

## HORLEY PARISH COUNCIL

### AGENDA

Dear Councillor,

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Parish Council which will be held in the Old School Room at 7.30 pm on Thursday 16 November 2017.

Clerk to Horley Parish Council

- 1) Apologies for absence
- 2) Declaration of Interests
- 3) Minutes of the meeting held on 3 August 2017
- 4) Matters arising
- 5) Finance

#### **(a) 2017/18 budget monitoring report to 30 September 2017**

The report annexed below shows the income and expenditure for the 2017/18 financial year to 30 September, as compared to the annual budget. There are no particular issues to draw to the attention of Members at this time. It is **RECOMMENDED** that the budget monitoring report be approved.

#### **(b) budget for 2018//19**

The right hand column of the annexed report shows the budget recommended for next year. In most cases this year's figures have been carried forward, inflated if necessary. The sum provided to finance a contribution towards the cost of maintaining the churchyard has been increased to £450, as agreed at the last meeting. As parish council elections will take place, the sum of £800 has been included to cover the cost of conducting elections should the number of candidates exceed the number of seats. This figure has been provided by the returning officer at Cherwell District Council. Members are requested to review the sums provided, and to consider the amount to be included as a contingency, so that the annual precept can be agreed.

#### **(c) audit of the accounts for 2016/17**

The report of the Council's external auditor, BDO LLP, relating to the accounts for 2016/17 has been received. The auditor reports that in their opinion the Council's Annual Return is in accordance with proper practices, and no other matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislative and regulatory requirements have not been met.

The auditor has made a number of comments relating to the internal audit of the Council's accounts. Firstly, the auditor is concerned that in the past, the Council has not formally

considered the internal auditor's report. Consequently, the internal auditor's report for 2016/17 is attached at Appendix 1 to this agenda. As Members will see, this simply takes the form of a proforma report supplied by BDO LLP which our internal auditor has completed and signed. BDO LLP have also pointed out that the internal auditor failed to complete box K, where a tick should have been added against "not applicable".

Consequently it is **RECOMMENDED** that the reports of the external and internal auditors be formally received and noted.

Secondly, the external auditor has recommended that, in future, the Council ensures that its internal auditor provides a report rather than simply completing the relevant page of the Annual Return. That report can take the form of a letter which should indicate whether there are any issues which should be drawn to the attention of the Council, and make recommendations regarding any matters where action is required. This report should then be formally reported to and considered by the Council. Under changes introduced from the current year, the Council will not be required to submit its accounts for external audit, and consequently the internal audit will be of increased significance. The Council will be required to publish its accounts, and those relating to the last two years are already available on the Horley Views website, on the Parish Council's finance page. In the circumstances, it is proposed that the Council's internal auditor, Clive Rosier, be approached to ensure he is prepared to continue to act for the Council, on the basis outlined above.

## **6) Land adjoining the Old Council Houses, Wroxton Lane**

Little progress has been made towards establishing whether parking spaces could be provided on this land. As agreed at the last meeting, the condition of the fence was reported to the County Council, but no immediate response was received. It would appear that there has been an internal reorganisation of the County Council's highways department, and responsibility for assisting with this matter has been reallocated, but the County Council have not advised as to who is now responsible for this matter. However, at a meeting with Mr Watson of the Highways department held on 26 October to discuss other matters covered later in this agenda, Mr Watson did agree to pick this issue up, and investigate further.

## **7) Planning report**

A report showing the applications which have been determined by Cherwell District Council, and those on which the Council has been consulted since the last meeting, is annexed below.

On 26 September Councillors Tite, Barnwell and the Clerk attended a meeting at the Old Forge in Wroxton Lane with the owner, Mr Hoddinott, and his planning consultant. Mr Hoddinott outlined his plans for converting the property to residential use in order to improve security at the adjoining caravan site. To date it appears no planning application has been submitted.

## **8) Applications for charitable donations**

- a) A letter has been received from the Katherine House Hospice requesting a donation. Members will no doubt be aware of the work which this charity does for local residents.

- b) An application has also been received from Clean Slate, a charity providing counselling and support for victims of all kinds of abuse across Oxfordshire. The charity appears to depend entirely on funds raised through donations, and have in the past received support from a number of town and parish councils, together with housing associations and religious bodies. They have requested £100.

### **9) Grass cutting contract**

A third and final cut financed by the Council was carried out in October. This means that the verges not maintained by residents within the village have been cut four times in total, whilst the verges outside of the village gates were cut once. It is recommended that Members consider whether they wish to repeat this frequency of cutting next season or make any changes.

The annual budget includes a provision of £300 to finance hedge maintenance, and it is anticipated that this will be undertaken by the same contractor during the winter period.

### **10) Highways matters**

Following the last meeting, Oxfordshire County Council were contacted regarding the general condition of the roads within the village, and in particular Hornton Lane, and also requesting a quotation for the cost of providing curbs along the verge to Church Lane in front of the church. After some delay, a meeting was arranged with Mr Watson, a highway officer, on 26 October. At the meeting Mr Watson agreed to provide a quotation for the cost of providing curbs to the east side of Church Lane adjacent to the churchyard, for the Council to consider.

Mr Watson also agreed to consider further some patch repairs to the roads through the village. Subsequently, various areas have been marked for repair by the County Council, although it is not known when these works will be done.

### **11) Disabled Access to the Church and the Old School**

The lack of wheelchair access to the Church from Church Lane has been raised recently with the Parochial Church Council. Members will be aware that there are two steps up from Church Lane before reaching the west door of the church, and similarly on the path across the churchyard leading to the Old School. Enquiries have been made as to whether the PCC has any plans to address this issue, and their response is annexed to this report.

### **12) Reports from External Organisations**

Any Member reports from external organisations.

### **13) Date of next meeting**

Thursday 15 February 2018

### **14) Any other urgent business**

## REPORTS

### Item 5: 2017/18 budget monitoring report to 30/09/17 Draft budget for 2018/19

	<u>Category Description.</u>	Budget 2017/2018	Spent to 30.09.17	Under/ overspend	Draft Budget 2018/19
1	Clerk's Salary	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
2	Clerk's Expenses	£150.00	£0.00	-£150.00	£150.00
3	Churchyard Maintenance	£400.00	£0.00	-£400.00	£450.00
4	Insurance	£300.00	£297.86	-£2.14	£300.00
5	Election Expenses	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£800.00
6	School Room Hire	£150.00	£0.00	-£150.00	£150.00
7	Subscriptions				
	OALC	£140.00	£0.00	-£140.00	£140.00
	SLCC	£50.00	£0.00	-£50.00	£50.00
	Community First Oxfordshire	£35.00	£0.00	-£35.00	£35.00
9	Audit Fee	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
10	Horley Views website	£50.00	£0.00	-£50.00	£50.00
11	S137 expenditure				
	Charitable contributions	£150.00	£50.00	-£100.00	£150.00
	Defibrillator	£125.00	£0.00	-£125.00	£125.00
12	Dog Bins Servicing	£385.00	£192.19	-£192.81	£385.00
13	Hedges	£300.00	£0.00	-£300.00	£300.00
14	Verge maintenance	£450.00	£228.00	-£222.00	£450.00
15	Contingency	£4,065.00	£0.00	-£4,065.00	???
	<b>TOTAL</b>	£6,750.00	£768.05	-£5,981.95	???

## Balances and income to 30.09.17

Business saver account balance 31.3.17	£20,005.03
Community account balance 31.3.17	£100.00
	<u>£20,105.33</u>
less expenditure relating to 2016/17	£168.07
	<u>£19,936.96</u>
Income	
CDC precept	£3,375.00
CDC supplementary grant	£4.87
CDC precept	£3,375.00
Total income	£6,754.87
	<u>£26,691.83</u>
Less expenditure	<u>£768.05</u>
Balance 30.09.17	<b>£25,923.78</b>

## Item 7 - Planning Report

The outstanding applications, and those which have been determined by Cherwell District Council since the last meeting, are summarised below. All decisions issued by the Council in response to applications received are displayed on the village website ([www.TheHorleyViews.com](http://www.TheHorleyViews.com)), including a link to the relevant application on the CDC website.

Application Number	Applicant	Description	Current position
16/02491/Q5 6	Mr R Freeman	Hovel Meadow Barn, Clump Lane, conversion of barn to dwelling.	Appeal against refusal by CDC, appeal dismissed.
17/01516/F	Mr R Freeman	Retrospective – repair alteration and part rebuilding of barn at Bramshill Park Farm, Horley (resubmission of 16/02355/F)	Permission granted.
17/01703/F	Mr & Mrs Attfield	To install a glass sided extension to the rear elevation of the house	No objection submitted by HPC
17/00371/TC A	Mr M Huskisson	Prune acer at Mulberry House, Banbury Lane	No objection submitted by HPC

## Annual internal audit report 2016/17 to

Enter name of smaller authority here:

HORLEY PARISH COUNCIL

This smaller authority's internal audit, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2017.

Internal audit has been carried out in accordance with this smaller authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this smaller authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose only one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been kept properly throughout the year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
B. This smaller authority met its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
C. This smaller authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this smaller authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

K. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable

For any other risk areas identified by this smaller authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed)

W/A

Name of person who carried out the internal audit CLIVE ROSSIER

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit  Date 22/5/17

\*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, internal audit must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

David Marriott  
Clerk to the Parish Council  
Horley

Rowarth House  
Horley

7 November 2017

Dear David,

### **Disability access to St Etheldreda's Church and MHT premises**

Thank you for your email dated 1 November attaching the letter Mike Patching sent to Sue Ashdown following her having organised a 'quiet day' in the Old School which was attended by a number of people, one of whom had a disability which required use of a wheelchair. I understand, having spoken to Mike and to Brian Ashdown, that this person had used their own portable ramps to enable their wheelchair to get up the steps in front of the church.

As we all know, the presence of these steps up to the church, which also carry a public right of way along the path through the churchyard and along the east boundary of Horley Manor, is significant to access to the church (of Parochial Church Council interest), to the Old School and the Old School Cottage (of Michael Hardinge Trust interest) and to the public footpath (perhaps of Parish Council interest). In any event, I note that the Chair of the Parish Council has asked you to put the matter on the agenda for the next meeting.

I am sure Mike is right when he says that this topic has been in peoples' minds, including those of the PCC, for a long time. Our churchwarden, Charles Cozens, has made the point on a number of occasions that the existing steps from Church Lane were designed to be broad and shallow so that assisted wheelchair access was as manageable as it could be.

The PCC is aware of the requirement under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments' designed to ensure that those with a disability can access the church. There is, of course, no legal basis for any suggestion that this obligation under the 2010 Act can only be met through the provision of a permanent ramp in some form or other.

The matter was discussed by the PCC at its October meeting and our position following that discussion can be expressed as follows:

- 1) Based on past inquiry by the churchwardens, there is in the PCC's view no realistic prospect of listed building consent being granted by the planning authority for the provision of permanent ramped access to the church. As to this, it is worth making the point (as I'm sure the Parish Council will know) that the Equality Act 2010 does not override other legislation, including that concerning planning regulation, which means that the planning authority is not forced to give consent because the requested

work is targeted at facilitating disability access. Our present understanding is that planning consent would be very unlikely to be granted.

- 2) That being the case, the PCC is not currently intending to pursue building a permanent access ramp as a solution to its Equality Act 2010 responsibility.
- 3) The PCC is however in the process of obtaining portable, aluminium ramps which can be deployed as required to assist those with a disability to get up to the church for the purpose of attending services and any other event held in the church. Other than attendance at church events, the church is unlocked and open to visitors every day, so these ramps will be available to, and can be used by, anyone who needs them. We appreciate that regrettably this will not work for a visitor requiring disability access who arrives on their own with no-one to assist them, but we think that it is nonetheless the adjustment which in all the circumstances is 'reasonable' for the purposes of the 2010 Act.
- 4) We do of course recognise that the inherent unlikelihood of getting planning consent for a permanent ramp affects not just access to the church, but also access to the Old School buildings – relevant of course to the MHT's obligations under the 2010 Act. This is perhaps an area where the tripartite discussion Mike is suggesting could be valuable. I am able to say that Charles Cozens is entirely agreeable for people with a disability requiring access to the Old School buildings to park on his gravel space in front of the Manor, from which there is access without any steps along the public footpath to the Old School.
- 5) As it is likely that first-time visitors to the village wanting to get to the church or the Old School are likely to arrive in the first instance at the Church Lane entrance, the PCC is wholly in favour, once disability access arrangements are in place, of having those arrangements clearly set out on the Noticeboard at that entrance.

I do not of course know what position the Parish Council will take at its next meeting, but I hope this letter will be helpful to inform the discussion which takes place. As I've already indicated, the PCC would be more than happy to engage in further discussion of the matter.

With best wishes,

David Kyle

Secretary, Horley Parochial Church Council