

## BLETCHINGDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Bletchington Village Hallon Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 7:30pm

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

028/20 **Apologies:** Cllr A.Jordan

029/20 **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Ledger declared an Interest in Planning Application number 20/00044/F/20/00045/LB.

030/20 **Public Participation:** None.

031/20 **To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020:**

The Minutes were approved by all and signed by Cllr Saunders.

032/20 **Reports from District or County Councillors:** None.

033/20 **Public Transport Representative (PTR):** Cllr Saunders reported to the Parish Council (PC) the sad news that Elinor Webber, our PTR, has passed away. All agreed her contribution and efforts should be acknowledged in the next Village News.

034/20 **Vacancy:** Cllr Saunders reported for the record that a meeting was held by the PC on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020 to meet with the four applicants who had put themselves forward for the Vacancy. Cllrs' Saunders, Lane, Taylor, Ledger and Pirie were present at that meeting. All agreed that each applicant was a strong candidate for the Vacancy and concluded that Matthew Whitehead should be offered the post. Matthew Whitehead accepted and completed the necessary paperwork. All welcomed him to his first meeting as Parish Councillor.

035/20 **Traffic Calming:** The Traffic Survey results were provided by Cllr Jordan this week. Cllr Ledger prepared a summary of these results which he shared with the Cllrs. The results show that the crossing on Station Road is not safe, as suspected, and that the existing "traffic calming" measures in that area are not working. Cllr Saunders reported that there has still been no reply to our emails on these matters. Cllr Pirie suggested a new contact to approach, Yvonne Constance. All agreed the Clerk should forward the email chain to Yvonne Constance.

In addition, all agreed the Clerk should begin enquiries into reducing the speed limit throughout the Village to 20mph and look into Vehicle Activated Speed (VAS) signs be placed throughout the Village.

036/20 **Pot Holes:** Cllr Saunders reported that the severe Pot holes have been repaired but since then, new ones have appeared in quick succession. The Clerk is to keep in contact with Chris Grain to make sure these are dealt with as soon as possible.

037/20 At 8:15pm, Cllr Taylor arrived and Cllr Pirie left the meeting.

038/20 **Enforcement Update:** Cllr Saunders reported that he chased up Heather Nesbitt (Enforcement Officer) on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020 and her reply was that she will be able to provide more information in relation to the Land at Diamond Farm following a meeting that is coming up. With regards to The Digs, she is waiting on some advice on the Enforcement notice.

Amy Sedman has replied with regards to the Hedges case, informing us that the case was closed in 2011 and again in 2016. In response to the PC objection that this case should not have been closed, she said a review is required in order for her to pursue this. Cllr Saunders is to reply to her and offer assistance with this review and meet

her on site. The Clerk is to gather all of the Enforcement paperwork the PC has, prior to this meeting.

- 039/20 **Programmable Flashing Lights:** The Clerk reported that Chris Marks has been told the new signs should be dispatched tomorrow and that Robelec is ready to install them as soon as possible. He also has someone in his team ready to programme the lights for us as soon as they are installed. The Clerk is to reply and request that the PC also have access to programming them.
- 040/20 **Snow Warden Scheme:** The Clerk reported that we now have a small group of people who have volunteered to help in the event of snow/ice. As spring is not far off, all agreed that the training should be delayed until the Autumn in preparation for next winter.
- 041/20 **Bottle Banks:** Since the Bottle Banks re-appearance on the Oxford Road, opposite the Sports and Social Club, a number of people have reported to the Cllrs their concerns with this location. Noise pollution does not appear to be an issue at the moment, but the Banks have not been emptied yet and people are leaving bags of glass bottles on the floor. There are concerns that older children who hang around this area, will use these bottles for vandalism and broken glass is a high Health and Safety risk to the younger children frequenting the nearby playground and dogs walking on the nearby footpath. There is also concern that when the Banks are emptied, will the vehicle used to collect the bottles block the road? The Clerk is to contact Ashley Neville from Cherwell District Council (CDC) to express our dissatisfaction that our original response was ignored, to ask why we were not informed prior to their appearance in this location and our request that a safer/more appropriate place be found.
- 042/20 **Blocked Footpath behind The Row:** Green Square have cleared the pathway apart from the fallen/broken wall as this is not their responsibility. It is unclear who is responsible for this wall. Cllr Lane is going to try and get sight of some deeds to see where the boundaries are.
- 043/20 **Empty Properties at The Row:** Concerns were raised again that the empty properties at The Row may remain that way for some time when they should be made available for occupancy. The Clerk is to contact Percy Lawson again to try and get a more definitive answer to their plans.
- 044/20 **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary VE Day Celebration Planning:** The Clerk has reported that both The Blacks Head and The Sports and Social Club may be hosting events that weekend. The Clerk is to contact the Sports and Social Club to see what type of event they are planning and offer financial assistance with a view to making the event available to all in the Village.
- 045/20 **Rocks on pavement/grass verge:** Chris Grain has confirmed that the land outside 4 Home Farm Cottages, Station Road, is owned by Highways and therefore the owner of the property cannot place rocks/concrete slabs on it. There are Health & Safety risks to leaving them there, which the owner will be responsible for. Chris Grain offered to write a soft letter to this effect, which the Cllrs agreed would be the best approach. The Clerk is to contact Chris Grain to request this.
- 046/20 **Grounds Maintenance Contract:** The Clerk sent out a tender to Green Scythe Limited, Jake Williams and David Woodley for the coming year. A general discussion was had and it was decided that we will continue to use Green Scythe Limited for the grass cutting and Jake Williams will be used for dealing with the weeds throughout the Village.

The PC will no longer instruct Green Scythe to cut the grass around the Village Hall as this is not PC land. The Clerk has drafted an invoice to the Bletchingdon Community Foundation (BCF) to reclaim the costs previously covered in error by the PC, which was approved.

Please see below for a summary of the quotes;

Company Name	Grass Cutting Quote	Hedge Cutting Quote	Weeding Quote
Green Scythe Limited	£239.50	£138.00	£326.50
David Woodley	£262.50	£95.00	No quote
Jake Williams	£220.00	£35.00	£220.00

047/20 **Spring Clean 2020:** The Clerk reported the dates that CDC is proposing for the Spring Clean 2020. All agreed the weekend of the 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> March 2020 is best. Posters are to be displayed as soon as possible, by the Clerk. The Clerk is to co-ordinate the weekend.

048/20 **The Slipe/BCF:** The Clerk reported that Howard Deller from the BCF has not been in touch yet with a date for a meeting between the BCF and the PC to discuss the matters raised in the previous PC meeting. Cllr Saunders will chase this. Cllr Saunders said that the BCF has not met to discuss plans for the Slipe. Cllr Lane insisted that the PC remains as leaseholder to the Slipe even though the land had changed ownership. Cllr Saunders said he had been advised this is not the case, but would seek further clarification.

The BCF specifically was also an agenda item as requested by Cllr Lane at the previous meeting, and consequently a discussion/Q&A took place where Cllr Lane explained his concerns regarding the management and function of the BCF. Cllr Saunders, who is also chair of the BCF, explained that a PC meeting is not the correct place to discuss the internal matters of a Private Limited Company. He did however acknowledge that there had been accusations and rumour regarding the management and function of the BCF and its Trustees, and he explained that the BCF had consequently subjected its finances, processes and procedures to open scrutiny by an external business accountant, by a lawyer, expert in charity law, and final conclusion by the Charity Commission. The result of these investigations, which had taken many months to conclude, was that the accusations and rumour had no foundation and that responsible, correct and proper management was being employed within the BCF. Cllr Lane asked if he could see these reports, but Cllr Saunders said this was not possible as they are confidential.

049/20 **Planning Applications.**

049a/20 **Applications Approved:**

19/02734/F & 19/02735/LB – Mr & Mrs Ian Jones – London House, Islip Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DP – Rebuild of part of a collapsed boundary wall and re-mortar. Removal of flower bed next to boundary wall. Approved.

19/02768/F – Mr Dougal Lott – 4 Blenheim Terrace, Bletchingdon OX5 3DQ – Erection of a new outbuilding in the garden of the property. Approved.

19/02776/LB & 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. Approved.

19/02707/F & 19/02709/LB – Mr P 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. Approved.

19/02723/F & 19/02724/LB – Oxford International Exchange Limited – The Rock of Gibraltar, Station Road, Enslow, Kidlington OX5 3AY – Internal alterations to reconfigure and upgrade the existing cellar, ground, first and second floor accommodation; external repairs, minor alterations and refurbishment; removal of existing 20<sup>th</sup> century side conservatory and the construction of replacement function and garden rooms along with associated landscaping works. Approved.

049b/20 **Applications Received:**

20/00105/TCA – Mr Richard Ehrman – Bletchingdon Park Stables, Church End, Bletchingdon – T1 x Field Maple – Reduce crown by up to 3.0m back to previous pruning points. T2 x Apple – Reduce crown by up to 3.0m, balance shape and clean crown to improve fruiting. T3, T4 x Yew – Reduce by up to 2.0m to allow easy access into the bin area. No objection.

20/00044/F & 20/00045/LB – Mr & Mrs S Cook – Home Farm House, Islip Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DP – Conversion of detached outbuilding into ancillary residential accommodation and internal and external alterations to the attached and detached outbuildings. No objection.

20/00164/TCA – Mr James Prior – Court Yard House, Church End, Bletchingdon OX5 3DL. G1 x 4 no.s Leylandii – Fell to ground level because of excessive shading. G2 x 17 no.s Mixed Conifers (Leylandii/Macrocarpa) – Fell to ground level because of excessive shading, overbearing dominance and close proximity to boundary wall. T1 x Tulip Tree – Crown reduction up to 3.0m. T2 x Magnolia – Reduction of lateral limbs encroaching on the neighbouring property and boundary wall. T5 x Cherry – Crown raise up to 4.0m and prune away from property by 2.0m. No objection.

20/00251/F – Euro Garages – BP Family Farm Services, Part of A34 by Weston on the Green – Erection of a building to provide a drive thru (Use Class A3), a serving window to serve the existing drive thru coffee shop, car parking and all other associated works. No objection.

050/19 **Finance:**

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

Invoices for payment 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Cheque No	Payee and Reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Total Amount	VAT
101614	Citizens Advice North Oxfordshire	Grants & Donations	023e/20	£50.00	0.00

The Direct Debit to BT is due to go out on or just after 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2020 for £37.90 including VAT. All payments approved.

**051/20 Correspondence Received:**

- a) John Howell Newsletter for January 2020 & February 2020.
- b) Gareth Miller email about the plastic footpath. Clerk to reply.
- c) Oxfordshire CC email notification about the Mineral and Waste Site Draft plans.
- d) Email from Claire & Ian about a theft in the Village.
- e) Email from Rebecca McNaught about our new Parish Transport Representative.  
All agreed the Clerk should contact her suggested person to see if he would be interested in taking on this role.
- f) Email from Rebecca McNaught about adding a new initiative to our Spring Clean event. All agreed that the Spring Clean should not have any additional tasks set as there is concern there will not be sufficient volunteers to do a good job of everything. The Clerk is to contact Jake Williams in the next couple of months and ask him to clean the signs, and to reply to Rebecca McNaught to this effect.
- g) Email from Margo requesting a Crime Prevention day/night event with Thames Valley Police giving advice, or setting up an online/facebook group for people to share their stories like this in order to warn others. All agreed we could share the various online/facebook groups that already exist in the next Village News.
- h) Email from the Digital Infrastructure team at OCC, asking us to display posters and fliers to tell our parishioners about the rollout of the 'Better Broadband for Oxfordshire' programme. All agreed the posters can be displayed by the Clerk.
- i) Email from OCC about Brexit Planning.
- j) OCC email about our Parish Emergency Plan, to be completed and returned by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. Clerk to prepare and return.
- k) An mail from Wild Oxfordshire with an invitation to attend a conference about protecting and enhancing our green spaces.
- l) Email from Philip Clarke with regards to the Great Wolf Resort. Cllr Saunders to draft a letter to share with the Councillors before sending. It was agreed that this draft could be used as a template for any parishioner who may wish to write a letter and that this could be included in the next Village News and a link on our website.
- m) Letter from Community First Oxfordshire asking if we would like to become a member? All agreed, not at this time.

**052/20 Reports from meetings:** None.

**053/20 Any Other Business:**

- a) M. Cormack has offered to repaint/treat the benches on the Village Green. All agreed this was a great idea and that the PC should reimburse him for any costs incurred. Cllr Saunders will tell him to go ahead
- b) J. Knight has offered to paint some goal posts on the Kick Wall. All agreed he can go ahead.
- c) It was agreed that the bench donated by Roger Neill could be used to act as a deterrent to drivers using the paved area outside the entrance to the Village Hall as a turning point in the road.
- d) The broken stone wall on Station Road has still not been repaired. Cllr Saunders agreed to contact Nick Mould about this.
- e) The Clerk is to contact Highways to report the large puddle that appears at the junction of Islip/Oxford Road each time it rains.
- f) In the next Village News, the Clerk is to ask if parishioners would be interested in attending a course about using the defibrillators.

- g) It has been noted that at peak times, people are blocking driveways on Station Road. All agreed a polite request asking people to park more considerately should go in the next Village News.
  - h) Clerk to ask Chris Grain about the highways signs left on the pavement, in the Village.
  - i) Clerk to email a copy of the 2020 Parish Council meeting dates to Cllr Whitehead.
- 054/20 Items for information or next Agenda only - all items for next agenda to be submitted to the Clerk by Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020.**

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**055/20 Date of Next Meeting:** to confirm the date of the next meeting as 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020  
Meeting Ended : 10pm