

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

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

10641: APOLOGIES/WELCOME TO VISITORS. Apologies were received from Mrs Jan Fielder.  
The Chairman welcomed all those present and said it was good to see Mr Runnalls.

10642: DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest.

10643: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

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

10644: CORRESPONDENCE.

Request for Parking Robert Palmer Alms-houses. The Chairman to the Trustees of the Alms-house Trust, Mr Hart had responded to say the Trustees had reviewed the request but could see no reason to justify dedicated parking as none of the tenants were disabled and parking was a problem for many living in Sonning. Following discussion, it was agreed to advise the writer of this, and that parking was not something SPC had any control over.

Census 2021. Cllr John Halsall (WBC Chairman) had asked all parish councils to help raise awareness of this. Mr Fisher said there would be Covid protection for collectors and an online version would also be available.

Flooding. The Thames had broken its banks and the road was flooded in Sonning Eye. The Bridge had been closed to prevent vehicles trying to drive through.

Travellers. There had been reports of travellers in the Wokingham area and landowners were being warned to ensure their land was secure.

Westy Patrols. The Children's Minister (Chris West) and a colleague had decided to patrol their areas, Emmer Green and Charvil/Sonning, and engage with young people in a positive way. This followed the tragic death of a 13-year-old boy in Emmer Green at the beginning of January. The patrols would be in Emmer Green on Wednesdays between 3.30-6.30 pm and in Charvil/Sonning on Fridays between the same times. The PCC had given their blessing to the scheme.

Climate Emergency Drop-in Session 24 February 10.00 am to 11 am. This would be held via Microsoft Teams and the topic would be Transportation and Electrification (of transport vehicles). The Chairman encouraged everyone to attend.

Borough Parish Liaison Forum. The Chairman said that little had been said about planning, which had been on the agenda, the census on 22 March had been mentioned and there was a lot of talk about trees.

10645: CASUAL VACANCY.

Regrettably, Mrs Harvey had resigned. Trying to run a business and a family under the current situation did not allow sufficient time to contribute fully to SPC. The Clerk had advertised the casual vacancy as required. The Chairman said that Mrs Harvey would be missed. Cllr Firmager said that there would be local elections on 6 May, but this did not affect Sonning except the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley Police Force Area.

## 10646: PLANNING.

List. The Chairman said that no applications had been approved or refused. There was an application for tree work at Brook House in the High Street, but SPC were not consulted on these types of applications. Mr Fisher said that application 210271, was for work to the large Yew overhanging the High Street and a Cherry Tree to the front of the property. The Yew was a fine example and was a feature of the street scene but needed to be better, and carefully managed.

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). School Cottage The Pit Thames Street (203485).: Little Barn Holme Park Farm Lane (210270).

The following new applications had been received. No new applications.

The following applications had been approved. No approvals

The following applications had been refused. No refusals.

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

Neighbourhood Plan. Expenses and Grant. Mr Morrison said that and an application for £2,200 from the Neighbourhood Plan grant for printing the questionnaire had been submitted, up to £10,000 was available. Mr Morrison had also become aware that Mr Gilmore had paid out for printing and other costs in preparation for the public meeting in 2020 informing parishioners about the proposed Sonning Neighbourhood Plan and he was proposing that Mr Gilmore should be reimbursed from the SPC Neighbourhood Plan budget. This was agreed in principle if Mr Gilmore could produce invoices. Mr Morrison would contact Mr Gilmore.

Consultation on Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan. Mr Fisher said this looked very professional. The Chairman said he had been unable to view it and asked Mr Fisher to copy it to him.

Little Goggs (210053). This was to upgrade existing EE and H3G LTE equipment (site share) consisting of 35 metre CF31 MBNL Tower on 7.8 metre concrete base. The Chairman said he had no objection but felt that a lot of work was involved and in maintaining the site. Mr Fisher said that there had been a previous application, including a tower of the same height, which had been approved. The Society had no objections and residents in Sonning Meadows had no objections. Following discussion, it was agreed to that SPC could find no reason the object.

School Cottage (203485). This was to replace the existing asbestos garage roof with tiles to match the house. Following discussion, it was agreed that this was an improvement and to support the proposal.

## 10647: PARISHIONERS QUESTIONS.

There were no questions.

## 10648: BOROUGH COUNCILLORS QUESTION TIME.

There were no questions.

## 10649: FINANCE.

- a) Report. The Clerk had circulated a report, which was noted. The Precept notification had been submitted to WBC and acknowledged.

## 10649: FINANCE (Cont'd).

- b) Payment of Accounts. Mr Morrison proposed, and Mr Fisher seconded making the following payments for December and this was unanimously approved.

### PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS FEBRUARY '21 (1- 31 January '21)

Date	Chq	Name	Service Item	Gross	VAT	Net	Committee	Sub-com
21/01/21	757	L A Bates	PHMC Office rent	250.00	00	250.00	ADMIN	Office rent
21/01/21	758	Pest UK	Rat Control Allot.	200.64	33.44	167.20	ENVIRON	Rat Control
21/01/21	759	SSE	St. Light Repairs	263.65	43.94	219.71	HIGH &LIGHT	St Light Repair
21/01/21	760	SCRIBE	Account System	416.40	69.40	347.00	ADMIN	Subs
21/01/21	761	TIVOLI	Dog Bin Empty	165.60	27.60	138.00	ENVIRON	Dog Bins
31/01/21	762	Henley Land	SLTC Hedge & Net	3275.00	.00	3275.00	REC SLTC	SLTC Hedge
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4571.29</b>	<b>174.38</b>	<b>4396.91</b>		

## 10650: HIGHWAYS

Speed Indicators (SID). Mr Fisher thanked Mr Runnalls again for his continued help with the mini-Sid. Due to the weather conditions, he had decided to leave the one in Charvil Lane until March, when it would be moved to the end of Glebe Lane. There had also been a request to put the SID in Pound Lane south, opposite West Drive. Mr Fisher said that he had mentioned the high speeds in his report to WBC. The report from the SID in Pound Lane, near the school, showed the maximum speed as 55 mph and the level of vehicles had reduced substantially since the Bridge was closed due to flooding in Sonning Eye,

Contact with Cllr Jorgensen. Mr Fisher had emailed Cllr Jorgensen, WBC Executive member for Highways and Transport and copied Cllr Firmager in, but no reply from Cllr Jorgenson, so far.

Wayfinding Signs. The Chairman said that he was reluctant to progress with this during the current restrictions and that the Society should be involved. Once the restrictions were lifted and the weather had improved there would be an opportunity for a site visit where details could be discussed. The Clerk would pass this on the WBC.

## 10651: RECREATION AND ENVIRONMENT W.G

- a) Safety Checks. Mr Fisher said that the playground was open as directed by the government. Mr Fisher agreed to put signs up by the exercise machines, the skatepark and the zip wire reminding everyone of the current regulations.
- b) Pavilion – Expenses to date. Mr Morrison said that the Parish Council had spent just under £7,000 on the two-storey planning application, engineers report, the letter regarding VAT and plans for the single storey pavilion. Despite this the Parish Council were no nearer to getting a new pavilion and SCC expected SPC to spend more on a new planning application and going out to tender. SCC had a large amount of money from the fundraising event and it was agreed that this should be used for any further expenditure on the application for the single storey pavilion and going out to tender. Mr Morrison felt that SPC should not commit any more money during the current restrictions particularly as grants were unlikely to be forthcoming making it difficult to go too far forward. Mr Fisher said that Mr Murphy would cover any shortfall in any grant. However, the Parish Council could not allow themselves to be in a position where the pavilion was unfinished, and funds had run out. If there was a danger of this, then refurbishing the existing pavilion was a consideration. The Chairman said the project ought to be put on hold until the situation improved, and Mr Fisher agreed to draft a reply to SCC. The Chairman said that he could get prices if a set of drawings were available. The Clerk would see if Mr Anderson's drawings for the single storey pavilion could be enlarged from A4 to allow all Councillors to have a copy to review and make any changes. When restrictions lifted a face-to-face meeting with SCC could be arranged.

## 10651: RECREATION AND ENVIRONMENT W.G (Cont'd)

- c) Proposals for CCTV. The Chairman said that he was not convinced CCTV would work unless a very expensive solution was used and there would be security problems with any equipment. A very clear picture was essential. Mr Halliday asked what damage had been caused and Mr Fisher explained about the SCC nets, glass being thrown into the tennis courts and an attempted break-in to the tennis hut. The cricket club were aware of the culprit who had damaged their nets but were not pursuing the matter and it had been suggested that CCTV was a deterrent to travellers. Mr Fisher said that he was prepared to meet the representative and could check out the images the system would provide, he would also ask if planning was necessary in the Conservation Area. The Clerk would check to see if CIL money could be used for CCTV.
- d) Quotes for Tree Work. Heritage had been appointed as the contractor, but it had been necessary to obtain planning permission for the work. This had now come through and Mr Fisher would discuss a starting date with the contractor, preferably when the ground had dried out.
- e) Security Proposals. The Chairman said there had been nothing from RBCS.
- f) SLTC Hedge, Trees and Security Fencing. The manufacturer had finally made contact and the Clerk was in discussion with them about replacement nets.
- g) Playground Inspections. Tivoli had provided a quote of £20 per month to inspect the playground. Mr Fisher proposed accepting the quote to start on 1 April, Mr Morrison seconded and this was unanimously approved.
- h) Appointment of Trustee King George V Field. The details needed to be updated as Mr Chapman had left Sonning some time ago. Following discussion Mr Morrison proposed that the Chairman, Mr A E Farnese, should be appointed as Trustee, Mr Halliday seconded and this was unanimously approved.

## 10652: TECHNICAL SERVICES.

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

Litter. The Chairman said there was no litter over the Wharf but there was litter along the river bank where it had flooded and then subsided. It was some time since the river in the area had been dredged and he would find out who would be responsible for this.

Bridge Lights. Mr Fisher had not heard back from his contact and would chase this up.

## 10653: CLIMATE CHANGE.

This had been discussed at the Borough Parish Liaison Forum on 8 February. WBC were proposing to plant 250,000 trees in the Borough over five years. Diana Tovar, WBC's Climate Emergency Strategy and Commissioning Officer, was the lead on this and had chaired a drop in session on 20 January, which the Clerk had attended. A video of the presentation was available. Landowners, who had space to plant a 'forest' and individuals, who could plant a single tree in their garden, were all to be encouraged to take part. The possibility of subsidies had been mentioned but not confirmed. Duncan Fisher was the WBC Ecology Officer and had given a presentation on the progress of the 250k tree planting commitment.

## 10654: HIGH SPEED BROADBAND.

The Chairman of Eye and Dusden PC, David Woodward had written to ask if residents in certain areas of Sonning would be interested in joining a scheme for fast fibre broadband direct to house. Following discussion, it was agreed to ask Mr Gilmore to look at the proposal and advise.

10655: POLICE & SECURITY.

In the absence of Mrs Fielder there were no figures. Mrs Fielder had thanked Councillors for their offer of support.

10656: ALLOTMENTS.

The Chairman was obtaining a quote for the fence and would contact Mr Hillier when it was received.

10657: ACTION LIST.

This was reviewed and updated.

10658: DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 9 March 2021 at 7.00 pm via Skype.

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