

CUMNOR PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee
held on Tuesday 22 October 2024 at 7.30pm
in Fogwell Field Pavilion, Fogwell Road, Dean Court

Present.

Councillors. Chris Westcott, Chair, Laurence Waters (Council Vice-Chair), Basil England, Alison Jenner, Paula Lopez, Gary Mason, Judy Roberts, Ray Stone,

County Councillor. CC Judy Roberts.

District Councillor. DC Judy Roberts.

67/24 Apologies for Absence.

Tom Christophers, (prior commitment), Dona Foster, (prior commitment) and Tina Brock, Clerk (unwell). These apologies were received.

In the absence of the Clerk Paula Lopez took the minutes.

68/24 Variance of Order of Business. None.

69/24 Declarations of Interest. None.

70/24 Minutes of the Meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 23 July 2024.

Approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

71/24 Matters Arising from the Minutes.

- i. Minute 55/23 Changing Room at The Old Forge. The ceiling had now been repaired and work to change the electrics of the bed had been ordered and a quote for a new hoist requested.
- ii. Minute 17/24 Street Furniture. MRH Services to quote to replace all the wooden slat of the bench at the overbridge Oxford Road, Cumnor with manmade slats.
- iii. Minute 50/24 Closes Pavilion. Council approved installing heating, insulating the roof and clearing the gutters at its meeting on Monday 7 October 2024. The window had fogged due to damp and did not need replacing. No proposal has been received from Cumnor Minors FC regarding internal alterations.
- iv. Minute 54/24 Noticeboards. QR codes had been produced and the Clerk was in the process of placing them on the noticeboards.
- v. Minute 60/24 Speeding/HGV Issues. Clerk contacted OCC Highways Engagement Team for assistance with reducing the speed limit along the B4044 from Eynsham Road, Dean Court overbridge to Farmoor from 50mph to 40mph and requested 30mph past care home and Hill End. Speed surveys are required and Council approved expenditure at its meeting on Monday 7 October 2024.

72/24 Public Participation. None.

Alison Jenner arrived at 7.35pm

EMERGENCY PLAN

73/24 To review the Plan.

The committee reviewed the plan and agreed to recommend the plan to Council for adoption subject to the following,

- i. The Clerk to check details for the District Council and/or County Council Community Resilience Liaison Offer and add to the plan.
- ii. Where temporary shelter may be required it should be added in the 'Examples of what can be done column', Initiate temporary place of safety, section 7.

FINANCE

74/24 Expenditure

The quote from Boward to carry out a decay test on a tree at Closes Field of £25.00 + VAT was approved.

Judy Roberts arrived, 7.45pm.

75/24 Current costs 2024/2025.

Council noted the following Committee costs to date.

- i. Burial. Dedicated Reserves of £84,670.74. Budget £2,480 with a remaining balance of £1,400.

- ii. Highways. Dedicated Reserves of £15,367. Budget £6,850 with a remaining balance of £3,495.57
- iii. Recreation and Playing Fields. Dedicated Reserves £16,557. Budget £26,262 with a remaining balance of £4,512.19. It was noted that there may be a shortfall attributable to increased costs caused by vandalism.

76/24 To approve budgets 2025/2026.

- i. Burial. Approved subject to Clerk assessing whether a CPI inflationary increase (or 2%) on all budget lines is required.
- ii. Highways. Approved subject to an increase in budget lines by 2% and with the addition of a budget line for Public Art maintenance when in place in the future.
- iii. Recreation and Playing Fields. Approved subject to Clerk adding a CPI inflation increase and/or a contingency budget line to cover unexpected costs such as vandalism.

RECREATION AND PLAYING FIELDS

77/24 Service and visual inspections of play parks carried out by MRH Services.

These were noted with the following actions.

- i. Mayfield Road – Gary Mason to check the potential trip hazard in the Multi-goal and advise the Clerk if any action needs to be taken.
- ii. Meadow Close Play Park – Ray Stone to check potential trip hazard in the path/manhole cover and the small split in the safety surface of the roundabout and advise the Clerk if any action needs to be taken.
- iii. Pinnocks Way Play Park – Judy Roberts to check the Youth Shelter concrete base and advise the Clerk if any action needs to be taken. With regards to the residents' fence panels it was noted that a letter was sent to residents earlier in the year, the clerk to send another follow up letter if there has been no response from residents to date.

The Chair asked that the councillors take photographs of the issues to help identify any action and send to the Clerk. This was agreed.

78/34 Nomination of Playground Inspectors.

It was **Noted** that the playground monitors were nominated at the meeting on 23rd July 2024 and remained the same as follows with one change.

- i. **Closes Field** – Dona Foster
- ii. **Glebe Play Park** – Tom Christophers
- iii. **Fogwell Field** – Judy Roberts
- iv. **Mayfield Road** – Gary Mason
- v. **Meadow Close Play Park** – Ray Stone (was Gary Mason)
- vi. **Pinnocks Way Play Park** – Judy Roberts

79/24 Reports from Playground Monitors of any other maintenance issues.

- i. **Closes Field** - None
- ii. **Glebe Play Park and Eco loo** - None.
- iii. **Fogwell Field** - None.
- iv. **Mayfield Road Field** - None.
- v. **Meadow Close Play Park** - None.
- vi. **Pinnocks Way Play Park** - None.

80/24 Requests for additional/replacement play/adult fitness equipment. None.

PAVILIONS

81/24 Closes Pavilion.

Gary Mason advised that a cage with coded padlock was required for the gas storage bottles to fuel the new boiler and would advise the Clerk of the regulations.

82/24 Fogwell Pavilion.

Alison Jenner reported that there were no issues with the maintenance or the PAT testing although there were 3 old fridges which aren't used which should be removed. It was not known who owned them. The electrical plug was removed from one for safety after the PAT test. To report at the next Fogwell Pavilion meeting on 13th November 2024.

HIGHWAYS

83/24 Bus stops/shelters.

Alison Jenner reported that there were exposed wires in a box connected to the bus stop outside the Glebe and this had been reported.

84/24 Speeding/HGV issues.

The committee noted the response on the request for the installation of a 7.5 tonne goods vehicle weight restriction in the village, the next steps were agreed as follows,

- i. The Clerk to establish the total cost of a feasibility study and write to the Parish's two County Councillors requesting their public support for Council's proposed weight restriction and to ask for financial assistance from their dedicated funds or elsewhere to help fund the feasibility study etc..
- ii. The Clerk to explore and consult with OCC on an interim solution to install signs which say 'unsuitable for HGV's' at both ends of the village.

In addition it was agreed to recommend to Council that it requests that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) installs a VAS, (Vehicle Activated Speed Sign), and/or a SID, (Speed Indicator Device), on the B4017 Tumbledown at the 20mph limit sign and on the B4044 Eynsham Road.

85/24 Parking issues.

It was reported that inconsiderate parking in Hurst Rise Road during school drop off and collection is causing a nuisance for residents with driveways being blocked preventing residents from leaving or entering their properties. It was agreed that the Clerk write to the Headmaster of Matthew Arnold School to request a letter be sent to parents and staff to ask them to be considerate when parking.

86/24 Street furniture requests.

- i. A memorial bench has been requested in Meadow Close. To be an agenda item at the next meeting.

There were no other reports or requests.

87/24 Footpaths/ROW.

The Committee reviewed the report from Tony Harker, Parish Footpath Warden and wished to record their thanks to Tony for his report.

88/24 Botley Traffic Advisory Committee next meeting.

No issues raised for the next meeting.

89/24 Parish Transport Representative Committee next meeting.

No issues raised for the next meeting.

90/24 Next Meetings.

To be held on Tuesdays: 21 January 2025 and 15 April 2025 in Fogwell Pavilion, Fogwell Road, Dean Court, Oxford.

The meeting closed at 8.49pm.

Signed..... Date.....2025.

Annex 1

The State of Public Footpaths in Cumnor Parish

Notes for Cumnor Parish Council

Tony Harker October 2024

An exceptional year for rainfall has seen many of the paths in the parish unpleasantly muddy for much of the year. Apart from that, they are generally well used and well respected. Local landowners take care to remark tracks when they have ploughed their fields, and to trim hedges and remove fallen trees to keep paths accessibleⁱ. Unfortunately, walkers are not always similarly

respectful of farmers' interests, and muddy paths can extend to up to ten metres wide as walkers try to find drier ground.

The Highways Authority's consideration of footpaths could be improved: the four footpath crossings of the A420 "Cumnor Bypass" are not particularly safe to use. There are several issues:

- Whilst there are good reasons for limiting the trimming of verges and central reservations, growth on the latter can, at the height of Summer, both block walkers' views and make walkers less visible to drivers.
- When trimming is done, trees are not cut back. Where the footpaths are near bends sightlines are badly restricted.
- There are three places where the paths cross roadside drainage ditches on wooden sleeper bridges. One of these (184/17) has been renewed in the past few years. One (184/25) is deteriorating badly. The third (184/19) was removed when the drainage ditches were cleared and never replaced – as a result an alternative access to the road has evolved, so that even drivers familiar with the road cannot be certain exactly where a walker might emerge.
- One of the crossings (184/41) originally had graded paths down the embankment to the road level. These are now barely visible, and steep short cuts have been trodden in their place.

The footpath which is in the worst condition (and probably the least used) is 184/17 which runs parallel to and close to the A420, requiring a double crossing of the A420 to follow it all the way to Nobles, whence a left turn onto 184/22 leads across Denman's Farm to Farmoor reservoir. It would be possible to create a new path to the west of the waterlogged land adjoining the A420 to link to Nobles without crossing the A420. I believe that this has been considered by the Parish Council, but it might be worth looking at again.

I do not believe that any of the paths which are marked on old Ordnance Survey maps, but which are not formally registered as rights of way are worth pursuing under the Ramblers Association's ongoing "Saving Lost Paths" campaign.

It should be noted that some sections of public rights of way in the Parish run alongside (184/15, 184/16, 184/17, 184/20, 184/22, 184/29) or across (parts of 184/28 and 184/30) parts of the proposed Botley West Solar Farm. Given the sort of fencing that is likely to be required for security purposes, these sections will become considerably less attractive if the development proceeds.

It is an unfortunate fact that there few opportunities, other than on public pavements, for users of mobility scooters to enjoy the Parish's countryside. Farmoor Reservoir is the main exception (although, of course, the tracks around the reservoirs themselves are not public rights of way). It is hard to see how this could be improved, but it might be worth taking an expert view.

ⁱ For example, the hedge alongside the path by the side of Long Copse (184/39) was trimmed in late September, almost doubling the width to which the path had dwindled, and a large oak tree which had fallen and blocked the same path was removed within about ten days.