

Minutes of the Blackbird Leys Parish Council meeting
Held on Tuesday 5 August 2003

Present at meeting:

Parish Councillors: C Martin, B Avery, C Hatton, L Cole, S Cole, G Roper and B Lester
(Chair)

Also Present: H Shayler (Clerk) and L Booker. For part of the meeting 3 Street Wardens, Sgt. S Redding and R Parveen (Oxford Mail)

1) Apologies for Absence — were received from J Lacey and M Mumford
The clerk read a letter of resignation received from C Minto. B Avery offered to do a letter of thanks for all the effort that C Minto had put into being chair of the Parish Council during the past year.

2) Co-option to fill vacancies: L Booker was present at this meeting and it was proposed by L Cole that she should be co-opted back as a Parish Councillor, 2 by B Avery this was carried with a unanimous vote.

3) Election of Sub Committees: It was confirmed that B Lester and C Martin would continue with their bi-monthly cleansing meetings with Oxford City Council representatives. G Roper offered to assist with the portfolio including police matters and it was agreed that this portfolio should be extended to cover a liaison with the street wardens.

Personnel - it was commented that a sub committee to deal with various matters including the review of the clerk salary may be useful- L Booker offered to be involved with this committee. After a short discussion, it was agreed that any issues that need to be dealt with can be done at the open meeting, if a sub committee is required for any specific reason then that will be dealt with at the time.

Due to the resignation of C Minto two items needed to be deal with:

i) B Lester offered to deal with the publicity/media portfolio and also offered to liaise with the Leys News when necessary.

ii) Treasurer - After a short discussion, L Cole offered to take this position, B Avery proposed this, 2nd by C Martin it was agreed by all.

Area committee representative - currently this is C Hatton. A discussion was held with the idea of a different member of the parish council being present at different meetings — it was agreed that a rota of names with dates should be circulated to ensure that all knew which meetings they were to be in attendance at. The clerk was asked to invite Fergus Lapage to the next meeting to discuss this along with the concerns previously raised about the conduct at some area meetings.

4) Minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2003

Item 8e should have stated that the work on the stream was to commence in July and at the last meeting had not started. Item 8c should have stated that only one tree had been removed and on further investigation the tree had been checked for wildlife before being taken down.

The minutes were signed as a true record

6) Public Discussion: The street wardens present were introduced to the Parish Council. A discussion was held giving information relating to the position that the wardens hold on the estate and the responsibilities that they have taken on. B Lester commented that although all of the work that they carry out is more than appreciated, there was a concern over them doing 'jobs' for which there are Oxford City Council departments to deal with — the example used was the clearing of streams. It was stated that part of their job was to ensure the environment was well kept which includes the removal of rubbish.

It was stated that the 'No Drinking' signs had been removed — it was confirmed that although the signs were not in place, the law of no drinking can still be enforced.

L Booker commented that there were not many wardens available to cover a large area such as Blackbird Leys and C Martin added that maybe for them to stay in one area at certain times would allow people to go up to them and ask questions / give information. It was stated that many of the public do contact them for many reasons, and when contacted that enquiry or concern has to be dealt with. For this reason it would not be workable to be in one area for too long - the public (or jobs needing to be done) dictate where the wardens will be. The local school assemblies are attended by the wardens to bring awareness to the children, and the wardens are on the estate 8.30am – 8.30pm each day. There is also a weekly meeting with the local police to allow information to be shared. To enable the Parish Council to have a better understanding of the responsibilities that the street wardens are taking on the clerk was asked to write to John Holmes at the Local Housing office to request a copy of the directives as shown for this position. The wardens were thanked for attending the meeting and wished good luck in future works on the estate.

4) Matters Arising:

a) B Lester reported that the clean up week end had been held on 12 /14 July and a picture along with information of the event had been posted to the web page. There had been a very low attendance to this weekend but a job well done by those who did turn up.

It was stated that there appeared to be an increasing problem with people putting out rubbish long before it is due for collection. It was understood that M Hart was going to put out a leaflet to try and discourage this from happening - B Lester would find out the current position and which areas of the estate the leaflets were to be delivered to.

Some graffiti showing on a wall in Sandy Lane has still not been removed and this should have been dealt with and will be chased up with copy letters to both Glen Wooldrige at City Works and the Chief Executive if necessary. It was understood that there should have been 5 new operatives with new equipment being trained up to go around the City to remove graffiti, but at present nothing had been done.

C Martin reported that a substantial amount of rubbish has now been removed from the stream. Unfortunately, some people are putting rubbish back in at the same time it is being removed - hopefully when the stream is clearer this situation will stop.

L Cole reported that there had been a 'residence' issue that had been taken up with S Craft and it is understood that the matter was sorted amicably.

It was commented that the yellow lines had started to appear on the roads this week, and that the signs for resident parking were due to be installed during the next couple of days. It was stated that all residents parking / visitor permits can only be obtained from Carfax - a local point was being looked into but it was stated that all areas of Oxford have to obtain the permits from the same place. Concern was raised over how people will know that they need to obtain a permit and where they obtain them from. It was stated that there must be a level of publicity to ensure people are aware of the changes.

7) Police Matters

Recent success had stopped a motorcyclist from 'displaying' around the estate with the driver now in custody. Several drug-related arrests had also been made during the past month. The local police had now been issued with mobile phones and it is hoped that this will speed up the time for reporting crimes and dealing with the paperwork afterwards.

It was stated that vehicle speed was becoming a problem on the Watlington Road - it was suggested that maybe the use of one of the speed compliance devices around would be of benefit. It was suggested that maybe the use of a

'smiling/sad face' display board which also showed the speed being done would be an option to consider - G Roper offered to enquire into the cost and availability of any speed catching options.

8) Planning Matters and Decisions.

No objections were made to the following applications;

APPLICATION	PROPOSAL	ADDRESS
03/01255/FUL	Single Storey Rear Conservatory Extension	151 Balfour Road.
03/01388/FUL	Erection of first & Second floor extension above existing garage	17 Frys Hill.
03/01534/CT3	Reposition front Door	1 Furlong Close

For the following application a notice of withdrawal had been received:

APPLICATION	PROPOSAL	ADDRESS
03/00950/FUL	Demolition of existing bungalow, erection of three storey building containing 92-bed flats, 9 parking spaces, bicycle & bin store	Sandy Lane

For the following application was objected to for reasons of excessive traffic congestion:

APPLICATION	PROPOSAL	ADDRESS
03/01421 /FUL	Erection of 7 general industrial business units (Class B2) alterations to existing access and provision of 26 car parking spaces.	Railtrack land to the rear of the Bungalow, Watlington Rd.

12) Financial Matters

The following payments were proposed by C Martin 2nd by S Cole and agreed with a unanimous vote

a) Clerk Salary -£248.94 (b) AOL (B Lester) - £15.99 (c) Tel answering - £35.25. (d) Office Rent -£250.00 (e) Foyer Meeting Room - £10.00

A short discussion was held relating to the Leys Fair 2003 and the £500. that had been requested to help support the event. L Booker proposed that the event was supported and that the donation was allowed to be given, 2nd by G Roper this was carried by all. It was suggested that the Parish Council hire a bouncy castle - or similar - to help raise the profile during this event.

It was commented that during a recent Area committee, the works required to clean up and landscape the Watlington Road were discussed. (During these discussions, B Avery declared an interest in the scheme as it was where he lived and therefore took no part in the decisions being made) The Parish had previously suggested that they could consider supporting the scheme if the City Council were to go ahead with it. After a short discussion B Lester proposed that the Parish Council financially support this project, should it go ahead, to the sum of £411. this was 2nd by L Booker and carried with a majority vote.

The clerk was asked to clarify that the insurance policy currently in place would cover the new equipment purchased when in the office and out.

13) Correspondence

No issues were raised from the information circulated.

14) Any other Business

It was stated that the football post for Spindleberry park should be back in place during the next week.

11) Date and Venue of next Parish Council Meeting- The next Parish Council meeting will be on 1st September at the Leys Linx commencing at 7.30pm.
The being no there being no other business the meeting was closed at 9.25pm