

Parish Meeting

By, and for the community of Clifton Hampden & Burcot

January 2nd 7.30pm - Clifton Hampden Village Hall

Present: Members of Clifton Hampden and Burcot Community and 4 Parish Councillors.

Facilitator: Kate Lowe

Scribes: Sarah Pipe, Debbie Croft & Emma Thatcher

Request to CH&B Parish Council on receipt of minutes:

The meeting was run in such a way as to allow parishioners a chance to speak and to pose questions. We were grateful to the councillors who did attend, and who provided some answers on the night. We now ask that as a council, you take the opportunity to reflect on the questions. We ask that you respond, in full, to each and every question - even those partially answered on the night. We ask that you do this in a timely manner.

Agenda

1. Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO):
 - An opportunity for those who did not get to speak at the PC meeting on the 9th December 2024 to be able to be heard and ask questions.
 2. Discuss if this Parish Council can support the community on the issues facing us, namely:
 - Being able to represent and lead the community through the complexities of the HIF1 Road (By-Pass) that has just been approved
 - Protecting our community from unwanted development considering new government pressure if we have no NDO to protect us
 - Being able to represent and lead the community through the complexities of the Culham Housing Development that was dependant on the HIF1 Road
 - Prioritising their focus for community value
 - Should the NDO fall through, can they achieve the same level of benefit for our community – funding for the school; village hall; surgery; allotments; burial ground; post office/shop – whilst balancing that with securing a charitable contractor and benevolent land-owner?
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Agenda Item 1 NDO – a chance for those who did not get to speak at the PC meeting on the 9th to be able to ask questions & share views

Agenda item was opened by the facilitator. The room was invited to speak or ask questions on any aspect of the NDO. These would be recorded into the minutes. People present were advised that if they wanted to give fact based answers that they may do so, but hypothetical answers and opinion based responses that triggered debate or argument would be stopped and the room made to move

on. The Parish Councillors were invited to respond to the questions at the meeting if they wished but were not required to do so. The PC would be requested, after the meeting, to provide a considered written response for questions raised.

A point of clarification was sent in advance of the meeting and was read out:

Clifton Hampden Surgery Patient Participation Group Report

This report has been prepared in response to an incorrect statement that was made at the last Parish Council Meeting on 9th December 2024.

A Patient Participation Group (PPG) is a group of people who are patients of the surgery and want to help it work as well as it can for patients, doctors and staff.

A recent PPG meeting, attended by a small committee, was held in the surgery on 27th November 2024. Amy Laker, the practice manager, reported that the surgery is continuing to provide a good health service, not only to the residents of Clifton Hampden and Burcot, but also to many others in the surrounding area. It is currently well staffed, both medically and administratively.

During the councillors' discussion and preparation for voting against the Neighbourhood Development Order, Christine McCulloch announced that Dr Peter Rubin, the Sole Trader of Clifton Hampden Surgery, was due to retire in 2 ½ months. This announcement was made during the last item on the agenda when no member of the public was allowed to speak.

In response to that statement, Amy Laker has confirmed to me in writing that **Dr Rubin, is DEFINITELY NOT retiring anytime soon.**

Sue Colman
PPG Secretary

Agenda item 1 Discussion followed:

- 1.1 How are the PC going to ensure the security of the surgery?
- 1.2 Will the PC put aside personal views and support the community allowing a whole parish vote on the NDO?
- 1.3. How will the PC ensure the benefits of the NDO materialize for the community if there is no NDO?
- 1.4. Why didn't the NDO go to referendum?
 - A. PC response at the meeting: Examiner suggested the plan was not clear to vote on so the PC responded and it was sent back to the examiner. He will produce a report.
- 1.5. Can you clarify what was sent to the examiner and what clarity was needed?
 - A. PC response at the meeting: The examiner didn't specify. The proposal was unclear.
- 1.6. In response to PC answer (of 1.5), and to give further clarity – In October the examiner asked the PC to either 1) endorse the NDO or 2) to explain why they couldn't endorse it and to provide a plan with a viable alternative. Can the PC explain why they didn't respond to either of the Examiner's

request? i.e. Why wasn't a viable alternative provided? And, why did the PC not endorse the NDO in order to bring it to referendum?

- A. PC response at the meeting: The steering group refused to engage
- B. Comment in response given at the meeting: We fully engaged in trying to explore alternatives but the PC gave no viable alternatives. The PC suggested fewer houses but this would bring no financial benefit to the village. There was 2 years of engagement.
- C. Comment in response given at the meeting: When the NDO was being put together with the previous PC, there were endless meetings and the plan evolved. The NDO as it stands is a compromise between various stakeholders within the village. In total there was over 5 years of listening and engaging with the community and making changes because we listened and that is how the final NDO came about – looking completely different from how it started. It has been impossible to address some of the issues the current PC have raised. For example all members are in opposition of the plan, they have highlighted the issue of greenbelt land and yet wanted more parking added.
- D. Facilitator stopped the discussion at this stage.

1.7 How do the PC intend to repay the £115,000 of grant money if this is requested? Can the PC absolutely reassure members of the parish that no one in the community will be asked to repay this. That the money will not be taken from the precept, nor the precepts be increased and if needed that the PC will repay from their own pockets?

- A. PC response at the meeting: In my experience of working with grants, no grant has ever been asked to be repaid. It would be a dereliction of our duty if we were required to repay. I have no fear we will be asked to repay.
- B. Facilitator - advises that the PC does not need to provide answers tonight if they do not wish to. They may provide more considered answers as a group after the meeting. Of course they can continue to answer if they wish.

1.8. At the last PC meeting on 9th December, the PC gave their reasons for withdrawing the NDO. When the record of the meeting was published, this discussion and these reasons were not recorded. In fact a decision to revert to the examiner was recorded, which had been made after the PC closed the meeting to any members of the public and asked residents to leave. There is no transparency on who voted for what and why votes were changed. Can we have a full account of the discussion that took place, setting out the positions of the councilors. Was it recorded and can the clerk publish the minutes?

1.9. At the PC meeting on 9 December one Parish Councillor stated themselves to be predetermined on the NDO before joining the Parish council. At the meeting on the 9th they stated that they had predetermined views. Does any other Councillor wish to declare pre-determined views?

- A. PC response at the meeting: The PC has the power to withdraw the NDO. There were objections raised after the new PC joined and we found fresh things that arose. Nothing was predetermined and there are no grounds for use of the word 'predetermined'.

- B. PC response at the meeting: The monitoring officer has reviewed the committee and has not found any cause for concern.
- C. For clarity it was your councillor who explicitly used the term 'predetermined' at the meeting in December when giving their decision to withdraw the NDO, hence why this question has been raised. Please answer the question as asked.

Post meeting note - Please could the PC consider the question as posed and provide a response? We would also like clarification as to whether the monitoring officer has reviewed the views of the councillors specifically on pecuniary interests related to the NDO, or more broadly in their views and actions as a whole - pertaining to their ability to represent the views of the community and not just represent their own self interest?

1.10. Concerns were raised about holding such a village meeting and that by having it, it was accentuating the split of views and village. The speaker expressed concern that they alone were brave enough to represent the side against the NDO. The tone and atmosphere of previous meetings was referred to as well as historic concerns about the motives of past Gibbs family members, which were not relayed as positive. It was commented that village shops come and go; surgeries come and go but once land it built on it's gone. It was felt that the amenities were less relevant to Burcot residents who had to drive to use them and were therefore mainly for use by Clifton Hampden residents.

- A. Facilitator thanked the speaker for their bravery at speaking given being the minority in the room. Confirmed again that all views were welcome and that their comments would be recorded.
- B. Response to comment: Gibbs family donated the recreation ground and the wharf to charity for the benefit of Burcot and Clifton Hampden residents. The duty of the Gibbs Estate Trustees is to find some value from the assets and the Trustees therefore suggested to the beneficiaries that they come up with a plan that embraced doing something for the Parish, which would mean personally benefiting less than they might otherwise, but would mean they, continued to add some value to the village. They continue to support the village, the school, the shop, the doctors surgery and the recreation ground for use by the whole Parish.

1.11. Given the new government endorsement for ambitious building programmes and the change in priorities for building on prime agricultural land, plus the HiF1 road having been approved, decision to build – what is the PC's plan to protect the village spaces from large scale development?

1.12. While I understand the NDO position and benefits, I don't understand the views of the new PC members. What are the views of the current councillors? What alternatives are being put forward in place of the currently proposed plans within the NDO?

- A. PC response at the meeting: It is not up to us to create another NDO. This has not been on the Agenda yet. Regarding the cemetery – the PC doesn't have to undertake a solution to create a new cemetery for instance.

1.13. The examiner asked in October for a viable alternative so why haven't the PC provided any?

1.14. The new PC is unenthusiastic on the NDO. Should they therefore not have come up with plans 18 months ago for alternatives for car parking, allotment use, burial ground etc.? Will the village hall become redundant due to the carpark being poor? If the Gibbs Estate sells the land none of these will be able to be used by the community and no alternatives have been given. Therefore, where is your strategic plan for the village?.

A. A PC response at the meeting: The Village Plan is the strategic vision.

1.15. Is it inevitable that the Gibbs will sell the land?

A. Trustee response at the meeting: In 2018 Christopher Gibbs died and the Trustees informed the beneficiaries that all remaining parts of the Gibbs Estate would be dispensed with within 10 years. The previous PC was approached to come up with a plan for dispensing the estate, by selling all parts of it, over those 10 years. This plan became the NDO. (There are still cottages owned by the estate but those living would not be included in the plan and would remain). The plan is available on the SODC and PC websites. There is a need to sell.

1.16. So does the NDO protect us from further bigger development?

A. Comment in response given at the meeting: The NDO protects our immediate surroundings on the northern side where it is community owned, which is the best way to protect the village by owning the land. Therefore the village can decide the use of this part of the land. The southern side could be developed.

1.17. Could all the responses be published in The Bridge so everyone can see them?

1.18. Would the PC be happy to answer in time for the next Bridge Magazine publication (deadline is 9th of each month, so for the February deadline ready for the March issue)?

1.19. The PC agenda and minutes are not published on their website, meeting dates aren't circulated or available online. Please aren't updated, can this be addressed so the site is up to date and the community has advance notice of meeting, receives agendas and has access to the minutes.

A. PC response at the meeting: We have a new Clerk so there is a delay.

Post meeting - please could we have a commitment that missing minutes will be published within a certain timeframe?

1.20. How do I read to find out what alternatives there are on the NDO to educate my judgement?

A. PC response at the meeting: All responses are on websites – NDO and PC websites.

B. Response to PC's reply at the meeting: There is no information about an alternative - if the the NDO doesn't go ahead, there are no other alternatives on the table at this time.

1.21. A suggestion was made for a show of hands in favour of the NDO as it would be instructive to the PC present at the meeting.

A. Facilitator gave the steer that as notice wasn't given that this would be asked, and as there is a clear majority in favour of the NDO in the room, that this would not be appropriate at this time. The vote did not go ahead as a result.

- B. Further response at the meeting: We already had a referendum on the village plan in which 83% of those who voted said yes.

1.22. Is there a deadline on when the examiner will respond?

- A. PC response at the meeting: No

1.23. Is it likely the examiner will throw the NDO out due to the PC not responding to their requests?

- A. PC response at the meeting: The examiner passes it to the planning officer. They (the examiner) can only provide a recommendation, they can't say yes or no.
- B. Comment made at the meeting in response to the PC's answer: The examiner does not have the power to pass the NDO, only to pass the NDO to the electorate for referendum. The examiner follows the basic conditions and follows guidelines set out by the national and district policies. The examiner has said some areas needed to be understood further to be able to put the NDO forward BUT as the PC does not support the NDO, the examiner cancelled the public hearing, which was scheduled to address those areas. The examiner will be unable to pass the NDO as there was no hearing and is therefore likely to 'fail' it by not putting it forward to planning because he hasn't been given the opportunity to find out all the additional information needed. The PC has been looking at this for more than 18 months during which time the scheme of ownership of the surgery has changed and the developer (Thomas Homes), now makes nothing. This has become a Social Cause Development for them (the developer) and they could walk away at any time.

1.24. The PC have said there is no commitment from the surgery and the building is developer-owned so there is no guarantee it would stay as a surgery. But this is just PC rhetoric and does not mean the developer will be able to change the use for anything other than a medical facility. Why doesn't the PC want to ensure a commitment to the surgery for the local community?

1.25. I haven't seen the minutes/notes/ communications back and forth between the PC and steering group – it would be good to see what alternatives were discussed. Can these be shared?

- A. Comment given at the meeting: There is a partial transcript from the meeting held on 2nd October where the PC put forward 7 questions and the steering group responded, which is on the website.

1.26. Is there any other correspondence or just that?

- A. Comment given at the meeting: There is information is on the SOCD and PCOn website

1.27. If there is no NDO, the Gibbs Estate still wants an exit strategy for all their assets in the village they will sell to anyone, which the PC won't be able to disallow. What is the PC's strategy to retain the land for the village as well as providing all the additional benefits?

- A. PC response given at the meeting : The PC can advise SODC against giving planning permission.
- B. Comment given at the meeting: But the PC isn't the decision-maker and this is not a long-term strategy.

Discussion Closed

The discussion had reached the maximum hour as was suggested at the start. There were no further urgent questions or opinions to be recorded from the room and everyone was happy to move on. Facilitator closed the discussion on agenda item 1.

Agenda item 2 How the Parish Council can support issues facing us and what are our priorities as a community.

Facilitator opened the discussion by framing that this agenda item was a chance for the community to guide the Parish Council on the issues most important to them. This is not meant to be accusatory. The hope is that the Parish Council sees this as an opportunity to hear directly from the community and the start of an open dialogue.

A note from a parishioner unable to attend was sent in advance of the meeting and was read out:

"I am Dalleen Last. My husband John and I have lived at Kara, Watery Lane, Clifton Hampden since 1971. I have worked for the Oxfordshire Health Authority for the whole of my career as an Occupational Therapist. I worked in different Hospitals and Oxford City Community team. I am now the Clifton Hampden Surgery PPG rep. on South Oxfordshire PPG Alliance (membership covering 21 surgeries).. At SOPA we hope 2025 will bring some positive developments in primary care in our localities as local and national plans get implemented.

From this perspective I would hope to have a Parish Council that would support the plans for a new surgery building at Clifton Hampden. The new building with ease of access together with rooms and facilities that could support the plans and developments i.e. Neighbourhood teams and self help groups etc. "

A Parish Council like this could be rightly proud to know that they have been instrumental in helping to secure the future Health and Social needs of the local community.

Dalleen Last
2/1/2025

Agenda item 2 Discussion followed:

2.1 Flooding alleviation – we need a long term strategy for all and central Clifton Hampden, beyond updating the necessary pipework, draining and drain covers. What is the PC doing to design a flood-alleviation strategy and put it in place? A plan that Involves landownership, funding, investigating bodies and local agencies etc?

2.2 As Church Warden, it is hard talking to grieving families when loved ones have died. There are only 5 plots left. Although there is room for scattering ashes, there is a desperate need for burial space. The previous PC were written to 10 years ago and asked to put a plan together for more

burial land, which they answered through the provisions laid out in the NDO. Will the PC answer what alternative provision they will provide instead?

2.3 How will the PC engage with the community to understand the priorities of the community now and going forward?

2.4 At the last PC meeting when they were asked, the PC did not know that the 20mph had been passed? Also the previous PC began the process and 3 residents on the Oxford road and Courtiers Green researched, wrote a proposal and met with Highways to push the speed reduction through. The current PC simply had to submit the application. The PC have then failed to follow up and know whether it had been passed. Why is this? And, why is this not a greater priority?

2.5 How can you communicate clearly – as in any business.

- A. PC response given at the meeting: PC newsletter comes to community
- B. Response given at the meeting: Not all residents receive the newsletter. A good format would be The Bridge or the same email that is used for social events/school/tennis/village events and have links to the minutes and agendas. Could we have just one channel – and a transparent communications plan?

2.6 As a new PC member and the lead contact regarding the recreation ground we would like to hear from residents how it is used and how for example facilities and parking can be improved. Communication is a challenge and can be improved and it would be good to hear about the PC's current communication strategy?

2.7 A comment was made about not feeling represented in Clifton Hampden as a Burcot resident but that they feel the current PC IS representing them. They referred to the action taken by the PC through refurbishing the bus shelter. They felt that there was bias in the room and didn't feel Burcot is represented enough. They noted the PC are elected to represent the best interests of the Parish, that by holding a village meeting it is an attack on the PC. They felt the previous meeting on the 9th December was very aggressive with a misogynistic tone. They stated that the meeting has no legal standing and was not advertised according to the rules.

- A. Response from facilitator: The rules for convening this meeting were followed. The PC clerk was requested to publicise the meeting as per the legal requirements within good time. As it stands the meeting has the legal standing as a formal Parish Meeting.
- B. Response from facilitator: Reiterated that this was not intended as an attack on anyone. This is a meeting of the parish where everyone is invited to speak. The suggestions within agenda item 2 are for the PC to take on board and consider as an indication of priorities from their parish. These are not meant as an attack. Apologised if you have seen it in another way.
- C. A comment made in response by a resident of Clifton Hampden: They had attended the previous meeting referred to and did not find the tone misogynistic. They spoke to very good social groups of friends across Burcot and Clifton Hampden. They took offense that the meeting so far (2nd January) had been divisive.

2.8 The surgery is a priority for so many Clifton Hampden and Burcot residents. What is the PC doing to ensure we have same services if there is no NDO

2.9 The Village shop and Post Office are vital and provide community, where people meet.

2.10 The School has children from families in both Clifton Hampden and Burcot, has many church and community events.

2.11 Tennis club, how lucky are we to have our own court

2.12 Pub!

2.13 There are half the parish live in Burcot and, need to be considered

A. A comment made in response: They are, they are part of our parish and part of our social networks. We are a single parish.

2.14 School is more than just a school, as a C of E school they use the church and invites the community in with compassion week, as well as other events throughout the year.

2.15 Clifton Hampden and Burcot Sea Scouts have over 100 children with facilities and activities for ages 6-18, providing social and life skills

2.16 A reminder of the request sent to the PC more than six months ago that they arrange for the bins on the recreation ground near the play area to be emptied? One bin is overflowing with dog excrement. A resident has been emptying this bin for four years but as they informed the PC they are no longer able to do this due to the amount and type of rubbish being put in it. Does the PC have a plan to empty it?

A. PC response given at the meeting: We will look into it tomorrow. Clerk has put in a request for one as it also needs to involve organizing and emptying it.

Discussion Closed

Facilitator suggested that on this note we close the meeting. All agreed and no further pressing issues were needed to be raised.

Meeting Closed

Thanks given by Kate for all who came. Meeting closed.