

## BINFIELD HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Binfield Heath Parish Council Meeting held on Monday November 28<sup>th</sup> at 7.00pm in the Scout Hut

Meeting of the Recreation Ground Charities & Allotment for the Labouring Poor Charity

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**025/22 Allotments.** All rents are paid.

#### **026/22 Recreation Ground**

026.01/22 Regular inspections have taken place.

026.02/22 A cradle child's swing seat is to be ordered for the recreation ground. **(Clerk to action)**

026.03/22 A spring mechanism for the sandpit gate is also required. **(Clerk to action)**

#### **027/22 Public Forum**

##### **The meeting of the Parish Council**

**Present** Cllr P Rollason, Cllr L Ransom, Cllr H Lacey, Cllr S Summerland, Cllr Sarah Fulton-Urry  
Cllr Robert Davis, Cllr D Bartholomew (OCC, SODC), Cllr L Rawlins (SODC). 2 members of the public.

**137/22 Apologies.** None

**138/22 Declarations of Interest** None

**139/22 Minutes of the meetings held on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022.** Cllr Summerland proposed the minutes were accepted as a true record. This was seconded by Cllr Ransom. All agreed.

#### **140/22 Matters Arising**

127.01/22 The Clerk has written to Shiplake Homes ask when the signs, cement silo, search light will be removed from Walled Garden House and perhaps a date when the wall be strengthened and completed.

**141/22 County Councillor's report** Cllr Bartholomew's full report is attached to the minutes. The recently announced changes to the bus route through Binfield Heath was discussed as there is a significant reduction in the service. Cllr Bartholomew explained that the service was possible due in part to the subsidy paid by OCC. The 6.34am bus was a surprising choice to remain as it is early for a commuter while the bus at 9.38am would be too late. The changes will take effect in early January. Cllr Bartholomew will support an application for some work on the Forge. Thanks were expressed.

**142/22 District Councillor's report** Cllr Rawlins presented his report that is attached to these minutes.

**143/22 Public Forum** Litter constantly being left at the end of Kiln Lane was mentioned. Notification of planning applications and PC responses to these were also raised. The Clerk agreed that alerts from SODC are not always sent out.

#### **144/22 Financial Situation**

144.01/22 The financial position had been circulated.

144.02/22 The November accounts were presented. Invoices to the value of £1,053.37 were authorised for payment. These payments were proposed by Cllr Ransom and seconded by the Chairman. All agreed. **(Clerk to action)**

144.03/22 The budget for 2023 was discussed. The Clerk had previously sent out notes to indicate the details of the finances. It was decided that the precept needed to increase this year in the hope that it could be reduced within the next few years. The precept to be requested is £21,500. **(Clerk to action)**

144.04/22 NALC had announced an increase in Clerks' salaries to be backdated to April 2022. The PC agreed the increase. **(Clerk to action)**

#### **145/22 Planning Matters**

##### ***Applications granted by SODC***

##### ***Completed applications for ratification***

5 Spring Terrace, Gravel Road, Binfield Heath P22/S3850 Change of use of cabin at the bottom of the garden from ancillary accommodation to an air B & B.

High Meadow, Kiln Lane, Binfield Heath P22/S3894/HH Replacement roof, two storey and single storey rear extension, fenestration and internal alterations, porch addition and replacement garage.

### ***New Applications*** None

**146/22 Neighbourhood Plan** Councillor Davis had sent an update to the NP. An application for a small Councillor Community Grant to cover part of the remaining costs has been made. A further grant application has been successful and this will provide funds for a Landscape Value Assessment and the final costs of the NP. The Local Parish Councils are uniting in their application to an extension to the AONB.

### **147/22 Community Matters**

147.01/22 The installation of the defibrillator will be on the agenda for the next meeting of the Charity Trustees of The Forge.

147.02/22 Airband The Clerk had been assured that no work by Airband will be undertaken before the PC is consulted.

### **148/22 Highways/Transport and General Maintenance**

148.01/22 The bus shelter: This should be erected soon. The Clerk will contact the contractor. **(Clerk to action)**

148.02/22 Change to a 20mph speed limit: This was discussed and evidence is suggesting that it only has a decrease in speed of 1 mph while the cost is significant. So it was decided not to move forward with this change. All agreed.

**149/22 Green & Open Spaces** A list of Green Spaces in the parish is to be assessed and discussed at the next meeting of the NP Steering Group.

**150/22 Website Compliance** The website compliance is still being investigated.

**151/22 The Forge** Parking in Binfield Heath is limited and is to be discussed in the near future.

**152/22 Neighbourhood Watch** Nothing to report. The preoccupation is mainly with knife crime.

### **153/22 Matters for future consideration**

The meeting finished at (9.15pm.)

**Date of next meeting: Monday January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023**

## **REPORT TO BINFIELD HEATH PARISH COUNCIL NOV 2022 FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW GENERAL OCC REPORT**

### **LIBDEM/GREEN/LABOUR WAR ON MOTORISTS CONTINUES IN OXFORD**

A wide range of initiatives are either in place or being consulted upon. These include:

- ZEZ (Zero Emissions Zone): Non-electric cars are charged or fined if they enter the area
- LTNs (Low Traffic Neighbourhoods): Through traffic is blocked from certain areas
- Traffic Filters: The city is to be split into four sectors and cars without permits will be unable to travel directly from one sector to another
- Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs): Cars without permits are fined if they park in certain areas
- WPL (Workplace Parking Levy): Businesses are to be taxed if they provide parking spaces for employees

While understanding that traffic is a huge issue in Oxford, the Conservative Opposition wonders whether this is overkill and is concerned about the amount of Council time and Council Tax money being devoted to Oxford in comparison to towns and villages.

### **OXFORD ZERO EMISSIONS ZONE (ZEZ) GENERATES £120,000 IN FEES & FINES**

The Cabinet Member in charge of Oxfordshire's highways insists the ZEZ scheme is not being used as a cash cow. Rolled out as a pilot on a handful of city centre roads in February, the ZEZ scheme sees automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras police charges between £2 and £10 for any vehicles that produce emissions. The prices will double from August 2025. The charges apply between 7am and 7pm every day on Bonn Square, Queen Street, Cornmarket Street, part of Market Street, Ship Street, St Michael's Street, New Inn Hall Street and Shoe Lane. It is set to be extended to cover much of the city centre next year, subject to public feedback.

### **HIGHWAYS OFFICERS DEVOTE LOTS OF TIME & EFFORT RESTORING LTN BARRIERS**

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in Oxford remain unpopular with many residents and the

barriers are frequently vandalised at great cost to the council. Cabinet Member Andrew Gant said: *“We will continue to make safe and reinstate all damaged bollards that have been forcibly knocked down or uprooted. Vandalism of this kind is a serious criminal offence and correcting it takes a lot of time and effort from our highway officers.”*

### **TRAFFIC FILTER PLAN TO SPLIT OXFORD INTO FOUR SECTORS**

The intention is to create four 'Sectors' within the city: North, South, West and East. When the traffic filters are operating, for cars without a permit, movement within each sector is unrestricted, but direct movement between sectors is not possible and requires use of the ring road. Affected motorists will face much longer journey times and distances. The intention is to force a change in behaviour.

### **WORKPLACE PARKING LEVY**

The plan is to tax businesses on every parking space they provide to employees. The decision whether or not to pass this charge on to the employee rests with the company.

### **CONSERVATIVES ATTEMPT TO SAFEGUARD OF COUNCILLORS' PRIORITY FUND**

Conservatives successfully moved a motion at October Full Council to request that as part of the Budget process, the administration gives full consideration to extending the Councillors' Priority Fund, which is due to expire at the end of the year.

### **LIBDEMS PASS MOTION TO CUT VAT**

The LibDems put forward a motion to Full Council in October stating Government should immediately introduce various subsidies and cut VAT to 17.5%. The motion was passed despite Conservatives pointing out that whatever the merits or not of the proposal, the administration was once again wasting council resources trying to get involved in central government issues way beyond the council's remit. Councillors are not junior MPs and they should focus on local matters. It is believed the motion was centrally generated by LibDem HQ as almost identically worded motions have been debated at other LibDem councils.

### **LIBDEM/GREEN/LABOUR ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES VEGANISM CAMPAIGN**

Conservatives moved a motion at October Full Council to put a brake on the administration's veganism campaign but were unsuccessful.

### **HOMELESSNESS IN OXFORDSHIRE**

Housing associations, charities and local authorities in Oxfordshire have come together to embark on a programme to help tackle homelessness in the county. OCC has helped to form the Oxfordshire Homeless Alliance, commissioning partners to improve homeless services by taking a collaborative approach to support those experiencing and at risk of homelessness.

### **COUNCIL BUDGET**

This year, the government is not expected to hold a spending review, so government funding will not keep pace with inflation, leading to a predicted funding shortfall of over £30 million next year. OCC is also estimating around £20m of other demand-led pressures, which include: the growing nationwide costs of supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities; the rising cost of social care and care placements for both children and adults; and a national shortage of social care workers leading to a reliance on agency staff.

### **OCC DECLINES THE GOVERNMENT'S INVESTMENT ZONES INVITE**

Councillor Liz Leffman, Leader of OCC, has written a formal letter to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up to explain why OCC has decided not to bid to be involved in Whitehall's investment zones initiative. Given that this decision has been made, the Opposition is questioning why time and money is to be wasted at Full Council in November debating a motion praising the decision.

## **UPDATED PARKING STANDARDS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS APPROVED**

On Tuesday 18 October, OCC's cabinet approved an updated guide for parking standards for new developments. It means developers will need to work collaboratively with the council to help achieve the targets set in the [Local Transport and Connectivity Plan](#) (LTCP), which was adopted earlier this year. The LTCP aims create a net zero transport system in Oxfordshire by 2040, improving health and wellbeing, tackling the climate emergency, reducing private vehicle use, and prioritising walking, cycling, and public transport. While supporting many of these objectives, Conservatives are questioning how the restrictions will apply in rural areas where residents are still very much dependent on the private car.

## **SPECIFIC OCC REPORT FOR BINFIELD HEATH**

### **CHANGES TO BUS SERVICES IN SHIPLAKE, BINFIELD HEATH AND DUNSDEN GREEN**

The clerk has been sent the new timetable, which will be effective from 8<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

### **20MPH APPLICATION PROCESS**

I am not in favour of this programme but will not block the PC should it wish to proceed. Details can be found here: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/traffic/20mph-scheme/i-want-my-area-be-20mph>

### **COUNCILLOR PRIORITY FUND**

As previously reported, I would be pleased to receive an application for a contribution towards refurbishment of 'The Forge' if this is supported by the PC. This would need to be submitted by the calendar year end and fulfilled before the end of the council's financial year.

### **RETIREMENT VILLAGE P21/S4102/RM**

I have again been in contact with OCC officers and they have again confirmed there is a breach but seem reluctant to take any action as they state the matter is progressing satisfactorily, although they are in consultation with OCC legal advisors.

### **RETIREMENT VILLAGE P21/S4102/RM: SPEED LIMIT CHANGES**

The consultation showed that 85% of respondents, including the police, opposed the change in speed limit from 40mph to 30mph. Despite this, officers recommended the change goes ahead. The decision was due to be made by the Cabinet Member on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October but at the meeting he agreed to defer the decision due to various outstanding matters. At the deferred meeting on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November he approved the change despite the fact that a further deferral has been requested by the PC and me as the PC's FOI request had not been fully complied with.

## **GENERAL SODC REPORT**

### **SODC HQ MOVE**

As previously reported, SODC has now moved out of Milton Park into Abbey House in Abingdon. Conservatives are pressing that this move should be made permanent and the vanity project of building a brand-new HQ in Didcot should be abandoned.

## **SPECIFIC SODC REPORT FOR BINFIELD HEATH**

### **P20/S2808/DIS: THAMES FARM**

As previously reported, after a meeting with TW and an extensive exchange of emails, the TW response to the request to commence tree replanting was as follows:

*"We have been advised that in order for the tree planting to be successful the ground remediation within a certain proximity should be completed first. We are committed to the development and hope to start ground remediation as soon as we can and therefore commence the tree planting accordingly."*

I asked the SODC Deputy Chief Executive to reply to TW stating that this response is unsatisfactory, and query that if the highway is safe, why it isn't safe to plant trees along the

highway (planting within the site can wait). A further response from TW is awaited.

## **SODC ward councillor's report Binfield Heath – 28th November 2022**

### Covid-19

The reliability of data on Covid cases is now much reduced following the end of test and trace. However national figures have shown falls in cases – contrary to what might be expected for this time of year. At 19th November, reported cases in SODC were at a weekly rate per 100k of population of 42 (it peaked at 1,504 on 6th Jan) – a low level and one that has reduced albeit that reporting may be incomplete. Indeed Reading BC have ceased reporting their figures because of fears about accuracy. It is fair to note that it has been unseasonably warm and that cold weather has not yet set in. However there seems scope to hope that Covid will only be a modest problem this winter? In Australia and New Zealand winter flu was more impactful and more virulent than normal and this may well transmit into the UK's winter season. Booster jabs for both Flu and Covid for over 50s and the vulnerable have been and are being rolled out through the autumn, before any winter peak.

### New CIL rates from 2023

SODC's proposals for increased CIL rates have completed inspection. They have now been approved by Cabinet and set for final approval by council on 8th December. There will be 3 zones of rates – these are:-

- Brownfield built areas of Didcot and Berinsfield (lowest rates)
- The south of the district south of a line just above Goring, up to Nettlebed and down across to Henley (highest rates)
- The rest of the District – excluding the Greenfield Strategic Sites in LP2035. Subject to mix, it is estimated that these new rates might yield an extra c70%. It should however be noted that the pay-out effect will take a while to work through the system since pay-out comes after some delay following the triggering of charges; so the full effect may be (say) by 2024. In addition SODC are to adopt a SPD (Supplementary Planning Document) to provide detailed guidance on the application of Section 106 obligations. On Strategic Sites, where a great deal of infrastructure is required, only s106 will apply (no CIL). However by exception some S106 will apply to deal with special issues on other sites – alongside CIL. (E.g. if exceptional highways or education needs are triggered by a large or unusual site or other special factors apply.)

### Henley & Harpsden NP

As you know, the H&H NP went to referendum on 24th November. There was a 15% turnout and an 82% Yes vote.

### Investment Zones

As noted in my October report these have been rejected by SODC (and OCC). We don't need extra development in addition to LP2035, it would be a bad idea to remove planning and environment safeguards and these have been economically and fiscally ineffective. Subsequently we find that the Treasury agree and the idea was dropped in the (new) Chancellor's Autumn Statement. Instead there will be more focus on R&D investment in universities and institutions that in the left-behind regions and thus outside the South East.

### "Call for Sites" for new Joint Local Plan – the results are in

SODC has published the results of our "Call for Land and Buildings Available for Change", part of the process in creating the next Joint Local Plan. This process is usually called a Call for Sites, but the name was amended to encourage sites that could have community and environmental uses, such as public open spaces or renewable energy. The Comms team has created an informative short video to explain what the Call for Land and Buildings Available for Change is and what happens next. You can find the video on our Youtube channel. It's important to note these are not proposals the Council is making for development. The Call for Land and Buildings Available for Change does not grant planning permission to any site submitted or confirm that the site will be suitable for development. You can view the full results on SODC's interactive Call for Land and Buildings Available for Change website. You do not need to contact anyone to say whether you support or object to these sites. SODC will assess the submissions on a range of environmental, heritage and physical constraints to determine their potential 'suitability', 'availability' and 'achievability'. Sites that may be suitable for further consideration will be identified through the Joint Local Plan work, and will be

consulted upon. Around Binfield Heath, there are no sites within the parish. However there are proposed sites in Harpsden (Gillott's School, Lucy's Farm and Oak Farm at Harpsden Bottom), outside Lower Shiplake and, large ones around the north and east of Reading. You can find out more about the Joint Local Plan on the South/Vale websites.

#### The Queen's Canopy

Following the sad passing of Queen Elizabeth, and in accordance with the wishes of the King, the Queen's Green Canopy initiative will be extended to the end of March 2023 to give people the opportunity to plant trees to honour Her Majesty. SODC is creating a record of all the trees planted across the district for The Queen's Green Canopy and Communities are asked to send pictures of their planted trees into SODC at [communications@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:communications@southandvale.gov.uk). More information can be found at: [southoxon.gov.uk/greencanopy](http://southoxon.gov.uk/greencanopy)

#### Councillor Grants Scheme

The second round of the Councillor Grant scheme is open in November – see [www.southoxon.gov.uk/grants](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/grants). I believe that the closure date for submission will be just after the in January. I believe that a submission re the NP has gone in?

#### SODC Housing Delivery Strategy

SODC are in the process of developing a housing delivery strategy. This will develop over time, but includes a wide analysis of housing challenges, options to assist suitable responses including community-led housing, deployments of s106 and scope to address gaps of provision.

#### Ukrainian refugees

Just to note that the war goes on and that many refugees in the UK are approaching the end of the committed six months with their hosts. In order to support hosts with cost of living pressures, councils across Oxfordshire are proposing to use some of the central government funding to increase the amount paid to hosts per month.

#### AONB extension

A brief for the work required has been developed and has been shared with suppliers. Costing and delivery schedules are being discussed. The next meeting is pencilled in for 29th November.

**Leigh Rawlins**  
**District Councillor**