

Minutes of a Meeting of East Challow Parish Council
Held on Wednesday 12th June 2024 at 19:30, East Challow Village Hall

Public Session: No Comments

Members Present:

Chair	Cllr V A Bosley (VB)
Vice Chair	Cllr F Webb (FW)
Members	Cllr T Hayes (TH)
	Cllr P Barrow (PB)
	Cllr B Miller (BM) (left at 21.00)
	Cllr I Crump (IC)
Clerk	Mrs J Smith
RFO	Mrs L Pike (left at 20.45)

Public and press: None Present

Meeting started at 19.36

27/24-25 To receive apologies for absence.

Cllr Gregson

Cllr Constance who is convalescing.

Cllr Bethia Thomas

28/24-25 Declarations of Interests

28.1/24-25 To receive declarations of interest for items on this agenda.

Cllr V Bosley on Village Hall Committee

Cllr I Crump on Village Hall Committee

Cllr P Barrow as District Councillor

29/24-25 To approve the minutes of previous council meeting.

29.1/24-25 Meeting held on 8th May 2024

It was agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Hayes seconded by Cllr Miller. The minutes were signed at the end of the meeting.

29.2/24-25 Matters arising from the minutes not elsewhere on the agenda.

07/24-25 The Clerk emailed Julie Perrin in response to the S106 funding application for artificial turf by Wantage Town Football Club, passing on the Council's resolution of no questions and no comments.

09/24-25 The Clerk sent the meeting dates to the Village Hall Booking Secretary.

13.2/24-25 Cllr Crump circulated a map of footpaths.

15.6/24-25 The Parish clock cheque has been written and will be approved on June's payments list.

15.7/24-25 The Clerk confirmed that the Council wished to renew the Insurance with Clear Councils for 1 year, the cheque was sent off by the RFO.

15.8/24-25 Challow Sports have the Grant Cheque for £2000.

17.1/24-25 discussions are taking place with Crest Nicholson about the Notice board location.

22.5/24-25 A quote has been received for work on the 5 metre strip on the recreation ground.

30/24 -25 Chairman's Announcements

An email had been received from Julie Perrin, Infrastructure Implementation Officer, after the agenda was distributed, concerning the S106 funding application from WoWH DC- Leisure team, for sports hall improvements at Wantage Leisure Centre.

Resolved: The council resolved to send the reply of no questions and no comments to Julie Perrin.
[ACTION CLERK]

The Chair reported that a fallen tree needs to be removed outside Long's Cottages and a dead tree on one of the small Village Greens on Main Street. A quote had been received from one of East Challow Parish Council's Ground Maintenance Contractors for £100 to complete both jobs.

Resolved: It was agreed that the work should take place as soon as possible for Health and Safety reasons and the expenditure of £100 was approved. If there was not enough money in the Grounds Maintenance budget for this expenditure this will come from general reserves. **[ACTION CHAIR and CLERK]**

The Chair reported that the Clerk's contracted hours were reduced to 4 hours per week, from 16th May 2024, but she was still working above and beyond this to meet the needs of the Council.

The Chair informed the Councillors that as there was much to discuss on this agenda, a motion without notice would be passed at 9.30 for 45 minutes only, it may be required to prioritise the rest of the agenda items at this point and defer some items to the July Agenda

31/24-25 Staffing Matters

31.1/24-25 To approve SLCC membership for the Clerk and RFO

Resolved: The Council approved SLCC membership for the Clerk costing £8 membership fee and £105 for a year and for the RFO £5 membership fee and £80 per year. Proposed by Cllr Miller seconded by Cllr Crump.

31.2/24-25 To receive and approve a training request.

The RFO has identified a course that she would like to undertake, SLCC | Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration (FILCA), cost and duration is £144 (inc VAT) for 12 months. The course content includes Roles and Responsibilities, Budget and Precept, Systems and Procedures, Internal Control & VAT, External Audit and Year End. Paid study time, as advised by the OALC, will be discussed at the 6 month review for the RFO.

Resolved: The Council unanimously approved the RFO's training request and the cost of the course.

The Clerk has requested to attend 2 training sessions run by the OALC; Risk assessment training on the 15th July at a cost of £20 plus VAT and Contract Management 2nd July £15 plus VAT.

Resolved: The Council unanimously approved the Clerk's training and approved the cost of the training.

31.3/24-25 To receive an update on advertising for Assistant Clerk/Job share.

It was noted that 2 applicants were interested in the position, interviews would be organised before the next meeting.

32/24-25 Finance 2023-2024

32.1/24-25 To note the reconciled bank accounts as of 31st March 2024.

Resolved: The reconciled accounts as of 31st March 2024 were noted.

Bank Reconciliation at 31/03/2024

	Cash in Hand 01/04/2023		77,462.85
	ADD		
	Receipts 01/04/2023 - 31/03/2024		78,447.95
			155,910.80
	SUBTRACT		
	Payments 01/04/2023 - 31/03/2024		47,979.94
A	Cash in Hand 31/03/2024		107,930.86
	(per Cash Book)		
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash	31/03/2024	0.00
	Barclays	31/03/2024	0.00
	Cooperative	31/03/2024	110,819.42
			110,819.42
	Less unrepresented payments		2,888.56
			107,930.86
	Plus unrepresented receipts		
B	Adjusted Bank Balance		107,930.86
	A = B Checks out OK		

32.2/24-25 To approve the annual accounts for 2023/2024, including:

Variances report, Reserves balance, Budget variations, Payments and Receipts Lists for the entire FY 2023/24

Resolved: The 4 reports were unanimously approved with the addition of adding that there was a locum Clerk/RFO in place in 2023 on the box 4 Variances report.

32.3/24-25 To receive the Internal Audit report, consider recommendations and agree actions.

Prior to the meeting this was circulated to all Councillors, the following points were noted and actions agreed.

All purchases should be arranged by and addressed to the Clerk or RFO.

The Council will aim to get expenses approved in advance. It was agreed that the RFO and Clerk will make a list of stationery needs and try and get this approved in advance. The Clerk has included an agenda item to approve expenses in advance.

Bank statements must be addressed to the RFO, the CO OP bank statement is addressed to the RFO.

Legal powers to pay will be recorded on the minutes, the Clerk will obtain advice from the OALC.

As recommended by the Internal Auditor, obtaining expert VAT advice on the new pavilion was noted by all Councillors.

A risk assessment template was received and has been used to review the current risk assessment.

The Clerk emailed the Internal Auditor to gain advice on what actions were needed for the point on the Burial Ground project, no more action is needed as the April minutes state that no more money will be spent on the project.

The RFO is working on the implementation of regular monitoring and review of budget expenditure.

The RFO is intending to learn more about EMR's to meet the requirements that EMR's are critically assessed.

SLCC benchmarking tool will be used to assess appropriate staff hours once membership is obtained.

The RFO is opening a Unity Trust Bank account, following advice from the Internal Auditor and minute reference 137.4 /23 from the July meeting minutes. Electronic banking will be implemented very soon

The RFO and Cllr Webb will ensure that the original bank statements to support the bank reconciliation will be signed on a rotation basis, by a member of the council at each meeting.

The Clerk and RFO will be gaining advice on an investment Strategy.

Resolved: The Council unanimously approved to receive the report, the actions discussed above will be implemented and monitored by the Clerk and RFO.

32.4/24-25 To agree content and approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Section 1 "Annual Governance Statement" 2023 /2024

Resolved: The Governance Statements were unanimously approved ticking yes for all items and it was duly signed.

32.5/24-25 To approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Section 2 "Accounting Statements 2023/2024"

Resolved: The Accounting Statements were unanimously approved, and it was duly signed.

32.6/24-25 To approve the dates for the public rights of inspection: 14th June 2024- 25th July 2024, being 30 working days including the first 10 days of July.

Resolved: unanimously approved, dates of 14th June -25th July, the RFO to sign and notices to be posted tomorrow 13th June 2024 on the 2 village notice boards and the website.

32.7/24-25 To approve the CIL Report

Resolved: The CIL report was unanimously approved, the RFO will send to VoWHDC. Cllr Webb requested that the RFO enquire about the length of time CIL money can be kept by the Council. **[ACTION RFO]**

32.8/24-25 To re approve the Asset Register as of 31st March 2024 and confirm the inclusions from minute reference 15.4/24-25 from the April meeting.

Resolved: The inclusions of the amendments to the Asset Register as detailed in minute reference 15.4/24-25 were confirmed. The Asset Register was unanimously approved total £130,889.07.

32.9/24-25 To agree to redact the signatures on the AGAR for the website.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed to redact the signature on the AGAR for the website.

33/24-25 Finance 2024-25

33.1/24-25 To agree the May payments paid in June 2024.

Resolved: The May payments paid in June were unanimously agreed. The large electricity bill was noted, the RFO has requested a call from SSE to discuss this and a meter reading will be submitted. This will go on July's agenda. **[ACTION RFO]**

33.2/24-25 To note the May 2024 receipts.

The May receipts were noted.

Total staff cost for May 2024: **1,244.02**

All other payments:

Voucher No.	Date	Supplier	Description	Payment Ref	Net	VAT	Total
8	02/05/2024	Castle Water	allotment water	Direct Debit	499.37	106.37	605.74
17	06/05/2024	Ionos	website	Direct Debit	15.00	3.00	18.00
18	05/05/2024	Microsoft	software licences	Direct Debit	20.60	4.12	24.72
23	12/06/2024	Clear Insurance	insurance renewal	403109	1,080.12	-	1,080.12
24	12/06/2024	Jane Smith	expenses	403110	41.98	8.40	50.38
25	12/06/2024	Laura Pike	expenses	403111	110.75	-	110.75
26	12/06/2024	East Challow P.C.C	church clock	403112	300.00	-	300.00
27	12/06/2024	Do the Numbers	internal audit	403113	400.00	-	400.00
28	12/06/2024	Jeremy Hanham	grounds maintenance	403114	1,160.00	-	1,160.00
29	12/06/2024	Wise Garden & Hedge	grounds maintenance	403115	1,420.00	-	1,420.00
30	12/06/2024	SSE	electricity bill	403116	2,298.86	459.77	2,758.63
							-
					Total		7,928.34

May receipts

Voucher No.	Date	Payer	Description	Payment Method	Total	
4	03/05/2024	HMRC	VAT refund	Online	1,890.90	
					Total	1,890.90

33.3/24-25 To note the reconciled bank account on 31st May 2024.

This was noted. The bank reconciliation and statement were signed by Cllr Miller.

Bank Reconciliation at 31/05/2024

Cash in Hand 01/04/2024		107,930.86
ADD		
Receipts 01/04/2024 - 31/05/2024		25,846.43
		133,777.29
SUBTRACT		
Payments 01/04/2024 - 31/05/2024		8,491.15
A	Cash in Hand 31/05/2024	125,286.14
	(per Cash Book)	
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements	
	Petty Cash 31/05/2024	0.00
	Cooperative 31/05/2024	127,235.16
		127,235.16
	Less unrepresented payments	1,949.02
		125,286.14
	Plus unrepresented receipts	
B	Adjusted Bank Balance	125,286.14
	A = B Checks out OK	

33.4/24-25 To ratify the opening of a Unity Trust Bank account as recommended by the internal Auditor, which was approved at the July 2023 meeting, minute reference 137.4/23.

Resolved: The opening of a Unity Trust Bank Account was unanimously ratified, the RFO has progressed this and will continue once the AGAR paperwork is complete. **[ACTION RFO]**

33.5/24-25 To receive information regarding the large water bill received.

This was briefly discussed, the RFO will be progressing this and will report back at the next meeting. **[ACTION RFO]**

33.6/24-25 To Approve expenses in advance of purchase.

Resolved: Stationery expenses requested by the Clerk were unanimously approved; X2 reams of paper @ £8.99 each, top up voucher Clerk's phone £20, x2 XL black ink cartridges £50.38, x2 colour cartridges £27.18. These will be purchased and reclaimed on July's payments list.

33.7/24-25 RFO report

This was not received as the RFO attended the meeting.

34/24-25 To receive reports from District and County Councillors

34.1/24-25 Oxfordshire County Councillor

No report was available.

34.2/24-25 Vale of the White Horse District Councillor

The report was received. DCllr Barrow highlighted that Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) is available for a number of projects including tourism. It is planned to submit a proposal to produce a leaflet/online guide/map covering the 7 villages immediately west of Wantage highlighting footpaths, byways and historical and natural assets including pubs and cafes. A map will be on one side and asset details and images on the other. This will be available for parish websites and will become a feature of East Challow Parish Council's website, distributed to museums. Libraries etc. A QR sticker will also be included on the leaflet.

It was agreed that the grant would be applied for in the name of East Challow Parish Council, it will be checked that this is lawful with the OALC.

35/24-25 Planning

35.1/24-25 To discuss the S106 application from Challow and Childrey Cricket Club for the refurbishment of the ladies toilets at the cricket pavilion

An email had been received from Julie Perrin, Infrastructure Implementation concerning the S106 funding application from Challow and Childrey Cricket Club for sports for the refurbishment of the ladies toilets in the cricket pavilion.

Resolved: This application was discussed, and the Council resolved to send the reply of East Challow Parish Council supports this application **[ACTION CLERK]**

35.2/24-25 To approve responses to requests for consultation on applications:

P24/V0274/FUL- Location: Grove Business Centre Grove Technology Park Downsview Road Wantage OX12 9FF

Description: Remediation of contaminated land and associated enabling works.(as amended by plans and information received 23 May 2024) Response date 11th June, response extension requested.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed to submit the response of no objections [**ACTION CLERK**]

P24/V1081/LDE- Location: Kirklands Mews Ickleton Road East Challow Wantage OX12 9JB

Description: An existing self-contained dwelling. **RESPONSE DATE 24TH JUNE**

Resolved: It was agreed unanimously by the Parish Council to submit a response of objection and reasons will be given. [**ACTION CLERK AND CHAIR.**]

35.3/24-25 To note planning authority decisions on application:

P24/V0832/FUL -Site Location: Mellors of Challow Ltd Faringdon Road East Challow Wantage OX12 9TE

Application proposal, including any amendments: Erection of 2.no single storey flat roof extensions to provide customer waiting area and workshop office. **GRANTED**

This was noted.

P24/V0078/A Location: Land on west verge of A417 East Challow Wantage

Description: Suffolk Sign (as amended by plans received 29th April 2024) **GRANTED**

This was noted.

36/24-25 To discuss any matters arising from The Annual Parish Meeting.**36.1/24-25 Funding request for GroW**

The Clerk had received an email requesting a grant, a representative of GroW was invited to the APM to inform the Council about their work in East Challow.

Resolved: The Council agreed that the Clerk should send the Grant Policy/Application to GroW and this would be discussed again at a meeting once the completed application is received. [**ACTION CLERK**]

36.2/24-25 Raising the profile of the Council and the Annual Parish meetings on social media

Raising the profile of the Annual Parish meeting was discussed, the RFO has offered to set up an East Challow Parish Council Facebook page, The OALC have advised that the Parish Council should; turn off commenting, only post factual items without promoting stance or views.

Resolved: It was agreed to ask the RFO to set up Facebook page, following the advice from the OALC, this would be on a trial basis. [**ACTION RFO**]

37/24-25 Update on the flood alleviation proposal adjacent to LJ & CA Cannings

There was no update available

38/24-25 Noticeboards**38.1/24-25 To receive an update on contacting Crest Nicholson about the location of the adapted notice board.**

Cllr Barrow had emailed Crest Nicholson but was still waiting for a reply, Cllr Barrow will chase this. Cllr Hayes and Cllr Bosley reported that the best location for the notice board would be the location set back from the highway, but not facing into the Crest Nicholson site. **[ACTION PB]**

39/24-25 Warm Spaces Project/Community Celebrations**39.1/24-25 To receive and update on the DBS checks required by the Risk Assessment.**

Cllr Barrow has completed his DBS application.

A motion without notice to extend the meeting until 10.15 was unanimously agreed.

40/24-25 To receive an update on a full tree inspection.

The Clerk emailed CClr Bethia Thomas to ask for support with gaining a progress update from OCC. CClr Thomas has sent an email to the Tree managers, but no reply has been received. The Clerk has emailed Andy Lederer again and asked CClr Thomas to contact the Tree Manager by phone.

41/24-25 To receive and update on the Emergency Plan

Cllr Miller is progressing this and is hoping to submit an updated version over the coming months.

42/24-25 To receive an update on registering land and updating registered owner address.**42.1/24-25 To receive an update on the registration of land owned by East Challow Parish council.**

An appointment has been made with Horsey Lightly Solicitors on the 28th June 2024 to progress the registration of the land. **[ACTION CHAIR & CLERK]**

42.2/24-25 To receive an update on updating the address of the registered owner on the Land Registry

This will be progressed at the same time as the registering of land. **[ACTION CHAIR & CLERK]**

43/24-25 Insurance 2024/2025**43.1/24-25 To confirm that the 2024/2025 insurance has been renewed.**

The insurance has been renewed and is active from the 1st of June. The Cheque was sent by the RFO as per the May minutes. The Clerk received an email on the 10/6/24 From Clear Councils reporting the cheque had not been received and asking for the original cheque to be cancelled and new one written and re sent. A new cheque has been written and will be sent by the RFO. **[ACTION RFO]**

43.2/24-25 To receive the advice on insurance from the Internal Auditor.

The Clerk asked the Internal Auditor's advice on levels of insurance and she responded advising that East Challow Parish Council should be insured for the amount of claims that you may expect.

This was noted by all Councillors.

43.3/24-25 To Note the information about the pavilion on the Statement of Fact.

The statement of fact requires that all buildings are maintained in good state of repair, this was noted by all Councillors.

43.4/24-25 To review the play equipment and ground surfaces sum insured once equipment installation is complete.

The Clerk has received an email from Clear Councils confirming that the wet pour surfaces under the equipment should be include in the equipment sum insured. The sum insured for equipment was discussed the Clerk advised that, with the installation of the new equipment East Challow Parish Council are under insured. **Resolved:** It was unanimously agreed that a review of the equipment insured figure would take place and this would be discussed at the July meeting.

43.5/24-25 To discuss and approve the changing of the current postcode of the pavilion on the insurance documents.

The Clerk received a phone call from Clear Councils requesting that the postcode for the pavilion should be the nearest location to the pavilion. The reason is that the insurance company will do an assessment on the nearest property for flooding and surface water risks. Cllr Barrow carried out a postcode check and this showed that the pavilion is covered by postcode OX12 9SB and not the current postcode OX12 9RY.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed that this will be changed when the equipment sum insured is changed. **[ACTION CLERK]**

44/24-25 Standing Agenda Items, to receive update and agree actions.**44.1/24 -25 Parish Cemeteries.**

To receive an update on the water supply for the New Cemetery and the planting of trees.

Cllr Crump reported that the Village Hall Committee would consider installing a rainwater butt to the guttering on the Village Hall when repairs to the guttering took place. This was raised at the Annual General Meeting. Cllr Bosley suggested a rainwater butt in the corner of the Cemetery, this could be kept full of water for use. The Clerk has been asked to contact the Village Hall Committee and request the Parish Council receive minutes from their meetings. **[ACTION CLERK]**

Providing water for the New Cemetery would be raised again at the July meeting.

44.2/24 -25 Traffic/Highways including:

Parking and speeding within the village/ Speed Indicator Displays (SID’).

Cllr Gregson has offered to download the data from the SID’s. Cllr Bosley reported that there was a parking problem in the Village and requested that the Clerk report this in Challow News. **[ACTION CLERK]**

44.3/24-25 Grounds Maintenance

To discuss the extra works on the Park Footpath and receive a quotation.

The Council has received a report from a Parishioner that the branches on the Park footpath were hindering walking the Park footpath safely. Wise Garden Maintenance attended and cut the specific branch back. It was decided that a quote should be obtained to carry out further works on the Park footpath to ensure safety. The Clerk received the following quotation;

To cut back any overhanging branches and shrubbery back to edge of the path or fence line, chip brash back into the wooded area

Total price £687.20

The path will need to be closed whilst work is carried out due to using chainsaws and other heavy machinery

Resolved: It was agreed that these works should take place to ensure safety, proposed by Cllr Hayes, seconded by Cllr Barrow. If there was insufficient money in the maintenance budget this will need to come from general reserves. The Clerk was asked to contact Wise Garden Maintenance requesting that this work is included in his work schedule. **[ACTION CLERK]**

44.4/24-25 Public Art

To receive an update on the Public Art project.

The planning application approval was received on 29th May and the second application for S106 monies was submitted on the same day. A decision could take up to two months. A short article updating the current situation will be submitted to Challow News. A short piece has been posted on the Parish Council website

44.5/24-25 Recreation Areas

To receive a report from the Pavilion Working Group.

No report was received as there had not been any meetings.

To receive a report from Challow Sports

A report had been received explaining that Challow sports are sorting labour to install the doors on the pavilion. Challow Sports enquired when there would be a meeting to discuss the reclaiming of the 5 metre strip on the recreation ground. Cllr Bosley and Cllr Crump will be arranging a meeting to discuss this. The Clerk enquired about the progress of Challow Sports ensuring Public Liability insurance was in place for any refurbishment works. Challow Sports have responded confirming they will be arranging Public Liability insurance and will send a copy once organised. **[ACTION CHAIR & IC]**

To receive an update on the progress of the actions required from the RoSPA report.

Wicksteed have replaced the bolt and chain on the Agility trail at no cost. They have also added some rubber screw covers to the agility trail.

To receive a report following the visual play inspection checks.

Cllr Hayes carried out a quarterly visual play area inspection check, the gap on the gate was highlighted this links to **22.5/24-25 on the May minutes** The Clerk enquired if anything would be done to rectify the gate requirement, it was unanimously agreed that this was a low risk and nothing would be done at this time.

The report also highlighted that the tennis court/ball games surface needs regular inspections to ensure cleaning is carried out when necessary. The litter warden has also carried out weekly inspections, these have been circulated to all Councillors for information.

To receive an update on the works for the replacement of the Carousel and the Slide.

All 3 pieces of equipment are now installed, the installation was completed on 5th June. A post installation inspection was carried out on 4th June by The Play Inspection Company. The newly installed equipment passed the safety checks. The contractors have left the play area and the access route in good condition and have carried out a good repair on the fence that they used to access the recreation ground. The Clerk has received a handover file. The invoice has been received and will be paid on the July payments. **[ACTION RFO]**

To receive an update on the tennis court cleaning quotations.

The Litter Warden has carried out an excellent job on removing the excessive moss that had built up on the court due to the extremely wet weather. The tennis court is now open, and the net is up. Difficulties were reported on obtaining quotations for improving the court surface, this is still being progressed. Some very useful information has been received from the OPFA.

To receive an update on the reclaim project for the 5 metre strip on the recreation ground.

The Clerk has received a quotation, this will be discussed again after meeting with Challow Sports.

45/24-25 To receive Correspondence and agree actions or approve responses.

Correspondence has been received requesting a footpath between East Challow and Mellors. A response has been sent highlighting that there is not sufficient highways land for the path and Mellors was quite a distance from East Challow.

OCC’s draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy will be going to public consultation at the end of June beginning of July. This was noted.

Correspondence has been received asking for support with a campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries used in bike and e-scooter. It was requested that the Clerk write an email on behalf of the Council supporting this campaign. **[ACTION CLERK]**

OCC have announced that there is newly formed Highways Engagement Team. This was noted.

Correspondence has been received with a link to share Oxfordshire Councils Charter, this was noted.

Dates had been received from Thames Water detailing consultation dates for the proposed South East Strategic Reservoir. This was noted.

46/24-25 Matters for future discussion.

Water supply for the New Cemetery.

Insurance review of equipment.

47/24-25 To agree a list of items to be included in the next edition of Challow News

Clerk job share details, parking problems, thank you Community Celebration, Public Art.

48/24-25 To agree date of the next meeting: 10th July 2024

There was no further business transacted, the Chairman closed the meeting at 22.15

Signed Chair.....

Date.....