

Minutes of the meeting of Sonning Common Parish Council held on Monday 16 January 2017 in the Village Hall.

Present: Mr Kedge (Chairman); Mrs Diwell; Mr Fort; Mr Howe; Mrs Lewis; Mrs Phillips-Tilbury; Mr Rawlins; Mr Rust and Mr Stoves. Also Mr Collings (Parish Clerk) and Mrs Varnes (Deputy Parish Clerk). Also present: Cllr D Bartholomew, Cllr P Harrison and Mr C McLoughlin Henley Standard.

- 17/116 Apologies for absence and declarations of interests: Mr I'Anson Mr Greenwood and Mr Jones. No declarations of interests.
- 17/117 Public Question Time: No members of the public present.
- 17/118 Police Report: Mr Kedge advised that he had been briefed that the village had been very quiet – probably due to poor weather.
- 17/119 Minutes of previous meetings:
- 119.01 Finance Committee held on 4 January 2017 were presented and approved.
 - 119.02 Planning Committees held on 28 November and 8 and 12 December 2016 were presented and approved.
 - 119.03 Parish Council meeting held on 12 December 2016 were presented and approved.
- 17/120 County Councillor's Report. Councillor Bartholomew reported that the joint meeting between the Chairs and Planning leads of the nine parishes in his Division has been postponed until after John Howell MP's planning conference on 20th January and due to further delays on the Third Reading Bridge traffic modelling study; a senior officer has provided FISH with details about how OCVA (Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action) might be able to help with funding; regarding the planning application for 245 houses at Emmer Green he was missed off the CAGE mailing list and so was unable to attend either meeting but he has offered to speak at the Planning Committee should this application go to Committee and if parish councils wish it.
- 17/121 District Councillor's Report. Councillor Harrison's report is attached as an appendix.
- 17/122 Mr Clive Mills gave an overview of FISH's plans after which it was resolved to approve the Finance Committee's recommendation to grant £750 to FISH.
- 17/123 Parish Clerk's Report was noted.
- 17/124 Budget and Precept for 2017/2018. The proposed budget agreed by the Finance Committee was reviewed in detail and after some discussion it was resolved to set an unchanged precept of £103,504 for the 2017/18 financial year.
- 17/125 'Social media'. Mr Howe described how platforms such as Facebook could be used to communicate with residents officially rather than using unmediated channels such as Sonning Common Gossip. After some discussion it was resolved in principle that the Parish Council should set up a presence on Facebook once it has been determined how it is to be managed. Volunteers to be sought.
- 17/126 Memorial Hall Field Working Party (MHFWP) – a brief report from Chair was noted.
- 17/127 Village Centre Working Party (VCWP) – Mr Howe reported that the date for the first major meeting has been put back to 10 February.
- 17/128 AONB Designation - Mr Rust advised that work is continuing to seek to extend the AONB.
- 17/129 Trees committee - Mr Rust reported that Stage 1 has been completed successfully for which he and the team were thanked. Next stages are being planned.
- 17/130 Matters for future agendas – nothing specific.
- Meeting closed at 21.35. Next meeting: Monday 20 February 2017 at 20.00.

Chairman:

Dated:

Appendix: District Councillor's Report January 2017.

Planning Matters.

Didcot Garden Town is a major part of our plan for development in the District, offering a significant number of jobs and home. Following the consultation, all comments from the website, events and conversations with community groups are being used to help prepare a draft masterplan for the Garden Town. This masterplan and vision for the area, supported by a Garden Town delivery plan setting out how this vision will become a reality, will be published in spring / summer 2017, at which point the community will have another opportunity to comment.

Neighbourhood Planning Up-date.

During December, Minister for Housing Gavin Barwell MP, announced new ways Neighbourhood Plans will affect development. Our MP, John Howell summarises the new approach well in his blog and I have taken this quote from there. 'The new rules mean that Neighbourhood Plans should not be considered 'out-of-date' where:

- The Neighbourhood Plan is less than 2 years old or has been part of the local development plan for 2 years or less;
- The Neighbourhood Plan allocates sites for housing; and,
- The Local Planning Authority can demonstrate a 3 year supply of deliverable housing sites'

John's full statement can be found at: <http://www.johnhowellmp.com/news/neighbourhood-plan-update/917>

This has significant implications for existing and up and coming Neighbourhood Plans and emphasises the importance of keeping them up to date. I know that John is working hard to get this and other provisions onto the Statute Book as soon as possible. To get up-dates on his activities in this and other areas I do recommend you follow John's Blog and sign up to his news letter.

Naturally, the developers are none too keen on this provision, which puts planning back in the hands of democratically elected representatives rather than their barristers and they are challenging the Minister's decision with a Judicial Review.

Enforcement

- 46 new cases opened
- 30 cases closed
- Seven cases closed were more than six months old

Our six week performance was 96 per cent this month well above target. We are continuing to find success in persuading landowners to regularise breaches (voluntary compliance). Seven out of nine cases closed as 'not expedient to pursue' were householder issues relating to fences, decking and sheds. Four cases are progressing to formal action.

5YHLS update

Our position remains that we have 3.8 years housing land supply (target 5YHLS).

- We have updated the district-wide completions data which is being verified before we recalculate our 5YHLS
- Site B Wallingford (550) (Core Strategy strategic site) was approved subject to a S106 at Planning Committee on 19/10. We are expecting an application on Wallingford Site
- E (Winterbrook area) imminently and pre application advice is currently being sought on Site A (north of the Wantage Road) Wallingford.
- We have a current application for 245 homes at Emmer Green on the edge of Reading and applications on smaller sites around Benson, Sonning Common, Shiplake, Cholsey and Crowmarsh (all for circa 80 dwellings).

Monitoring Progress

Current performance is good but majors has dipped recently reflecting the rise in pre- application advice requests (data as @ 14/12/2016).

1. Majors: 72% decided within 13 weeks against local target of 70% (national target 60%).
2. Minors: 85% decided within 8 weeks against local target 75% (national target 65%).
3. Others: 93% decided within 8 weeks against a local target of 90% (national target 80%).
4. Improving Planning Performance: 9% of majors decided within two year period (national target confirmed as 10% or less from 2018; which is back dated 2.5years, so we need to address our performance now)*
5. 59% appeals dismissed (20% performance increase on this time last year) local target 74% (average national position 60%)

New Neighbourhood Planning Officers

Last month we informed you that Ricardo Rios and Rachael Riach have joined the Team supporting Neighbourhood Plans and from the 1st January they are joined by Holly Jones.

We aim to support this team with further recruitment.

Gladman's Application - Emmer Green

I'm still awaiting confirmation from SODC to what the officer's recommendation will be however, the view I've had from Joan Desmond the officer looking at the application is she is minded to recommend approval. However, since then I've spoken to Paula Fox and she confirms there is still a long way to go before a final decision has been made. However, since then Reading Borough Council have raised objections primarily based on traffic then we might have the situation where SODC recommend approval but Reading Borough Council recommend objections.

Gallagher Estates Ltd

There are two applications P16/S3259/SCR which is an environmental impact assessment was approved and P16/S3142/0 which is has still not been decided but speaking to the officer involved is likely to be approved. This is likely to go to committee in March along with the Gladman's application.

T A Fisher and Sons application

Yet again another application in Kennylands Road. P16/S3707/O. This is another 30 houses in back land development.

Other Matters

A competition for new businesses

Together with our partner Council, Vale of the White horse, we are sponsors of a new competition for businesses which are less than two years old.

Southern Oxfordshire New Business Competition 2017 (SONBC '17) is accepting applications from 1 January to 28 February. Judges are looking for the brightest rising stars in local business, whatever their trade or industry.

The winner will receive a serviced office rent-free for a year, plus a host of other great prizes to help boost their business including: expert branding and website advice, social media coaching, IT consultancy and support, accountancy services and a full programme of business mentoring. For more information and to download an application form go to www.sonbc.co.uk

Grants available to help get residents active

New funding from Sport England will be available to councils, community groups and sports clubs from January 2017. The funding is aimed at projects which reduce inactivity, increase volunteering and improve facilities. Please tell residents about the following funds:

- Community Asset Fund for capital projects to provide new or enhanced facilities, or new facilities in fields or unused buildings. Types of projects that could be eligible include renovating a sports pavillion, installing floodlighting or creating a new sports pitch. £5,000 - £150,000 is available.
- Inactivity Fund for revenue projects that increase activity levels in people aged 55 and over such as Walking Football or care home activities. Funding is anticipated to be between £250,000-£500,000.
- Volunteer Funding which targets under-represented groups and young people aged 10-20 years. Projects could include charities and organisations working with groups to promote volunteering opportunities for example matching volunteers to sports club volunteering roles.

For more information please contact Cath Dale, Participation Officer on 07801 203 551 or 01235 422222 or by email cath.dale@southandvale.gov.uk.

Adverse weather plan

During the winter months waste collections might be disrupted by adverse weather conditions. Our Adverse Weather Plan sets out how the councils and Biffa will address the operational issues caused by snow and ice and flooding.

We will keep people up to date with disruption information through our websites, social media, the local press and media.

We will also use emails to keep you up to date. If you receive enquiries from residents as a result of any disruption refer them to the Biffa call centre on 03000 610 610.

For more information about waste collections during adverse weather contact 01235 422406 or email the Waste Team.