

Western Valley Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Western Valley Parish Council

Thursday 10th August 2023 at 19:45, The District Centre, 1 Gentian Mews, Didcot

Public Session – Prior to the Start of the Meeting

MoP1: Regarding P23/V0667/RM – made comments at the July planning meeting – same comments to be applied here, particularly noise and a small gap of just 25meters between the proposed widened main road and the closest house proposed. Asks the parish to support HIF1 project. Allotments – sees no reason why the parish should not take on the land.

MoP2: Representing the applicant of P23/V0667/RM gave summary of how they got to the current proposal, and highlighted there is a separate application in for surrounding infrastructure. Highlighted that this application was only regarding design, scale, layout and landscaping, the previous outline planning application already approved development of this site.

Members Present:

Chair	Cllr S Peacock (SP)
Vice-Chair	Cllr A Thompson (AT) [left the meeting 20:54]
Members	Cllr T Williams (TW)
	Cllr A Dearlove (AD)
	Cllr L Durman (LD)
	Cllr V Humphries (VH)

Officers Present:

Clerk to the Council	Mrs L White (LW)
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Public and Press: At least 4 including DCllr H Gascoigne; DCllr D Dewhurst

Meeting started 19:54

23.04.1. To receive apologies for absence. [LGA 1972 s85(1)]

Apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Cllrs G Clarke and P Knowles.

23.04.2. Declarations of Interests [LA 2011 s31]

23.04.2.1. To receive declarations of interest for items on this agenda

None.

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23.04.2.2. To consider requests for Dispensations [LA 2011 s33]

None.

23.04.3. To approve the minutes of previous council meetings [LA 1972 Sch 12. Para 41(1)]

23.04.3.1. Meeting held on 11th July 2023

It was agreed the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting and they were duly signed.

23.04.3.2. Matters arising from the minutes not elsewhere on the agenda.

None.

23.04.4. Chairman's Report

None.

23.04.5. District and County Councillor Reports

Formal reports will be issued for August after the meeting – will be published on the website once available.

23.04.5.1. County Councillor S Povolotsky

Apologised in advance of the meeting they would be unable to attend, and asked that any urgent OCC matters be e-mailed or text messaged to them.

23.04.5.2. District Councillor H Gascoigne & D Dewhurst

The report arrived the day before the meeting and had been circulated to all Councillors. Comments in addition to the report:

- Doctors Surgery for Great Western Park, and item has come to VoWHDC cabinet – the next steps are with the ICB / NHS, so any frustrations should be shared with them rather than Vale. For the Valley Park development the triggers for releasing the monies from developers to the health care providers etc will be earlier in the development build. The S106 agreements should be ringfenced to the greater Didcot area.
- It was confirmed that the monies are to be released for the Valley Park healthcare provision at each 250 occupations, the land at 500 occupations. The whole of the monies and the land will be available at 1000 occupations.

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23.04.6. Planning

23.04.6.1. To approve Terms of Reference for the Planning Committee

Appendix A

Resolved: The terms of references were unanimously approved suitable for use.

To consider applications and approve response to planning authority.

23.04.6.2. P23/V0667/RM - Parcel 1P Land to the west of Great Western Park (Valley Park) Didcot

Reserved Matters submission relating to phase 1P pursuant to outline planning permission P14/V2873/O, comprising 172 dwellings with associated infrastructure and landscaping.(as amended by plans and information received 19 July 2023). (Outline planning application for a residential development of up to 4,254 dwellings, mixed use local centres, primary schools, sports pitches, community and leisure facilities, special needs school, open space and extensive green infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping, attenuation areas, diversions to public rights of way, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works)

The previous Harwell PC objection was analysed and the council approved a response on the delta between the previous comments and the updated drawing.

For Reference, the previous Harwell PC comments are detailed below:

Council objects to this application:

1. No new houses should be built until health care provision is in place for the new residents. Is there enough school provision in the area before the new ones are built in the town?
 - a. Propose Response: “Lack of Healthcare provision remains a significant issue for the current residents of our parish, with many not being able to register with a GP. Should this application be granted we request a planning condition be placed on it that stock cannot be released until adequate healthcare provision is in place.”
2. Infrastructure to surrounding areas, particularly to GWP for schools, for cycling and walking must be fully in place before any residence is sold so that residents are not stranded there/car dependent
 - a. Propose Response: “Due to the nature of this site and the requirement to travel to GWP for schools and other local amenities, should this application be granted we request a planning condition be placed on it that stock cannot be released until adequate walking and cycling infrastructure is in place so residents are not stranded or car dependent.”
3. Too many gardens are too small. Council does not accept that the proposed density could not be achieved without gardens meeting guidelines
 - a. Confirmed met.

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4. Density of Northern area was increased following Vale guidance according to a Persimmon representative who addressed the council. This contributes to the lack of garden space. Council is unclear why density here is being increased and how this will impact the remaining development where density will presumably be lower OR that the number of houses will suffer scope creep and increase in number over and above the total housing given in the outline planning of 4,254
 - a. Confirmed met.
5. Concerns about lack of visitor and resident parking. It is unclear whether infrastructure will be in place to allow for residents to be car free.
 - a. Confirmed meets the design requirements.
6. Flats are sharing EV points. This seems like a conflict point. Concerns also as to who owns and maintains the charging points - if 3rd party company, this may prove expensive for the residents
 - a. Appears from the drawings, that there is now no shared EV charging, they will be owned either by the management company or housing association which owns them. IT is currently unclear how the electricity would be billed on chargers which are owned not by the resident.
7. Language around solar provision is too loose. A firm commitment is expected. Designs/street scenes do not reflect this.
 - a. PV appears to have been approved to all buildings on the EV PV drawing, number of panels per property is yet to be decided.
8. Object to installation of gas boilers. As with Taylor Wimpey application we do not accept that the new flagship development in Didcot will provide, in the first phase, houses that will after a single year no longer meet the new efficiency regulations coming into force in 2025. Does not align with Vale or OCC carbon objectives.
 - a. We note that this will be a no gas site, and appreciate the update, it is not clear from the drawings where each of the air source heat pumps will be located, what is being done to manage the installation locations and prevent any noise issues with the neighbouring properties.
9. Windows on too many properties are too small.
 - a. No Comment.
10. No provision of swift boxes etc.

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- a. This has now been included.

11. The north/south footpath on the Western side of the development is not intended for cyclists. Council sees no reason why this cannot be shared space - design it like people will use it!!

- a. This is outside the boundary of this application. There are requirements and obligations on when footpaths and cycleways need to be in place to support the other development.

12. The only on-site facility is a play area. Please make it a condition that the play area is complete and in use before nth occupancy (ideally with n=first).

- a. Already a requirement to have in place by the 100th occupation.

13. Services - are Thames Water able to handle the sewage, or will it need bowsers as happened with early GWP phases or will they just let it flow directly into the local waterways?

- a. Parcel 1 Foul Water Drainage Strategy does not state at what point these will be active. This Council acknowledges that there is capacity for 800 homes in the current foul water system, and we need to ensure this capacity is increased for Phase 2 developments.

In addition, it was commented that the noise assessment completed in 2014 is still valid as it recorded the maximum noise when the road was at maximum capacity. Therefore the roads may be busier now, but will still only be reaching the maximum recorded in 2014, but will be reaching it more often.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to submit the response NO OBJECTIONS and we thank the developer for updating the drawings from the original application. This Council still has concerns about the level of noise which will be experienced by the closest dwellings to the A4130.

Other Planning Matters

23.04.6.3. To discuss the recent decision by the Oxfordshire County Council Planning Committee to REFUSE the planning application for the project named as HIF1. To agree a formal response (if any) and to agree any follow-up action as required.

Project Summary (taken from the meeting of the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan – update 17 July 2023)

Project summary – Four linked Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF1) Highways schemes to improve connectivity, unlock delivery of new homes and jobs and improve cycling and pedestrian provision. Completion due by mid-2026 but may be delayed by land acquisition and planning challenges.

Four projects:

1. Science Bridge
2. A4130 capacity improvements
3. Clifton Hampden Bypass
4. New River Thames crossing at Culham

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The Chairman gave a summary of the meeting at which this same motion was discussed by Didcot Town Council.

Summary of comments by this Council

- Yes we wish to encourage people to use cycles, buses etc but the homes in this parish are far from the town centre and to be able to go to the major local supermarkets, cars are needed. Tradespeople need vans for equipment etc, and the old power station site will continue to be developed for more distribution centres etc. The A4130 is already at capacity and there is yet more development to be completed.
- Train can be more expensive than running for example an electric car.
- New train station idea for Grove is being scrapped, Culham station cannot be expanded.
- In a few short years, with electric cars people will feel less guilty about using their cars and will increase the use.
- The Harwell bypass helped a lot more people get there. This scheme was to increase capacity in to Culham and Oxford.

[Cllr Thompson left the meeting]

Resolved: Approve Unanimously to write letter to Secretary of State regarding this Council's disappointment in the cancellation of this scheme, to delegate to the Clerk to write, and circulate to the Cllrs prior to sending.

23.04.7. Clerk's Report and Action List

Appendix B

23.04.7.1. To review the Action List

Action List

See Action List

23.04.7.2. To approve approach to the creation of a Parish Logo, allocate budget.

[ACTION] to contact school in September to get ideas of how they could see it running and bring back to a future meeting.

23.04.8. Finance 2023-2024

Appendix C

23.04.8.1. To approve additional payments to be made as soon as possible once precept has been received.

Resolved: Unanimously Approved the payments as listed.

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Payments to be sent Direct to Supplier

Item	Supplier (For VAT Purposes)	VAT	Total Payment
Reference Texts	SLCC (Books)	£1.80	£332.30
Clerk's SLCC Membership	SLCC (Membership)	Zero	£146.00
Hall Bookings	Vale of White Horse	Zero	£256.25
Scribe Software & Set Up	Scribe – Starboard Systems	£131.40	£788.40
		£133.20	£1522.95
		LESS VAT	£1389.75

Refunds to L White

Item	Supplier (For VAT Purposes)	VAT	Total Payment
Stationery	Amazon GB190023639	£1.33	£7.58
Stationery	Amazon GB727255821	£4.21	£25.35
Stationery	Plastoreg Smidt GmbH GB130880136	£4.50	£26.99
Stationery	Amazon GB190023639	£2.00	£11.99
Printer	Amazon GB727255821	£95.17	£570.99
Stationery	Stapleoffice LTD GB308166216	£4.30	£25.80
Stationery	Plastoreg Smidt GmbH GB130880136	£2.67	£15.99
.Gov.uk Registration	CloudNext GB825509426	£22.00	£132.00
Hosting	CloudNext GB825509426	£0.20	£1.20
Laptop	DELL GB635823528	£124.70	£748.20
PO Box – 1 Year	Royal Mail GB2431700	£66.00	£396.00
Insurance	Zurich	Zero	£319.82
		£327.08	£2,281.81
		LESS VAT	£1,954.73

Staff Costs July

Item	Supplier (For VAT Purposes)	VAT	Total Payment
Total Payroll Costs, Inc HMRC	L White & HMRC combined	Zero	£885.85
Work from home allowance	L White	Zero	£26
		Zero	£911.85

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23.04.9. Training

Appendix D

23.04.9.1. To consider list of upcoming training courses and approve budget and attendance by Councillors or Clerk.

The Clerk asked the parish council pay for them to attend the Practitioners Conference in October, offering to reduce the cost to the Council by covering the costs of travel and not billing time away. In particular day two contains a lot of seminars which will be useful for WVPC work. Due to the early start on Day 1, the Clerk asked the Council to consider the “Gold Package” with 2 nights and two full days at the conference. A significant group of Oxfordshire clerks will be in attendance, including the Didcot Town Clerk and this will be an ideal networking opportunity. Attendance gives 2.5 CPD points per day attended.

Noting this expense was not on the agenda, the all councillors supported the Council paying for the “Gold Package” for the Clerk to attend the 2023 practitioners conference, Budget £499, this is within the training budget for they year.

This will be entered on to the next agenda for transparency.

23.04.10. Allotments

23.04.10.1. To approve response to VoWHDC regarding Allotments, and whether the PC wishes to manage the future allotments, the land to remain owned by VoWHDC.

Motion Failed.

[ACTION] Clerk to seek information on average running costs from local parish who run their own allotments.

[ACTION] Clerk to seek information on how large the site is / how many plots will fit.

Staffing Committee

Appendix E

23.04.10.2. To approve creation of a Staffing Committee and Terms of Reference

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to create a Staff Committee and adopt the Terms of Reference.

23.04.10.3. To appoint members to the Staffing Committee.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to appoint AT; AD; VH and appoint another in the future if needed.

23.04.11. Approve Governing Documents

All below adopted unanimously, Procurement Policy to move to next meeting.

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23.04.11.1.	Procurement Policy	Appendix F
23.04.11.2.	Acquisition and Disposal of Land Policy	Appendix G
23.04.11.3.	Scheme of Delegation	Appendix H
23.04.11.4.	Statement of Internal Controls	Appendix I

23.04.12. To receive Items of Correspondence and agree actions arising.

None.

23.04.13. Matters for future discussion.

Lobby OCC regarding parking allocations

Lobby OCC/Vale/Landowner regarding sound mitigation from the A4130 should HIF1 be completed.

23.04.14. To agree list of items from this meeting to be submitted to any local publication or our Facebook Page as a Parish Council Update.

Clerk proposes a 1 or 2 page monthly parish council update to engage the community, delegated to the Clerk.

Resolved: Delegate to the Clerk to produce 1 page update after each meeting for publication on social media, website etc.

23.04.15. Confirm the date and time of the next Council Meeting – 14th September 2023, 19:45

Confirmed.

There being no further business to be transacted, the Chairman closed the meeting 21:30

Number	Item	Update	Action Pending On	Status
2023-001	Register with HMRC as an Employer	10 August 2023 - Applied for account and have a Government Gateway - to follow up with call and to apply for a UTR.	Clerk	Open
2023-002	To Purchase Smart Phone	10 August 2023 - Awaiting bank account to refund current outstanding expenses - Clerk using spare personal asset currently to keep PC and personal information separate.	Clerk	Open
2023-003	To open Bank Account with Unity Trust	10 August 2023 - Application in Progress - awaiting pending e-mail address creation.	Clerk - CloudNext	Open
2023-004	Create a Website	10 August 2023 - Domain has been applied for, hosting has been arranged and website design ordered. As soon as the Cabinet Office approves the domain, the website will swiftly go live. Councillor e-mail addresses and set-up instructions will be issued as soon as the domain has been secured.	CloudNext	Open
2023-005	External Noticeboard at the District Centre.	10 August 2023 - Request is being discussed by the District Centre, likely to be approved. GC to send previous noticeboard plans to the Clerk	District Centre & GC	Open
2023-006	ICO Registration	10 August 2023 - Awaiting Website Creation	Clerk	Open
2023-007	Seek Planning Course from Vale	10 August 2023 - Clerk to contact Planning @ Vale - speaks to EB @Vale.	Clerk	Open
2023-008	Invite PCSO to discuss Civil Parking Enforcement	10 August 2023 - Clerk to Contact.	Clerk	Open
2023-009	To write letter to Secretary of State regarding this Council's disappointment in the cancellation of the HIF1 scheme.	10 August 2023 - New Item	Clerk	Open
2023-010	Parish Logo - to speak with local secondary schools	10 August 2023 - New Item	Clerk	Open
2023-011	Allotments	10 August 2023 - New Item to seek average running costs, and the size of the allotments which will come to us.	Clerk	Open

Number	Item	Update	Action Pending On	Status
2023-012	Lobby OCC regarding Parking Allocations for new builds	10 August 2023 - New Item	Clerk	Open
2023-013	Lobby OCC/Vale/Landowner regarding Sounds Mitigation from the A4130, should HIF1 be completed.	10 August 2023 - New Item	Clerk	Open