

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Sonning Parish Council held in the Pavilion, Pound Lane, Sonning, on Tuesday 13 December 2016 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT. Mr A E Farnese (Chairman), Mr T Fisher, Mrs P Pownall, Mr I Runnalls. By invitation Cllrs Angus Ross (Executive member for the Environment) and Cllr Parry Bath, deputy to Mr Ross, both WBC. Cllr M Haines (WBC). Mrs L A Bates (Clerk). No Visitors.

8952: APOLOGIES/WELCOME TO VISITORS. Apologies received from Mr A Evans (indisposed), Mr Morrison and Mrs Jacobs (previous engagements). The Chairman welcomed all those present, in particular Cllrs Ross and Bath.

8953: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

The Minutes of the last meeting were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

8954: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of Interest.

8955: CASUAL VACANCY.

This was ongoing.

8956: PRESENTATION: Cllr ANGUS ROSS.

Cllr Ross introduced himself and Cllr Bath. Cllr Ross was the Environment Portfolio holder at WBC. Responsibilities included: Waste Collections & Disposal, Drainage and Flooding, Public Rights of Way Greenways Project, Sport & Leisure, Country Parks, Open Spaces, Play Areas, Trees and SANGs, Energy & Climate Change. Cllr Bath was his deputy and shared the responsibility. The visit to Sonning made it the 10<sup>th</sup> Council they had met. Going briefly through the portfolio Cllr Ross said that:

1. Flooding was an important issue and included drainage. The Flood and Water Management Act, introduced in 2010, handed responsibility for flood and water management over to lead Local Authorities, water companies, riparian owners and the Environment Agency. WBC were putting together a robust list of ditches in need and of official assets near water. By-laws, giving WBC powers to ensure that developers maintained drainage, were being introduced and WBC were preparing a drainage strategy. This had now gone into the local plan and developers had to present a maintenance programme with their planning applications. The strategy aimed to provide a template to ensure a good drainage system and minimise the effect of new development on water. Eddie Napper (WBC drainage engineer) now worked with the planning team over this and Mr Napper had an assistant, Val Hobson, to help deal with the workload. WBC were now better placed and had emergency plans for major incidents.
2. Recycling. Cllr Ross had come to the job just as the blue bag system had been introduced. Recycling rates were based on the % of waste that was re-cycled. Their target was to re-cycle 50% of all waste by 2019. Food waste re-cycling had not been introduced but might be considered as part of the next contract, it was a matter of using the best method to do collections.
3. Leisure and Sport. Cllr Ross said that his predecessor, Cllr Malcolm Bryant, had done a good job on consulting on a new strategy which included health and wellbeing, improving leisure centres and keeping them open. There were plans to replace Bulmershe and Carnival Pool and a new Sports Complex was being built at Ryeish Green and Arborfield.
4. Public Rights of Way. Ways of linking new developments to the community via public rights of way were under consideration. It was noted that Sonning had very few rights of way. Cllr Ross handed over to Cllr Bath who said that his background was working in the energy industry. The EU required 90% of energy to be renewable, most of this would be through wind turbines and WBC were working towards this goal. Wind was limited, on a cold day, with no

## 8956: PRESENTATION: Cllr ANGUS ROSS (Cont'd)

wind, there would be no energy. WBC were not against renewables and were looking for projects, which would also provide an income, possibly sites for battery storage that would back up the National Grid, 2 acres could produce energy for 2 million homes. Cllr Haines asked how much it would cost for small developments and Cllr Bath said several millions. Cllr Bath said that climate change had increased the risk of flooding etc. The temperature was rising, 1 degree over the last 15 to 20 years, and the water temperature in the sea was also rising.

The Chairman said that drains and ditches in the Parish were not being maintained at the same level as in the past, perhaps due to financial restrictions. There was a suggestion that raising the Playhatch Road would solve the flooding in that area but this was unlikely and recent road works in the area had caused traffic to back up in both directions and 84 cars had tried to cross Sonning Bridge at the same time. Cllr Ross said that ditches were not the responsibility of WBC unless they adjoined land in their ownership. Cllr Haines said that the drains in Sonning were Victorian and in poor repair, many no longer went in the original direction and had the wrong slope. The Chairman asked who should drain the rivers and Cllr Ross replied that the EA worked on the theory that rivers should self-clean, however fallen trees did cause blockage but dredging was not encouraged. In 2014 the problem was that ground water was getting into the sewage system, there were lots of elements to consider.

Mr Fisher asked what Sonning could do to be greener. Cllr Ross suggested that identifying and reporting blocked drains, adopting a street for residents to litter pick and having an emergency flood plan. Val Hobson could be called in to help. The Chairman said that a recent planning application at the Great House had shown local areas at risk of flooding, and there were many, along the river. Mr Runnalls said that the road outside the Golf Club often flooded. The Chairman said that water meadows had always existed alongside rivers and took most of the flood water but these were being built on. Cllr Haines said that Woodley had introduced a wild flower area in some of its parks and Cllr Ross said that he would like to see other parishes adopting similar planting and invited Sonning to make suggestions. The Chairman said that he would like Sonning residents to do more, residents were always interested in planning applications but not a lot more. Cllr Ross suggested that welcome packs for new residents might be helpful to and Cllr Haines said that he had his own. Cllr Ross said that WBC had to try to save money, at one time Eddie Napper had 3 assistants now he only had one. The public should be encouraged to self-help and to share responsibility.

As there were no more questions Cllrs Ross and Bath took their leave and the Chairman thanked them and said that it had been most interesting to listen to what they had to say.

## 8957: CORRESPONDENCE

WBC Local Plan – Transport Consultation. This was now under way and Parishes were being urged to respond.

Bull Inn. The Clerk had been informed by Mr Stephens that the internal work being carried out on the rear apartment of the Bull did not require planning permission as there were no structural changes.

CAA Document Printing Costs. WBC would charge £3.21 per copy for a run of 800.

Request to Part Fund Bulmershe Leisure Centre. WBC had sent out their list of projects being undertaken in the area and suggested that the £49,000 CIL money allocated to Sonning might be given towards this project. It was agreed that there were several projects within Sonning that had already been identified.

Pot-hole Liguge Way. Mr Napper had repaired the hole very quickly after receiving the Clerk's request. He had however said that WBC would not pay to have a channel cut in the road hump but had no objections to SPC carrying out the work.

SCC new Chairman. Mr Travers, who had been the Club Chairman for the past three seasons had stood down and Mr Garry Phillips would take over as Chairman for the 2017 season.

## 8957: CORRESPONDENCE (Cont'd)

WBC Local Plan – Call for Sites – Joint Meeting. The Northern Parishes had suggested a joint meeting to discuss their responses to the proposed sites in the area.

SLTC Hedge. The SLTC Chairman had congratulated the contractor for the excellent work he had done when reducing the hedge.

Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan. This had been adopted by WBC.

## 8958: PLANNING.

Report. The Chairman said that the application to extend the car park at the Great House was the greatest problem. Mr Fisher said that the joint parking group had met the manageress Julie and the CEO Rodney to discuss parking. He had explained the group's remit and shown them SPC's comment on the application. They had explained that they were in discussion with the land owner next to the mill regarding additional parking space. The Great House staff already parked in the Mill car park and Rodney, having seen the view from the Bridge understood the, loss that extending the car park represented. The Chairman said that he was also concerned about the listed cottages, which were now being used as staff accommodation, and were they fit for purpose. The Clerk would ask Mr Stephens.

**The following applications were on going:** Reading Blue Coat School Sonning Lane (152342-F/2014/2319) split decision: Holme Park Farm House, Holme Park Farm Lane (153218): Chestnut House Mustard Lane (161970): South Meadow Cottage (161434). Pavilion, Recreation Ground (162872).

**The following applications had been approved:** 31 Old Bath Road (160624): 20 Old Bath Road (161638): Microsoft Campus Thames Valley Park (161733): Reading Blue Coat School (161860) F/2014/2319.

**The following applications had been refused.** There were no refusals.

**The following new applications had been received.** Inniscara 15 Holmemoor Drive (163105). Front and rear single storey extensions, front and rear two storey extensions and conversion of existing loft to provide additional habitable accommodation: The Great House at Sonning (161332). Proposed 18 space extension to existing 'lower' car park: 9 Glebe Lane (163088). Single storey front extension and porch extension to dwelling: 31 West Drive (163113). Erection of a part two storey, part single storey front extensions to dwelling: The Old School House (163053). Listed Building consent for the erection of 1m -high reclaimed cast iron hurdles to form a fence along 10m of south-east boundary, to include a cast iron gate, installation of a 1350mm - wide reclaimed brick path from gate to the top of existing brick steps in front garden( part retrospective): 32 Sonning Meadows (163244). Proposed erection of a single storey rear extension to dwelling - amendment to previous consent 160981.Part retrospective: 37 Pound Lane (163258). Proposed erection of two storey rear extension and demolition of existing conservatory: Sonning Church of England Primary School (163312). Remove condition 4 of planning consent 161037 for the demolition of existing staff toilets, new extension and internal alterations to form new secure entrance and reception area and new staff and disabled toilet; external works to form new parking layout and safer access. Condition 4 relates to parking and turning space: O/S Turntrees, 11 Hawthorn Way (163286) Consultation from Openreach for the intended installation of a cabinet, box, pillar, pedestal or similar apparatus which does not exceed 1.8 metres in height or where the ground or base area does not exceed 1.5 square metres.

## 8959: CONSERVATION AREA ASSESSMENT.

There was nothing new to report and it was assumed that the WBC executive would sign it off in the new-year.

## 8960: QUESTIONS FOR BOROUGH COUNCILLOR.

Cllr Haines said that there was no new information about the Bridge. Plans to raise the Playhatch Road had been delayed due to lack of funds. Mr Fisher said that the point had been made to OCC that Berry Brook backed up and Mr Runnalls said that the planned culverts under the raised road would become blocked.

## 8961: PARISHIONER QUESTIONS

There were no questions from parishioners.

## 8962: FINANCE.

- a) Report. The Clerk had prepared a report which was noted.
- b) Payment of Accounts Mr Fisher proposed and Mr Runnalls seconded making the following payments and these were unanimously approved.

### PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS DECEMBER '16 (1 TO 30 NOV)

Date	Chq.	Name	Service item	Gross	VAT	Net	Committee	Sub-Comm.
11 Nov 16	339	Henley lands	Main Mow	245.00	0.00	245.00	REC.	Main Mow
11 Nov 16	339	Henley lands	Drain	1675.00	0.00	1675.00	REC.	Misc.
11 Nov 16	340	K Trimmings	Litter	2324.98	00.00	2324.98	HIGHWAYS	Litter
11 Nov 16	341	L A Bates	Honorarium	718.58	119.76	598.82	CLERK	Honorarium
11 Nov 16	341	L A Bates	Tel.	40.00	00.00	40.00	ADMIN	Tel
11 Nov 16	342	Inland Rev.	Tax	157.55	0.00	157.55	CLERK	Tax
11 Nov 16	343	ISS	Dog Bins	104.00	17.33	86.67	AMENITIES	Dog Bins
18 Nov 16	344	WBC	New Lights	2133.44	355.57	1777.87	LIGHTING	New Lights
			<b>Total</b>	<b>7398.55</b>	<b>492.66</b>	<b>6905.89</b>		

- c) Draft Budget/Report. The Clerk had prepared a draft Budget together with the monthly report for comparison. Councillors would consider the draft budget and bring any revisions to the January meeting ready to approve the 2017/18 Precept.
- d) Allocation of CIL Funds. This would be discussed at the January meeting.

## 8963: HIGHWAYS.

Electrical Speed Indicators. Mr Fisher would arrange to meet Mr Horton together with the Chairman to agree positions for the indicators. WBC had confirmed that CIL funds could be used for speed signs. Mr Fisher agreed to obtain the details from Mr Evans and progress ordering the speed signs. Lorry Watch. There was no update. Mr Runnalls said that more lorries were using Charvil Lane and Thames Street. The Chairman would ask his contact if the police would allow information from the Bridge cameras to be used by SPC.

## 8964: RECREATION AND ENVIRONMENT W.G.

- a) Safety Checks. Mrs Pownall had checked the equipment and everything was fine.
- b) Security. Mrs Pownall proposed purchasing a security system for £100 plus VAT, Mr Runnalls seconded and this was unanimously approved. A 4G version might be purchased at a later date.
- c) Playground Equipment and Walkways. Proludic would install these over the weekend 17/18 December.

8964: RECREATION AND ENVIRONMENT W.G. (Cont'd)

- d) Water Drain. This was working well.
- e) Pavilion Door. Ongoing.

8965: TECHNICAL SERVICES.

Safety Checks. The Chairman had carried out the safety checks.

Lighting Upgrade. Mr Fisher said that the three remain concrete lights, that needed to be replaced, would be undertaken in the new-year and a decision about which heritage lights should be installed would be decided in the new-year. There had been some complaints about the new lights installed by WBC. Mr Fisher would speak to David White about these.

Quote for Posts. The Chairman had an example of the Sonning School planters and would check it for size and cost.

Allotments. There was no update.

8966: NEWSLETTER. The Chairman had discussed with Mrs Pownall and agreed to publish this in the new year.

8967: WEB SITE.

Mr Fisher had responded to the genealogy enquiry that Mrs Pownall had received. It was agreed that Mr Fisher should speak to Mr Gilmour about including a page on the Web Site for similar genealogy enquiries.

8968: ACTION LIST.

The Action List was reviewed and updated.

8969: DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 10 January at 7.00pm.

Signed..... Dated.....