

Fencott & Murcott Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting – 23rd July 2018 Fencott & Murcott Village Hall

Present

J Lewis
J Wylie
N Bates
4 Members of the Public

1. Apologies for absence

L Cox (Parish Clerk)

2. Declarations of interest

None

3. Election of Chair

James Lewis was proposed for election of Chair by Jane Wylie, seconded by Nicole Bates, and accepted the role with a unanimous vote.

4. Vacancies on the Parish Council

Following this year's election of parish councillors where only three candidates presented nomination papers to Cherwell District Council, and an uncontested election, it is desirable to co-opt two parish councillors. Written declaration of interest in response to notices was received from two people – Kay Bott and Tim Brown.

It was resolved that both Mrs Bott and Mr Brown should be co-opted as parish councillors with immediate effect.

5. Approval of Minutes of previous meeting, held 25th April 2018

Approved and signed by Chairman

6. Public questions, comments or representations

Revd Steve Hayes, Rector of St Mary's Ambrosden, and trustee of the Bury Fields Trust informed the Parish Council that the Trust had lost all its other trustees, and under the terms of the Trust requested that the Parish Council nominate at least two new trustees.

The Chair suggested that a sensible option would be for Parish Councillors to automatically be trustees of the Trust such that for the duration that they are councillor they are also trustee. The Bury Field Trust document will be circulated for councillors consideration at the next meeting.

Further public input was deferred until the Annual Parish Meeting directly following this meeting, and at which Oxford County councillor Dan Sames, responsible for the Otmoor area, would be present.

7. Chairman's announcements

None

8. Finance Report

The Chair presented the finance report, noting that bank accounts stood at £13,042 at the end of the financial year.

Invoices approved for payment were:

- Painting of gates at village entrances (including the gate in the countryside between the two villages): £415.00
- CDC election fees: £78.00

A quotation of £20 per month for payroll services in order to commence paying the clerk was approved.

It was noted that a grant of £870 that was applied for in respect of compliance with recently introduced transparency regulations had been received. The grant application had included the cost of a computer and scanner for the clerk, and expenditure on these items up to the value of the grant was approved.

The annual budget, updated with the above grant and expenditure was approved.

The Parish Council's extant financial regulations were approved for the current financial year.

9. Parish Business

Planning – No applications in progress at this time. A decision of the appeal process regarding planning application at the edge of Fencott is awaited.

Ditches and Waterways

Information was presented regarding Environmental Agency work schedule to include maintenance of Marlake Ditch and the ring ditch on Otmorr that runs behind properties on the south eastern part of Murcott. EA will be contacted to request extension of their maintenance, or at the very least inspection of, Pound Ditch and the ditch that passes under the road at the eastern parish boundary. The Parish Council will circulate details of the EA programme to residents of adjacent properties.

Parish Council extant policy documents including standing orders and code of conduct was approved.

It was reported that certain documents can be archives with county Archive services. It was agreed that appropriate documentation would be sorted and archived, and non-archivable material that is of no further use will be destroyed. It was noted that a request had been made by a local historian for historic information on Fencott and Murcott. It was agreed that this would be taken into consideration in conjunction with the archival process.

The issue of communications was raised by members of the community, and it was confirmed that obligations are to post material in the bus shelters and on the Parish Council web site. It was agreed that regular information would be submitted to the Otmorr Review for publication, and occasional leaflet drops would be made, commencing with the information sheet that had been prepared for the Annual Parish Meeting. It was agreed that no Parish Council information would be posted to social media unless it had been approved for circulation, and not before it has been published in the obligatory manner via bus shelters and official web site.

10. Urgent business not on agenda

The Village Hall Committee had approached the Parish Council with a request to take over ownership and responsibility for the village defibrillator, and a memorial bench to be positioned on the grass verge in front of the Village Hall. A parish Councillor has reviewed the issue of responsibility for the defibrillator, and it was agreed that once parts due for replacement have been supplied by the Village Hall Committee, the Parish Council will take over responsibility for ongoing maintenance and serviceability. It was also agreed that once terms of insurance (including £10m public liability insurance) had been checked and approved the Parish Council will take over responsibility for the memorial bench as an item of parish council street furniture.

It was noted that a grant is available to help with forming a neighbourhood plan. It was agreed that the Parish Council would look into this in conjunction with its plans to formulate a neighbourhood plan which will enable consultation within the parish on matters including planning and other local

development as well as impact of infrastructure projects on the parish. This will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

It was also noted that grants may be available for improvement of services, etc within the parish. These include a discretionary grant from OCC's Cllr. Dan Sames of up to £1,000, and the HS2 community and business fund. Our community is encouraged to come forward with ideas for which these grants may be applicable.

It was noted that a grass cutting grant is available for cutting verges in the villages. OCC Highways has suggested we may be eligible for a grant of around £650, and the Parish Council would have to sign a Deferred Responsibility agreement. On initial consideration the grant is small and obligations onerous, but it was agreed that grass cutting contractors would be approached to see if they would be interested in performing the duties for the sum available. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

9. Next meeting date

A full schedule of meetings will be agreed by the councillors and published within 2 weeks.

Chairman
