Hill	JH
Richard Ovey (vice-chairman)	RO
<i>For part of the meeting:</i>	
David Bartholomew (OCC councillor)	DB
David Nimmo-Smith (SODC councillor)	DNS
Jane Pryce – Clerk	JOP

Members of the public/parishioners present for part/all of the meeting	6
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1. APM MINUTES:

Minutes of APM held on 9th March 2015 were signed and dated by PL, as an accurate record.

2. ANNUAL OCC REPORT

**Oxfordshire County Councillor David Bartholomew
Report to APM of Rotherfield Greys Parish Council**

Responsibilities

In addition to representing the interests of residents in the nine parishes in my Division and my place on Full Council, I have a place on each of the following committees: Audit & Governance Committee; Planning & Regulation Committee; and Cabinet Advisory Group on Income Generation. Additionally, I am Group Whip for Conservative County Councillors and in this capacity attend monthly Conservative Group meetings in Oxford.

Parish Council Meetings

Most of the parish councils I am responsible for meet every month and I attend most meetings. If ever I can't attend, I send a written report. At each of the meetings I attend, I give a general report on County matters, then follow this with a report on matters specific to that parish.

Key County Issues

Local Government Settlement and Budget

Financial cuts and budget pressures have dominated the agenda over the last year. Prior to Christmas, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) went out to consultation on possible additional budget cuts totalling £51m, which at the time was believed to be the worst-case scenario. It was hoped that when central Government confirmed the local government settlement that not all the 95 savings measures consulted on would have to be taken. As it transpired, due to a change in the funding formula that unexpectedly penalised shire counties, the settlement was even worse than expected and the total additional savings required now total £69m.

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A series of short-term measures, including drawing on reserves, has been taken to buy time before new savings to cover the difference between £51m and £69m have to be found. By law, OCC has to produce a balanced budget and this was debated by Full Council on February 16th. Unusually, the budget was agreed by all three major parties after the Conservatives agreed to defer some of the planned savings on Children's Centres and draw even more heavily on reserves. Council Tax is to rise by 3.99%.

Backlash Against Shire Counties Settlement

Around 50 MPs signed a letter demanding changes to the Government's proposed settlement with local government referred to above. The letter calling for shire councils to be given more money was sent to the Communities Secretary, Greg Clarke, before the final deal was laid before the Commons. This contributed to the Government making a minor adjustment: worst-hit counties are to be given some transitional relief. In the case of Oxfordshire, this amounts to approximately £4.5m per year for two years only. The best way to use this funding is currently being assessed and recommendations will be made by a cross-party panel.

Property, Back Office and Reserves

There have been misleading media reports that OCC could reduce its financial challenges by selling property, cutting the back office and drawing on reserves. The reality is that OCC has already sold more than 100 properties realising over £62 million that has been used on capital projects. Furthermore, 26 leases have been terminated saving over £2.1 million pa. With regard to back office functions, the number of directors has been cut by 50%, senior managers by over 40% and staff generally by 30%. Various services are already shared with other councils and partners, and further options are being explored to find even more back office savings. Reserves are already being drawn upon and will soon become low compared to expenditure.

The Challenge of Social Care Costs

Nearly half of the Council's budget goes on Social Care. By and large, the Council's responsibilities here are statutory, meaning that for the most part, budget cuts fall in other areas. An extraordinary statistic is that at any one time, just 2% of the population account for all these Social Care costs. It is projected that over coming years an increasing amount of the Council's budget will go on social care.

Devolution

Central Government has stated it is prepared to devolve more funding and power to a local level if appropriate governance structures are in place. All the Oxfordshire councils (County, District and City) submitted a joint bid covering matters such as infrastructure, planning and health. This was cooperative activity but has been overtaken by recent events as per my March report.

'Oxfordshire Together' – Delegating Responsibilities to Parish Councils

OCC is looking at alternative ways in which it can deliver a number of different public services across a wide range of areas. The way public services are delivered will shift towards enabling people and communities to take ownership of local priorities. OCC will continue to provide community leadership and foster partnership working, but the days

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when the council could deliver all services to all people have gone. OCC has started talking to town and parish councils to identify opportunities to work together. An initial engagement event for town and parish councils took place on 21st September. OCC's vision is outlined in *Oxfordshire Together – the Model* booklet, with further details on some of the initial services in scope included in the *Transitional Offer of Highway Services* booklet. Both can be found at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshiretogether.

Key Rotherfield Greys Issues

Oakley Wood Household Waste Recycling Centre

For much of the year, the future of Oakley Wood was in doubt as part of the general Household Waste Recycling Centre review. At one stage it appeared that the nearest county centre for residents in my parishes might be near Abingdon. I led a strong campaign against this proposal and am pleased to report that my concerns were listened to, and the future of Oakley Wood is safe in the medium term.

Third Thames Bridge

Berkshire councils and enterprise groups have been campaigning vigorously in recent years for a new Thames bridge. This would link the end of the A329(M) in Berkshire to Playhatch in Oxfordshire. Many Oxfordshire residents are concerned about the large amount of extra traffic that would be deposited onto inadequate rural roads. There are worries the B481 could become a rat-run between the M4 and the M40, and that the A4155 into Henley would become even more congested. Both OCC and SODC have shared residents' concerns but last year both councils agreed to contribute funds to a traffic modelling study being led by Wokingham Borough Council. I have recently learnt that this study has now been expanded and renamed '*Strategic Outline Business Case*'. In response to this I tabled a question to the OCC Cabinet asking for reassurance that proposals resulting from the study will be rigorously challenged to ensure they best meet the needs of Oxfordshire. My March report has the latest update.

3. SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT 2015-2016

By Cllr. David Nimmo-Smith

"I was elected, last May, with Charles Bailey to represent this parish and 9 others. I'm on the planning committee and the Licensing committee. I keep tabs on the planning applications and I get Charles to deal with The Lamb, Highmoor which is of concern to residents in Rotherfield Greys.

Last Thursday, the Henley/Harpsden Neighbourhood plan had its referendum voted on. There was a 28% turnout and 83% voted for which includes the 170 houses at Highlands Farm. When the detailed planning applications for this come through, the traffic modelling conditions need to adhered too.

The District Council is doing a Corporate Plan which is a Statement of Intent to show where it wants to be in 3 years time. Protection of the green belt and the AONB to provide a nice rural environment for people to enjoy, promote business appropriate to the area, building houses at Didcot, Henley and Thames. The Corporate plan is putting more money into planning and enforcement. A budget was set so that there would be no increase in their portion the council tax received from County which is 7.5%. The County have increase council tax by 3.5 - 3.7%.

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The proposed decking on the car park in Henley is on hold for a year whilst a study is done. Third Thames Bridge will take a long time to resolve and plan. And to find the money to build it.

There was a question about social housing in Highlands Farm development.

“Social housing will account for 40% of the new houses and be managed by charities such as SOHA and Sovereign and other social housing associations.”

And buses? “County Council is removing all subsidies for buses”

An unground car park in Henley will not be happening as deemed too expensive.

Gillots Lane widening? “More passing spaces instead”

Highlands farm planning approval process? “As the Henley/Harpsden plan has been approved, detailed planning applications will be arriving and that it is the time to make responses/views.”

4. CHAIRMAN’S ANNUAL REPORT

It gives me great pleasure to deliver my report for the year ended 31 March 2016

During the past year the Council has held four public meetings. Councillors have also met at other times in connection with planning applications and other specific matters when they have arisen.

The principal matters that we have dealt with is reviewing 17 planning applications. Of those, 5 were approved, 2 withdrawn, 6 refused and 4 are still under consideration. The issue which took the most time was The Lamb which appears to have now complied with its enforcement notice and is no longer selling cars from the premises.

Looking forward, the principal planning issue will almost certainly be Highlands Farm which is on our boundary and the effect of increased traffic through the village during construction and after completion.

The Council also supported our clerk with her magnificent restoration of the decommissioned telephone kiosk. Again, I should like to thank her for all her hard work on that project. It is greatly appreciated by all who see it.

Events ahead for consideration include the Queen’s 90th birthday celebrations.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank our County Councillor, David Bartholomew, for his representation for our parish over the last year and particularly seeking to protect our roads in the event of a third river crossing being commissioned.

I should like to thank our District Councillors, David Nimmo-Smith and Charles Bailey for their reports and contributions on behalf of all of us.

I should like to thank all my fellow councillors for their support over the year.

Finally I should like to thank Jane for her help and guidance and for all the time and energy which she puts in on our behalf.

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Thank you all very much.

Peter Lloyd, Chairman

5. OTHER BUSINESS

None

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

001/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Micheal Pearey emailed his apologies.

002/16 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL & PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS:

None. If the planning application for Fishers comes up then PL will absence himself from the discussions.

003/16 RESOLUTION TO ADOPT MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (9/11/2015):

The minutes as an accurate record and duly signed and dated by PL.

004/16 OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL BUSINESS:

**MARCH 2016 FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW
GENERAL OCC REPORT**

BUDGET

Prior to Christmas, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) went out to consultation on possible additional budget cuts totalling £51m, at the time believed to be the worst-case scenario. However, due to a change in the funding formula, which penalised shire counties, the settlement was even worse than expected and the additional savings required now total £69m. In response to protests from shire counties, on 11th February the Government announced transitional funding and OCC will receive £9m across two financial years in respect of this. The Council met on Tuesday 16th February to debate the budget measures necessary to achieve the savings. Although most of the savings will still go ahead, a cross-party agreement was made on the day incorporating the following changes:

- A total of £2m of savings relating to Early Intervention Hubs and Children's Centres will now not take place. An original £6m saving on Early Intervention Hubs and Children's Centres - agreed by the council at its annual budget meeting in February 2015 - will still take place. No decisions have been taken at this stage on how this £2m will be spent.
- A total of £3m of savings relating to day centres (including transport to day centres) will now not take place. Instead they will be replaced by a saving of £1m from 2017/18 resulting from a full review of all day services for older people.
- There will be a further £300,000 contribution to the budget from reserves.

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The net result of this is that the council will be able to set a balanced budget in 2016/17 but over the medium term now has £15.2m of unidentified savings to make as opposed to the previous figure of £11.2m. The new £4m of unidentified savings all fall in 2017/18.

A number of other important decisions were made during the debate:

- A cross-party board of county councillors will be created to consider how best to use the transitional funds.
- The council will consider workplace parking charging with a view to early implementation.
- There will be a review of the number of Cabinet members.
- The benefits of a Unitary Council will be discussed on a cross-party basis and full and timetabled consultation will be prepared. This will be subject a free vote for all councillors.

PROPOSALS FOR DISTRICT UNITARY COUNCILS

On Thursday 25th February a surprise announcement was made by Oxfordshire's District Councils and Oxford City Council. (This may have been in response to OCC's call for a debate on a single Unitary Council for the county.) It called for the abolition of OCC and the establishment of four district unitaries:

- A new Southern Oxfordshire Unitary Authority would cover the area currently administered by Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils.
- An Oxford City Unitary Authority would be formed in the centre of the county, covering the area currently administered by Oxford City Council.
- A West Oxfordshire-Cotswold Unitary Authority covering the area currently administered by West Oxfordshire District Council and Cotswold District Council.
- A Cherwell-South Northants Unitary Authority covering the area currently administered by Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council. OCC welcomes the District Councils' engagement in the Unitary debate and will shortly be putting forward its own proposals.

PL asked about the approval process for this? “There would be consultations involving the Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Councilors and MPs for Oxfordshire (including the Prime Minister).”

MAJOR INCIDENT AT DIDCOT POWER STATION

There was a partial building collapse of Didcot A Power Station on Tuesday 23rd February and a major incident was declared. The multi-agency rescue operation continued over the weekend of 27th/28th February with emergency services cooperating with structural engineers and demolition experts. The partially collapsed building remained unstable making it a complex operation. At the time of writing (February 29th), there was one fatality, three people missing and five injured. Updates are posted regularly on the OCC website.

THIRD READING BRIDGE

Various Berkshire councils and enterprise groups have been campaigning vigorously in recent years for a new Thames crossing known as the 'Third Reading Bridge'. The bridge would link the end of the A329(M) in Berkshire to Playhatch in Oxfordshire. The enthusiasm of the scheme promoters is not shared by many Oxfordshire residents who are concerned about the large amount of extra traffic that would be deposited on to

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already congested rural roads. Historically, both OCC and South Oxfordshire District Council have shared residents' concerns, but both councils recently agreed to contribute funds to a 'Strategic Outline Business Case' in order to remain part of the process. OCC has made it clear to the other partners in this piece of work, that the council, by helping to fund this work, is not inherently supporting the scheme and will await the results of this work before taking a position on whether to support a full business case submission for funding. This decision process will also involve further consultation with the communities the scheme could impact upon. An initial report is due this autumn.



A member of the public asked about the size of the bridge and timescales. "This will be a super bridge – 4 lanes. If the go-ahead was given, it will be at least another 10-20 years before anything will happen."

**SPECIFIC REPORT FOR ROTHERFIELD GREYS
OAKLEY WOOD HWRC**

I am pleased to report that officers have now recommended that a reduction in the number of HWRCs should not happen until extensive further analysis has taken place and that this was approved by OCC Cabinet in December. This should mean Oakley Wood is safe in the medium term at least.

PL thanked DB, on the behalf of the Rotherfield Greys Parish, for the effort put in he was putting in, particularly the bridge and other issues discussed.

005/16 SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS

Please see the above annual report.

006/16 HIGHLANDS FARM – Public presentation of outline plans

007/16 QUEEN'S 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS AND 'CLEAN FOR THE QUEEN'

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Beacon lighting will be Thursday 21st April at 7.30pm. Notices will be put up and it is in The Link magazine.

Mr. and Mrs. Duncan are organising a village clean and JOP obtained their telephone number and resolved to help with ordering of litter picking equipment if needed.

008/16 MISCELLANEOUS:

(a) Correspondence

Letters of thanks for donations to Greys PCC and NDCC. An email was received to confirm that the telephone kiosk was included into the parish council insurance policy at no charge. The next financial year (2016/17) an additional premium of £14 would be added for this.

(b) Public Footpath/Bridleway Report

Jane Warren, Rotherfield Greys Chiltern Society Representative, provided a footpath report for the meeting.

(c) Telephone kiosk: JOP informed the councillors that a leak was stopping the library being installed, man power will be needed to level the kiosk and pack it out. This was agreed.

(d) Rotherfield Greys Website

JOP informed the councillors that she was unable to progress with the website as it was now beyond here programming skills. Permission was sought to get quotes for this finishing touches and email alerts (monkey-mail/constant contact) and linking to other websites (eg. Greys Court NT). The OALC are offering funding for this via the Transparency Code. The clerk will draft a tender and pass round at a future date for approval. It was agreed that the clerk would seek quotes.

(e) Defibrillator Project at Greys Court

Grants are available to apply for funding for this. Greys Court has been looking into this but has not got back to me yet. In the meantime JOP would enquire about grants from SODC.

(f) Training Courses from OALC

A list of current courses was presented.

OALC training courses – Half day £35 + VAT £42 Full day £65 + VAT £75.83
The new OALC training courses list have come available for 2016.

April 20th **Employment** – everything you need to know from recruitment to dismissal – Bethan Osborne

May 18th **Freedom of Information, Data Protection** - – Liz Howlett, solicitor

June 29th **The Clerks Year** – Dominic Stapleton

July 13th **Chairmanship** - – Liz Howlett, solicitor (vice-chairman -maybe)

September 21st **Finance for parish councils** - Steve Parkinson, SLCC

October 5th **Roles and Responsibilities** for new councillors - Liz Howlett, solicitor

November date tba **Planning**

December 7th **Employment briefing** - Bethan Osborne

JOP suggested the Chairmanship course for SH and Nick Digby would like to attend Roles and Responsibilities. The clerk to email Nick Digby about this and when details of the Chairmanship course come available, SH will be informed.

Broadband Update

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PL received the email below:

“Oxfordshire County Council has been working with BT and Openreach to ensure that the proposed coverage of superfast broadband in the Rotherfield Greys area is both equitable and affordable.

The original plan was to provide a solution based on a Fibre-to-the-Premise (FTTP) access. However as detailed surveys were compiled, it was established that a few premises in a number of the postcode areas would not be reached by the planned FTTP solution therefore, Oxfordshire County Council requested BT to estimate a cost for building out the service to provide access to all premises.

The outcome of this work has revealed a cost which is significantly above the value-for-money assessment we work to. Accordingly, we requested BT to conduct another detailed survey to establish what alternative delivery options there could be which would provide more ubiquitous coverage but at a cost which is within the value-for-money threshold.

The result of this work is now available and we are sharing this with you at this time to assist your understanding of the plan.

Please note, until all work is actually complete, nothing can be taken as a 100% firm commitment – the nature of delivering infrastructure always carries the risk of possible unknown problems.

The plan is that premises in the following postcodes will continue to be delivered as FTTP and are targeted for release within two months (we are working with BT to expedite this date as the infrastructure is in place and needs commissioning):

RG9 5WA, RG9 5WB, RG9 5WD, RG9 5WE, RG9 5WF, RG9 5NH, RG9 9JD, RG9 5PW (1 premise)

The following postcodes will now be delivered as a Fibre-to-the-Cabinet (FTTC) solution and are targeted for completion next year. This will clearly disappoint those which were scheduled for delivery by December 2017, but as described above, the solution will now provide a service for an additional circa of 70 premises which would had been left with no improvement:

RG4 9AF, RG9 5LP, RG9 5LR, RG9 5LT, RG9 5LX, RG9 5LY, RG9 5NA, RG9 5NB, RG9 5ND, RG9 5NE, RG9 5NG, RG9 5NJ, RG9 5RG, RG9 5RQ, RG9 5WG

TIME SET ASIDE FOR QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Questions were asked about planning applications: Fishers (see below) too many windows, the clerk suggested that the complainant should response to the application through the SODC website. And the new access/exit was a blind spot when approaching the road.

009/16 PLANNING APPLICATION RESPONSE(s):

a) Applications to be considered

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P16/S0242/O Robinsgrove, Satwell Close, Rotherfield Greys RG9 4QT

Erection of a new two storey dwelling and garage

RGPC response due by 1st April 2016

JOP has received 4 responses from the public about this application and a letter about traffic in regards Satwell Close and details of a covenant on the land. This was passed to the councillors with the planning application.

b) Planning responses

P16/S0077/O Highlands Farm, Highlands Lane RG9 4PR

Outline permission for 170 houses and associated infrastructure

RGPC response SHOULD BE APPROVED with comments – 11th February 2016

P16/S0219/FUL Bells Cottage, 3 Rocky Lane, Rotherfield Greys

Two storey and single storey extensions and alterations to existing dwelling to include the erection of a single storey swimming pool block. Two storey and single storey extension and alterations to existing double garage. Change of use of paddock to domestic curtilage and erection of tractor store.

RGPC response 'NO STRONG VIEWS' 2nd March 2016

P16/S0299/HH Holly Dell Satwell Close Satwell RG9 4QT

Erection of flat roof single storey rear extension with glazed roof lantern

RGPC response 'NO STRONG VIEWS' 10th March 2016

P16/S0491/HH Fishers, Shepherds Green RG9 4QL

Demolition of east side of existing dwelling house and erection of two storey extension, glazed link to existing garage and addition of mansard floor to garage to facilitate conversion into domestic studio space and erection of detached 3-bay garage

RGPC response 'NO STRONG VIEWS' 10th March 2016

c) Planning decisions

P15/S3261/HH Tudors, Satwell Close, Rotherfield Greys, Henley-on-Thames RG9 4QT

New single storey front extension, internal alterations, 2 no. single storey rear extensions, first floor rear extension, two storey rear extension, demolition of conservatory and replacement single storey side extension

RGPC response "NO STRONG VIEWS" SODC GRANTED 13/11/15

P15/S4001/FUL Badgemore Park Golf Club, Badgemore

Proposed alterations and extension to provide additional accommodation for management and training centre, incl 7 bedrooms. Renewal of expired application P09/E1372

RGPC response 'SHOULD BE APPROVED' SODC GRANTED 18th January 2016

P15/S4086/LB Cowfields Farm Road, Greys Green

Installation of oak panelling in entrance hall of main house

RGPC response "SHOULD BE APPROVED" SODC GRANTED 25th January 2016

P15/S3763/FUL 3 Oaks

Temporary residence in caravan 5 years

RGPC response "SHOULD BY APPROVED" SODC REFUSED 10th February 2016

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P15/S4319/FUL Greys Meadow RG9 4QJ

Proposed use of existing timber buildings as an art studio building and associated store for private use

RGPC response "SHOULD BE REFUSED" SODC GRANTED with conditions 12th February 2016

Caravan at 3 Oaks Orchard: The application, although suggested by SODC (Robert Cramp) to approve, after receiving more information SODC issued a refusal.

The Lamb at Satwell: The enforcement for removal of cars for selling was complied with by the middle of February, a member of the public informed the clerk the cars were being stored behind a barn in Shepherds Green. JOP has informed SODC of the location and a new enforcement is being prepared.

Greys Meadow: This application was approved but with strict conditions including no overnight residency.

0010/16 WAR MEMORIAL: No issues.

011/16 FINANCE:

(a) Donations/Subs: OALC annual subscription 133.07, CFO (formerly ORCC) £55.00, CPRE £36.00 and re-issue for lost cheque CAB £150. These amounts had been agreed for the budget.

(b) Accounts paid:

Clerk's salary	£ 549.14
Office rent	£ 83.36
Clerk's expenses	£ 14.11 (sealant for phone box)
Total	£ 646.61

(c) Precept: Precept has been agreed and first payment of £3,894.00 will be paid on the 4th April 2015. Second payment (also £3,894) will be made on 5th September 2015. The total Precept will be £7,788.

(d) Pension Contributions

JOP requested a change to the monthly bank standing order for employer pension contributions to an annual payment. This would save a monthly payment sheet being issued.

The letter for change to bank standing order was signed by PL and RO and JH

(e) Internal auditor

It was resolved to again appoint Keith Jefferies to be the internal auditor

012/16 Matters arising for information only

Future proposed member for Rotherfield Greys Parish Council.

Nick Digby was unable attend to introduce himself as a proposed candidate for the parish council before the May meeting.

Resignation letter from PL was handed to the clerk and the vice-chairman RO

A card and present were handed to the resigning chairman and a round of applause was given.

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THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.20 PM

Next meeting is the Annual (Electors) meeting on 16th May 2016