

THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL WILL BE HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 7.30 PM IN THE LILAC ROOM, THE
VILLAGE HALL. YOU ARE HEREWITH SUMMONED TO ATTEND THE ABOVE
MEETING. THE BUSINESS WILL BE AS DETAILED BELOW

Mr Thom Rhodes, Clerk for the evening

MINUTES

130.25 Members Present: Chairman D. Duthie, Cllrs., M. Barker, J. Smith, J. George, R. Border, S. Varnom, J. Dunsdon, P. Almgill (Joined at Agenda item 9a).

131.25 Apologies: Cllrs., P. Lishman, (DPC) Adrian Walsh (WODC), *Thomas Ashby (OCC)*.

132.25 Public Participation - Standing Orders will be suspended for a period of up to 20 minutes to allow members of the public to address the Council in relation to the business on the agenda or request matters to be discussed at a subsequent meeting. Please note that this is limited to a maximum of 5 minutes per member.

133.25 To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 1 October 2025. Cllr., Varnom proposed, Cllr., Barker seconded. **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting

134.25 County/District Council Matters. No update (non-attendance).

135.25 Parish Councillors - Disclosure of interests on agenda items: Chairman Duthie; No. 9 Manor Road. (7b) and Cllr., S. Varnom – PCC (8n).

136.25 PLANNING

- a) Planning Permission No: **MW.0165/23** - Gill Mill Quarry, Standlake Road, Ducklington OX29 7PP
PROPOSAL: Details pursuant to Condition No. 13 (Ecological Report for Phase 9)
APPLICANT: Smiths & Sons (Bletchington) Limited
Town and Country Planning Act (as amended)
- see Briefing Pack
 - Council Decision No objection or comments.
- b) Application No: **25/02303/S73** - 9 Manor Road, Ducklington
PROPOSAL: Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 25/01297/HHD to allow the approved extension to be reduced in size.
APPLICANT: Mr M Clarke
s.73 Town and Country Planning Act
- see Briefing Pack
 - Council Decision: No objection or comments.
- c) Application No: **25/02184/FUL** - Oxford Witney Hotel Ducklington Lane Witney
PROPOSAL: Part internal reconfiguration of ground floor accommodation within the

existing footprint and roofline to include 14 additional guest suites (inclusive), relocated main reception and health suite. Associated accessible external access and landscaping to replace the current entryway and courtyard.

Discussion with agent was had; Client application to revert to a hotel, when current contract and incumbents leave. Invited to DPC meeting; Communication from client provided; only visual change is 3 windows from the front of the building. This change will be covered in the Ducklington newsletter on the changes, and an update on FB to share context with community.

- Council Decision to Approve on the proviso that present usage is permanently terminated. Letters of objection have been noted. Vote of 6 for the above – unanimous. A request to Cllr., Ashby to disseminate decision and context.

Hi David,

Hope you are well.

Thank you for your email. As Tommy mentioned, I work for the group which owns the Oxford Witney hotel.

I believe you already had a discussion with Tommy on this, but it is not our intention to do any works at the hotel until the current usage has terminated.

Below a short statement which should hopefully help during your meeting. Unfortunately, I would have to decline attending the meeting as I believe the topic might change to the current usage, which I'm not at liberty to discuss as this is managed by one of the large government contractor holders.

“As we are looking to the long-term future of the Oxford Witney Hotel, we have submitted a planning application to allow us to reconfigure the outdated layout of the hotel, as well as repurpose some of the underutilised internal areas in the hotel for the creation of additional bedrooms.

We have no intention to do the proposed works at the Oxford Witney Hotel until the current usage has ended, and this would also not be possible operationally.

We intend to invest a significant amount to turn the outdated Oxford Witney Hotel into an upscale hotel after the current usage has ended. This would include the works proposed in the planning application, as well as a complete refurbishment of the hotel to an upscale standard. The proposed improvements to the hotel would create additional opportunities and help enhance the immediate surroundings once completed.

Given the uncertain nature of the current usage, we would require the approval of the planning application for us to prepare for the proposed works in the future.”

Happy to have a call and discuss if that helps.

I would appreciate if you could leave my name out of the statement to avoid unwanted comments on social media.

Kind regards,



APPLICANT: Mr Mike Pille
Town and Country Planning Act
- see Briefing Pack
-

- d) Neighbourhood Plan - PL to report

137.25 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings and Standing Items:

- a) Hotel - SV to report: TVP involved around community safety. Total on site 207, 24 single females. 2 Single males. Families. 5x of 7 families. Windrush clinic struggling with volume. Children in schools.
- a. Village Hall - SV/JG to report: AGM has taken place, Committee Meeting on 24th Nov. for elections of members. Doorbell issue on agenda. Energy survey being committed to, with Door seals already fitted.
- b. CCTV Camera Log - see Briefing Pack: Nothing to report.
- c. Village Newsletter - see Briefing Pack: 14th Nov. Allotments available. Hotel update.
- d. Projects Committee - JG to report: Bartholomew Close – Natasha nearing completion of Sculpture. Sensory Garden underway; Planting (3 trees) for this month. Softer Planting in the Spring. Village Green & Fritillary Field Metal Sculptures.- Cllr., Barker & Cllr Duthie recently met with Christopher Townsend. Village Entrances - Ceramic mosaic planters are complete and mostly installed. Thanks to Sarah for her and her team's efforts. Proposed to order two benches for the Sensory garden.
- e. Nature Plan - JG to report: Wildflowers are planted. Stones have been placed in the bottom of Starnham Road to stop driving and skips being placed on the Grass. Request signage for the triangle with cost to be brought for approval circa. Proposed a budget of £25.00 to not to come out of the £200 budget for Nature. Cllr., Barker seconded, and unanimous vote 6. Thanks to be formally sent to Smiths for support (Stone's and Shingle around Village Hall).
- f. Village Events Committee - MB to report: Good apple pressing event. raised £830.15, for the village. Sold 92 of 110 calendars. £300 into profit on calendars, will come back to PC with proposal of fund distribution. Next event: Christmas fayre 30th Nov VH, Carols around tree 17th December.
- g. Wild Ducks - JG to report: Post on Facebook thanking volunteers. Okay for JG to post with what has been done as Ducklington PC. Agreed Unanimously.
- h. Training on Storing and Sharing files in Google Drive - PA to report: Date to be circulated (confirmed)
- i. Provision of Outside Electric Socket and Defibrillator at Village Hall - DD to report: Socket approved. Defib application for the free unit was unsuccessful, possibly a spare one at DFC Lobby. Suggestion to split the cost between Village Hall and Parish Council if needing to purchase a new one.
- j. EV Microhubs - JG to report: Nothing to report, movement slow. Chased up, no movement.
- k. Neighbourhood Policing - JD to report: Cllr., Dunsdon; Reported on Police Officer

visit to allotments organized by council. Reporting on loss of property, fittings off the hosepipes, pulling up leeks, strimmer cord. A Chain on the gate is the only preventative measure currently. Two PO colleagues will cover, particularly calling by on a Saturday, Very helpful PO. Other allotments in the village suggested too. Thanks to the council for the PO attending. Suggested use of Police signs, "Operations in progress" have a sign out there.

- l. Connecting the Sensory Garden to a Water Source - MB to report: Waiting for Thames Water (Clerk) to provide costings.
- m. Ducklington Cemetery - Proposed Legal Agreement - DD to report (also see Briefing Pack): Current process goes as far back to at least as far as 1960s/70s. Fees received by the Church currently. Dioceses legal agreement proposes, the Church continuing to administer Burials and Monuments, keeping the fees and do with them as they wish. Control of the cemetery passed to the incumbent. Discussions had with other Authorities/contacts/Clerks. All reported Ducklington current setup peculiar to Ducklington. Contact with bereaved families mostly between the Church and Funeral Director. Training cemetery and management already completed by Chair. Monies raised from assets can be repurposed into community/running cost. Queries on the administration; Clerk-first operations, (allotting and marking plot, Completing Interment Form, Register of Burials book and Green Form. Raising Invoice to Funeral Director) Cemetery Sub-Committee will need to be formed. The values of the council will continue to work with the pillar of the parish community church.
 - i. Proposed to accept Chair proposal of retaining rights of land and management of the grounds. Administering Land and Fees as DPC.
 - ii. Votes: 1 abstained, 5 agreed, 1 self-removal due to Conflict of Interest.
- n. Website Administrator - PA to report: Sarah to handover to Jenny.
- o. Village Christmas Tree - MB to report: Formal request cost up to £200.00 – sponsor for the tree has been confirmed too. All agreed to raise and order for Christmas tree up to the value of £200.00

138.25 New Business

- p. St George Flag on Telegraph Pole - DD to report (also see Briefing Pack): Flag on the green, telegraph pole. Motion made to contact operator of pole. Clerk to inform operators moving forward as standard process. Cllr., Barker proposed to vote; voted unanimous (7).
- q. Co-option of New Councillor John Smyth - DD to report (also see Briefing Pack): Co-opted. Chair proposed, John Dunsdon seconded, voted unanimously (7 votes).
- r. Wreath for Remembrance Day - DD to report: Confirmed as ordered. Cllr Duthie to

- lay.
- s. Clerk's Use of the Lilac Room in the Village Hall as an Office / Meeting Place - PA to report: Regular and professional communication between the VH and Clerk (DPC) required. Recommend that two organisations communicate between one another. Process and protocol to be determined between the two. Investigation details shared with personnel committee; Councillors can view on request. Clerk to continue to be promoter of the parish. Proactive approach to communication and protocol. Bookings required for use of the Lilac Room.
 - t. Lone Worker Policy re. Item 9) d) above - SV to report. As Above.
 - u. Access to Village Hall / Lilac Room when Meetings in Progress - JG to report (also see Briefing Pack). As discussed above.

139.25 Playgrounds / Litter / Open Spaces / Sports Pavilion / Sports Field / Allotments

- v. Playgrounds - Inspection Report - DD to report: No inspection report this week. December meeting report.
 - w. Litter Picker's Report - see Briefing Pack. Noted Litterpicker has been very busy.
 - x. Village Pond - Pollarding, Coppicing and Pruning Trees - see Briefing Pack: Overgrown complaint, clerk to get 3 quotes to pollard and prune.
 - y. School Car Park/DSC's Parking Spaces - Drainage Issues - DD to report: Side car parking space - waiting to hear about EV chargers. Ponding in Car Park - 1 quote, two more quotes required by Clerk. Suggested vendors: M P Whittle and TW Landscaping for quotes.
 - z. Allotments - Review of Actions Agreed at Last Meeting - DD/JD to report: Plot numbers and Allotmenters agreed.
- b) Allotments Management Module (Scribe) - PA to report: Peter to propose to have the AMM – Clerk to action for a quote for approval in December.

140.25 Finance

- a. Account Balances/Bank Reconciliation/Debts - see Briefing Pack: Peter thanked for producing reconciliation, 3rd party debt going down.
- b. Invoices due for Payment - as per Payments Schedule in Briefing Pack: Payments as list. Payments approved by all.
- c. Draft Budget - Financial Year 2026-27 - PA to report (also see Briefing Pack): Peter, Dave, Steve, met for expenditure to date and forecast EoY. Precept to be set Dec. Budget for review provided; NL spend and incoming increased. Salaries national. Aware grass cutting for re-tender. Indicative model of £45,000 vs. £42,000 last year. Playground spend anticipated. Section 106 and Grant money monitored a duty to utilise. December will have firmer figure. Thanks to PA for efforts. Vary of areas, retendering likely will increase cost.
- d. Annual Review of Internal Controls - PA to report: Clerk to report December. OALC adopted.
- e. Reserves - PA to report. As above.
- f. Management of Bank Accounts - PA to report (also see Briefing Pack): Clerk proposed delegated powers to move money between accounts. Cllr., Almgill proposed, Chair seconded: Unanimous vote of 7.

141.25 Other comments/ matters for next Agenda:

Local plan meeting tomorrow, Paul may not be able to attend. David to get in touch with Paul.

MB - Thomas Ashby priority fund, £10k. Possible replacement Speed Indicator sign.

MB - Moors; next month to write to planning officer if not heard back.

MB - A415 reduce speed to 50mph, for next months agenda.

DD - Bollard knocked down, David suggestion to replace the damaged bollard; tarmac pulled up around it (hazard). (On for next month agenda.)

142.25 Date of next meeting: Parish Council Meeting - Wednesday 3 December
2025, Lilac Room, Village Hall