

Minutes of the Blackbird Leys Parish Council meeting
Held on Tuesday 7 October 2003

Present at meeting:

Parish Councillors: C Hatton, C Roper, C Martin, L Cole, S Cole B Avery (Vice-Chair)

Also Present: H Shayler (Clerk), and for part of the meeting Mr F Lapage, 3 Street Wardens, J Hewitt and S Vanderhyde

Apologies for Absence - were received from B Lester and J Lacey

2) Co-option to fill Vacancies: No one present at this meeting

3) Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd September 2003 The minutes were signed as a true record

Matters Arising:

a) Leys Fair. The Parish Council was not represented at this year's Fair. It was commented that the Parish Council should not only support this event, but use it as a way of making local people aware of its existence. S Cole agreed to collect initial ideas for a possible stand/event at the Fair next year. The clerk was asked to put this item onto next January's agenda to allow plenty of time for discussion and decisions to be made.

b) Rental of garages on the estate. A discussion was held stating that if the rents were reduced people would use the garages. If used then there would be less vandalism and therefore the upkeep costs should go down. If the garages are not going to be kept good with maintenance then they should be removed — not left to be used as tipping areas and areas of neglect. It was also commented that if the rents were reduced sufficiently then people might take on the responsibility of maintenance themselves. B Avery proposed a letter should be sent to the City Estates asking if it is possible for rent to be reduced allowing the cost to be more affordable to most residents and suggest owners taking responsibility for maintenance, this was 2 by C Martin and carried with an unanimous vote.

As members of the public were present for public discussion, it was agreed that this item would be moved up the agenda and the Parish Council would return to matters arising later:

5) Public Discussion

a) Mr LePage was introduced to the Parish Council — a discussion was held relating to the conduct of the Local Area Committee and the way in which people were being addressed along with the appearance of people being given different lengths of time to raise issues and comments. It was stated that there had been a review of the way in which the committee ran. It is a fairly new committee and it has been learning: It was commented by the Parish Council that over time things had improved but there was still a lack of communication between the City and Parish Council which on many occasions becomes very frustrating. Mr LePage commented that it is hoped for the Area committee to be given a capital sum of money to be used for local improvements which should hopefully allow local schemes to be achieved much quicker. Any such schemes would be passed to Parish Council for comments before being implemented.

A comment was made re the length of time taken at meetings for the discussion of planning applications — could these not be given a slot at the beginning or end of a normal meeting allowing members of the public to attend Area Committee Meetings for that aspect only, another comment made was for 'speaking forms' to be introduced to the meetings. If these could be completed by people as they arrive at the meetings, then the chair, and other committee members, would have an indication of the topics to be discussed — allowing the meeting to run without any hidden 'surprises'.

Mr LePage said he would take all comments and suggestions back to the Area Committee for discussion and hopefully as time goes on a better relationship

could be achieved between the Parish and City Council. B Avery thanked Mr LePage for attending the meeting.

b) S Vanderhyde was introduced from the Blitz organisation as a representative of Mr J Ord. Mr Ord had requested if Blitz could share the Parish Council office. S Vanderhyde stated that Blitz would still have use of their normal area for general meetings and public dealings. However, the area currently used is very open to the public and they were requesting an area that could be used to store confidential papers and take confidential telephone calls allowing privacy with certain circumstances. G Roper proposed that in principal this arrangement could be put in place for a trial period of six months, the clerk added that the terms of the agreement currently held with the Parish Council and the Community Centre would need to be checked to confirm that we can sub-let the office, this was 2nd by C Martin and carried with an unanimous vote. S Vanderhyde was thanked for attending the meeting.

c) The street wardens had requested financial assistance with the implementation of a scheme allowing local youths to attend a go-cart project with Trax people. The meeting are to be held at the Barn and would be two hours over a 5 week period. During each meeting there is an hour of cart building and an hour of discussion. At the last meeting the carts should be ready to use and a test drive will be taken. The cost for each participant would be £13.90 and no more than 6 would be in attendance. It was stated that this would be available to anyone, not just those who may be causing problems on the estate. G Roper proposed that assistance should be given as this is a good incentive and if it is helping local people it should be supported, B Avery added that the participants should pay something towards the scheme so that they start to realise that you get nothing for nothing. C Hatton 2nd the stated proposals and it was agreed that a sum of money would be paid to support this scheme but a final amount would be discussed later.

Further discussions were held relating to Street Wardens work — it was asked if any further notices had been placed on vehicles informing them of the new monitoring systems. No further notices had been reported, however, a couple of notices relating to schemes allowing the clamping of vehicles had been seen. C Martin commented about the mass of children now attending Peers school and the problems that appear to be starting with children walking in groups that flow onto the road and additional vehicles in the area all causing a potential hazard. Would it be possible for the street wardens to start slightly earlier allowing them to be present in such areas at peak times. The street wardens commented that they currently start at 8.30am which means they are normally out and about for around 9am — it has been suggested that an earlier start is discussed to enable a presence during the early morning rush hours.

C Hatton raised the issue of vandalism, generally damage to local cars — mainly Saturdays and Sundays — from people who are able to escape via the alleyway along Spindleberry Park. The street wardens commented that this was not necessarily something that they could deal with, it would be a police matter. The crime prevention officer could be contacted for suggestions. B Avery offered to chase up the officer for recommendations on safety in this area.

4) Matters Arising Continued..

c) C Martin that the pipes were still in the stream causing a pile up of rubbish — the bridge had now been built. B Avery would contact the site manager to discuss when the pipes will be removed.

Some other areas were building up with rubbish. It was asked if there is a policy for prosecution relating to people dumping rubbish or fly tipping — if so, how is it implemented.

6) Police matters — There were no police present at this meeting, and no issues were raised.

7) Planning Applications

APPLICATION	PROPOSAL	ADDRESS
03/01749/ADV	Three illuminated fascia signs and neon strip	Bow Ozone Leisure Park, Grenoble Road. Oxford

Although no objections were given to this application, it was asked for information relating to light pollution. The area around the leisure complex and stadium has many items of lighting in place and it would appear that more are to follow.

APPLICATION	PROPOSAL	ADDRESS
03/01861 /CT4	Single storey extension.	9 Sorrel Road, Oxford OX4 5SG

No objection was raised to this application

8) Financial Matters

The following expenses were proposed by S Cole, 2nd by G Roper and agreed with an unanimous vote:

- a) Clerk Salary - £248.94, (b) AOL - £15.99 (c) Telephone Answering - £35.25
- d) Postage -£28.32 (e) British Telecom — office phone line -£26.07 (f) Renewal of Web Server -£111.63

This issue of clerk salary was to be deferred until next month.

9) Correspondence

f At present there is no one available to become a representative on the Governing Body of Windale Primary School

h) Community Conference. J Hewitt gave a brief description of the reasons behind the conference. Due to a change or loss of funding to some organisations, the conference is to look at ways to develop long term funding which may include employment issues. B Avery informed the Parish Council that B Lester was hoping to attend the conference and it was agreed that it would be left to the discretion of the chair for any funding to be given as assistance for the conference.

Additional items of correspondence:

Regional Minerals Strategy — Consultation Draft

Annual Progress Report 2003 — Local transport plan. The clerk was asked to apply for a hard copy of this report

Affordable housing in rural Oxfordshire — meeting 30.10.03 at Horspath Village Hall 7.30pm

Ox Rural Community Council —AGM 30.10.03 Horspath Village Hall 730pm

OALC — Meeting of larger councils — 22.10.03 5.45pm

OPFA — AGM 07.10.03 Radley Village Hall — 730pm

10) Any other Business

C Martin suggested that the Parish Council considered joining BBOWTS (Berkshire Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust) in order to gain assistance for local issues. The clerk was asked to look into options for membership or the option of help when required.

It was stated that the Housing office is looking to move premises. The local advice centre is also considering moving for larger premises. It is possible, depending on where the housing office moves to, that the advice centre may move to the portable cabins outside the front of the church.

11) Date and Venue of next Parish Council Meeting - Tuesday 4 November at The Leys Linx, Blackbird Leys Road

there being no other business the meeting closed at 9.55pm

