

OCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK: MRS S BELL
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MINUTES OF MEETING

A meeting of Ockley Parish Council was held on Monday 4th March 2024 at 7.30 pm at Ockley Village Hall.

1. Attendance and Apologies

— Ms A Barclay Chairman

Mrs L-J Clarke

Mrs Z Biasuzzi

Mr J Lee-Steere

Mr B Thorne

Mr C Chalvert co-opted at meeting

Ms S Bell Clerk for the meeting

Also present MV District Councillor L Mursaleen-Plank, Cllr Abhiram Magesh and Mrs L Fletcher

Approximately ten members of public present for the public session.

Mr J Wright and Mrs H Clack sent apologies.

2. Declaration of interests and notification of changes to members interests

JL-S Jayes Park Estate

Treasurer and Trustee Ockley Housing Association
Churchwarden of St Margaret's and Trustee Ockley
School Buildings

3. Public Session

The members of public attended to express their views on the Elmer's Field application and expressed that they hoped for the Parish Council to object to the application. The main concerns with the application from residents were potential loss of amenity land, the loss of the unique view of Leith Hill, other general accessibility concerns such as the access from A29 where they felt that the view is blocked by hedges from either side. The traffic statement states on demand on bus service but residents have to phone the day before and there hardly are any transport opportunities and no school in locality. Parishioners felt that there would be lots more movement traffic wise in the close which already is hard to navigate in as it is a tight road due to parking on one side from

residents. They also raised concerns over more pressure on local amenities.

District Councillor L Mursaleen-Plank advised she was going to make contact with the planning inspector for suggestions on this as the consultation period 6 weeks has just started – the number of houses in plan approvals is a target to reach not necessarily the max target. Ockley have suffered as a result of not having a local plan in place and not technically being in the green belt site so developers are picking up on this and putting their applications in to Mole Valley District Council (MVDC). Until the local plan is in place, these applications will continue to happen so the Council as a whole has very little say over these applications. MVDC have to stick within the planning guidelines. Developers appeal goes to public enquiry and a barrister deals with the cases.

LJ has visited Capel Parish meeting and planning to go Abinger and they have all similar planning application problems not just Ockley. AB advised members of public Parish will be discussing this planning application and will be taking a vote later on in the meeting. JLS will not be in the discussion or the vote due to his personal interest but has declared a

Dispensation Request to the Clerk prior to the meeting meaning that he can remain in the room while discussion takes place. AB also advised parishioners present that Parish Council does listen to Parishioners concerns and can refer to these comments when submitting responses to the planning applications but the decision to approve or refuse an application comes down to MVDC. Parish Council have to object within certain policies/guidelines and should be able to justify these reasons and cannot just say no to an application because the residents do not want the application to be approved.

A member of public asked the Council what measures are being made for infrastructure and community facilities for Ockley as all doctors, schools, Ockley's post office, etc. have gone so what are MVDC provision for all these new houses. District Councillor L Mursaleen-Plank explained that this is down to the developer. The applications are more than just housing. Developers do look at infrastructure to a point and this is why it is good to have communication with the developers to discuss what is needed and wanted from the Parish.

Member of public thanked the Parish Council and District Councillors for their hard work they put in.

4. Minutes of meeting held on 9th January 2024

BT proposing and JLS seconded. Chairman signed the minutes.

5. Updates on minutes

Nothing to up-to-date.

6. Casual vacancy – one vacancy remains

Update re. documents for completion / training

Charles Calvert co-opted onto Council. ALL Councillors in favour. Clerk to send paperwork and set up email address.

7. Correspondence diary dates:

• CSW reports

Clerk to send round the Gatwick forum meeting on 20th March for AB or LJ to possibly attend the online session.

8. Planning matters - full list on website

• Any updates on major planning applications:

Elderslie MO/2022/1227 application refused – subject to appeal

LJ concerned around the local amenities within Ockley. She advised Capel school is closing and will be moving up to The Weald Primary School. The Weald Primary have not got an infant school. Another concern is the doctors Leith Hill practice being stretched to its max capacity. AB advised she has asked Clerk to send email round to all local amenities of what their capacity is currently so this can be included with the findings in OPC responses to planning applications.

In the council's discussion on the Elmers Field application the following points were raised by Councillors:

- A local resident wants to put in a disabled bay on the access road and plebs for this have not been taken into account by the developer. Part M has not been included.
- Movement in and out of the access road is already difficult
- Some felt that there were other more suitable sites in the village that could be developed.
- One Councillor thought that the access road had been sufficiently improved in the proposed plans.

- Another Councillor felt that the development offered good housing of the type needed within the village.
- Another Councillor felt the other end of village is dying and asked why housing is being put down the southern end of the village and not this side with the Church and closer to the train station.

Views of the village is very clear; the parishioners want to object but cannot be done on a personal view.

AB proposed that as CC had only been co-opted that evening and had not had a chance to look at the application at all, the vote should be delayed by 48 hours to give CC a chance to review the documents. Clerk to send details over to him. The votes would be counted after this and a response to the application submitted accordingly.

- **Hawksmoor objection** – Further meetings to take place – no decision on their application at the moment. Clerk to arrange meeting with Hawksmoor.

- **Enforcement Action – land south of Ockley**

AB has seen the email been that was sent out regarding the visit from MVDC. Highways should be notified on the flooding because of the wheels/tyres that could be possibly the cause of

the flooding. This item will remain on the agenda until resolved. Residents have reported that the shipping containers on the site are possibly being lived in. More in depth investigation needs to be done by MVDC

9. Finance:

a) accounts to be paid - as shown on website

These were read out by LF. AB proposed and ZW seconded. To obtain a quote from grounds maintenance for strimming.

b) bank details – Additional signatory to be added ZB

This is still in process.

c) verify bank statements to budget spreadsheet

JLS viewed and signed.

d) interim internal audit (mulberry) 2023/24

This has been booked by the Clerk.

10. Staffing matters

AB welcomed the Clerk back after her absence. ZB announced to all Councillors she was expecting but planned to continue to attend meetings when feasible.

11. Footpaths in the parish

DT is going to be footpath warden chasing up a training course to be officially. No training date as of yet. Nothing more to up-to-date.

12. Crime reports

ZW read out main comments. 8 crimes reported between 15th Jan -4th March 2024.

13. Social matters

LJ has made an effort to visit all the local groups. The main issues she has found are parishioners asking about the school buildings. AB advised this is a long term and complicated matter getting the buildings repurposed. A draft is needed for an article on more background information regarding the school to be published in WOOF in order to keep the village updated on the school buildings. It was agreed that communication with the village could be improved on. An example was brought in on Rudgwick Parish Council issue a little blue leaflet with emergency contacts for the locals and possibly Ockley could provide something similar for the Parish. LJ also advised that the elderly community do struggle to email as they have no access to internet. It was proposed that the Parish Council could provide a telephone number to be contactable for parishioners to leave a message for the Clerk. There

is nothing in noticeboards to advertise the Council. AB thanked LJ and agreed to give a trial for a few months for pay as you go phone. Clerk to action.

14. Data Protection Officer – retention of services / Councillor and clerk training

Clerk to arrange training for GDPR for all Councillors.

15. Play area

ZB trying to obtain Lottery Fund quotes for a grant for the play area. SSC HC sent an annual report and this included a fund that ZB applied for new fencing through. A separate quote is needed for the refurbishment of the play area. LF brought up the play inspection – nothing major to report on. AB suggested possibly creating a new teenage friendly equipment such as basketball hoops, table tennis, etc. in addition to the toddler equipment

16. Highways – flooding of A29: north of village Beare Green Road and south of village by Randhawa Farm

HC has got Highways involved. This is a persistent problem.

17. Biodiversity

Clerk to find training dates.

18. NDP

JLS advises needs to resurrect the plan but is finding not much external enthusiasm for this to take place. A working group is needed and maybe an article in the WOOF magazine could help raise interest from parishioners. CC offered to look at other parishes that are similar to Ockley. Ockley needs backing from MVDC and decide whether to make a start on working on the NDP again. Clerk to circulate all the documents. District Councillor to make contact with MVDC planning to get advice for help with moving forward with the NDP.

19. Community Hub

LJ wanted an update on the discussions that took place at previous meetings. The Parish council had previously suggested using the buildings as a hub within the community. Without a definitive plan it is possible that the buildings could get sold or developed by the diocese. The Parish needs ideas for how the buildings can be used. LJ believes the sub-committee for the school do not meet and therefore, nothing will happen. There were a couple of events that happened last year and there was very limited interest from members of the committee which has stalled progress. This needs

to start off again. JLS advised he has been asking for meetings, trying to get reengagement to start this up again. LJ and ZB to attend this if a meeting can be arranged.

20. Date of next meeting – Monday 13th May 2024

DRAFT