

Minutes of the meeting of Sonning Common Parish Council held on Monday 20 March 2017 in the Village Hall

Present: Mr Kedge (Chairman); Mrs Diwell; Mr Greenwood; Mr Howe; Mr Jones; 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

- 17/149 Apologies for absence: Mr Fort. No declarations of interest.
- 17/150 Public Question Time: No public present.
- 17/151 Police Report items. The yellow lining on Grove Road was discussed and it was confirmed that police would enforce the restrictions despite closure of their office.
- 17/152 To approve the Minutes of previous meetings:
- 152.01 Finance Committee held on 8 March 2017 were presented and approved.
 - 152.02 Planning Committee held on 20 February 2017 - deferred.
 - 152.03 Parish Council meeting held on 20 February 2017 were presented and approved.
 - 152.04 Special Parish Council meeting held on 27 February 2017 were presented and approved
- 17/153 County Councillor's Report – attached as Appendix 1.
- 17/154 District Councillor's Report – attached as Appendix 2.
- 17/155 Parish Clerk's Report: noted with request to address hedge and knotweed problems at 33/35 Peppard Road.
- 17/156 Memorial Hall Field Working Party (MHFWP): A brief update from Mrs Pearman was circulated noting slow progress in being able to get to work on the site. Regarding the AONB Mr Rust advised that liaison with the CCB remains important. He asked for volunteers to complete photos and queried getting improved footpath signage and was advised to speak to the Chilterns Society.
- 17/157 Village Centre Working Party (VCWP): Mr Howe advised that there is to be a meeting with Ben Hamilton-Baillie on 28 March to try to set up a 'whole village' review. Mr Greenwood reminded that there has to be an update to the Neighbourhood Plan in 2018 to tie in with the Local Plan to 2033. Essential to address the gaps between villages and B road weight restrictions.
- 17/158 Council membership: with the pending need to find a replacement for Mr I'Anson members were asked to sound out contacts and possible candidates.
- 17/159 Matters for future agendas – the AONB.

Meeting closed at 21.05. Next meeting: Monday 24 April 2017 at 20.00.

Chairman:

Dated:

Appendix 1

REPORT TO SONNING COMMON PARISH COUNCIL MARCH 2017 FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW GENERAL OCC REPORT

EXTRA FUNDING SECURED IN ADDITION TO 2017/18 BUDGET PROPOSALS

The County Council set its budget for 2017/18 on Tuesday 14th February. Ahead of the meeting, it was announced the Council had £1,957,000 extra, over and above the position reported to the Cabinet in January, as a result of better than expected business rate collections, council tax collection fund surpluses and a higher than expected grant. The County is proposing to hold £926,000 of this until the 2018/19 financial year, to deal with future pressures. Cabinet proposes to spend the rest of the money (£1.03m) in this financial year in the following ways:

- £170,000 to be spent on additional grass-cutting work on highway verges. This is an area of spend that has been reduced in recent years.
- £250,000 one-off funding initially for a pilot Communities Fund for parishes and towns to bid for matched funding schemes following changes/reductions for funding for services.
- £600,000 additional funding for children's social care – a part of the council that has been exempted from cuts since 2010 but has continued to experience significant rising demand on services in common with children's social care departments across England.
- £11,000 increase on the Council's Flood Defence Levy.

OPEN ACCESS CHILDREN'S SERVICES TO CONTINUE AT 34 BUILDINGS

Start-up funding for 12 more community schemes to run open access services at children's centres has been approved by OCC. The proposals, which will receive a total of £305,883, are among the latest to be considered as part of the transition from council-funded to community-led services at children's centre locations. Community services will complement the council's new service for 0-19 year-olds, which will meet the needs and aspirations of children at risk of abuse and neglect in Oxfordshire, and ensure that families who need extra help are identified at an early stage. When added to previously considered applications, the approval of these 12 schemes means funded plans are now in place for services such as 'stay and play' to continue at 18 children's centres, with business cases at a further six centres supported in principle but deferred to the final round of the Transition Fund for more work. Added to this, open access sessions will also continue at the eight Children and Family Centres and two satellite centres at the heart of the council's new Children's Service. In total, it means a combination of council-funded and community-led solutions for open access services are now confirmed or supported in principle at 34 buildings across the county – with more to come when applications for the final round of transition funding are considered.

'FIX MY STREET' WEBSITE UPGRADE

Over the last six months OCC has been working hard to make Fix My Street work more effectively. The new service will launch this month. It will improve the quality and consistency of public reports, as well as OCC internal processes for closing down reports, making it easier to reliably see what's going on in a given area. Members of the public who consistently give good information can be rewarded with 'trusted reporter' status, meaning OCC will fast track future reports to the contractor, resulting in quicker resolution for the resident and reduced effort for the inspectors. Before the new system launches, OCC needs to deal with reports that are still marked as 'open' in the current version. This means: 1) Leave open anything which has been active within the last 12 months; 2) Close anything older than 2 years; 3) For reports between 1 and 2 years old, notify the reporter by email that OCC intends to close their report, but give them the option to 're-open' the issue if they believe it is still a problem.

EXTENSION OF FIRE & AND AMBULANCE SERVICE CO-RESPONDING

OCC Fire and Rescue Service has been working in partnership with South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) co-responding in the community for over 12 years. More recently OCC has also been working with Thames Valley Fire and Rescue partners to undertake a collaborative co-responding trial. (Co-Responders are firefighters trained by SCAS to provide a 'first response' to specific medical emergencies where there is an immediate threat to life prior to an emergency ambulance arriving on scene.) The trial has been a success with crews attending approximately 1500 medical emergency calls per year. To further support communities Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service are working in partnership with SCAS towards all fire engines within communities being available for cardiac arrests, so that casualties across Oxfordshire can receive the quickest available defibrillator and casualty support.

CADDY CAMPAIGN TO REDUCE OXFORDSHIRE'S FOOD WASTE

Residents are being urged to do their bit to make sure food waste doesn't end up on the scrap heap. At the moment it is thought that around 30% of the county's food waste is put in waste bins rather than the food caddy – a figure all Oxfordshire's councils hope to cut significantly. To do this, the councils have launched a campaign with Agrivert, the company who process the county's food waste, to encourage residents to recycle more of the food they would otherwise throw away. It is two and a half times cheaper to process food waste if it is put into a food waste caddy for recycling or composting than if the same waste is put in the general rubbish bin. There's lots of advice on how to reduce food waste and information on how it is recycled at

www.recycleforoxfordshire.org.uk/lovefoodhatewaste

UNITARY UPDATE

At the end of January, OCC launched 'A Fresh Start for Oxfordshire', a draft of OCC's intended proposal for DCLG on how and why a single unitary authority for Oxfordshire could work. Since then, there have been meetings with

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the Leaders of South Oxfordshire and Vale District Councils, and further public consultation. It has now been agreed that the three councils will move forward with a new joint proposal for a single unitary council called 'A New Council for a Better Oxfordshire'. The principal change from the earlier version is that the proposed five area boards would be replaced by 15 to 20 area boards, based on the county's main market towns and their surrounding villages. In addition, Oxford (the city itself) would have a strengthened model of governance including an autonomous local council and area boards covering different parts. Full details can be found here:

<https://www.better-oxfordshire.org>

SPECIFIC REPORT FOR SONNING COMMON

GALLAGHER ESTATES APPLICATION FOR SON 6

I was pleased to be interviewed by BBC Oxford and ITV Meridian prior to attending the planning meeting. While I was delighted with the refusal decision, I was disappointed that once again SODC denied me the right to speak in my role as County Councillor. At County planning meetings, District Councillors are given their own slot and I am continuing to press for this disparity of treatment to be addressed.

(INFORMAL) CONSULTATION – PEPPARD ROAD PROPOSED SHARED-USE PATH

As reported at the last PC meeting, OCC Highways had sought my views on the proposals to improve and convert the section of footway between Westleigh Drive and Bird Wood Court (a distance of approx. 440metres) on the western side of Peppard Road to a 'Shared-Use' path, for use by both pedestrians and cyclists. These proposals had been designed in response to the adjacent residential development of Lea Meadow. I advised the PC that I would appreciate its input before I responded. Subsequent to the PC responding to the consultation, I confirmed to the officer responsible that my views were in accord with the PC.

WOOD LANE FLOODING

I have had further email correspondence with a resident in relation to this. I had previously explained that OCC had investigated the matter and scheduled some minor patching but no major resurfacing. I asked the resident to send me some photographs when the road floods in order that I could press the case for more substantial repairs. The resident did supply photographs, but while I accept there is a very large puddle after rainfall, it cannot be described as flooding. I have pressed for repairs, but am unable to agree it is a high priority safety issue.

THIRD READING BRIDGE

I have seen the draft results of the traffic modelling study, but have been asked not to make any public comment prior to a number of queries raised by officers being resolved.

STREET LIGHTING AT BRAMLEY CLOSE RG4 9LU

I was contacted by the clerk about lack of progress regarding lighting repairs. I arranged for the necessary work to be put on a priority list.

Appendix 2

Paul Harrison - SODC District Councillor's report March 2017.

Local Issues. Gallagher's Application

At present the Gallagher's application was stopped by the planning committee as it would have stopped other parishes from adopting neighbourhood plans. However, it could still be challenged by the developer when it goes to the inspectorate. What was gratifying was the support from residents who turned up in mass at the planning meeting.

Gladman's Application

This is going to be a more difficult one to defend as the site is not protected by a neighbourhood plan. Hence the number of years land supply reverts to 5 year and not 3 years which applies to neighbourhood plans which are deemed to be as current.

What is frustrating is officers at SODC recommended that smaller parishes do community led plans and not neighbourhood plans.

For Eye and Dunsden they have 140 houses and the Gladman's application for 245 houses which is a 175% increase in housing.

This application is probably more dangerous for us in Sonning Common as this will open the floodgates for all the land between Sonning Common and Reading to be developed. There are a number of developers who have taken out options on the land waiting for the results of the Gladman's application.

The one thing we have going for use this time is the support from Reading as this would put a massive increase on their road structure.

Devolution. The discussions with Oxfordshire CC on the question of a Unitary Authority have continued and this resulted on the publication of the 'Better Oxfordshire Proposal' last Friday. This is now subject to a Scrutiny Committee Review this Thursday (9th March) and will go before Full Council at an Emergency Meeting on the 10th. If approved by the three councils involved, South Oxfordshire, Vale of the White Horse and Oxfordshire CC, then we expect the proposal to be submitted to the Secretary of State for his consideration. You can read the full proposal: A new council for a Better Oxfordshire at: www.betteroxfordshire.org

There will be much more information in coming months and we will be passing this on to you through the various communications channels available.

Planning Matters.

Neighbourhood Planning Up-date.

This month at Planning Committee we had the first opportunity to put Minister For Housing Gavin Barwell MP's announced new rules concerning Neighbourhood Plans to the test. An application for homes at Sonning Common was refused for a number of reasons, but one of the most significant was that the application differed significantly from the policies of the Adopted Neighbourhood Plan. This was not the only reason and I have no doubt that the developer will appeal, but it will be one of the earliest tests of the Minister's directive.

5 Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) update

Our public 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

* In addition to all the major applications in and around our larger villages we are starting to receive housing proposals in our smaller villages such as Brightwell cum Sotwell (3) and Warborough (2).

Monitoring Progress

1. Majors: 88% decided within 13 weeks against local target of 70% (national target 60%).
2. Minors: 84% 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%).

Appeals Public Inquiries

* East Hagbourne, land east of New Road – held in early January. SofS confirmed that he will not recover the appeal (ie review the Inspector's decision).

* Tetsworth - traveller site of 12 pitches outside of the Green Belt and is scheduled for the second week of June.

* Thames Farm, Shiplake – we have confirmed our views that the two appeals should be the subject of a co joined inquiry (the quashed first appeal was for 110 units and second for 90 units refused in August 2016). Date TBC.

* CABI, Crowmarsh – appeal against refusal of new offices and residential development will be the subject of an inquiry in July.

* Long Wittenham – appeal against non-determination of 35 unit scheme – strongly opposed by Parish Council and local residents. Likely to be an inquiry – date TBC

Enforcement:

* 22 new cases opened

* 37 cases closed

* 13 cases closed were more than six months old

Our six week performance was 95 per cent this month (target 80 per cent). This is a great effort by the team as we have three vacancies and a member of staff on sick leave recovering from a hip operation.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

* Total CIL demand (20 notices): £1,919,195 (note: two demand notices are for a large site and the first installment of £372,675 is not due until May 2017)

* Total CIL received: £205,670

* CIL proportion paid to Henley: £4,940.63 (next transfer to town/parishes by 28 April 2017)

* Total CIL Liability (209 notices): £7.1 million

South Local Plan 2033

• The Second Preferred Options consultation is scheduled to commence at the end of March 2017. The slight delay from the last update is to ensure we have the most robust evidence available to support the consultation – particularly for infrastructure. It will take the form of a full Draft Local Plan to include development management.

➤ Some of the evidence studies and their progress:

o Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA): Final draft received. Will form an appendix to overarching SHEELA document

o Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP): Draft 'baseline' report received mid-Feb. Officers are currently reviewing

o Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI): Draft interim report received Mid-Feb. Officers are reviewing.

o Green Infrastructure Strategy: Received first detailed 'pilot' (for Abingdon) and expecting similar settlement level assessments for all towns and larger villages through the first half of 2017. Settlement level assessments received and comments returned.

o Sustainable transport study: Consultants (Steer Davies Gleave) appointed. Technical note received and comments returned. Stakeholder workshops to be held Spring.

o Leisure Strategy: Consultants appointed Nortoft. Inception meeting to be scheduled.

o Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment: Consultants ORS appointed. Cherwell to join study.

o Sustainability Appraisal. AMEC Foster Wheeler appointed. Inception meeting scheduled March.

Design Guide shortlisted for award. South and Vale urban design officers together with collaboration from other specialist officers have had the South Oxfordshire Design Guide shortlisted for the Public Sector entry in the Francis Tibbalds Urban Design Awards 2017. Being shortlisted for the award is a good step towards raising the profile of the Council and the need to secure high quality design in South Oxfordshire. Awarded by the Urban Design Group, the awards give more recognition to urban design work, particularly at project stage. Voting is now underway and the results will be announced in March 2017.

46 Young Achievers awarded in South Oxfordshire. Dozens of young people from South Oxfordshire have been recognised for their achievements in sport, art or citizenship at a celebration event. South Oxfordshire District Council's Young Achiever Award Ceremony took place on Wednesday 22 February at Didcot Civic Hall with district council Chairman Paul Harrison and Vice Chairman Jeanette Matelot presenting certificates to 46 young people. Each young achiever also received £250.

Those recognised for their achievements include synchronised swimmers Lottie Moghul, aged 12, and Teri-Faye Coupar, 15; ice dancers Hannah Stewart and Anais Sophie, 13 and 15 years old; 16 year old endurance athlete Nancie Bowley; and Emily Williams, 15, who volunteers to help at her local Beaver group.

Cllr Elizabeth Gillespie, Cabinet Member for Grants at South Oxfordshire District Council, said: "I'm delighted that we are recognising the achievements of these talented young people. They are involved in activities ranging from voluntary community work, music and traditional sports. They are a real credit to the district setting great example for others to follow."

Communications. South News keeps residents in touch with news from the council, including the latest on planning and housing in South Oxfordshire, news on recycling collections and events at our leisure centres and Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot. To receive South News visit www.southoxon.gov.uk/southnews

Thames Valley Police. Given that the Government has now allowed Police and Crime Commissioners the opportunity to bring the Fire Service within their portfolio, I thought that an up-date for our PCC would be appropriate.

Commissioner Stansfeld is minded to take up this option as there are significant benefits to be gained, but as with any new legislation, there are bound to be wrinkles that need to be ironed out. Several other PCCs have already started the process and because of this, our PCC is going to wait for the immediate future to see how these pan out. Once the process is clear and has been tested, I fully expect that a bid will be put in for Thames Valley to proceed with this.