

BLETCHINGDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 24th June 2021 at 7:30pm

Present: Cllr C. Lane (Chairman), Cllr M. Whitehead, Cllr M. Taylor, Cllr A. Jordan, Cllr R. Pirie, Cllr D. Robins, Cllr D. Ledger, Oxfordshire County Cllr (OCC) Mr N. Simpson & Parishioner P. Simmons.

095/21 Covid-19 precautions taken: The Clerk sanitised the building, made sure it was well ventilated and that the seats were spaced 2 meters apart. An attendee register was completed by everyone who came, which will be sent to the Village Hall manager.

096/21 Apologies: None.

097/21 Declarations of Interest: None.

098/21 Public Participation: None.

099/21 To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 27th May 2021: The Minutes were approved by all and signed by Cllr C. Lane.

100/21 Clerks update on action points:

- a) The AGAR forms have all been submitted to the external auditors and the relevant notices have been published.
- b) The zoom subscription has been cancelled as we are no longer using it.
- c) The speed gun has been purchased and is now with Cllr M. Whitehead. We are still trying to source the necessary signage.
- d) I have emailed the charity to request that Cllr Taylor be added to the charity committee.
- e) I have also emailed the Village Hall Committee and Bletchingdon Community Foundation (BCF) with regards to our parish plan to see how they might like to get involved contribute/participate.
- f) Both Cllr R. Pirie and I attended the Cherwell District Council Virtual Parish Liaison meeting on the 16th June 2021. A summary of the information from that meeting is as follows;
Oxfordshire has performed really well under the difficult circumstances brought by Covid/the national emergency. In particular, they are proud of how they tackled the issues of homelessness and learnt some important lessons for the future.

There is going to be financial pressure for the next couple of years that will result in an increase of Council Tax but that will be limited to £5 per household.

Finances will also be re-prioritised. Cherwell District Council (CDC) are asking for Parish Councils to let them know of any feedback from our Parishioners.

Some information was shared with regards to the Oxford to Cambridge Arc and the point of contact is Cllr B. Wood. July – September 2021 is the engagement period when information will be shared and feedback will be requested from Parish Councils.

An update with regards to Covid-19 cases was given and as of the date of the meeting, although cases were rising, the numbers remain low. There are more cases in people aged 16+ than in the over 60's, who are mostly fully vaccinated by now. The number of cases in hospital is very low with only one person needing

mechanical medication. There have been no deaths in Oxfordshire since the beginning of May 2021 at this time. This shows that the vaccine does work and they would like Parish Councils to assist with sharing this message and encouraging those to take the vaccine if they haven't already.

CDC thanks Parish Councils for their community spirit shown through this pandemic and ask that we continue with these efforts with a view to mitigating the effects of lockdown as much as possible.

Lastly the Planning Policy was discussed and the key dates are;

OCC Plan – Gather evidence stage for 10 weeks from 30th July 2021.

CDC Plan – Options stage from 30th September 2021.

OCC Plan – Draft Plan stage from May/June 2022.

CDC Plan – Draft Plan stage from November 2022.

OCC Plan – Re-submission stage from September 2022.

CDC Plan – Re-submission stage from March 2023.

- g) We now have the '20 is plenty' signs in the office, apart from one which Cllr M. Whitehead has.
- h) I have contacted Oxfordshire County Council again to request that they clear the footpaths on Weston Road and The Causeway as Cherwell District Council say this is not their job.
- i) I have submitted the planning application for the Notice Board which has now been accepted by the Planning Department.

101/21 Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) matters/reports:

County Cllr N. Simpson reported that there is a road closure in Bletchingdon due in September 2021. The Clerk will circulate the notice to everyone. He confirmed that he met with County Cllr Y. Rees and Mrs J. Conway with regards to the '20 is Plenty' campaign. He will be working closely with Claire Taylor on this project and for now there is nothing for the Parish Council to do. He will try to arrange another visit from Thames Valley Police to issue more parking tickets to help with our issues on Station Road and suggested that we remind people where they can and can't park in our next Village News. All agreed we will do this.

102/21 OCC Correspondence:

- a) An email shared with us by County Cllr N. Simpson with regards to the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange proposal that is emerging. He explained that both CDC and OCC are just consultees in this process, which is currently in the very early stages. They will focus on ensuring that the right systems are in place to control traffic flow away from neighbouring Villages, before the HGV's hit the roads.
- b) An email from Mary Hudson from OCC about proposed changes to the Local List 2021. No further action.

103/21 Cherwell District Council (CDC) matters/reports:

- a) None.

104/21 CDC Correspondence:

- a) The Cherwell Parish Bulletin was shared with everyone prior to the meeting. No further action.

105/21 Parish matters:

- a) **Communication** – A discussion was had and all agreed that the Parish Council would like to invite Parishioner D. Montrose to be our communication consultant. The Parish Council will put together some guidelines/parameters and ask that all correspondence to be shared with the Parish Council for approval before being published. The Clerk will contact Parishioner D. Montrose.
- b) **Traffic Calming** – There has been no reply from Mike Smith, despite being chased. County Cllr N. Simpson will chase this up for us and meet with Cllr C. Lane to have a 'walk around' the Village to get a better understanding of our needs. With regards to the much needed bollards on Station Road, Cllr M. Whitehead confirmed that the developers had said they were going to install them, rather than Highways OCC. Cllr C. Lane is going to speak to Chris Thompson/the developers on another matter so he will enquire about the bollards and also the belisha beacon that has not been replaced yet which they also confirmed they would do.
- c) **Signage Around the School** – The Clerk confirmed that she has contacted the School to ask them to clarify how the Parish Council can assist with their signage. At the time of the meeting, there had been no reply.
- d) **Plastic Footpath** – Cllr C. Lane reported that he has spoken with Chris Thompson who said he would consider the possibility of putting in a permanent footpath to replace the plastic path, to the development. Nick Mould stated that the Duchy will only carry out this work if it is a condition of the planning application for the new development in that area currently being considered by CDC. Therefore the Parish Council will need to wait for the decision from CDC.
- e) **Enforcement Update** – Hedgerows at Tollbrook Corner. Cllr C. Lane reported the email reply to our request to have the hedges replaced by the landowner. Their response was "The District Council will not formally require the replacement of the hedgerow as it has to give due regard to the likelihood of appeal which can be made on any reasonable grounds. If the hedgerow removal had been concealed or unknown to the Council that might be another matter, however the Council has on record knowing of the removal in 2011 and choosing not to take action at that time. Unfortunately, this now puts the Council in an untenable position as taking action now, whether it be replanting or prosecution, could be seen as unreasonable behaviour to an inspector or magistrate." All agreed that following this response, the Parish Council should write a letter to our MP and copy in our CDC Cllrs to challenge this decision.
Land South of Diamond Farm is close to reaching its enforcement compliance.
The Digs and The Studio. The appeal is still in process and ongoing.
The cattle sheds opposite The Rock of Gibraltar. The response from CDC was "The occupants of the mobile home were already planning to vacate within the next 5 weeks, therefore this time will be given to allow them to voluntarily remove the mobile home from the land."
Dollys Barn. The response from CDC was "I have been out to measure the building which turned out to be a part-refurb, part-replacement of two existing structures which had been in situ over 10 years. The existing structures have been merged together resulting in a slightly larger structure overall. The

investigation is still ongoing, however my initial findings are that the structure is unlikely to benefit from permitted development. A retrospective planning application has not yet been invited whilst I discuss the potential acceptability with a case officer who has had previous involvement on the same site.”

- f) Replacement Dog Waste Bin on Weston Road** – The Clerk confirmed that the replacement bin has been ordered but that it has not yet arrived.
- g) Tree Survey** – The two tree survey reports and quotes were compared by everyone. All agreed to proceed with Arbor Tree Specialists and that the trees highlighted as ‘critical’ and those highlighted as ‘needing work in the next three months’, should be instructed to proceed immediately. In addition, it was agreed that the Horse Chestnut tree on The Green should be included now too. The remaining trees will be reviewed again in the autumn. The Clerk will contact the tree surgeon accordingly.
- h) Councillor Priority Funds for the Bottle Bank enclosure** – A discussion was had about the funding received and the fact that the plans have evolved since the application was submitted, as Cherwell are carrying out the enclosure themselves. The discussion went on and it was agreed to relocate these funds to purchase a storage unit to store marquees donated to the Village. The Clerk is to contact OCC to seek permission for this change of allocation to the funds and County Cllr N. Simpson confirmed he will support this request.
- i) Parish Plan** – Cllr A. Jordan updated the Parish Plan and circulated this prior to the meeting. He suggests that now we should build a list of all the ongoing/planned projects in the Village and make sure they are included in the Parish Plan. Then assign different projects to Cllrs to be responsible for seeing through. All agreed this is good way to proceed and thanked Cllr A. Jordan for his work on this.
- j) The Slipe** – Cllr C. Lane reported that he has still not been able to reach the new owners of Frognest Farm to discuss access to The Slipe, but will continue to try.
- k) Benefactor** – Cllr A. Jordan reported that our benefactor is aware that we would like to accept his offer and he will let us know his thoughts in due course.
- l) The Blacks Head pub to be put on Register of Asset of Community Value (ACV)?** – Cllr D Robins reported that he needs some information from the other Cllrs to assist with completing the forms. Cllr A. Jordan has replied with detailed answers which should help. Cllr D. Robins will now proceed.
- m) Finance** – The following payments were approved by the Parish Council.

Invoices for payment on the 30th June 2021

Method	Payee and Reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Amount	VAT	Total
Debit Card	Buy A Plan – Site and Location plans for Notice Board Planning Application	General Administration	This Minute	£19.78	£3.96	£23.74
Bank TF	IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd	General Administration	This Minute	£285.00	£57.00	£342.00
Bank TF	Oxfordshire County Council - Traffic and Pedestrians Surveys	Traffic Control	This Minute	£320.00	£64.00	£384.00

Bank TF	Clerks Salary for April, May and June £1,440 plus salary adjustment as agreed in March 2021, Minute reference 055/21/j £172.80	Clerks Salary	This Minute	£1,612.80	£0.00	£1,612.80.
Bank TF	Green Scythe Limited – Grass cutting for May 2021	Grounds Maintenance	This Minute	£434.00	£86.80	£520.80

The Direct Debit to BT is due to go out on or just after 23rd June 2021 for £42.29 including VAT.

106/21 Planning Applications-

a) Planning Applications Approved/Refused:

21/01076/TCA – Quincotts, Islip Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DP – Various Tree Works – Approved.

21/00972/F – Heathfield House Nursing Home, Heathfield, OX5 3DX – Erection of staff accommodation (alternative to scheme that refused permission under application 20/00861/F). Approved.

18/01969/F, 18/01970/LB, 18/01945/F & 18/01946/LB – Bletchingdon Park House, Springwell Hill, Bletchingdon OX5 3DW – Alternations 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. Alternation to the grounds: various works and general refurbishment of the interior of the main house along with changes to the form of the north west steps. 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 within class B1) and agricultural building. Approved.

21/00692/F – The Oxfordshire Inn, Meadow Walk, Heathfield OX5 3DX – Conversion of building to provide 6 x apartments. Refused.

b) Planning Applications Received:

21/01114/F – Heathfield Park Golf Driving Range, Heathfield OX5 3DX – Change of Use from golf driving range to stud farm – remove existing buildings and replace with a similar footprint of stables, all weather manege and re-use of existing building to form a temporary staff unit – resubmission of 19/01287/F. Objections: The Parish Council objects to this application as it sees it has no benefit as per the previous two applications that the Parish Council objected to. There is no business plan to indicate that this business is sustainable. No detail of waste storage particularly vital given its close proximity to the running ditch. Access onto a very busy and already dangerous road would be unsafe, as visibility is limited. Additional traffic, in the form of horseboxes, HGVs delivering feed and bedding, and farm machinery associated

with the care of horses will add to the already excessively busy road. The field and grazing is very low lying and wet and therefore unsuitable for proposed use. Feed and tack storage inadequate for number of stables proposed.

107/21 Other Correspondence Received:

- a) John Howell Newsletter. Shared with all, no further action.
- b) An email from John Callaghan/Lisa asking if we would add a link to our Parish Website – ‘Registry Office Near Me’ to make it easier for people to find their nearest registry office. All agreed not to do this as this is a marketing ploy.
- c) A similar email request from Mary Williams about adding a link to our website – ‘Post Office Near Me’ making it easier for people to find their local post office. All agreed not to do this as this is the same company as above.
- d) An email request for a donation from Clean Slate charity. All agreed a donation of £100 should be made. The Clerk is to check the validity of the request beforehand.
- e) An email from Vicki Gallyer asking if a dog waste bin can be installed at the start of the footpaths by Stonehouse Farm. All agreed that we should provide the bin as there it has been reported that dog poo bags are left hanging in trees in this area and in some cases, dog poo is left on the footpath. The Clerk is to contact CDC to see if they will agree to pick up from this site.
- f) Cllr D. Ledger shared a contact from our website from a concerned parishioner with regards to the frequency of the grounds maintenance team. All agreed the Clerk will reply and explain the recent events which required them to revisit shortly after their previous visit.

108/21 Any Other Business:

- The Clerk shared a text message received from a parishioner requesting help with regards to a preferred footpath route she has been unable to use recently with her dog and baby, due to the overgrowth. All agreed we should try and arrange for this to be cut back. The Clerk will contact CDC about the area immediately behind the houses and Cllr C. Lane will assist with cutting back the area at the ‘kissing gate’.
- Cllrs are receiving repeated request for help from concerned parishioners about a number of front gardens in the Village that are not being well kept. In some cases, rats have been seen scurrying amongst the items being left in those gardens. All agreed the Clerk should report these houses to CDC.
- Cllr M. Whitehead reminded everyone he needs volunteers to help with the speed watch when the time comes.

109/21 Items for information or next Agenda only - all items for next agenda to be submitted to the Clerk by Thursday 15th July 2021.

110/21 Date of Next Meeting: to confirm the date of the next meeting as 22nd July 2021 at 7:30pm.

Meeting Ended : 9:37pm.