**Minutes of the meeting of Fringford Parish Council,   
held on Monday 18th December 2023 at 7.45pm.**

**Present:** Councillors: Ginny Hope (Chair), Les Harris, Phil Davids-Austin, Hayley Ryder, David McCullagh (Remotely), Robert Gue, Ros Mackenzie

**Also present:** R. Damerell (Clerk) and 3 members of the public

1. **Apologies for absence**
   * + No apologies were received.
2. **Requests for Dispensations and Declarations of interest, gifts and hospitality** 
   * + No Dispensations were requested or Interests declared.
3. **Public participation**
   * + No questions were raised though residents were invited to speak under points 77.3 - ‘Village Resilience’ & 77.5 - ‘Butchers Arms – Asset of Community Value’.
4. **Updates from County & District Councillors –** 
   * + No update provided.
5. **To approve the Minutes** **of the last Parish Council Meeting**.
   * + The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting.
6. **Finance**
   * + **Financial Spreadsheet** – The Councillors received the monthly Reconciliation.
     + **Invoices to pay** - The Invoices were reviewed and approved by the Council.
7. **Parish Matters**

* **Draft Budget 2024/25**
  + - The Parish Council reviewed and unanimously approved the draft budget for 2024/25
    - The Parish Council reviewed and unanimously approved an increase of the Precept of 5% to £16,090. This was deemed to be proportional to the rate of inflation.
* **Village Plan Refresh**
  + - Cllr Hope confirmed that Research Oxford have been formally engaged to carry out the Community Engagement with villagers during the spring to ask what priorities they want to put forward into an updated village plan. Cllr Hope has liaised with Tim Mustill who has very kindly provided a handover to Research Oxford and is happy to offer his involvement going forward. Cllr Hope is undertaking a look-back at the community achievements from the 2016 Village plan and Cllr Ryder in drafting a model questionnaire in conjunction with Research Oxford.
* **Village Resilience**
  + - This item is linked to the Village Plan refresh. Two residents have communicated with SSE regarding concerns over the frequency of power cuts in the village. They have written to SSE copying in Victoria Prentis MP. A reply was received confirming there was no concern regarding the power cuts. The reply was forwarded to Victoria Prentis who responded to SSE. SSE wrote another letter to Victoria Prentis stating they would bring forward some general maintenance work scheduled for 2025/26 to 2024/25. The residents agreed to liaise with the Parish Council if any update or confirmation is received regarding these works.
    - Cllr Hope also confirmed there are several telegraph poles in the fields surrounding the village which are of concern as they appear to be leaning at quite significant angles. These have been reported to SSE who stated that there was no problem with the poles.
    - Cllr Hope to follow up with a log of telegraph poles and send to the contact at SSE to request that they are included in the networks 2024/25 maintenance works in the village.
* **20mph Limits – Pre-Consultation exercise**
  + - Cllr Ryder confirmed that locations for what will be the legal limit signs have been checked and agreed on the map for Oxfordshire County Council and that any redundant posts and signs be removed.
* **Butchers Arms – Asset of Community Value**

Asset of Community Value

* + - A resident confirmed they had researched the process for registering The Butchers Arms as an Asset of Community Value through Cherwell District Council and that there were some helpful examples on the CAMRA Website. The registration process was shared and discussed with the Parish Council.
    - If a council approves a site for protection, that status must be considered during any future planning proposals. If the ACV’s owner seeks to sell, a six-month moratorium can be sought for the community to raise money to buy the asset itself. In extreme cases the council can exercise a right of compulsory purchase.
    - Cllr MacKenzie proposed registering the Butcher’s Arms as an Asset of Community Value, seconded by Cllr Harris, and unanimously approved by the whole Parish Council.

Butchers Arms update

* + - Cllr Hope spoke to the Acting operations manager at Punch Taverns who updated that a new tenant has been sourced, and Punch are currently carrying out the onboarding process. The hope is for the pub to be operational in the next few weeks.
    - Cllr Hope updated that in the absence of the pub operating, a Pop-up pub event will run on the 29th December in the Village Hall and asked if Punch could contact the tenant to inform them of the event if they would like to attend and meet residents. The Parish Council expressed thanks to everyone involved in the pop-up pub while the pub remains closed.
    - The Parish Council did express some reservations over the sustainability of the pub and the business model of Punch Taverns as each new tenant seems to struggle.
    - The Parish Council is keen to have a dialogue particularly with the new tenant and Cllr Hope has asked Punch to keep her up to date as the situation develops.
* **Cherwell draft Local Plan Review 2040 (including village recategorisation)**
  + - No update to report outside of the Village Plan refresh agenda item. To ensure that the statement on the Cherwell 2040 Local Plan is placed on the Parish Council website as it includes the agreed view on housing developments.
* **HS2 Grant Applications for improvements to The Green**
  + - **The Wall -** Cllr Hope confirmed that there have been numerous positive comments about the rebuilding of the stone wall. Once the wall is complete the new topsoil will be laid and the grass seed in early spring.
    - **Pond Area** – Tree work is starting on 20 December which will be followed by the planting of bulbs. Cllr Hope has been in contact with the Land Agent for the Shellswell Estate to plant and install a number of bulbs around the pond area.
    - The Baroness has also offered some oak wood to build some bird boxes. This could be a community project with the school. The Parish Council registered its thanks to the Baroness for the wood and bulbs.
    - Village Sign – A draft sketch of an option for the village sign was provided to the Council as an update. It was agreed to discuss and look at options outside of the meeting. Comments were that it needs to look good and have longevity.
    - Grant Shortfall – Cllr McCullagh has contacted Victoria Prentis MP, about the grant monies having sat with the Ministry of Transport (MoT), meaning that no interest was gained on the monies. There is a shortfall due to the delay with the project and the inflationary increases, which were out of the control of the Parish Council. David will write again to Victora Prentis MP, to ask if she can investigate with the MoT if they can address the interest shortfall.
* **New Vehicle Activated Sign for the village**
  + - Cllr Hope agreed to pass on residents’ feedback to the manufacturer that for vehicles the sign is accurate, but it has been noticed that it can sometimes be triggered by runners.
* **Village Hall update including roof survey and bus stop survey**
  + - The Parish Council was successful in obtaining a grant from Cherwell District Council of £11,010 towards the replacement roof on the original part of the Village Hall. This is 50% of the total cost of the roof. Cllr Gue updated that he has asked the Village Hall Committee to contribute 75% (£8,258) of the remaining balance for the repairs to the roof. There are still two committee members to respond to the request but is confident it will be agreed. The Parish Council will pay 25% (£2,753).
    - The Parish Council approved the quote to carry out the repair work on the Bus Stop roof.
* **Cherwell Parish Bulletin – Actions**
  + - No update to report

1. **Planning**

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| **Ref No:** | **Location** | **Proposal** | **PC Comments** |
| [23/03110/F](https://planningregister.cherwell.gov.uk/Planning/Display/23/03110/F) | St Michael And All Angels Church Main Street Fringford OX27 8DP | Dig out church pathway to enable wheelchair access to the Church entrance and improve accessibility for those who are mobility impaired | Support |
| [23/03111/LB](https://planningregister.cherwell.gov.uk/Planning/Display/23/03111/LB) | St Michael And All Angels Church Main Street Fringford OX27 8DP | Dig out church pathway to enable wheelchair access to the Church entrance and improve accessibility for those who are mobility impaired | Support |

**Decisions**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ref No:** | **Location** | **Proposal** | **Decision** |
|  |  |  |  |

**Appeals**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ref No:** | **Location** | **Proposal** | **CDC Decision / Comments** | **Parish Council Comments** |
| APP/C3105/W/23/3324251 | Land Adjacent to Wise Crescent Opposite The Laurels Fringford | Erection of 6 one and a half and two storey dwellings, with the construction of new access and footpath, together with carports, parking, landscaping and all enabling works | Appeal Allowed | The Parish Council agreed it is vital to ensure that the conditions that have been put in place by Cherwell DC are enforced by Cherwell DC.  The statement for the Village Plan for the website needs to be updated to include the 6 new houses which will be built in the village. |

1. **Correspondence Received / AOB**

* None to report

1. **Items for next Agenda**

* All items for the next agenda to be submitted to the Clerk by 5th January 2024.

1. **Date of next meeting:**

* The date of the next meeting as 15th January 2024 at 7.45pm.