

OCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK: **MRS S BELL**
77 HIGHLANDS ROAD
HORSHAM
WEST SUSSEX
RH13 5ND

EMAIL: **clerk@ockleypc.co.uk**

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 Calvert 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 for the Parish Council to object. 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 in the planning is the access from A29 as the view is blocked by hedges from either side is relatively dangerous and limited, 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. So believes there would be lots more movement traffic wise in the close with such an already tight road due to parking on one side from residents and 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 uncontrolled developments 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.

LJC 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. AB also advised Parish Council does listen to Parishioners concerns and includes these comments when submitting responses to the planning applications but the main decision 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 unfortunately, the residents do not want the application to take place.

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 LJC to possibly attend the online session.

8. Planning matters - full list found at the end of the minutes

• Any updates on major planning applications:

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

LJC 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 field 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 responses to planning applications.

The road access out for the planning application, LJC informs that a resident wants to put a disabled bay in and no such plans have been addressed in the new housing development. LJ has looked through plans and could not find any disabled aspect. Movement out of the road is already busy. BT informs the plans have included detail about two-way traffic with parking included. AB said after looking at the plans, she believes this to be a good development for the Parish as Ockley is in need of new houses. ZB advised there are better locations best suited elsewhere than Elmers. CC said 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. LJC objected due to no local amenities. BT in favour as need village houses and is convenient as set in middle of the village and will improve the flow of traffic due to the plans they have provided. CC has not looked the planning application. AB will give CC a chance to look at the application as not fair to vote without him looking at it first. Clerk to send details over to him and then can get the deciding vote on what the Parish Council shall respond with.

• **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. She notified Highways for flooding because of the wheels/tyres that could be possibly the cause of the flooding. This item will remain on the agenda as due an update. Residents have reported that the suspicious shipping containments are possibly being lived in. More in depth investigation needs to be done.

9. Finance:

a) accounts to be paid – shown at the end of the minutes

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

b) bank details – Additional signatory to be added Zoe Biasuzzi

This is still in process – to be actioned once March minutes have been signed.

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.

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

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

13. Social matters

LJC has made an effort to visit all the local groups. The main issues she has found are parishioners asking about the school. AB advised is a long term project, a draft is needed for an article on more background information regarding the school. Agreed that communication is an issue and Ockley need to improve on this. 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. LJC 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 LJC and agreed to give a trial for a few months for pay as you go. 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 offered of possibly creating a new teenage friendly equipment such as basketball hoops, table tennis, etc. from the refurbishment in the future.

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

HC has got Highways involved. BT advised of a tree trunk on the bend where flooding was and this was hit by a vehicle but this has now been removed off the road. However, this is a persistent problem.

17. Biodiversity

Clerk to find training dates.

18. NDP

AB not much to update. JLS advises needs to resurrect the plan but is finding not much enthusiasm for this to take place. A working group is needed and maybe an article in the WOOF magazine could help string up some interest from parishioners. CC offered to look at other parishes that are similar to Ockley. Ockley needs backing from MVDC and whether to make a start on working on the basics 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

LJC was confused and wanted an update on the discussions that took place at previous meetings. The Parish wants the buildings to be used as a hub within the community before the buildings get sold or developed. The Parish needs ideas at what the buildings can be used for. LJC 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. LJC and ZB to attend this.

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

Planning applications

MO/2023/1732/PNQ

Land west of Brickyard Copse, Ockley RH5 5PE

Prior notification for the change of use of an agricultural building to 4 No. dwellings (Use Class C3)

Prior approval granted

MO/2024/0190/PLA MAJOR

Land at Elmers Field, Elmers Road, Ockley, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 5TL

Erection of 20 No. residential dwellings with associated landscaping, cycle and vehicle parking and upgraded infrastructure provision.

13-Feb-2024

MO/2024/0159/CAT

9, Old Hatch Cottage, The Green, Ockley, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 5TB

Leyland Cypress/Leylandi (T1) to reduce height by approximately 40%. Salix Caprea/Goat willow (T2) to carry out a crown reduction of approximately 75%.

12-Feb-2024

Finances

Ockley Parish Council

Accounts to be paid 4 March 2024

Already paid but not yet authorised:

Mrs S Bell £577.89

Clerk's salary and expenses

January 2024

Mrs L Fletcher £1304.20

Temporary Clerk hours

HMRC

Tax on Clerk's salary SB/LF £542.96

Yet to be paid:

Helpdesq £23.40

Cloud backup Feb, March 2024

Mrs S Bell £687.20

Clerk's salary and expenses

HMRC

Tax on Clerks' salary £124.79

Mrs L Fletcher 61 hours authorised for payment

Temporary Clerk hours

and expenses postage £17.50

Mulberry and Co £288.00

SB finance courses

AB, LJC courses

Viking Payments £172.36

Ink cartridges

Surrey Playing Fields £10.00

Annual affiliation fee

