

Vale and South Oxfordshire  
**Neighbouring Parish Councils Joint Committee**

**Minutes of Meeting held on Saturday 5th August 2023 at 10:00am**

Chris Hancock (Appleford PC Working Group), Greg O'Broin (Appleford PC/Chair), Hugo Raworth (Sutton Courtenay PC), John Peters (Nuneham Courtenay PC), Nick Fielding (Burcot & Clifton Hampden PC), Dr Rita Atkinson (Sutton Courtenay PC), Robin Draper (Sutton Courtenay Action), Sam Casey-Rerhaye (Culham PC) and Vicky Shepherd (Appleford PC).

In attendance: Geoffrey Ferres (Clerk to the Joint Committee).

**1. Apologies for absence**

None.

**2. Approval of minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2023 previously circulated with the meeting notice were approved and signed.

**Action: GOB to sign and forward to Clerk**

**3. Recent Developments since last meeting**

GOB reminded the meeting of recent developments: -

A pre-enquiry meeting on 17th July 2023 for CPOs & SROs attended online by Charlie Hopkins on behalf of the NPC-RC. The inspector set out the anticipated process for the meeting starting on 31st October 2023.

On 18th July 2023 the Planning & Regulations Committee of OCC decided (7 to 2) to reject the planning application for the HIF1 road. To date OCC have not issued the Decision Notice required after a planning decision and meeting minutes have not yet been published by OCC.

On 25th July 2023 a call-in letter was issued by DLUHC to OCC stating that the HIF1 scheme will be subject to a public enquiry under

Page 1 of 5

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a planning Inspector.

On 1 August 2023 Charlie Hopkins wrote a response (letter copied) on the call-in by DLUHC questioning the call-in of a decided planning application and requested withdrawal of the notification.

An extraordinary meeting of OCC Planning & Regulation Committee has been called for Monday 21st August 2023 at County Hall.

#### 4. Contributions by Parish Councils to Planning Advisor Fees

The Committee **agreed** to approve an invoice of up to £4,250 from Charlie Hopkins for work in relation to the Planning and Regulation Committee meeting.

SCR said Culham has already approved £1,000.

GOB said Appleford has already approved £1,000.

RA said Sutton Courtenay has an Extraordinary Council Meeting on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> August if the Clerk can send the invoice by then.

SCR said Culham has a Council Meeting on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> August. It was noted that at present there are no further NPC-JC advisor fee commitments.

**Action: Clerk to invoice member councils as soon as he receives the invoice from Charlie Hopkins**

#### 5. Administration – Update

Nothing to report.

#### 6. Next Actions

After extensive discussion on possible options including challenge to the call-in, rule 6 or informal participation at the planning inquiry and a possible judicial review later, the Committee agreed to write the following letters: -

- a) A letter to the Chief Executive of OxonCC urging OxonCC to challenge the Secretary of State's call in, cc the Chair of the Planning & Regulation Committee.





## Vale and South Oxfordshire Neighbouring Parish Councils Joint Committee

- b) A letter of complaint to OxonCC under its Complaints Procedure regarding the delay in issuing the minutes and the decision notice following the Planning & Regulation Committee meeting last month
- c) A letter to both local MPs on the issue of the apparent abuse of Ministerial powers.
- d) Letter to the Minister of State for Housing (Rachel Maclean) DLUHC reiterating points in CH letter (noting the refusal was unequivocal and widely reported etc.)

A FoI request for all correspondence between OCC and DLUHC to be considered.

**Action: GOB** (to be circ. for comment please return comments by COB 9/8)

The Chair advised that OxFOE have also written to the Chief Executive on 3rd August. (For information the response from the Chief Executive included "The council agrees that the Planning and Regulation Committee resolved to refuse the HIF1 Planning Application. The decision notice was not issued following the resolution, so it is our understanding that a decision to formally refuse planning permission had not yet been made by the time the call-in was received.)

It was noted that OCC have 6 weeks (from 25th July 2023) to present a Statement of Case to the planning inspector. It was noted OxonCC would have two potentially conflicting positions – Highways supporting approval and Planning Dept. supporting the decision of the Planning Committee.

NPC-JC await agenda (expected around 14th Aug) and notification for public addresses to the P&R meeting of 21st August. NPC-JC Representatives required.



## Vale and South Oxfordshire Neighbouring Parish Councils Joint Committee

The Joint Committee **agreed** it needed to continue its discussions before the special meeting of the Planning & Regulation Committee that has been called for Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

Committee members were reminded of the early deadline for submitting requests to address that meeting.

The Committee **agreed** to record its thanks to the Chair, Chris Hancock, and the Clerk.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.40am to a date and time to be confirmed in writing to all members by the Chair.

**Action: GOB**

### The Meeting Reconvened 23 August 2023 @ 20:00

Greg O'Broin (APC/Chair), John Peters (NC PC), Paul Schenk (B&CH PC), Dr Rita Atkinson (SCPC), Vicky Shepherd (APC) and Chris Hancock (APCWG - joined circa 8:20)

Guest: Richard Tamplin (Rtd Planning Inspector)

Apologies – Geoffrey Ferres, Robin Draper (SCA), Hugo Raworth (SCPC), Nick Fielding (BCHPC), Sam Casey-Rerhaye (CPC).

#### 6. Next Actions (Continued)

GOB introduced Richard Tamplin who can assist us greatly given his experience. RT lives in Abingdon and spoke in opposition to HIF1 at the planning hearing on 17 July.

The meeting of the Planning & Reg Committee (P&RC) scheduled for 21 Aug had been cancelled and is now listed for 4 Sept. OCC.

Democratic Services (Shilpa Manek) have advised that publication of the minutes for the HIF1 hearing is imminent.

The agenda and report pack for the meeting has to be published a week in advance of the P&RC meeting.

It was agreed to hold an informal meeting on Saturday to note key

Page 4 of 5

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## Vale and South Oxfordshire Neighbouring Parish Councils Joint Committee

issues and agree in principle how each PC might respond.

RA asked how the Planning Inquiry is likely to work. Currently SCPC are working on a Planning Appeal where HIF1 is relevant. RT explained that this is a Planning Inquiry in unheard of circumstances for a rejected application and is different to an appeal.

Rule 6 participation carries responsibilities and requires resource to present a case (4 Oct is deadline) and respond to other submissions. The Inspector will work rigidly to his timetable. The advantage of Rule 6 is it allows participants to attend the case management conference and to question the other side, who can question us.

The alternative is to register as Interested Parties and Statutory consultees but does not confer the same rights as Rule 6.

CH asked if the Planning Inspector would follow a judicial role. RT said he /she does not act in a judicial role but in a "quasi-judicial role" which is still quite rigid.

RA & GOB agreed that the cost of participating as a Rule 6 participant would be expensive. That would only be possible with outside fund-raising support. RA said on Hobby Horse Lane SCPC are hoping the Vale will make a strong case although that is an appeal & not an inquiry.

It was agreed to wait and see what emerged from the Minutes and meeting on 4 Sept.

7. **Noise** Deferred back to Appleford & Sutton Courtenay for discussion.

8. **Next Meeting**

TBA

*J. Brown*  
30 Sept 2023