

Vale and South Oxfordshire Neighbouring Parish Councils Joint Committee

Minutes of Meeting held on 24th March 2022 at 6:15pm

Present: Andrew Steele (Culham PC), Charlie Hopkins (CHp - Consultant), Chris Hancock (Appleford PC Working Group), Chris Neill (Burcot & Clifton Hampden PC), Greg O'Broin (Appleford PC), Jacob Shepherd (Appleford PC Working Group), John Peters (Nuneham Courtenay PC), Rita Atkinson (Sutton Courtenay PC), Sam Casey-Rerhaye (Culham PC), Vicky Shepherd (Appleford PC).

Apologies: Mandy Rigault (Nuneham Courtenay PC), Robin Draper (SCA),

Note: Charlie Hopkins joined the meeting at 7:05pm and John Peters circa 7:30pm.

1. Joint Committee Agreement

Initial discussion on the revised Joint Committee Agreement circulated prior to the meeting. RA felt it still doesn't reflect requirements on traffic modelling which SCPC see as key. CH view was that there are wider issues and recent events (deferral & Cabinet proposal for a CAG) have changed the situation. GO view is, SC members can see that their requirements are taken into account rather than embedded in the agreement. RA said she didn't want traffic to be overlooked.

CN mentioned voting provisions and GO pointed out this was amended. RA wished for voting to be removed. GO view was something had to be put to meetings to establish consensus. He referred to the term nem con which is a legal term for consensus. It was agreed to change the heading of Clause 8 to Decision Making (delete voting) and to remove last sentence.

Note: CHp joined the meeting prior to conclusion of this item.

Actions:

- 1. RA to provide wording**
- 2. GO to amend agreement re Clause 8 & deletion of last sentence**
- 3. GO to try and est. when Environment Agency will respond**

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2. Status Update – Cabinet Meeting, Cllr Webber & EA Consultation

Nobody was clear on whether the CAG proposed by the OxonCC Cabinet has been set up or who are the members? RA said that OxonCC should throw out the application pending negotiations with Government and review of options. There was general agreement the application should be withdrawn.

CHp asked how OxonCC will square the circle between building a road and net zero policies (climate emergency) in the Oxford 2050 Plan?

GO pointed out that the absence of a response from the Environment Agency was a factor in OxonCC's decision. Emily Catcheside had acknowledged this when she called GO to advise on the deferral.

CH noted Cllr Webber's comments at meeting of Appleford PC that it is difficult to backtrack on such a major project. Homes England has committed OxonCC to deliver infrastructure. He advised that we should continue to object to HIF1 application. However, we might hold fire on new detailed technical responses. He (RW) suggested waiting for the outcome of CAG's review.

3. Strategy/Options on Moving Forward – Strategy, Engagement with CAG & Influence

CH & GO view is that we need to complete the current expert reports on the planning application. While some amendments may come from CAG, we expect the material for a revised Application will essentially be HIF1 with some tweaks.

VS said we need to finalise the experts work and see this through to completion.

Continued discussion on CAG etc.

RA referred to the GDA (Grant Determination Agreement) with Homes England in the Cabinet resolution. GO noted that OxonCC is progressing with CPO preparation which indicated their intention to proceed with the fundamentals of HIF1.

CHp concern that the public will not be aware of the nature of the Regulation 25 request.

CHp referred to his email exchanges with David Periam in Emily Catcheside's absence (she is now back at work). OxonCC will place the Regulation 25 Request on the web portal. What he expects to

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happen is the request will go to OxonCC Highways (Dan Townsend) and will be passed on to AECOM.

CHp said his calls to OxonCC are not getting a response for whatever reason. He has been trying to get email address for the new Chief Exec and for the Head of Planning. Stephen Chandler is the new Chief Exec who replaced Yvonne Reeves earlier this year. SCR to send CHp his email address. GO noted that Stephen Chandler is Interim Chief Exec and OxonCC is recruiting for the position.

RA referred to the address to Cabinet by Emily Smith (VoWHDC) & David Rouane in support of HIF1. They both said that HIF1 was essential for their DC's housing plans. GO said that their acceptance of the binary choice was a default and noted that Antonia Jenkinson (CFO & Dir of Corp Serv. at Culham Science Centre) made similar claims to justify employment plans etc. RA emphasised that we should challenge both DCs on their reliance on the HIF1 road for housing plans.

The logic applied by DCs is, if they allow planned developments to proceed, OxonCC Highways will object on the grounds the roads cannot cope.

It was suggested NPC-JC writes to SODC & VoWHDC¹ to ask for the analysis or evidence to justify their statement.

JP suggested a march with CPRE, FoE & others in parallel with technical objections is required. General agreement. CN suggested a meeting focusing on campaigning against the road in the next two weeks. JP also suggested that NPC-JC should reach out to Stadhampton and Chiselhampton to engage them in the campaign as they will receive the HIF1 traffic.

GO asked if anyone knows a celebrity or person who would be of interest to the media.

Actions:

- 1. All to set Alerts on OxonCC Website**
- 2. GO to write ** as Chair of NPC-JC asking for: -**
 - a) Early meeting with CAG**
 - b) Planning Application is withdrawn**
 - c) Seek response to L's 10.02.22 & Joint Doc 11.21 plus timetable of CAG activity**
 - d) All CAG meetings to be in public (GO to agree wording with CHp)**

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3. GO to write ** to SODC & VoWHDC for the analysis used to justify their position
4. SCR to provide Chief Exec email (Head of Planning?) to CHp
5. Meeting on Campaign – date to be agreed.

Note: ** = Parish Councils / Clerks requested to write similarly.

4. Experts WIP & Phase 2 & Administration (item 5 on agenda)

A spreadsheet with calculations of costs for Phase 1 and Phase 2 was circulated by GO prior to the meeting.

RA was concerned about spending money and suggested a pause until CAG clarify options. However, it was also realised that due to the short timeframe, it's unlikely OxonCC will change their plans fundamentally or change the underlying EA statements. The meeting agreed the need to complete the original work planned.

CHp said his role involved oversight and engagement with planning officials & directing the team of experts. He checks the web site every couple of days. If he withdrew, we would lose momentum. He explained discussions with Profs Whitelegg, Goodwin, OxonCC, and others (Friends of the Earth, Councillors etc). This is important ongoing input and cannot be deferred.

Due to an unknown and possible extended timeframe. It was recognised we may at some point have to look at Crowd Funding, a point also made by CH. John Peters offered to talk to contacts in Radley and Sandford who may be able to assist.

The meeting considered the main elements of work proposed: -

a) Acoustics Review (quote £950 Bikerdike Allen)

GO & CH argued the needs for an Acoustics review deferred from earlier Phase 1.

It was agreed that noise affects all Parishes along the length of the road (79 houses Appleford, 288 properties in SC & Culham plus the European School, Clifton Hampden as noted by CN). It was agreed to proceed on the understanding that the specification for the work will cover all the five villages for a more detailed assessment.

b) Landscape & Green Belt (Alan James)

Alan & Charlie accompanied by GO & CH conducted a site assessment over two days along the length of the road. All parishes were visited to assess the impact.

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Agreed this should complete as GO & CH stated that any modifications to the application will not impact this assessment as OxonCC is unlikely to fundamentally change the scheme design.

- c) Transport Assessment – Sustainability (Prof John Whitelegg)
CHp said Prof JW needs to undertake TRICs analysis based on housing numbers.

Was agreed is necessary but to put on hold until more detail on the revised assessment is known and for information to emerge.

All further work (other than overwatch & items (a) to (c)) on hold.

Actions:

- 1. All members to set Alerts on the OxonCC Portal (to pick up changes made)**
- 2. Work to proceed or be deferred as above.**

5. Administration

Admin discussed above.

GO requested that members go back to their PCs to ask that payments already made by NCPC (which were approved by NPC-JC) are reimbursed before the end of March (Year End).

GF would like all payments to be reimbursed before the end of the financial year (March) for a clean annual cut off.

Action: Members to prompt their PCs to reimburse NCPC for invoices paid if still o/s.

6. Any Other Business

None

7. Next Meeting

TBA (w/c 4 or w/c 11 Apr).

¹ Previously NPC-JC experts have advised that the DCs/OxonCC need to examine the scale of housing development that can be accommodated by a combination of modifications to the existing road network and public transport/active travel policies.

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