CULHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Clerk's Report
March 2024

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 13th March 7.30pm in the Church. Public and press attendance is welcomed.

ROSPA/PLAYGROUND – I have followed up with Sutcliffe again who have now replaced caps where required from the report. However, they are unwilling to rectify the uneven ground and require more specific details of where this is an issue. As I was not involved in the installation process, any additional help with this is welcome.

Transfer of The Green – Paul Gillitt from Wellers has now been appointed and I have forwarded the draft TP1 and correspondence received by email from John Taylor. I will follow up with Paul Gillitt as I have not heard from him during the last month.

Unity Trust Bank – completed at long last. Big sigh of relief!

Budget Variance Report – no surprises since last month. The budget for 24/25 has been adjusted to reflect these increased costs, although some additional costs may arise for ground maintenance.

Diocese of Oxford - I am awaiting the invoice for the difference in rent from Diocese of Oxford and have chased it. I have also written to advise that the PC are in agreement to paying towards the costs of the Diocese to extend the lease/renew. I will need agreement from PC to contact lawyers – Wellers to enquire costs to review the lease and agree.

The Community Orchard – The planning officer has emailed and raise concerns (see below) . I will need approval to appoint a solicitor as advised.

"the draft planning obligation as prepared by the applicant is offering the land to be used as a community orchard (to be planted by the parish) on a 25 year lease (with an option to renew for another 25 years) at a peppercorn rent but with the inclusion of a forfeiture clause allowing for the land to revert to the owner in the event that the parish do not maintain the orchard.

We do have earlier e-mail correspondence suggesting that these terms are agreed by the parish but as the obligation needs to be in place before the issue of planning permission we need to ensure that this decision has been made by the ***parish having taken legal advice as to the consequences of agreeing this as this will be the basis for the offer to the parish by the owner of the land to be used for the orchard.".***

Our Solicitors are reluctant to accept the obligation, and therefore issue planning permission until you have confirmed acceptance of the terms (with legal advice) If the terms are not acceptable to the Parish, it would not be possible to alter them once the permission is issued, except with the agreement of all parties, which would incur further fees."

I will be reviewing and updating the risk register and this will need to be approved either on the meeting held on 13th March or at the April meeting.

The interim internal audit is scheduled for 26th March via Zoom and I will be busy ensuring CPC is compliant and ensuring the relevant documents are available. The full audit will take place on 30th May 2024.

The Annual Parish Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 15th May and it is important that we can plan and arrange as soon as possible.

I have been reviewing the Scribe accounting system for APC and also for CPC – to discuss at the meeting.

I have annual leave booked as follows:

19th – 23rd April 2024

4th – 11th May 2024 (week before the Annual Parish Meeting, so need to ensure all is in place before the 4th).

Denise Corney

11th March 2024