



WATERPERRY with THOMLEY PARISH COUNCIL

20th February 2025

Minutes of Waterperry with Thomley Parish Council meeting held in the classroom
at Waterperry Gardens on Thursday 20th February 2025 at 7:00pm

Contact: Lawrence Wootten (Clerk/RFO)

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MINUTES

Present: Sue Parker (Chairman), Lawrence Wootten (Clerk/RFO), Daryl Atkinson,
Caroline Monteith, Dawn Leopard, Tim Bearder (District and County Councillor) **Actions**

- 1) Apologies received from Simon Melton who had written to the Chairman to say he was resigning from the council with immediate effect. Lawrence will inform SODC and publish the statutory Notice of Casual Vacancy on the Parish Council noticeboard and website. **LW**
- 2) There were no declarations of interest, gifts or hospitality.
- 3) No members of the public present – no items raised.

Tim Bearder, District and County Councillor for the Parish, gave a verbal report and took questions from the Council on matters of interest, including the County Council's budget for road repairs and the implications of the creation of Unitary Authorities in Oxfordshire. His written reports had been circulated to Councillors and would be published in the March edition of Holton, Waterperry & Waterstock News. **LW**

- 4) a. Minutes of the previous meeting on 9th January 2025 approved and signed by the Chairman and will be added by the clerk to the website and posted on the village noticeboard. **LW**
b. Lawrence reported that he had received confirmation of receipt of the Parish Precept Form from SODC and confirmation of renewal of the Council's insurance policy from AJ Gallagher Insurance.
- 5) a. The Finance Report and reconciled bank statements were presented, discussed, and agreed as accurate. On 31st January 2025 the balances of the Council's bank accounts were as follows:
Unity Trust Current Account - £2379.46
Unity Trust Instant Saver Account (Allocated Reserves) - £5183.95
Barclays Village News Account - £553.65 (paper statement issued 20th January 2025, not available online)
Unity/Lloyds Corporate Multipay Card – the statements for this card show all purchases made and the monthly fee, but since the balance is paid automatically by Direct Debit, there is no outstanding credit/debit to record here.

Lawrence explained that he had now obtained statements for the Unity/Lloyds Multipay Card. The card allowed the Council to purchase items which cannot be paid for by BACS transfer or cheque. He reminded Councillors that purchases made using the card are not debited immediately from the Council's Unity Trust current account, but are paid automatically by Direct Debit from the Unity Trust account on the 10th or 11th of the month following the purchase, and the total of that Direct Debit is made up of the sum of those purchases plus the £3.00 monthly fee.

Lawrence would present monthly statements and reconciliations for the card to the Council in exactly the same way as he does for the Council's bank accounts.

- b. Lawrence presented an amended Parish Council budget for 2025/2026 which included budgeted costs for printing the parish magazine, advertising income and contributions to costs from Holton Parish Council and Waterstock Parish Meeting. The Parish Council's overall budget of £7650 remained unchanged by this, but Lawrence explained that the Internal Auditor had recommended that the magazine budget was included. The amended budget was approved and will be published under the Finances (2025/2026) section of the website. **LW**

- c. The following invoices for payment were approved – Lawrence to set up the payments on the Unity Trust online account – Daryl and Sue to authorise: **LW/SP/DA**
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| OALC – Parish Council’s Annual Subscription (see item 6 n below) | £ 216.00 |
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- The following payments made since the last bank reconciliation (last meeting) were noted and approved:
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| Clerk’s salary (January 2025) | £ 103.44 |
| HMRC (PAYE) | £ 206.78 |
| Lloyds Bank (Corporate Multipay Card Monthly Fee) | £ 3.00 |
| Go Cardless (Hugo Fox website monthly subscription) | £ 11.99 |
| Currys PC World (Replacement Clerk’s Laptop – purchased using Lloyds Multipay Card) | £ 399.00 |
- d. Policy on the use of the Council’s Unity Trust/Lloyds Corporate Multipay Card adopted and will be added by the Clerk to the Parish Council’s website. **LW**
- e. Complaints Policy & Procedure adopted and will be added by the Clerk to the Parish Council’s website. **LW**
- f. Complaints & Compliments Form agreed and will be added by the Clerk to the Parish Council’s website. **LW**
- g. Reserves Policy adopted and will be added by the Clerk to the Parish Council’s website. **LW**
- h. Grant Awarding Policy adopted and will be added by the Clerk to the Parish Council’s website. **LW**
- i. Planning Pre-Application Protocol adopted and will be added by the Clerk to the website. **LW**
- j. Standing Orders (adopted in February 2024) were reviewed and agreed no amendments necessary. **LW**
- k. Financial Risk Assessment for 2024/2025 was reviewed and approved. RFO to add the document to the Parish Council’s website under Finances 2024/2025. **LW**
- l. Financial Regulations (adopted in February 2024) were reviewed and agreed no amendments necessary. **LW**
- m. It was agreed to invite our District and County Councillor, Tim Bearder to the next Annual Parish Meeting/Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2025 so he could address members of the general public on matters of interest and answer their questions. Lawrence would contact him to find his availability before a date for the meeting was agreed. **LW**
- n. It was agreed to renew the Parish Council’s membership of the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils. The subscription for 2025/2026 would be £ 216.00 (see item c above). **LW**
- o. It was agreed that the Parish Council would pay for renewal of the Clerk’s membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks in April 2025 at the cost of £80. **LW**
- p. The Clerk/RFO’s salary for the 2025/26 tax year was agreed following circulation of an explanatory document to Councillors. As of 1st April 2025 the Clerk/RFO will be allocated 3 hours per week at Scale Point 11 on the National Association of Local Councils pay scale = £14.13 x 3 x 52 = £2204.28 per annum or 12 monthly gross salary payments of £183.69.
- q. It was agreed to appoint Eugenia Skelly as the Internal Auditor for the Annual Governance and Accountability Review for the 2024/25 tax year. Eugenia is a member of the Internal Audit Forum – the professional body for Parish and Town Council independent Internal Auditors. Chairman signed Eugenia’s letter of appointment – Lawrence to return it to her via post and confirm by email. **LW**
- r. Lawrence explained that funding for the Government grant of £100 towards moving to a .gov.uk domain and associated email addresses had been used up before Christmas 2024, and was no longer available, but it was still very worthwhile for the Clerk and Councillors to have .gov.uk email addresses linked to the new www.waterperrywiththomley-pc.gov.uk domain. It was agreed that Lawrence should request 5 email accounts to be created through Hugo Fox at a cost of £11.99 per month (including VAT) to be paid by Direct Debit through the existing Hugo Fox account. **LW**
- s. It was agreed that the Council would not sign the letter from Beckley & Stowood Parish Council to the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution until the matter had been discussed with members of the general public at the Annual Parish Meeting/Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

- 6) **P25/S0402/LB** - for development work at the following location: 28 Waterperry, Waterperry OX33 1LB.
P25/S04257/LB - for development work at the following location: Waterperry House, Waterperry OX33 1JY.

It was agreed that the Council had no strong views on either of the above applications and was happy to leave the decision to SODCs's Planning Officer. Sue to respond to SODC via the Planning Portal. **SP**

- 7) a. This item is ongoing – currently no further progress to report. **SP**
- b. It was agreed to appoint Richard Taylor Landscapes again as the contractor for recreation ground and verge mowing and strimming in the burial ground – his quote for the 2025/2026 Financial Year was approved. The Recreation Ground and area around the Parish Council Notice Board would be cut fortnightly from March until November. The grass verge along Green Ground would be cut three times across the year, with its first cut in early June (and therefore observing “No Mow May”) – possibly using a flail mower (hired at additional cost to the Parish Council) if vegetation is so tall/thick that a normal mower is unable to cope. Lawrence to email Richard to confirm. **LW**
- c. The issue of protecting village verges from erosion will be discussed by Councillors with an Oxfordshire County Council Highways Officer when they meet in the village on the morning of 25th March 2025. **SP/LW**
- d. Sue reported that a new Planning Application the new noticeboard had been submitted to SODC. **SP**
- e. It was agreed to put this item “on hold” pending further discussion and community consultation – perhaps at the Annual Parish Meeting/Annual Meeting of the Parish Council. The size of the churchyard puts limits on what can be done in terms of rewilding and encouraging biodiversity. The general public expect the churchyard to be kept tidy when they visit the graves of friends and family as it an open churchyard.
- f. It was agreed that a budget of £200 would be allocated to the project to plant up the trough donated by Rectory Farm. Where purchases couldn't be made by BACS transfer, Caroline would liaise with Lawrence and the Unity/Lloyds Multipay Card would be used to allow VAT to be reclaimed. **CM/LW**
- g. It was agreed that Dawn would come up with a drawing/sketch of how the current village noticeboard might look if it were converted into a heritage trail noticeboard and put this in the parish news to make people aware of it. This would be discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting/Annual Meeting of the Parish Council before agreeing a way forward. **DL**
- h. The project was approved, with Caroline to come with some suitable wording It will be publicised in the parish news and via the website and social media. Rather than a judged competition, it was agreed that all children's entries would receive a small prize (bug hotel, bird boxes, roosting pouches) and a total budget of £150 was approved. Caroline to liaise with Lawrence to purchase the prizes to ensure VAT could be reclaimed as in item 8f above. **CM/LW**
- i. Sue reported that she had emailed Oxfordshire County Council's Tree Service on 7th January, but had not yet had a reply. She agreed to chase them up. **SP**
- 8) i. No new training courses requested
- ii. Lawrence reported that he was booked onto the OALC Playground Inspection Course on 2nd April 2025. **LW**
- 9) No correspondence to discuss.
- 10) The idea of a spring Litter Pick will be added to the agenda for the next meeting (date tbc).
- 11) The date of the next meeting was provisionally agreed as 27th March 2025, 7pm.

Meeting closed 9.20pm

Sue Parker (Chairman)

Lawrence Wootten (Clerk/RFO)