

Sonning Common Parish Council
Minutes of the Meeting for the
Village Centre and Environment Committee held on
Monday 23rd August 2021 at 19.30 hrs in the Village Hall.

Present: Mr Howe; Ms Boorman; Mr Bidgood; Ms Diwell; Mr Stoves; Mr Rawlings; Mrs Underwood (Finance Assistant).

- VCEC 21/035 Apologies for absence: Mr Giles and Mr Cann
- VCEC 21/036 Declarations of pecuniary interest: None received.
- VCEC 21/037 Public Question Time: No members of the public attended the meeting.
- VECE 21/038 Environmental Strategy Summary. Ms Boorman informed the Committee that the document distributed Why is an Environment Strategy needed? is a first draft and puts into context why this is important and how it links in with wider documents. Mr Rawlins commented that the ANOB are looking to extend the Chilterns area and that Henley also have set up a Working Group on this matter. Ms Boorman said that she has been in contact with Henley and will also be speaking to wider Parishes to see if they can get together and share ideas and plans like encouraging residents to have less lighting in their back gardens to encourage bats. Ms Boorman also mentioned that the importance of the local Parishes working together as OCC concentrate on their plan and do not scale this down to the smaller Parishes.
- VCEC 21/039 Letter regarding Active Travel Bid. Mr Howe stated that he has read and slightly amended the draft letter that Ms Boorman put together. Mr Bidgood commented that he would like to see more about the Cycleway in the letter and Ms Boorman explained that this is an introductory letter being sent, in the first instance, to David Bartholomew informing OCC that we as a Parish have plans in place which we would like included in the Active Travel Bid and would like an officer of OCC to look at our plans. Mr Rawlins commented that that these 2 elements, the Village Centre and the Cycleway should go into the introductory letter but that they are 2 separate projects. Ms Boorman agreed as the Village Centre project is further along and on a different timescale to the Cycleway. Mr Bidgood agreed that as this was the case, he was happy for the letter to be sent. It was resolved that the letter in the first instance would be sent to David Bartholomew but not the Active Travel Bid proposal and any further information requested on the Cycleway will be directed to Mr Bidgood.
- VCEC 21/040 Ms Boorman said that she will put together a report about her visit with Mr Stoves to Old Copse woods for the next Committee meeting.
- VCEC 21/041 Mr Bidgood updated the Committee on The Cycleway Working Party. He informed the Committee that he has formed a working party with 4 others and that he has a meeting scheduled at the end of the month with Mr Phillimore of Phillimore Estates. All the Committee agreed that this was good news.
- VCEC 21/042 Mr Bidgood updated the committee on The Triangle. He informed the Committee that David Bartholomew has sent the issue of The Triangle back to the Parish Council as we own the land. Mr Rawlings brought up that he thought that OCC had an obligation to address the drainage on the road. Ms Boorman said that the work has been scheduled by OCC and that we could share the costs with them. Mr Bidgood asked if the Highways Department needed to be involved in matter and Mr Howe informed the Committee that

we own the land, so Highways do not need to be involved if it is agreed that the posts are put in. It was resolved that Mr Bidgood will call David Bartholomew to discuss The Triangle and the flooding issues.

VCEC 21/043 The Committee agreed to co-opt John Stoves and Jerry Hargreaves on to the Committee.

Standing items:

VCEC 21/044 **Youth Club:** Mrs Underwood informed the Committee that the Stayca was a success and the children involved had an enjoyable time.

VCEC 21/045 **Village Halls:** Mrs Underwood updated that the first quote has been received to replace the floor in Sonning Village Hall.

VCEC 21/046 **Village Centre:** Mr Rawlings updated the Committee that unfortunately the new location of the Post Box is going to stay. The Committee agreed that whilst this is unfortunate it does not affect the Village Centre plans. Mr Rawlings asked Mr Howe if any progress had been made with regard to landowners' interest and mapping of the proposed plans. Mr Howe said that this was a work in progress and agreed to take the first step in reaching out to a landowner to get their thoughts on the proposed plan and will inform the Committee on this next month.

VCEC 21/047 **Allotments:** Mrs Underwood updated the Committee that emails have been sent to plot holders whose plots need attention. It was also brought up that it is being considered about renumbering the plots to make it easier to identify plots. The Committee agreed that a better map is needed for the allotments and that trying to get a footpath from the village to the allotments would be a good idea. It was agreed that this would be added to next months agenda for more indepth discussion.

VCEC 21/030 **Widmore Pond:** Mrs Underwood informed that Committee OCC Highways have informed the Parish Council that the wall surrounding the pond is sound. Mr Stoves asked if the Parish Council should register the pond with the Land Registry as it is currently common land. Ms Diwell agreed to look into this and Mr Howe asked if the Clerk could seek legal advice on this matter.

VCEC 21/031 **Traffic Management:** Mr Bidgood said that he had no updates to present.

VCEC 21/032 **Budget/Finance:** Mr Howe informed the Committee that no budgets had yet been set with regard to the Village Centre.

VVCEC 21/033 **Environmental Matters:** Ms Boorman had no further updates to offer other than those already covered in the meeting.

Meeting Closed: 8.31pm

Date of next meeting: Monday 27th September at 19.30

Signed (Chairman):

Date: