

## **Minutes of the 2023 annual meeting of Nuneham Courtenay Parish Council held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at the Village Hall**

The Chair opened the meeting at 7.05pm.

Parish Councillors present: John Peters (Chair), Mandy Rigault and Madhvi Saini.

Also present: Cllr Robin Bennett (OxonCC), Geoffrey Ferres (Clerk) and one parishioner.

### **Annual Meeting Business**

**23/1. Election of Chair for 2023-24**

The Council **elected** Cllr John Peters, who then signed a declaration of acceptance of office.

**23/2. Election of Vice-Chair for 2023-24**

The Council **elected** Cllr Mandy Rigault.

**23/3. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye (SODC).

**23/4. Declarations of Acceptance of Office**

All members had signed declarations of acceptance of office in the presence of the Clerk before the meeting opened.

**23/5. Declarations of interest**

Cllr Madhvi Saini and Cllr Mandy Rigault both declared an interest in relation to the Village Hall.

**23/6. Minutes of the last ordinary Council Meeting**

The minutes of the ordinary Council Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023 were **approved**, then initialled on each page and signed by the Chair.

**Actions: Clerk to publish signed minutes on Council's website**

**23/7. London plane trees**

Edward Whorwood, Tree Officer – South in Oxfordshire County Council's Tree Service, addressed the Council regarding planned work on the eight mature London plane trees along the main road and the three options for managing the impact of the work on residents and the A4074:

Initialled:



Date: Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023

- a) The most extreme option would be a Sunday evening full closure of the A4074 with two teams completing all the work over the roadway, probably between 6pm and midnight. The work over the footpaths would happen during the following week.
- b) Another option would be lane closures with two-way traffic lights, probably two trees at a time, working from north to south. The diversion route would be problematic. This can be undertaken at two different rates: either over eight days with just one team or using three teams and completing the work in about three days.

The Council **unanimously agreed** to ask for the Sunday evening closure.

Edward Whorwood said he expected the work to happen in mid-July. Letter will go to every house along the main road about three weeks prior to the work.

Work cannot proceed on any tree if there is an active nest but, as London planes are not a native species, he said they are not very attractive to nesting birds.

Councillors asked about the state of the footpaths, but Edward Whorwood said it is too risky to prune the roots.

Edward Whorwood said he favoured regular pollarding on a similar basis every six to eight years.

Edward Whorwood asked the Council about planting another London plane, perhaps at the northern end of the village. It would have to be planted on Highways land. He said OxonCC will make its proposal in November.

Edward Whorwood was asked why OxonCC had planted a Tibetan cherry when it is not a native species. He replied that some non-native species had been chosen in view of climate change, but in this case the tree's beautiful bark was felt to be something that would make people appreciate it.

**23/8. Public participation**  
None.

**Other Annual Meeting Business**

- 23/9. Co-option(s) to fill vacancies**  
The Council **agreed** to defer this item to a future meeting.

Initialled:



Date: Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023



- 23/10. Standing Orders**  
The Council **re-adopted** its existing Standing Orders without amendment. **Action: Clerk to update Council's website**
- 23/11. Financial Regulations**  
The Council **re-adopted** its existing Financial Regulations without amendment. **Action: Clerk to update Council's website**
- 23/12. Code of Conduct**  
The Council **re-adopted** the existing Oxfordshire model Code of Conduct without amendment.
- 23/13. Complaints Procedure**  
The Council **re-adopted** its existing Complaints Procedure without amendment.  
**Action: Clerk to update Council's website**
- 23/14. Grants Policy**  
The Council **re-adopted** its existing Grants Policy without amendment.  
**Action: Clerk to update Council's website**
- 23/15. Employee Salary Procedure**  
The Council **re-adopted** its existing Procedure for the Payment of Salary of Council Employees without amendment.  
**Action: Clerk to update Council's website**
- 23/16. Privacy Notice (and Data Protection Policy)**  
The Council **re-adopted** its existing Privacy Notice (and Data Protection Policy) without amendment.  
**Action: Clerk to update Council's website**
- 23/17. Guide to Information and Schedule of Fees**  
The Council **re-adopted** its existing Guide to Information and Schedule of Fees without amendment.  
**Action: Clerk to update Council's website**
- 23/18. Register of Assets**  
The Council **approved** an updated Register of Assets put forward by the Clerk in his capacity as Responsible Financial Officer.  
**Action: Clerk to update Council's website**

Initialled:



Date: Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023

- 23/19. Financial Risk Assessment**  
The Council **re-adopted** its existing Financial Risk Assessment without amendment.  
**Action: Clerk to update Council's website**
- 23/20. Bank Mandate**  
The Council **agreed** that the Chair, Vice-Chair, Cllr Madhvi Saini and the Clerk should continue to be signatories.
- 23/21. Standing Orders and Direct Debits**  
The Council **confirmed** its existing annual variable direct debit agreements with:  
➤ South Oxfordshire District Council for a garden waste bin kept at the churchyard  
➤ The Information Commissioner's Office for the annual fee.
- 23/22. Dates and venues for Ordinary Council Meetings 2023-24**  
The Council provisionally **agreed** to hold its next meeting on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and **approved** the other dates proposed by the Clerk for Ordinary Council Meetings up to the next annual meeting in May 2024.
- 23/23. Roles and Responsibilities**  
The Council **reappointed**:  
a) The Chair as Planning Champion  
b) Cllr Mandy Rigault as Parish Transport Representative  
c) Cllr Mandy Rigault as its representative on what has been known as the SG42 Steering Group  
d) The Chair as representative on the Vale and South Oxfordshire Neighbouring Parish Councils Joint Committee.

### **Audit 2022-23**

- 23/24. End of Year Bank Reconciliation 2022-23**  
The Council **noted** the bank reconciliation at the end of the financial year presented by the Clerk in his capacity as Responsible Financial Officer and signed by Cllr Mandy Rigault.
- 23/25. Review of Systems of Internal Control 2022-23**  
The Council **noted** the report of the annual review its check systems of internal control carried out with the Clerk by Cllr Mandy Rigault. **Action: Clerk and Cllr Mandy Rigault to sign Certificate of Internal Financial Control**

Initialled:



Date: Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023



- 23/26. Internal Auditor's Report 2022-23**  
The Council **deferred** this item to a future meeting as the report has not yet been received.
- 23/27. Annual Governance Statement 2022-23**  
The Council **deferred** this item to a future meeting as the Internal Auditor's report has not yet been received.
- 23/28. Accounting Statements 2022-23**  
The Council **deferred** this item to a future meeting as the Internal Auditor's report has not yet been received.
- 23/29. Certificate of Exemption from External Audit 2022-23**  
The Council **deferred** this item to a future meeting as the Internal Auditor's report has not yet been received.

### Other Urgent Business

**23/30. County Councillor's report**

Cllr Robin Bennett gave a report and noted that the Annual Parish Meeting clashes with SODC's annual meeting, so both he and Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye would be unable to attend.

Among the items covered in the discussion that followed were Berinsfield's Youth Club; cycling and pedestrian improvements; the Minerals and Waste Strategy; and school transport.

Cllr Mandy Rigault said she will write to OxonCC regarding the Call for Sites. **Action: Cllr Mandy Rigault**

Cllr Madhvi Saini had raised the lack of school transport for pupils across the county attending the University Technical College at Harwell. Cllr Robin Bennett said school transport was due to be discussed by OxonCC's Cabinet on 23<sup>rd</sup> May.

**23/31. District Councillor's report**

None.

**23/32. Planning Applications**

The Chair said he has written to the Enforcement Officer regarding no 25 but has received no reply.

The Clerk advised him to write to the management in the Planning Team as the issue he is raising is inappropriate granting of permission, not a breach of planning permission.

**Action: Chair**

Initialled:



Date: Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023

**23/33. Finance**

The Council **approved** the following payments:

- £104.00, Nuneham Courtenay Village Hall Committee, hire for meetings held in September and November 2022, and January and March 2023
- £600.00, Simon Gray, five years' support with hosting the Council's website – the cost to be met by eliminating the Grants budget (£500), and reducing the Communications and Annual Parish Meeting budgets by £50
- £86.24 Geoffrey Ferres, 2022-23 Q4 Clerk expenses

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AS', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Initialled:

Date: Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023