

Kidlington Parish Council

Exeter Hall, Oxford Road, Kidlington OX5 1AB

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Minutes of the Meeting of Kidlington Parish Council Community Committee held at Exeter Hall at 6.30pm on Thursday 5 September 2024

Present: Cllr Lesley McLean (arrived 7.25pm), Cllr Melanie Moorhouse, Cllr Phil Wyse, Cllr Doug Williamson, Cllr Nik Soheili, Cllr Street (Chair), Cllr Naveed Barakzai Pace

In Attendance: Facilities Manager – Graham Kearney (FM)
Community Projects Office – Les Dent (CPO)

Apologies: Clerk – Rachel Faulkner, Cllr Fiona Mawson

24/CO/037 Declaration of Interest: None declared

24/CO/038 Jenny Cummings, Joint Commissioning Officer, OCC addressed the committee about the role of Local Area Co-ordinator for Kidlington, to be employed by Oxfordshire County Council, connecting and supporting residents who need help. The co-ordinator will work alongside local residents, groups, services and organisations to help signpost. An event is being held on Tuesday 10 September at the Baptist Church in Kidlington to encourage people to share ideas and help recruit to this role; it was noted this recruitment does not include support for residents in G&WE or the surrounding villages, however, the plan is to eventually roll out to other parishes. Recruitment for this role will be early November.

24/CO/039 Minutes: the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2024 were reviewed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

24/CO/040 Verbal update on Action from June Meeting:

(a) The committee discussed the ongoing issue of fly tipping at Exeter Hall. It was acknowledged that all of the measures so far put in place including reducing the number of bins, monitoring the CCTV and installing signage with QR codes highlighting locations of waste disposal centres, have not been effective. The FM liaises with CDC officers on a regular basis to clear debris as quickly as possible. The possibility of putting video evidence of fly tippers on the website was discussed.

Action: To continue to monitor with a view to possible relocation.

(b) Members were positive about the recent refurbishment of the former bar area now known as the Committee Room. FM looking at possibility of lime washing the woodwork as a trial.

(c) It was reported by Cllr Street that Cllr McLean had contacted OCC's Paul Fermer regarding budgets for maintenance of footpaths they are responsible for, and awaiting feedback. Cllr Moorhouse reported that she, Cllr McLean and Cllr Easdown Babb were now OCC Super Users and able to report issues directly.

(d) Green space info has been updated on the website with a video link from Wild Oxfordshire available to view on the KEG website, circulated to members ahead of the meeting.

(e) Cllr Soheili spoke to members about commercial sponsorship of community initiatives. He expressed frustration that there is no current dialogue between the village and the large companies located at the airport and Technology Park who may be keen to support environmental initiatives. Cllr Williamson suggested that a presentation by Wild Oxfordshire at a Kidlington Voice/Connections meeting might yield some interest. Cllrs Soheili and McLean are keen to build stronger links with the business community and will continue to investigate. Cllr Wyse suggested that smaller donations

might be available from smaller local companies. Cllr Moorhouse suggested contacting the Oxfordshire Local Economic Partnership whose role is to encourage business partnerships.

24/CO/041 Facilities Manager's Report:

- Reported that the Unicorn sculpture has been removed from Park Hill.
- Looking at installing a timber frame around the sandpit at Exeter Park to help hold the sand within the pit; costs to be advised. Need to consider replacement of the roundabout which is affected by sand getting into the works and stopping it from spinning.
- Knee rail fencing at the Blenheim Road/Bicester Road junction has been installed. The Chair thanking Cllr Soheili for his work distributing leaflets.
- Teleshore meeting confirmed double depth graves at Bicester Road cemetery. FM to refer to Oxford Direct Services for possible training of grave diggers.
- The FM suggested that it would reduce maintenance and make the area look smarter if pre-prepared areas were laid out for the burial of cremated remains at St Mary's Garden of Remembrance as they have been at Bicester Road Cemetery.
Action: The recommendation was approved by the committee.
- Information and quotes on the interpretation board for St Mary's Fields was circulated ahead of the meeting.
Action: The recommendation was approved by the committee.
- The Big Hay Rake at St Mary's Fields had a great turnout with 55 plus volunteers attending.
- OCC are due to remove a fallen Willow tree within St Mary's Fields.
- The wooden screening previously agreed will be installed at the Coronation Garden shortly.
- Allotments: Councillor tour organised for 10 September. Cllr Street suggested providing a heavy-duty trolley at Blenheim Road to help residents transport water now that hoses are no longer permitted on this site.
Action: Item for the Allotment Committee in October.
- Kidlington Table Tennis Club has requested fitting of a ventilation system at the Pavilion to be considered; with offer from them to provide some funding.
Action: To be followed up by the FM.
- Cllr Street thanked the staff team for the success of the Gala Day. Cllrs felt that it was a great opportunity for them to engage with residents. The date for next year was agreed as 19 July 2025. The members stall to be available at other events this year.
- Fireworks event confirmed to be held on Tuesday 5 November. Extra budget approved for a laser show. Contractors have offered a preview for councillors – to be arranged.

24/CO/042 Budget Considerations/Requests:

(a) Wild Oxfordshire project:

The committee discussed the option to continue to work with Wild Oxfordshire. The position has been funded by Cherwell District Council for three years and hosted by Kidlington Parish Council. The committee was presented with some options from the organisation to extend the contract which were discussed. Members agreed that the expertise offered had been very useful to help improve the Council's open spaces and public engagement. Cllr Williamson said that there were a number of ongoing projects that need completing. Cllr Wyse asked what role BBOWT take and Cllr McLean agreed that more information was required on what they could provide.

Cllr Street suggested that the committee request £10k to allow the council to contract Wild Oxfordshire for one day per week to work on nature recovery projects.

Action: Cllr McLean to speak to CDC officers to better understand what can be provided by BBOWT. The committee decided to defer the decision to the next meeting and the meantime find out from CDC what could be offered from BBOWT, to investigate with local businesses potential sponsorship of the initiative and to consider the budget implications.

(b) **Additional Seasonal Outdoor Staff:** The Facilities Manager recommended that additional staff would be required in the spring to manage the grass cutting. The committee was asked if it wanted to budget for this next year. The FM explained that KPC staff work on council owned properties ie: cemeteries, Exeter Hall, Play Areas. The contract with CDC/Continental was mainly to look after public spaces such as verges, weed spraying.

Action: For members to better understand what the CDC contract comprises, what are the statutory duties of the County Council and what is expected from KPC. To consider the budget implications at the next meeting.

24/CO/044 S137 Grant Applications:

(a) **Clean Slate 2024:** £100 grant approved.

(b) **Volunteer Driver Service:** £1,500 approved.

24/CO/046 Park Hill Working Group:

Cllr McLean reported on her meeting with the Head Teacher at North Kidlington School regarding their use of the Park Hill Recreation Ground. It was confirmed that the school use the site on a regular basis and in fact they would be appreciative if the council were able to install a running track or line mark a rounders pitch. Cllr McLean informed the committee that the proposed plans for the PR8 (Begbroke) site now include more sporting facilities that could include a Wheeled Sports Park. Cllr McLean reported that the District Council's Sports Strategy is being developed in order to better understand the community's requirements beyond sports pitches. Cllr Moorhouse asked that the group proposing a Skate Park be included in this research. It was agreed that, given that information, it would be wise to wait for 6 months before making any decision about the future of Park Hill. Cllr Wyse explained that, following conversations with Kidlington Recreational Trust it was clear that the temporary building at Park Hill was an important source of revenue for the Trust. He expressed concern that if the building becomes unusable the Trust may expect KPC to fund repairs. He said that the Clerk had told him that KPC has no responsibility for the upkeep of the buildings although he was unsure whether that is the case. Cllr McLean expressed concern that if that is not the case an ear marked reserve may be required.

Action: Cllr Wyse to consult with KRT to better understand their plans for the future of the temporary building at Park Hill and whether KPC has any liability.

To arrange a meeting of the Park Hill Working Group

To look at the leases with KRT and better understand KPC's commitments.

Cllr McLean left the meeting at 8.20pm

24/CO/045 Community Speed Watch:

Cllrs Soheili, Barakzai Pace and the Clerk had a meeting with the TVP CSW co-ordinator. The committee discussed how the Council could best support the scheme.

Action: Communication Working Group to discuss this item.

24/CO/047 Kidlington Eco Group (KEG):

The group are working towards becoming a CAG (Community Action Group).

KEG was successful in obtaining a grant for a Draught Busters scheme which would offer residents help better insulate their homes and save energy. A training session is being offered at the Baptist Church on 10 September 2024 to which all are welcome.

24/CO/048 Natural Environment Group:

The committee agreed to the plan created by Rhiannon Young (Wild Oxfordshire) for The Phelps to improve a small green space and enhance the habitat for nature.

24/CO/049 Man Shed: Cllr Wyse reported on investigations into a potential for creating a 'man shed' in the village. Cllrs Wyse and McLean will be visiting an example in Thame to better understand how it works. He explained that they work best if they are community led and sought sponsorship from local building companies. It was discussed that the Barn may be a good location. A representative from Cherwell Collective had been invited to visit the Thame Man Shed.

The committee RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders to allow the meeting to continue beyond 8.30pm

24/CO/050 KPC Events – verbal update on:

Give It A Go Fitness Day – members were updated on the plans for the fitness day and encouraged to attend on the day.

Gala Day – planned for 19 July 2025

Christmas Lights Switch On – plans are underway with schools

Remembrance Sunday – the Clerk is co-ordinating this event.

The meeting closed at: 8.35pm

Date of next meeting: 6.30pm on 7 November 2024