

## BINFIELD HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Binfield Heath Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 6.30pm by Zoom

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Meeting of the Recreation Ground Charities & Allotment for the Labouring Poor Charity  
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#### **20/20 Recreation Ground**

20.01/20 The new goalposts are in place and in use. Cllr Maher expressed praise for the Chairman in bringing the community together over the issue of the goalposts in the summer.

20.02/20 A resident had suggested that a new piece of equipment be purchased for the recreation ground. This was discussed but the decision will wait until the new year.

**21/20 Allotments** The allotments are all let. All tenants except one have paid their rent. **(Clerk to action)**

**22/20 Public Forum** No public presence.

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

**Present** Cllr P Rollason, Cllr L Ransom, Cllr S Summerland, Cllr H Lacey, Cllr Sarah Fulton-Urry and Cllr K Maher. Cllr D Bartholomew (OCC) and Cllr L Rawlins (SODC)

**95/20 Apologies for absence** None

**96/20 Declarations of Interest** None

**97/20 Minutes of the Committee meetings held on Monday September 21<sup>st</sup> 2020.** Cllr Summerland proposed the minutes were accepted as a true record. This was seconded by Cllr Lacey. All agreed.

**98/20 Matters Arising** None

**99/20 County Councillor's report** Cllr Bartholomew's full report is attached to the minutes. On local matters he reported that a) local work at Coppid Crossroads has mostly take place b) officers have investigated the commercial parking outside Dragon Cottage and no vehicular obstruction was found at that time c) many objections have been made to the application to extend the time for tree replanting and development at Thames Farm as problems have been encountered.

**100/20 District Councillor's report** Cllr Rawlins introduced his report. His full report is attached to these minutes. He confirmed to Cllr Lacey that the District Councillor was still able to vote and debate despite the SODC changes to the processing of planning applications. Cllr Ransom commented that sometimes planning applications were slow in coming through to the PC. Cllr Maher remarked that there was a huge increase in people working from home which would continue to have a huge impact on future planning.

**101/20 Public Forum/Correspondence** No public presence. The Chairman has been asked about the purchase of a defibrillator for the village. This was discussed. The Clerk was asked to invite Dr Barton to the January meeting. **(Clerk to action)**

#### **102/20 Financial Situation**

102.01/20 The financial position was circulated.

102.02/20 The October accounts were presented. Invoices to the value of £3664.30 were authorised for payment by BACS. These payments were proposed by Cllr Fulton-Urry and seconded by Cllr Summerland. **(Clerk to action)** The VAT on the purchase of the goal posts will be claimed.

102.03/20 Councillor expenses: None

102.04/20 Clerk salary: This was reviewed in the light of clerk scale changes. The Clerk was moved to Scale 25. This was proposed by Cllr Fulton-Urry and seconded by Cllr Summerland. All agreed. The Clerk expressed her thanks.

102.05/20 Future expenditure: Decisions about future expenditure will take place after the budget is set in November. **(Clerk to action)**

#### **103/20 Planning Matters**

A planning response had been made in response to the new Govt. Planning Changes.

##### ***New Applications***

P20/S3092/FUL Amendment No.1 dated October 12<sup>th</sup> 2020 Erection of a new detached

cottage with garage accommodation (As amended by plans received 12 October 2020 to move the property further east and north and reduce size). The Willows Kiln Lane Binfield Heath RG9 4EJ. This application has been discussed by a working party and the PC has recommended refusal of this application.

P20/S3220/LB Remove concrete floor/screed on kitchen and old floor treatment, and replace with vapour proof damp membrane, increased insulation, underfloor electric heating and new stone/limestone tiles. Frieze Cottage Crowsley RG9 4JL This application has been withdrawn.

P20/S1991/FUL Amendment No.1 – dated 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020 Proposed new 4-bedroom residential dwelling, built within the garden of Oak House Cottage. New single storey, single car, oak frame car port (As amended by plans 14 October 2020 to reduce width of property and reduce glazing along south elevation Land next to Oak House Cottage Track Leading to Box Cottage Common Lane Binfield Heath RG9 4JY. This application has been discussed by a working party and the PC has recommended refusal of this application.

### ***Applications Granted***

P20/S2562/HH Two storey rear extension and single storey side extension (Amended plans and description received 14 August 2020) 1 Heathfield Close Binfield Heath RG9 4DS

### **104/20 Community Matters**

104.01/20 Website compliance: A strategic review of the website will be reviewed in January.

104.02/20 Remembrance Day: Cllr Ransom will attend the service and the BHPC wreath will be laid.

**105/20 Highways/Transport and General Maintenance** Nothing for discussion this month.

**106/20 Neighbourhood Watch** Cllr Maher was not aware of any issues this month. There had not been much police presence this month.

**107/20 Neighbourhood Plan** Cllr Maher had ascertained the response rate from EDPC that was very good. Cllr Maher has also talked to David Woodward at EDPC and discussed the way that EDPC had started the process. Cllr Maher proposes that a short questionnaire is formulated and put out to the community to gauge interest as to prepare a plan needs commitment from a reasonable number of residents. It was suggested that the questionnaire be available from a link from the newsletter or from the website. Cllr Maher added that if there was a very poor response from the community questionnaire then he would suggest that the PC does not proceed.

**108/20 New Standing Orders** This was deferred until January. The Clerk will look at the finer detail before adoption is recommended. **(Clerk to action)**

**109/20 Matters for future consideration** Neighbourhood Plan; CIL money; Standing Orders.

The meeting finished at 8.15pm

**Date of next meeting: Monday November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020**

## **REPORT TO BINFIELD HEATH PARISH COUNCIL OCT 2020 FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW**

### **GENERAL OCC REPORT**

#### **OXFORD EDGES TOWARDS A RED ALERT AS CORONAVIRUS CASES DOUBLE**

Residents are being urged to be extra vigilant to avoid local control measures as Oxford sees a sharp rise in coronavirus cases. The latest figures for the city show a doubling of cases to a rate of 43.9 per 100,000 of the population – putting the city on amber alert but edging closer to a red alert level. Oxfordshire as a whole is currently on yellow alert, with cases at 18.1 per 100,000.

The cases are across all parts of the city, with the majority among 18-24-year-olds and cases per 100,000 are now at their highest level in Oxford since May. Ansaf Azhar, Oxfordshire County Council's Director for Public Health, said: "My plea is a simple one – keep your distance, wash your hands, wear a mask, and ensure you are adhering to the rule of six."

#### **RETURN TO SCHOOL AND COVID-19: PARENTS, PUPILS AND TEACHERS PRAISED**

Parents, carers, pupils, teachers and school support staff are being praised by OCC's public health

and education teams for their commitment to ensuring a safe return to classroom education, despite the continued national challenges of COVID-19. Pupil attendance in all Oxfordshire schools is currently significantly higher than the national average: For Oxfordshire maintained schools, at the end of September, it was 93.3% compared to 88.7% across England.

Schools are working hard to carefully manage their COVID-19 safety measures. They are regularly communicating details to parents, carers and pupils by letter, social media and online virtual meetings giving parents confidence to return their children to the classroom, maintain attendance, and enhance their children's wellbeing. Head teachers and members of the Council's public health and education teams have put in place robust processes so that schools, colleges and early years settings can respond quickly and appropriately to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

### **OXFORDSHIRE TO RE-OPEN MORE LIBRARIES**

More Oxfordshire libraries opened on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> September and work progresses for more to open in early October. The changes mean that Sonning Common, Faringdon, Watlington and Goring libraries have now reopened and work is progressing for, Chinnor, Woodgreen, Charlbury and Wychwood libraries to be open early October. OCC has previously successfully reopened 20 libraries including Abingdon, Banbury, Berinsfield, Bicester, Blackbird Leys, Carterton, Chipping Norton, Cowley, Didcot, Eynsham, Headington, Henley, Kidlington, Summertown, Thame, Wallingford, Wantage, Woodstock, Witney and the Oxfordshire County Library in the Westgate Centre. Please check Oxfordshire Libraries website for the current opening hours as they may not be the same as pre-Covid-19 and may be subject to change.

### **'YOU CAN ADOPT' CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES IN OXFORDSHIRE**

Oxfordshire is playing a key role in the national #YouCanAdopt campaign, which explores what the adoption process involves and highlights the need for more adopters. Since early April, there has been a 14% increase in enquiries to adopt with Adopt Thames Valley. However, considerable delays to court processes due to COVID-19 means there will be many more children who will need adopting come the autumn. Oxfordshire desperately needs more adopters from across its diverse communities, who can offer children a permanent safe and loving home. The adoption process has evolved over the last few years; it is simpler and quicker than it has been previously and there is a lot more support available. To find out more visit [www.adoptthamesvalley.co.uk](http://www.adoptthamesvalley.co.uk)

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

#### **AIRBAND BROADBAND WORKS**

The chairman raised enquiries about this I have supplied a detailed response from OCC officers.

#### **TRAFFIC SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS AT COPPID CROSSROADS**

The gates and signs have now installed and received coverage in the local press. The dragon's teeth and other lining works were delayed by adverse weather but will be completed shortly.

#### **COMMERCIAL PARKING ON THE VERGE AT DRAGON COTTAGE**

I asked officers to investigate this matter and they have said that while there may aesthetic concerns, there is no obstruction thus there are no grounds for OCC intervention. They have suggested the PC writes to the company/individual and makes an appeal from a community perspective for the vehicles to be moved.

#### **IMPACT OF ROAD WIDENING ON A4155 AT THAMES FARM**

I have received complaints about the impact of the road-widening that fall into two categories: 1) There is a kink in the road where the widened section meets the old road near Bolney Lane and this allegedly causes some drivers to poorly position themselves, endangering other road users; 2) The widened road has increased speeding by motorists. With regard to 1), I reported the matter to officers and they said the changes were in accordance with specification and there were no safety issues. With regard to 2), Shiplake PC has agreed to fund a speed survey which will provide hard

evidence (or not).

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

### **THAMES FARM: P20/S2825/EX (EXTENSION OF TIME) & P20/S2808/DIS (DRAINAGE)**

The application from Taylor Wimpey (TW) to extend the construction schedule by one year attracted over 50 objections from residents. Their concern is not that construction is delayed, but that TW are planning to delay the tree replanting until construction commences. Permission to extend the schedule was granted and TW's reasons for delaying the replanting are given on the SODC website. The drainage plans also have major implications for the area and I advise that the PC familiarises itself with the scheme. More information is on the Shiplake Villages website.

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## **SODC WARD COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – BINFIELD HEATH – 26TH OCTOBER 2020**

### **Covid-19**

Covid cases are now showing strong resurgence and impacts have been seen in Oxford and Reading. For now the south of England is faring better than the north, but there is no space for complacency. The government have announced a new 3-tier approach to local restrictions. Powers have been devolved to allow more local council input to track, trace and enforcement. SODC has adopted these and will work with the County council and others in a common endeavour. These powers are in place to enable response as local circumstances may develop. SODC is involved in the financial measures announced for support to businesses and individuals affected by local lockdowns.

### **Local Plan 2035**

The closing date for responses to the main modifications consultation is 2nd November. Planning White Paper consultation The first stage on shorter-term changes being the :- • Standard Method • First Homes (taken from affordable housing provision) • 'Temporarily' raising the affordable housing threshold from 10 to 40 or 50, and • Extending the Permission in Principle system to Major developments (10+ homes) Closed on the 1st of October. The consultation on the second much more radical stage closes on 29th October.

### **Determination of Planning applications in SODC**

Earlier in the year SODC adopted changes to the routing of planning applications to help deal with the exceptional Covid situation, the refusal of the secretary of state to make any allowances in deadlines, and the backlog caused during lockdown. It was intended to review this system in October. However the present reality is that there remains a backlog of 70 applications for planning committee and it is the case that, despite best endeavours, the virtual meetings are only able to clear about 4 cases per meeting. Under these circumstances and with the current Covid situation not looking promising SODC's council agreed to extend a changed and temporary approach into 2021, to be reviewed no later than 31st July 2021, but hopefully sooner. There are some small changes to the revised approach. The most significant being that if a district councillor calls in an application (and does not withdraw it, if subsequently satisfied by advice, changes or conditions imposed) then it will automatically go to committee without any other triage or review. So under this system, objections by a town or parish to a Minor application (1-9 homes) would not send it to committee – unless supported by a district councillor call-in. (This was always the case for small "Other" applications (incl householder ones). Major applications and large-scale major applications will continue as previously (that is Major ones (10+ homes) go to committee if contrary to the town or parish view, and large-scale majors (200+ homes) go automatically anyway. It is regrettable that this extension is necessary, but given the intransigence (yet again) of the secretary of State it is the only option to avoid undue Appeal costs and at the extreme special measures arising from non-determinations.

### **District finance – revised budget**

SODC has agreed a revised budget for 2020/21 with an increase in the budgeted deficit of £1.1 million. This mostly arises from covid-19 but also from some other unavoidable costs. Given the stretch on staffing during Covid – with the situation becoming more threatening – there is very limited scope to make offsetting savings. Reserves are held against such rare “rainy day” exceptions and they will be used accordingly in this year. Of course, the situation for the autumn/winter part of the year until March 2021 remains uncertain with the current Covid risks. The revised budget is based on best estimates of what is known so far, but is based on the assumption of mild conditions; it does not seek to cover the risk of more extreme scenarios.

### **Corporate Plan**

SODC has adopted the new Corporate Plan. It enjoyed the largest and most positive response ever known for one of these in South Oxfordshire. Details of work programmes and measures will now be refined.

### **Council constitution**

SODC’s council has reviewed its constitution and agreed a number of practical changes. Amongst these – via an amendment in council – it was agreed to let district councillors on the Planning Committee to debate and vote on applications in their own ward. I opposed that change since it could open up scope for challenges to decisions and to the extent that councillors might be more sympathetic to cases from their ward might introduce less confidence in the fairness of decisions.

### **Motions**

SODC’s council heard and supported motions on Neighbourhood Plans, action on foul river pollution, action in favour of diversity and contrary to ethnic discrimination and finally, action to improve the Cornerstone arts and cultural centre.

### **Council offices**

SODC’s cabinet has reviewed options for its new council offices in the wake of Covid and changed patterns of home-working. Council staff have indicated that they believe patterns of home-working are efficient and will endure. In the light of this – and together with Vale of White Horse council (who share offices and staffing with SODC) – the decision in principle has been made to progress new offices at the Didcot Gateway site. The Didcot site is opposite the railway station and the offices will be on council owned land. Other options will now be considered for the previous office site at Crowmarsh, where there was a fire caused by arson in January 2015. The current offices in Milton Park are extremely expensive and there are sound financial benefits from moving back to owned offices. Accordingly, the intent is to move forward at pace. Leigh Rawlins District Councillor