

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Wantage Area Committee

held on Tuesday, 14 January 2020 at 6.30 pm

at Meeting Room 1, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB



Open to the Public, including the Press

Present:

Members: Councillors Hayleigh Gascoigne (Chair), Ron Batstone, Andrew Crawford, Amos Duveen, Jenny Hannaby, Sarah Medley and Patrick O'Leary

Officers: Paul Bateman, Kathy Deacon, Michael Flowers, Cheryl Reeves and Shona Ware

Number of members of the public: 5

Wa.1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Barrow, Andy Cooke and Janet Shelley.

Wa.2 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2019 and agree that the chairman signs them as such.

Wa.3 Declarations of interest

Councillor Ron Batstone declared a non-pecuniary interest for the Letcombe Brook Project as he had served as a representative. He would leave the room for the duration of the item.

Councillor Patrick O'Leary declared a non-pecuniary interest for the King Alfred District Scouts as he was serving as the president. He would leave the room for the duration of the item.

Councillor Andrew Crawford declared a non-pecuniary interest for the Letcombe Brook Project as he was a Wantage Town Councillor. He would leave the room for the duration of the item.

Councillor Jenny Hannaby declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Letcombe Brook Project as she had been a founder of the project but agreed to come to the meeting with an open mind and would remain for the discussion.

Wa.4 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None.

Wa.5 Public participation

Four speakers representing their application were present for four out of six applications. They spoke in support of their application and had the opportunity to respond to questions from the committee. The speakers were the following:

David Walsh	King Alfred District Scouts
Chris Lakeland	Blewbury Parish Council
Julia Reynolds	Letcombe Brook Project
Debbie Poole	Hanney Scout Group

Wa.6 New Homes Bonus Grants 2019/20

The grants officer provided the committee with a revised table of a list of schemes and the suggested grants awarded to each application.

The committee considered the head of corporate services' report, which set out details of six applications for New Homes Bonus grants. The committee noted that it had a budget of £43,063. The officer's report had assessed each application against the grants criteria and had scored the applications against the policy matrix.

Blewbury Village Hall

The officer introduced the application by Blewbury Village Hall which sought £20,000 towards the scheme total of £510,071, representing a 3.92% contribution towards the total cost. This fund would contribute to the refurbishment of Blewbury Village Hall. The officer explained the scoring recommendation and the subsequent suggested award. The officer clarified a question regarding the funding of the application, confirming that Blewbury Village Hall would be funding the remainder of the projects either through external funding, most of which they had secured or directly from the organisation. The officer also answered a question on how the grants worked, confirming that if the project did not go ahead by a set date then the grant money would be required to be returned.

There was one speaker present for the application. Chris Lakeland was present to answer any questions from the committee and spoke in support of the application.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended score of 9 out of 12 points.

East Hanney Parish Council

The officer introduced the application by East Hanney Parish Council which sought £1,012 towards the scheme total of £2,024 representing a 50% contribution towards the total cost. This fund would contribute to a new mobile speed indicating sign. The officer explained the scoring recommendation and the subsequent suggested award. Councillors asked what the change had been which had adjusted the score to a 9. The officer clarified an administrative error had given the wrong New Homes Bonus score, and the subsequent correction had awarded an extra point as a result.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended score of 9 out of 12 points.

King Alfred District Scouts

Patrick O'Leary declared a personal interest and withdrew from the room for the duration of the item.

The officer introduced the application by King Alfred District Scouts which sought £32,094 towards the scheme total of £64,188 representing a 50% contribution towards the total cost. This fund would contribute to the re-roofing of the district scout headquarters. The officer explained the scoring recommendation and the subsequent suggested award.

Councillors requested clarification from democratic services on whether councillors could make a statement and then leave the room before the officer introduced the application. The democratic services officer confirmed this was their advice.

There was one speaker present for the application. David Walsh spoke in support of the application and answered questions from the committee. Councillors asked the speaker whether the scout group benefited the wider surrounding parishes which the speaker confirmed was the case. The areas that would benefit included Ardington and Lockinge, East Challow, East Hendred, Grove, Sparsholt, Wantage, West Challow and West Hendred.

The officer answered a question that if the scoring was adjusted with an increased score then other applications would not be deducted points.

A motion, proposed and seconded, was passed, to increase the New Homes Bonus score by one point as a result of the new areas that would benefit from the project. This increased the score to 8 out of 12 points.

RESOLVED: To approve a score of 8 out of 12 points for the application

Letcombe Brook Project

Councillors Andrew Crawford and Ron Batstone declared personal interests and withdrew from the room for the duration of the item.

The officer introduced the application by Letcombe Brook Project which sought £1,590 towards the scheme total of £3,180 representing a 50% contribution towards the total cost. This fund would contribute to new equipment for volunteers of the Letcombe Brook project. The officer explained the scoring recommendation and the subsequent suggested award.

There was one speaker present for the application. Julia Reynolds spoke in support of the application and answered questions from the committee. She explained the wider benefit confirming there was more than one interest group that would benefit from the project. She also confirmed that other areas would benefit. These areas were named as East Hanney, Grove, Letcombe Basset, Letcombe Regis, and Wantage.

A motion, proposed and seconded, was passed, to increase the New Homes Bonus score by one point giving a new total of two out of three points. This increased the score to 8 out of 12 points.

Councillors also discussed the wider community benefit score and how the project would benefit the local communities in the surrounding areas. The speaker confirmed there was multiple interest groups in the scope of the project.

A motion, proposed and seconded, was passed, to increase the community benefit score by one point to a new total of two out of three points. This increased the score to 9 out of 12 points.

RESOLVED: To approve a score of 9 out of 12 points for the application.

West Hendred Parish Council

The officer introduced the application by West Hendred Parish Council which sought £2,222 towards the scheme total of £4,444 representing a 50% contribution towards the total cost. This fund would contribute to the replacement of unsafe play area equipment. The officer explained the scoring recommendation and the subsequent suggested award.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended score of 7 out of 12 points.

Hanney Scout Group

The officer introduced the application by Hanney Scout Group Parish Council which sought £1,870 towards the scheme total of £3,740 representing a 50% contribution towards the total cost. This fund would contribute to the purchasing of camping equipment. The officer explained the scoring recommendation and the subsequent suggested award.

There was one speaker present for the application. Debbie Poole answered questions from the committee.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended score of 5 out of 12 points.

Having approved the scoring of each application against the grants criteria, the committee went on to consider the amounts that should be awarded to each applicant.

RESOLVED:

a.) To award New Homes Bonus Grants as follows:

Applicant	Scheme	Grant
Blewbury Parish Council	Blewbury Village Hall Refurbishment	100% of the amount requested capped to £20,000.
East Hanney Parish Council	East Hanney Community Speedwatch mobile road sign	100% of the amount requested capped to £1,012.
Letcombe Brook Project	Volunteer Equipment for Letcombe Brook Project	100% of the amount requested capped to £1,590

b.) To authorise the head of corporate services, in consultation with the committee chair, to allocate the remaining grants budget 2019/20 to the following applications in line with the points scored against the grants criteria:

Applicant	Scheme
King Alfred District Scouts	Re-roofing of district scout headquarters
West Hendred Parish Council	Replacement of unsafe play area equipment
Hanney Scout Group	Purchasing of camping equipment

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm