

DRAFT Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting of Binfield Heath Parish Council

18th March 2020 at 6pm in Dunsden Village Hall

Due to the outbreak of Covid-19 this short meeting replaced the monthly meeting at the Bottle and Glass.

- 1. Present** Cllrs Paul Rollason, Lis Ransom, Sue Summerland & Hugh Lacey & David Bartholomew (OCC & SODC) The Clerk.
- 2. Apologies** Cllrs Keith Maher, Sarah Fulton-Urry (self-isolation due to Covid-19)
- 3. Delegation of PC statutory and legal responsibilities to a Committee for the period of the Covid-19 crisis**

Following Government guidelines on Covid-19 the PC meeting on 23rd March has to be cancelled. This extraordinary meeting was set up on March 18th in order to delegate the performance of Parish Council statutory and legal responsibilities to a Committee that will act for and on behalf of the Council. The Parish Council resolved the following:

Members of Committee: Cllrs P Rollason, L Ransom, S Summerland & H Lacey. Other members of the PC will be consulted as required.

Terms of Reference: Acting on all normal agenda items (e.g. planning) plus any local or county issues brought to the Councillors' attention.

Area: This is the whole map area covered by Binfield heath Parish Council.

The Clerk will continue to undertake routine work from home in contact with the Committee as often as necessary and is authorised to pay invoices up to the value of £2000 as required.

This resolution was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Cllr Ransom. All agreed. Resolution carried.

- 4. February 2020 Minutes** These minutes were read. Cllr Rollason proposed acceptance and this was seconded by Cllr Lacey. All agreed.
- 5. Matters arising**

24.01/20 Tree in the centre of the village OCC Tree officers have looked at the tree and report that it needs severe pruning to give it a chance to thrive. The PC agreed that this treatment is necessary and the decision to allow this work was agreed. **(Clerk to action)**

24.02/20 Litter pick Thanks were expressed to all those who took part in the Litter Pick on March 7th

25.01/20 Third Reading Bridge Cllr Ransom will start a draft letter to circulate among the Councillors.

25.04/20 Accident at Coppid Crossroads It would appear that signage was not the issue for this accident. However, the PC feels that reducing the height of the hedge at that corner would help visibility at the junction. Pricketts to be asked.
(Clerk to action)

27/20 Neighbourhood Plan The next step with this is a public meeting so this item unfortunately will have to be deferred until the Covid-19 crisis is over.

6. Financial Situation The financial situation was presented and invoices to the value of £3484.64 were approved for payment. **(Clerk to action)**

7. Any additional Covid-19 response

- a. A village voluntary group has been set up. It can be accessed on <https://www.facebook.com/groups/236764107369482/?ref=share>

The Parish Council Committee will support the group in any way possible.

- b. A letter is to be written to the Bottle and Glass to thank them for hosting the PC meeting for the past few months and explaining that it cannot meet there until the crisis is over.
- c. The appointed Committee will be in contact with each other and the Clerk when appropriate. The Parish Council can still be contacted via the Clerk. The public will be notified of any formal meetings but it is anticipated that there will be none until this crisis is over.

8. County & District Councillor David Bartholomew updated the Parish Council about the effect of the virus on OCC and SODC. Both Councils are advising homeworking as much as possible and meetings have been cancelled. There is a skeleton staff and priority is social care. Paperwork is reduced to a minimum so there will be no paper planning applications. Both Councillor reports will be on the website.

Chairman: Cllr Paul Rollason

REPORT TO BINFIELD HEATH PARISH COUNCIL MAR 2020 FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW

GENERAL OCC REPORT

A BUSY MONTH DEALING WITH STORMS AND FLOODING

OCC's Emergency Planning, Fire and Rescue and Highways teams had a busy February dealing with the local impacts of the storms and flooding that have made national headlines. Storm Ciara and Storm Dennis hit the UK on consecutive weekends in mid-February and with river levels already high as a result of much higher Autumn and Winter rainfall than the average, the Environment Agency issued scores of Flood Alerts and a number of the more serious Flood Warnings. Highways teams dealt with more than 150 incidents as a result of Storm Ciara and more than 100 stemming from Storm Dennis. The Storm Ciara incidents largely related to high winds (fallen trees blocking roads, debris)

whereas Storm Dennis was also about flooding with some roads closing and surface water causing issues.

AIRBAND STARTS WORK ON ULTRAFAST BROADBAND FOR RURAL OXFORDSHIRE

Independent broadband firm Airband has started work on its fibre network in Oxfordshire as part of the BiRO project, which delivers ultrafast broadband to businesses in rural Oxfordshire. Work started in the first week of February 2020, with night work on Thame High Street. Airband is deploying fibre to the premise, ultrafast broadband direct from the exchange.

Airband Project Lead, Andy Brain, said he was pleased with the progress that has been made: "This first cluster stretches from Thame to Chinnor. We'll also be working on other clusters at the same time including the second cluster which goes from Henley-on-Thames to Lower Shiplake and Sonning Common and a third cluster from Childrey to Kingston Lisle, west of Wantage. We expect all of these clusters to be finished by June 2020 if not before."

The BiRO project is funded by £6.3m EAFRD funding through the Rural Broadband Infrastructure scheme to improve broadband for businesses in rural Oxfordshire and will provide ultrafast broadband to 970 SMEs across the region. The project is managed by the Oxfordshire County Council Digital Infrastructure programme in partnership with Airband.

SEVEN RECYCLING CENTRES TO CLOSE FOR SPRING CLEAN IN MARCH AND APRIL

This March and April seven of Oxfordshire County Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres will be closing for two days to carry out a deep clean and essential maintenance. The work forms part of the council's planned approach to maintenance, and is designed to keep sites safe, looking clean and fresh and helping improve the customer experience when using these important environmental facilities. Only one site will be closed at any one time and all other sites will be open on those days. Residents are asked to plan for these closures, ideally holding on to waste until the site reopens or if that is not possible visiting one of the other sites.

Site closure dates: Alkerton 3rd & 4th March 2020 Redbridge 10th & 11th March 2020 Ardley 17th & 18th March 2020 Dix Pit 24th & 25th March 2020 Oakley Wood 31st March – 1st April 2020 Stanford 21st & 22nd April 2020 Drayton 28th & 29th April 2020 For those residents with permits, please note that these can be used at any of the sites.

UPDATE ON THE YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES FUND

Voluntary and community organisations have been awarded a share of OCC's new £1m Youth Opportunity Fund. The fund is aimed at groups that can provide activities and opportunities for young people between the ages of 11-18, and 11-25 special educational needs. Feedback from Oxfordshire residents points to strong support for improving community-run youth services. This new fund was made available to help existing projects expand and new ones get started. The successful bids will now receive grants of up to £70,000 over the next few months. By offering start-up funding in previous years, the council has already helped many community-run groups provide support for younger

children and families. Now the aim is to do the same for youth services. Community-run youth schemes complement the work of OCC's children's services, which target resources at young people and families with additional needs and those at risk of abuse and neglect. The council also has a desire for more youth clubs to be established.

BECOMING A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COUNCIL

OCC is implementing plans to become a dementia-friendly organisation. The aim is to develop further awareness, understanding and support for vulnerable residents and staff who are impacted by the health condition. The number of people with dementia in the UK is expected to rise to 1 million by 2021. About two in every 100 people aged between 65 to 69 have dementia, and this rises to one in five for those aged 85 to 89. Oxfordshire has an ageing population and the number of residents aged 85 and over is forecast to increase. This means that more people in Oxfordshire are likely to be affected by dementia, either by having a diagnosis themselves or through someone they know with the condition.

More people may develop dementia whilst still in employment; others will be combining work and a busy lifestyle with being a carer for a person with dementia. Therefore, awareness is key to understanding the lifestyle changes, choices and challenges that will occur with an individual's diagnosis. OCC aims to help people who live with dementia to stay independent and live well in their communities for as long as possible. As the first step to becoming more dementia friendly, the Alzheimer's Society held an event for staff and councillors at County Hall on Tuesday 25 February to complete a 'dementia friends' training session to improve awareness and learn about dementia friendly communities in Oxfordshire. The next step in the plan is to help to develop dementia friendly communities across Oxfordshire to help to reduce isolation and support people to be aware of and understand dementia. This will enable people living with dementia to live well within their local communities for as long as they are able.

SPECIFIC REPORT FOR BINFIELD HEATH

THIRD READING BRIDGE SUMMIT MEETING

I will be attending this on Friday 27th March.

ACCIDENTS AT EMMER GREEN ROAD/SONNING COMMON ROAD CROSSROADS

I await the PC's suggestion about proposed action and the details of date/time/registration numbers as requested by officers.

CHESTNUT TREE OPPOSITE POST OFFICE

I am delighted that the tree can be retained, albeit with some aggressive pruning. Please advise if I can be of further assistance in regard to this matter.

SODC ward councillor's report – Binfield Heath - 18th March 2020

Local Plan On 3rd March, after 5 months of a temporary direction, the Secretary of State (SoS) Robert Jenrick removed that direction with immediate effect. Following discussions between council representatives and officials from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the Secretary of State's letter to Cllr Sue Cooper, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council, stated that he is using government powers in Section 27 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 directing the council to progress the local plan through examination, to be adopted by December this year, and for senior council officers to provide reporting to MHCLG on progress of the plan. The letter can be found here:

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/news/2020/2020-03/south-oxfordshire-local-plan-update>

Cllr Cooper, said: "It's disappointing the Secretary of State has felt it necessary to intervene, however the council remains committed to working constructively with the MHCLG and the Secretary of State as well as engaging productively with our partnerships across Oxfordshire." The effect is that SODC's powers are restored to it, but that the submitted Local Plan 2034 must remain in examination. However, the direction permits scope for the council to recommend changes to the Inspectors at examination. Discussions have indicated support for such reasonable scope. On 5th March both the cabinet and council of SODC recognised the direction and agreed to progress the submitted local Plan on these terms.

Reading Transport Strategy 2036 Reading Borough Council are consulting on their 2036 Transport Strategy. This includes a 3rd bridge to the east and a "northern orbital route" to connect to the A4074. In the full document pages 90, 97 and 98 particularly apply:-

<https://democracy.reading.gov.uk/documents/s10695/Annex%20A%20Reading%20Transport%20Strategy%202036%20-%20Draft%20for%20Consultation.pdf>

The consultation opens on 23rd March and closes on 14th June. It can be accessed here :-
<https://consult.reading.gov.uk/dens/reading-transport-strategy-2036/>

The next 3rd Bridge "summit" meeting with MPs and council representation was scheduled for 27th March, but has been postponed due to the Covid-19 situation.

Leigh Rawlins

District Councillor