

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Sonning Parish Council held via Skype, on Tuesday 9 March 2021 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT. Mr A E Farnese (Chairman), Mr T Fisher, Mr A Halliday, Mr P Morrison.
1 Visitor. Mrs L A Bates (Clerk).

10659: APOLOGIES/WELCOME TO VISITORS. Apologies were received from Mrs Jan Fielder and Mr M Firmager (WBC).

The Chairman welcomed all those present and said it was good to see Mr Runnalls.

10660: DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest.

10661: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

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

10662: CORRESPONDENCE.

Letter to MP's asking for Extension of time for Remote Council meetings. A draft letter from all Wokingham parishes had been circulated. This asked for an extension of time for remote meetings, which currently would end of 6 May, any meeting after 6 May would have to be in person including the Annual Meetings of Parish Council's and the Annual Parish Meeting. Following discussion, it was unanimously agreed that Sonning would support the request.

Invitation to meet Simon Price – leader of Communities and Neighbourhood. An email had been sent to the Chairman and Clerk on behalf of Cllr Firmager. This was to introduce Simon price the officer who had been appointed Assistant Director of Housing, Income and Assessments in January 2021. Simon Price wanted to meet the Chairman and Clerk to introduce himself and to understand any items SPC would wish to discuss building on the existing partnership working. Cllr Firmager wished attend, if not already committed, and asked that a date be arranged through to Hannah Lee at Wokingham.

Park and Ride – Coppid Beech. The work on this had begun.

Roll of Honour. Wokingham wanted to hear suggestions for inspiring residents from all parishes to add to their Roll of Honour.

Woodley, Earley and Wokingham Libraries. These libraries were now open for click and collect.

Transport, Planning Consultation. Wokingham were developing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). In order to decide where best to focus future investment in active travel infrastructure to support walking and cycling. New cycle routes, improving footways and crossings, creating 'school streets' or reducing the impact of through-traffic in local neighbourhoods were mentioned. WBC were carrying out a consultation at <https://wokinghamlewip.commonplace.is/>

Ruscombe Neighbourhood Plan. This was now out for consultation.

Piggott School Admissions. Mr Fisher said that Piggott's School had a new admissions policy and many year 6 pupils from Sonning School were not being offered places, despite this being their first choice. Places were being offered at Emmbrook School in Wokingham. There was no direct public transport to the school from Sonning and the only transport was via private car, which would take an hour there and back twice a day.. As many as 60 children from surrounding areas were also affected. Mr Fisher had been asked if SPC could write to Piggott. Councillors were supportive and Mr Fisher agreed to draft, and circulate, a letter for Councillor's approval. The Chairman suggested also writing to Cllr Firmager.

10663: CASUAL VACANCY. There had been no call for an election so this could be filled by co-option.

10664: PLANNING.

List. The Chairman said that the following applications had been approved. School Cottage, The Pit Thames Street (203486): School Cottage, The Pit Thames Street (203485): The Malt House High Street (203639).

The following applications were ongoing. Land South of Old Bath Road (201833: Linkside Duffield Road 19/24/38) APPEAL APP/X0360/W/20/3254803 Holme Park Sports Ground APPEAL APP/X0360/W/20/3260833: 103 Pound Lane (203293: Sonning Church of England School (203230): Little Goggs (210053). Little Barn Holme Park Farm Lane (210270).

The following new applications had been received. Microsoft Campus Building 5 (210435). Application to remove condition 4 of planning consent VAR/2007/1716 for the Proposed variation to condition 9 of consent RM/2000/2543 for the use of part of the undercroft as a gymnasium. Condition 4 refers to the fitness centre and the variation is to widen the use of the gym: 20 West Drive (210115). Full planning application for the proposed erection of a 1no. two storey dwelling, with basement and triple garage following demolition of existing dwelling: 26 Sonning Meadows (210379). Full planning application for the proposed erection of a 1no. two storey dwelling, with basement and triple garage following demolition of existing dwelling: Reading Blue Coat School (210693). Application to vary condition 13 of planning consent 170118 for the Application to vary condition 13 of planning consent F/2010/1641 for the Proposed erection of a two storey classroom block, construction of an internal access road (part temporary part permanent) and erection of two temporary buildings containing 4 classrooms. Demolition of existing 3 classroom buildings known as (Dunster Gaines Cooper & Lesser) to allow for up to 825 pupils to be enrolled at the school. Condition 13 refers to pupils enrolled at the school and the variation is to allow for increased numbers of pupils to attend the school over the coming years: Uppfield Charvil Lane (210287). Householder application for the proposed erection of a part single part two storey side extension: Berkshire County Sports Club (210694). Full application for the proposed extension of existing Berkshire County Sports Club car park adjacent to Sonning Lane with associated erection of new floodlighting.

The following applications had been approved. See above.

The following applications had been refused. No refusals.

The following applications had been withdrawn. No applications had been withdrawn.

Neighbourhood Plan. Mr Fisher said that WBC would be reconsulting on the Local Plan now that the Grazeley site had been ruled out. With Grazeley in the Plan only one site in Sonning was included but without the anticipated housing at Grazeley WBC were having to reconsider all options again and all the sites in Sonning would be included. Additionally, Readingensians had been included. Mr Fisher felt that it was important that residents views on these sites should be sought via the Questionnaire. Mr Morrison said that supplying postage paid envelopes would encourage residents to return the Questionnaires and it might be possible to fund this expenditure from the grant.

Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan. This had been circulated and the Clerk would comment saying that SPC thought it was well presented and to congratulate Finchampstead.

Reading Golf Club Application. The Clerk had circulated a draft. Following discussion, it was agreed that Mr Morrison would reduce the number of words.

10665: PARISHIONERS QUESTIONS.

There were no questions.

10666: BOROUGH COUNCILLORS QUESTION TIME.

There were no questions.

10667: FINANCE.

- a) Report. The Clerk had circulated a report, which was noted.
- b) Payment of Accounts. Mr Fisher proposed, and Mr Morrison seconded making the following payments for March and this was unanimously approved.

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS MARCH '21 (1- 28 February '21)

| Date | Chq | Name | Service Item | Gross | VAT | Net | Committee | Sub-committee |
|----------|-----|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| 23/01/21 | 763 | Berks Pest Control | Replace for 758 ½ year fee | 200.64 | 33.44 | 167.20 | ENVIRON | Dog Bins |
| | | | TOTAL | 200.64 | 33.44 | 167.20 | | |

10668: HIGHWAYS

Speed Indicators (SID). Mr Fisher thanked Mr Runnalls again for his continued help with the mini-Sid. The results from both SID's had been sent to Martin Heath (Highways WBC) as usual. The SID in Charvil Lane had now been moved to Pound Lane, near Glebe Lane and from there it would be moved to Pound Lane south. The fixed SID in Pound Lane showed the maximum speed as 55 mph at 5.00 pm on a Thursday. Although the average speed was 22.6 mph the average number of vehicles over the speed limit was 73.3%. A speed of 75 mph had been recorded in Charvil Lane on a Saturday at 6.35 pm. The average speed over the limit was 89%, slightly lower at the weekend.

Traffic Working Group. Mr Fisher said that, although WBC had allocated a substantial sum for highways there was nothing for Sonning. Mr Fisher would contact Cllr Firmager for more information.

Contact with Cllr Jorgensen. Mr Fisher had emailed Cllr Jorgensen, WBC Executive member for Highways and Transport and copied Cllr Firmager in, but Cllr Jorgensen, still hadn't replied. Mr Fisher had spoken to Mr Heath who said that the situation would improve after the pandemic.

Wayfinding Signs. The Chairman said that the Society had expressed their opposition to additional signs in Sonning. Once the restrictions were lifted and the weather had improved there would be an opportunity for a site visit where details could be discussed. There was an opportunity for one or two tasteful signs. The Noticeboards were in need of a tidy.

10669: RECREATION AND ENVIRONMENT W.G

- a) Safety Checks. Mr Fisher said that the playground and exercise machines had been checked. The playground was closed during the week but open at the weekend and Mr Fisher would put a note to this effect in the playground and on Sonning Buzz. A quote to repair the Spica of £1200 including VAT was too expensive and other quotes would be sought. The damage seemed to indicate misuse by older children/adults.
- b) Pavilion – Expenses to date. The Clerk said that WBC might provide a grant towards solar panels on the new pavilion and a company based in Reading had provided solar panels to Twyford free of charge as part of a special arrangement.
- c) Pavilion – Discussions with SCC. Mr Fisher said that SPC would clean the pavilion, toilets and showers prior to the start of the season. The electrician would inspect the electrics on 15 March. SCC had provided a substantive list of repairs etc but it had only just arrived and too late to fully consider. Mr Fisher would inform SCC of this and say that some items would be done prior to the start of the season.
- d) CCTV. The Chairman said that he was not a fan of CCTV systems, his experience was that none were totally successful, and a broadband connection was required at a monthly cost. The Chairman continued by saying that it wasn't clear what use the system would be put to as SCC

10669: RECREATION AND ENVIRONMENT W.G (Cont'd)

knew who had vandalised their nets but had not pursued the culprit. Mr Halliday said that most vandalism took place at night, by people wearing hoodies and infrared would be required (not part of the quote) and even then, the result would be unidentifiable, particularly as the cameras were to be placed on the roof of the building giving an oblique view. Mr Morrison said that no one was an expert. and it would be easy to spend a lot of money, up to £3,000, with no benefit. Mr Fisher said dummy cameras had been mentioned and the use of redundant cameras, at a cost of £50 each to install, had been suggested as a deterrent. The question of filming children was raised, and Mr Fisher would speak to the head teacher about this. Following discussion Mr Fisher agreed to draft a reply to SCC to say SPC could not support CCTV on the site and to thank the representative for his time.

- e) Quotes for Tree Work. Mr Fisher said that the contractor was due to start work on 22 March and included work to the large Beech Tree.
- f) Security Proposals (Travellers). The Chairman said that he would continue to try to speak to the head at RBCS. The Chairman said that sadly an elderly woman from Little Glebe had been found dead in the RBCS nature area. There had been a large police presence at the time.
- g) SLTC Net. The company had supplied replacement nets and Henley Landscapes would install towards the end of the week, when they would also repair the post to the gate in the compound and complete the first mowing of the season.
- h) Repairs to Field. Mr Fisher said that SCC had purchased the fertiliser and were now asking SCC to pay half the costs. Mr Fisher had explained that SPC should have been asked first. SCC had worked hard on the repairs and their manpower had been provided free of charge. Following discussion. the Chairman proposed paying the full invoice price of £438. including £60 vat. and that SCC would then pay half, Mr Halliday seconded. and this was unanimously approved.

10670: TECHNICAL SERVICES.

Safety Checks. The Chairman said that there was nothing to report.

Litter. Mr Morrison agreed that litter was the only issue following a busy weekend. This was likely to be resolved when WBC emptied the bins on 10 March.

Bridge Lights. Mr Fisher said that the company had provided some information but further inspection had shown that the Bridge lighting was not technically something the company could deal with.

10671: CLIMATE CHANGE.

Mr Fisher had spoken to Cllr Firmager who would find out more details.

10672: HIGH SPEED BROADBAND.

Mr Fisher had spoken to Mr Gilmore, who was unable to give any time to this due to his commitment to the Neighbourhood Plan. Mr Fisher had then spoken to the contact in Sonning Eye who had made a lot of progress. However, this was based on the fact that Sonning Eye was based as 'rural' and as such could receive grants, whereas Sonning was not rural and grants were not available. The route of the existing fibre to both parishes started in Woodley Green, onto Pound Lane and from there onto the Bull and from there over to Sonning Eye. Mr Fisher had made contact with a resident who was keen to assist and would continue to explore possibilities.

10673: POLICE & SECURITY. In the absence of Mrs Fielder there were no figures.

10674: ALLOTMENTS.

The Chairman was obtaining a quote for the fence and would contact Mr Hillier when it was received. In the absence of Mrs Fielder Mr Halliday was happy to keep an eye on the allotments.

10675: ACTION LIST.

This was reviewed and updated.

10676: DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 13 April 2021 at 7.00 pm via Skype.

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