

## BLETCHINGDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Bletchingdon Village Hallon Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 7:30pm

**Present:** Cllr A.K.Saunders (Chair), Cllr C. Lane, Cllr M. Taylor, Cllr D. Ledger, Cllr R. Pirie, Cllr A. Jordan, District Cllr D. Hughes and Parishioner M. Whitehead.

001/20 **Apologies:** None.

002/20 **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Jordan expressed an interest in Planning Application number: 19/02768/F

003/20 **Public Participation:** None.

004/20 **To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019:** The Minutes were approved by all and signed by Cllr Saunders.

005/20 **Vacancy:** Cllr M. Knight resigned from her post on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019. The Clerk contacted Cherwell District Council (CDC) to inform them of this and the CDC provided the Parish Council (PC) with the appropriate Notice to display, which was placed in the Parish Noticeboard. During the set period of time the Notice must be displayed, there was no request made by any Parishioner to hold a by-election for the vacancy. CDC confirmed on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020 that the PC is free to fill the vacancy by co-option.

Parishioner M. Whitehead has expressed an interest in joining the Parish Council and was invited to observe a meeting by Cllr Saunders. M. Whitehead was asked to leave the room whilst the subject of the vacancy was discussed.

A discussion was held and all agreed it would be fair to further advertise this vacancy for any parishioners who may not have seen the Notice. An advertisement will be placed in the next Village News, which is due to go out at the beginning of February 2020, and also on the PC website. A deadline for interested parties to let the PC know will be set for the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020, two weeks prior to the next PC meeting.

M. Whitehead was invited back into the room where Cllr Saunders explained the next steps the PC will be taking.

006/20 **Traffic Calming:** Cllr Jordan has arranged quotes for the 'Speed Survey' and 'Footfall Survey' on Station Road, by the crossing. The current quote is for £320 + VAT from 7am-7pm on a Wednesday, before the end of January 2020. Cllr Saunders asked if the time period should be extended to co-inside with the Co-op opening hours which is 7am-10pm. Cllr Jordan confirmed he will go back to them to ask this question. All approved the cost of these surveys which are similar to the cost of previous surveys. All Cllrs reported they are receiving numerous complaints from Parishioners using the crossing and the near misses they are experiencing due to cars not stopping at the crossing. The drivers when questioned explained that they just didn't see the crossing or know it was there. Cllr Pirie suggested we should use the next Village News to ask our Parishioners to put their complaints in writing so a record of incidents is created.

Cllr Saunders also added that we could let them know we are aware of the problem and what we are doing about it.

All agreed, once we have the survey data, we should use all the evidence we have to ensure this problem is addressed urgently.

- 007/20 **Pot Holes:** Chris Grain from Oxfordshire County Council confirmed that three severe pot holes on Islip Road have been repaired and a further 14 in the Village have been marked for repair. (8 in Valentia Close and 6 on Islip Road) However, it was reported to the Clerk that there are three very severe pot holes that need to be repaired urgently. One on St Giles, one on Tollbrook Corner and one on the Oxford Road/Hampton Gay junction. Clerk to contact Chris Grain urgently about these in particular but also in general as the smaller pot holes are increasing in size too.
- 008/20 **Enforcement Update:** Cllr Saunders confirmed he will chase this up again.
- 009/20 **Programmable Flashing Lights:** The Clerk is to chase up the installation of these new signs again as they have been in receipt of the cheques for some time now.
- 010/20 **Snow Warden Scheme:** All agreed that an advertisement should go in the next Village News to try and find some more volunteers, as only one parishioner has come forward so far.
- 011/20 **Bottle Banks:** Following a series of events since the last meeting, Bletchington Parish Council no longer has any Bottle Banks. Cllr Saunders reported that the Landlady of the Blacks Head was approached by CDC asking permission to place the Bottle Banks in their car park. CDC had told the Landlady that the PC were aware of this and had approved the move, which for the record was not the case. When the landlady was made aware that the PC had not approved the relocation of the Bottle Banks, she contacted CDC and asked them to remove the Bottle Banks from her property immediately, which was done.  
All residents received a letter about the new location of the Bottle Banks on the day of the move from the old location. But since they were removed entirely from the Village, CDC has not communicated this to our residents or explained what people need to do with their empty bottles now. It has been reported that some bags of empty bottles have been dumped in the old location of the Bottle Banks.  
All agreed we should contact CDC to find out what our residents need to do with their empty bottles from now on and also to update their website which has very out of date information. We should also let people know where they can recycle their glass in the next Village News and also ask that bags are not left in the old location.
- 012/20 **Empty Properties at The Row:** Percy Lawson replied to our letter to confirm that Mr Stern did purchase two of the properties on The Row but due to delays on his other projects, they will not be occupied for some time. No further action required.
- 013/20 **Blocked Footpath behind The Row:** The Clerk contacted Green Square to report the blocked footpath and they replied to confirm their maintenance team will investigate and come back to use. Clerk to chase a response as there has been no further correspondence from them since December 2019.
- 014/20 **Village Hall Sign on Kirtlington Road:** The direction of the Village Hall sign has been changed so that it is now correct.
- 015/20 **Draft booklet for Parishioners:** All approved the booklet created by Cllr Ledger, but agreed that this should be postponed until the vacancy has been filled so that the new Cllr details can be included.
- 016/20 **The Slipe:** Cllr Saunders raised the subject of the PC renting The Slipe. Does the PC wish to continue renting it and therefore, maintaining it?  
A general discussion was had and it was decided that before the PC can make a decision, the PC would like to meet with the current owners of The Slipe, The Bletchington Community Foundation (BCF), and ask them what their plans are for it. The Clerk is to set up a meeting between the BCF and the PC.

017/20 **Ground Maintenance Contract:** As our current contract with Green Scythe Limited has come to an end, the Clerk is to tender for 3 quotes for the coming year. This should include weeding in the curbs around the Village.

Having reviewed the previous contract, it would appear as though the PC was paying for the grounds maintenance of land around the Village Hall which is owned by the BCF. Therefore the Clerk is to back charge the BCF for any Village Hall grounds maintenance costs in 2019 that were paid for by the PC.

Cllr Jordan asked about the common area inside the School as volunteers from the Village have been helping the School with the upkeep of this area when perhaps this should be the responsibility of the BCF? All agreed this should also be discussed during the BCF/PC meeting to make sure we are sharing responsibilities correctly.

018/20 **Reports from District or County Councillors:** At 8:20pm, District Councillor David Hughes arrived. He explained that new businesses in our area are bringing a benefit to CDC, despite the disruption they initially cause. For example, there might be a new version of the New Homes bonus to come. With regards to the Climate Crisis, CDC are working on their own plans to be as environmentally friendly as possible. He asked if there is anything he can help us with. Cllr Saunders asked about S106 money and how we might be able to ask for some? District Cllr Hughes said we can contact him or Claire Taylor to find out what's available. Cllr Saunders also explained the Bottle Bank situation and District Cllr Hughes said he will look into this for us. Lastly, Cllr Saunders reported the dangers of the crossing on Station Road. District Cllr Hughes said in his view, advance warning signs should be in place at least. He recommended we contact the Senior Planning Officers and copy him in, letting them know about the issues and asking for them to be addressed urgently with a reply expected within the week.

District Cllr Hughes also shared some information about the charities he is supporting as Chair this year and extended an invitation to an event he is hosting at the Weston Manor Hotel. All agreed the Clerk should ask him for his leaflet about this so that we can put some information in our next Village News.

019/20 **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary VE Day Celebration Planning:** The 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020 is a Bank Holiday to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day. It was discussed whether or not Bletchingdon PC should host an event. It was decided that the Clerk should first contact the other organisations in the Village such as the PTA, BCF and Sports Social Club to see if they would be interested in working together to put on an event.

020/20 **Operation London Bridge:** Following the Cherwell Parish Liaison meeting in November 2019, it was discussed what actions Bletchingdon PC could take in the event of the death of a Senior Royal and what plans would need to be made prior to said event. The conclusion was that as Bletchingdon PC cannot 'toll bells' or 'lower flags to half-mast' as suggested by CDC, no further action is required at this time.

021/20 **Planning Applications.**

021a/20 **Applications Approved:**

19/02473/TCA – Ms Jemma Proctor – Little Lime Tree, 1 Weston Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DH – T1 Whiteleaf – Reduce height by up to 4.0m. H1 x Leylandii – Reduce height by up to 3.0m, trim back sides to the point to allow new growth. T2 x Firebush – Cut down and ground out stump. Approved.

19/02187/LB – Mr & Mrs Ian Jones – London House, Islip Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DP – Repair works to roof structure of existing canopy. Approved.

19/02557/LB – Mr & Mrs Ian Jones – London House, Islip Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DP – Rebuild the chimney using the existing brick with appropriate mortar and addition of chimney pots. Approved.

19/02254/F – Mr Paul Jarvis – Half Acre Cottage, Heathfield, Kidlington OX5 3DU – Removal of Condition 11 (use of dwelling) or 12/00882/F. Approved.

021b/20 **Applications Received:**

19/02707/F – Mr Paul Heron – The Old Rectory, Weston Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DH – Removal of existing modern extensions and carport and replacement with a single extension and separate studio and minor internal alterations and landscaping. No objections from planning committee or PC.

19/02806/F – Sir Basil Markesinis – Michaelmas Cottage, Islip Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DP – Change of roof covering to garage conversion from cedar shingles to natural slate (re-submission of 19/00355/F). No objection from planning committee or PC.

19/02734/F – Mr & Mrs Ian Jones – London House, Islip Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DP – Rebuild of part of collapsed boundary wall and re-mortar. Removal of flower bed next to boundary wall. No objection from planning committee or PC.

19/02768/F – Mr Dougall Lott – 4 Blenheim Terrace, Bletchingdon OX5 3DQ – Erection of new outbuilding in the garden of the property. Cllr Jordan declared an interest in this application and therefore did not comment. There were some objections raised as follows; This is overdevelopment in a conservation area. The sloping roof is too massive. There are overlooking issues into the neighbouring Malt House & Barley Cottage. Comparing the floor area to the footprint of the existing house, the new 'shed' is huge. It affects the setting of a listed building.

19/02723/F – Oxford International Exchange Limited – The Rock of Gibraltar, Station Road, Enslow, Kidlington OX5 3AY – General internal alterations to reconfigure and upgrade the existing cellar, ground, first and second floor accommodation; general external repairs, minor alterations and refurbishment; change of use of the first floor from A4 to B1 office use; removal of existing 20<sup>th</sup> Century side conservatory and the construction of the replacement function and garden rooms along with associated landscaping. No objection from planning committee or PC.

021c/20 **Applications Re-consultation/Amendments:**

18/01969/F – The Bletchingdon Park Estate C/O Perdix Partnership – Bletchingdon Park House, Springwell Hill, Bletchingdon, Kidlington OX5 3DW – Alterations to the form of the north west steps to the house, formation of underground spa and car parking facilities and a reformed swimming pool and associated enclosure adjacent to the main house.

18/01945/F – The Bletchingdon Park Estate C/O Perdix Partnership – Bletchingdon Park House, Springwell Hill, Bletchingdon, Kidlington OX5 3DW – Various works to the parkland, which include improvements to the landscaping, repair of existing structures and new interventions within the landscape. Erection of new buildings to form new Estate Yard Lodge (to provide offices within Class B1) and agricultural building.

18/01946/LB – The Bletchingdon Park Estate C/O Perdix Partnership – Bletchingdon Park House, Springwell Hill, Bletchingdon, Kidlington OX5 3DW – Repair of existing structures and new interventions within the landscape.

18/01970/LB – The Bletchingdon Park Estate C/O Perdix Partnership – Bletchingdon Park House, Springwell Hill, Bletchingdon, Kidlington OX5 3DW – Alterations to the house and grounds; Various works and general refurbishment of the interior main

house along with changes to the form of the north west steps. Formation of underground spa and car parking facilities and a reformed swimming pool and associated enclosure adjacent to the main house.

CDC did not provide the PC with a copy of the full application for each of the above due to the size. Therefore Cllr Jordan will contact Mark Webber for a debrief on the plans and report back to the PC.

#### 022/19 **Finance:**

Cllrs were asked to consider invoices for payment itemised on the payment schedule.

#### Invoices for payment January 2020

Cheque No	Payee and Reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Total Amount	VAT
Bank TF	Fiona Mason – Expenses. Mileage claim for attending SLCC meeting in November 2019.	General Admin	This Minute	£21.60	£0.00
Bank TF	Claire Fraser – Payroll for Oct-Dec 2019	General Admin	This Minute	£30.00	£0.00
Bank TF	SLCC Annual Membership Fee	General Admin	This Minute	£109.00	£0.00
Bank TF	Jake Williams – Weeds and Bus Shelter work	Grounds Maintenance	This Minute	£565.00	£0.00

The Direct Debit to BT is due to go out on or just after 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020.

All payments approved.

**Precept 2020/21:** The Clerk summarised with the Cllrs where the budget for 2019/20 was to date and what the proposed budget for 2020/21 is. Cllrs agreed the 2% increase on what was received in the previous year, which is due to the 50% reduction in the Council Tax Support Grant the PC will be receiving.

#### 023/20 **Correspondence Received:**

- a) Cllr Ledger's email with regards to traffic issues throughout Bletchington and the 'Oxfordshire Freight Strategy' report that was enclosed within. A discussion was held and it was decided that once the results of the speed survey have been received, the parishioners who have raised concerns over these issues should be invited to attend the following meeting so that we can share all the information available.
- b) Email from Charles Tyack with regards to placing a food truck in our Village. Clerk to reply to him and say regrettably this is not something we can accommodate.
- c) An email from the No Expressway Group asking for support in their campaign was shared with all.
- d) Email from Cam, Team Rubicon asking if the PC would be interested in a skate park in the Village. All agreed there is no land available for such a project. Clerk to reply.

- e) Letter from North Oxford Citizens Advice asking for a donation. All agreed they are happy to support them and a donation of £50 should be put on the next payment schedule.
- f) An email from Daniel Healy from Highways England in response to our letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019. He explained that their signs team cannot consider these due to the installation costs, especially as they may not discourage HGV drivers from using the road anyway.

024/20 **Reports from meetings:** None.

025/20 **Any Other Business:**

- a) The no parking signs are to be put up on The Green.
- b) It was reported that a complaint has been received by a parishioner about large concrete stones being placed on the pavement/verge outside a property which they feel is unsafe. The clerk is to contact CDC for guidance on this matter.

026/20 **Items for information or next Agenda only - all items for next agenda to be submitted to the Clerk by Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020.**

- Cllr Lane requested that the BCF be on the agenda next month.

027/20 **Date of Next Meeting:** to confirm the date of the next meeting as 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Meeting Ended : 10:30pm.