

**DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of Great Milton Parish Council (GMPC) held at the Pavilion on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025, at 7.30pm**

Present: B Fox (Vice Chair), Councillors M Horsley (MH) and David Harms (DH)

In attendance: Allison Leigh (Locum Clerk), Jacqueline Wren (Clerk), Georgina Heritage (District Councillor) and a member of the public.

**159/24 Apologies for Absence:**

- Apologies were received from Steve Harrod (Chair), Andrew Noble (AN)
- Sarah MacMahon (SM) was absent.

**160/24 Variation of order of business:** None

**161/24 Declarations of members' interests:** None

**162/24 Presentation by the management of Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons regarding development plans for 2025:** Representatives from Le Manoir were in attendance. They noted that since the approval of their plans in 2022 a lot has changed such as building regulations as well as industry developments/operational requirements.

Le Manoir has been working to address these and has had a pre-application consultation with South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC). Le Manoir is looking to submit a S73 application to SODC which is an application to change an existing application and a S19 application which is a variation or discharge of conditions. There have been some minor changes the most notable being:

- reorientation of the bistro building through 90 degrees without the adjacent lake
- relocation of the substation (which is to be acoustically contained and only operational during a power cut)
- the conservatory will be reduced in size and scope
- the spa building will be smaller and more like a farm building in appearance

etails will be available on the SODC website once the application has been submitted. Le Manoir is looking to submit the application in February.

If approved, Le Manoir is uncertain of when works would take place. They would like to avoid closure during works, but if this should be necessary, they will make GMPC aware. The works will be phased.

The council noted the potential impact of works and/or closure on residents and businesses, in particular with regard to Manoir staff living in the village and the associated rental income and trade for local businesses. Le Manoir acknowledged this concern and commented that once works commence, Le Manoir intends to produce a monthly update for The Bulletin about their progress.

It was noted that Le Manoir is committed to honouring its S106 agreement involving bus transport.

## **163/24 Reports**

### **South Oxfordshire District Council**

A report was received from the District Councillor. See Attachment 1.

The District Councillor reported that the County Council has sent a response to the government indicating they are keen to be in the first wave of the devolution process as this is a scheme that will be going ahead.

Thames Valley Police: The District Councillor reported she has met with Thames Valley Police. They have noted that they will not be submitting reports to parish councils, but suggested that the Council register for Thames Valley Alerts.

## **165/24 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024 were approved and signed.

## **166/24 Actions from the previous meeting:** The Council reviewed the actions from the previous meetings.

- Oxen Piece – It was noted there is still moss on the pavement.
- Some councillors need to provide a photo for the website.
- There is a meeting with the school on 21/1/25 at 3pm.

## **167/24: Council IT:** The Council resolved for the Locum, Clerk and MH to strive to resolve the issue of possible inability to access to the current Outlook account. If this cannot be resolved, the Council resolved to open a new account. The council would also like to understand the BT charges.

## **168/24 Training:** The Locum Clerk advised that the following training for Councillors and the Clerk would be very beneficial as the Clerk is new and Councillors have not been on recent training: Roles and responsibilities for all councillors and the clerk in person in Great Milton of an approximate cost of £450 + travel for 2 representatives from Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils.

The Council resolved not to proceed with this training but would like to proceed with training courses for the new clerk.

## **169/24 Planning Applications:**

There were no new planning applications.

A member of the public asked about the speed signs and the Council noted that they did not opt for a sign with imagery due to cost.

## 170/24 Finance

- A **Donation requests:** The Council resolved not to donate to Clean Slate.
- B **Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) subscription:** The Council resolved to proceed with a subscription to SLCC for the new clerk.
- C **Back pay to clerk in post from 9/9/24 – 16/9/24:** The Council resolved not to pay a week's salary for the Clerk of September 2024.
- D Payments authorised:

<u>Payee</u>	<u>Element</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Cheque number</u>	<u>Power to Spend</u>
Allison Leigh	Locum Clerk – expenses	47.10	20/1/25	2455	Local Government Act (LGA) 1972 s111
Allison Leigh	Locum Clerk – January	660.00	31/1/25	2459	LGA 1972 s 112
Staff costs	Clerk Home Allowance from 20/1/25	13.00	20/1/25	2462	LGA 1972 s 111
Great Milton Freecycle	Donation	90.00	20/1/25	2460	LGA 1972 S137
Staff Costs	Back pay to the clerk from April – August 2024	28.60	20/1/25	2461	LGA 1972 s 112
Castle Water	Water at the allotments	12.94	20/1/125	2464	Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, s26
JM Dudley	Layout and printing of The Bulletin – January edition	287.60	20/1/25	2466	LGA 1972 s 142
E Spencer	Christmas tree	200.00	20/1/25	2465	LGA 1972 s 137

Receipts – There were no receipts.

- E **Bank Reconciliation and Accounts:** The bank reconciliation and statement of accounts were agreed and signed.
- F **Online banking:** The Council resolved to change the address for the Council's Unity Trust Bank account to that of the new Clerk.

- 171/24 Security in the village:** The Neighbourhood Watch coordinator was not in attendance
- 172/24 Items for next agenda or information only:** None
- 173/24 Confidential item:** The Council resolved to exclude members of the public from agenda item 174/24 due to its confidential nature.
- 174/24 Evaluation of level of Clerk's Role:** The Council resolved to increase the level of the role of Great Milton Parish Clerk role from LC1 12 (£14.36/hour) to LC 2.26 (£18.72/hour). After the 3-month probation period, this will increase to LC2.29 (£20.02/hour). The Clerk will work 7.5hours per week.

The meeting closed at 20:30.

***The next meeting of Great Milton Parish Council will be held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February starting at 7.30pm in The Pavilion.***

***Agenda items for the February meeting are due to the Clerk by Wednesday the 5<sup>th</sup> February.***

## Attachment 1

District Councillor Report  
Haseley Brook ward  
06 January 2025

Cllr Georgina Heritage



### Meetings and Council Activity

- ❖ The Community Grants panel sat on 12<sup>th</sup> December to consider Capital Grant applications, and I'm delighted that Lewknor parish council were successful in their application to help fund solar panels for the village hall. I'm very much looking forward to seeing the project progress over the coming year.
- ❖ As mentioned in my previous report, I chaired the PCC and Chief Constable annual report in December and, following comments from parish councils, I also raised the question of regular reporting to towns and parishes. Most parish councils list a TVP report in the monthly agenda, but apparently they haven't seen one for approximately five years.

The advice given in answer to my question was that parish councils should register on "Thames Valley Alerts" for up-to-date information: [Home Page - Thames Valley Alert](#) .

However it was also accepted that a proactive approach by TVP of advising parish/town councils of this, rather than simply ceasing monthly reports, would be appreciated by towns and villages in the South & Vale districts.

- ❖ At the parish meetings I attended last month I mentioned that **SODC's 5 Year Land Supply** position has improved, however the information didn't arrive in time for my previous report. For clarity, our position is now 4.62 years... or 5.59 according to the new Joint Local Plan with Vale, which was submitted to the Secretary of State on 10<sup>th</sup> December (more details on this below). For South currently, we are being measured against a four year target as we have undertaken a local plan consultation containing housing requirement and site allocations. This could change as a result of housing targets and changes in the new NPPF and, for reference, I'm including some NPPF key points at the end of this report.
- ❖ The other huge local government matter, which is now a priority concern for councils throughout the country, has come in the form of the White Paper on **Devolution**. The following points might be helpful in summarising what we know currently:
  - District councils will be abolished and replaced by Unitary Authorities which take on the duties of both County and District.

- The Government target is for unitaries to cover a population of around 500,000. Oxfordshire has a population of 720,000 so has a decision to make. Is it too big for one or too small for two?
- These unitaries will be overseen by a Combined Authority and an elected mayor covering a population of about 1.5M.
- We are likely to align with an existing statutory authority footprint, perhaps TVP or ICB BOB (NHS).
- If we are in the first wave it will probably take around two years.
- There are advantages to going early in terms of certainty and stability for services and staff.

SODC's Leader Cllr David Rouane has written to Cllr Liz Leffman, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council, asking her to make formal contact with the Government as soon as possible to express a strong view for Oxfordshire to move forward quickly with local government reorganisation.

In his letter, sent in the days following the publication of a Government White Paper on English Devolution, Cllr David Rouane set out that it was not in the interests of South Oxfordshire to have a prolonged period of debate on the matter within the public sector.

He explained that "the Government has already decided that local government reorganisation is going to happen. Delay will only bring uncertainty for residents and local businesses who depend on our services, and for our staff who will be worried about their own futures. We owe it to everyone to move to a more stable position as soon as possible."

This letter is available on the council's [official correspondence page](#) on its website.

- ❖ On a lighter note, as part of my cabinet work, I was pleased to be involved in December's staff day for GLL/Better Leisure, the organisation that manages South & Vale's leisure facilities. While we don't have leisure centres in Haseley Brook, I know many residents use the centre in Thame and visit the Riverside open air pool and splash park in Wallingford. The day involved staff awards, and there were some incredibly worthy winners amongst this dedicated team, including a young member of staff who saved a life using CPR. For those of you who frequent the Riverside, you may recognise Harrison in the second photo below, who is known for going above and beyond in customer service. It was lovely to see him rewarded for his work ethic and attitude, and equally lovely to see that the team at our most local leisure centre in Thame were recognised with the South Oxfordshire Facility Award.



## New Performing Arts Grant

Community organisations working in the arts in South Oxfordshire will benefit from a new grant launching in February...

On 28th November, SODC Cabinet members approved our new Performing Arts Grant, which will open on 3 February 2025 to voluntary and community organisations in South Oxfordshire, who will be able to apply for up to £5,000 in funding for projects that improve community wellbeing across the district.

The grant scheme aims to enhance the cultural landscape of South Oxfordshire by providing a financial boost to projects that help improve the quality of life of people living in the district, through projects that have a significant impact on the community.

As Cabinet member for Communities I'm very excited about the approval of the new Performing Arts Grant and would like to encourage all eligible voluntary and community organisations to apply when applications open.

Applicants must show how their projects meet the following community values and priorities, fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable performing arts scene in South Oxfordshire:

- Increase the range of arts opportunities available to local communities.
- Support inclusive practice and celebrate diversity
- Develop local artistic talent
- Promote innovation and excellence
- Develop new audiences and participants in performing arts initiatives

Organisations eligible to apply are:

- Non-for-profit groups, arts, or community groups
- Town and parish councils
- Schools (for non-core curriculum activities)

More details about the grant along with information about the launch event and drop-in events across the district will be made available soon on the council's website [southoxon.gov.uk/grants](https://southoxon.gov.uk/grants) and organisations can contact the Community Arts team [performingartsgrants@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:performingartsgrants@southandvale.gov.uk) for support when the grant is open.

## Notice of Submission of Joint Local Plan 2041 to the Secretary of State

A plan for the future in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse took a major step forward on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024. The two district councils have been working together to produce a Joint Local Plan (JLP), which aims to help meet their local communities' need for affordable housing, jobs and infrastructure while tackling the climate emergency.

Following a series of successful public consultations, which produced strong and positive feedback, the plan has now been submitted to the Government for the examination stage.

The Planning Inspectorate will examine the JLP and assess whether it has been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements.

At the end of the public examination, the Inspector will conclude whether or not the plan is sound. In most cases the Inspector's report will recommend some changes that would allow the plan to be adopted.

If successfully adopted, the plan would replace the existing Local Plans for both councils.

In the new draft Joint Local Plan, the councils have shown that there are enough new homes in the pipeline already. This means that there is no need to build on any extra new greenfield sites over the next 15 years, beyond what has already been allocated. Only one area of expansion has been earmarked, which is on the brownfield land owned by the Ministry of Defence at Dalton Barracks near Abingdon.

Crucially, the plan also sets out new firmer environment policies so that development is net zero carbon and delivers twice the national level of biodiversity net gain to help with the recovery of nature.

## New NPPF

The updated **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** has been published following the Government's consultation. Below are some key points, and you can access the full document here: [National Planning Policy Framework](#)

### Key points:

The Government has re-committed to its promise to build **1.5 million new homes** over the course of this Parliament.

- The total annual **national housing target** has been raised from **300,000 to 370,000**.
- Housebuilding would increase by **more than 60%** under the new targets compared to recent levels of building.
- **Mandatory housing targets** will require local authorities to use the standard method as the basis for determining housing requirements in their local plans.
- A “modernised, strategic approach to Green Belt land designation and release” will require local authorities to use the local plan process to adopt a “**sequential approach**” considering brownfield, then grey belt and then higher performing land.
- “**Grey belt**” has been defined for the first time = land in the green belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143.
  - Those purposes are:
    - a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.
    - b) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.
    - d) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.
- **Green belt developments will have more affordable housing:** “a) be set at a higher level than that which would otherwise apply to land which is not within or proposed to be released from the Green Belt; and b) require at least 50% of the housing to be affordable, unless this would make the development of these sites unviable (when tested in accordance with national planning practice guidance on viability).”
- New “**golden rules**” will introduce a 15% premium on top of existing **affordable housing** requirements, up to a maximum of 50 percent. This differs from the proposed 50% requirement proposed prior to the consultation and has been justified by saying that it may make developments unviable in high-cost areas.