

# NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Meeting Held in St Giles Church on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2021

<b>Attendees</b>	Cllr. James Nettleton (JN) Cllr. Mike Black (MB) Cllr. Peter Ablett (PA) Cllr. Duncan Howlett (DH) Cllr. David Turner (DT) (SODC) John Polhill (JP) (Newington resident) Eva Goble (EG) (Clerk)
<b>Apologies</b>	Cllr. Graham Howlett (GH) Cllr. Robin Bennett (RB) (OCC)

Ref	Item	Notes	Action
108/21	<b>Introduction</b>	The Chair (JN) opened the meeting and welcomed all present.	
109/21	<b>Apologies</b>	As above.	
110/21	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b>	Minutes approved and signed by JN.	
111/21	<b>Declarations of interest regarding items on agenda</b>	None.	
112/21	<b>Matters Arising not on agenda</b>	None.	
113/21	<b>Open Forum &amp; Village Matters</b>	None.	
114/21	<b>District Councillor Report (DT)</b>	DT reviews and summarises his report (Appendix 1). Key issues highlighted: <b>Waste collections</b> problem still ongoing with contractor BIFFA due to shortage of drivers due to some isolating and 20% of European drivers did not return to the UK after Christmas. PA suggested a 'one off' collection until the problem is resolved. DT informed this idea was being discussed with BIFFA along with a possible monthly collection. <b>Covid-19</b> rates still rising across Oxfordshire. Residents encouraged to get tested regularly and book PCR test if feeling unwell. Better Leisure Company who run gyms have been invited to join Public Health England's drive to boost the uptake of the Covid vaccination among young people. The County Council and District Councils are working together to contact clinically extremely vulnerable residents to let them know that help and support is still available. South Oxfordshire and Vale Councils were able to grant funding to 12 voluntary organisations to provide covid-safe transport for residents to get to vaccination appointments and receive food parcels.	

		<p><b>SODC Leader of the Council</b> has pledged to support the re-settlement of Afghan refugees.</p> <p><b>SODC continues to retain a five-year housing land supply</b> and the local plan 2035 remains in place.</p> <p><b>Chalgrove Airfield housing.</b> DT met with James Martin of Martin Baker who is opposed to the application that was submitted from Homes England and will fight any compulsory purchase order that Homes England submit on the terms of it being unviable. The CAA are likely to not approve a new runway.</p>	
115/21	County Councillor Report (RB)	<p>(Appendix 2). Key issues highlighted:</p> <p><b>County libraries</b> set to return to pre-pandemic opening hours from 6<sup>th</sup> September.</p> <p><b>Saturday morning music sessions</b> set to launch across Oxfordshire for children aged 6-13 during term time from 18<sup>th</sup> September in Bicester, Oxford, Didcot, Thame and Witney.</p> <p><b>New 20mph speed limit zones</b> have been approved following a consultation with residents, with Cuxham becoming the first of five trial sites in Oxfordshire and Wallingford a possibility. It was agreed that a 20mph speed limit should also be enforced throughout Newington following a recent accident where a motorcyclist was killed on the Stadhampton to Newington road. We will write to the County Council suggesting this. The Parish Council offered condolences to the family of the motorcyclist.</p> <p><b>Civil Parking Enforcement.</b> The government has approved OCC's bid to take responsibility for civil parking enforcement from Thames Valley Police in South Oxfordshire. Parking offences will be enforced by a contractor on behalf of the Council.</p> <p><b>A Councillor Priority Fund</b> is available to support community projects and organisations. Applications from eligible organisations should be directed to Cllr. Bennett.</p> <p><b>Covid vaccines</b> are still available for those aged over 18 and people do not have to wait to be invited. Bookings can be made via the national booking service.</p>	EG
116a/21 DH/GH	Comm Liaison/ Notice Board	No updates.	
116b/21 DH/GH	Planning Applications	None.	
116c/21 PA/MB	Church Revival	No progress but DT confirmed that the grant monies can be used to pay for the structural engineer recommended by the architect. The structural survey has been arranged for 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2021.	
116d/21 MB/JN	Event Co-ordination	The tennis tournament has been cancelled for now due to JN frequently being away. No other events planned for this year.	
116e/21 EG	Website Management	Updates uploaded regularly although the website does not have many hits from residents who tend to use Friends of Newington Facebook. It was agreed that residents would be contacted via Facebook to gauge interest in residents receiving the weekly newsletter 'Grapevine' published by Stadhampton which would include events coming up in Newington.	MB
116f/21 9A/MB	Neighbourhood Plan	No updates.	
116g/21	New Highways/	RB informs that officers are currently in the process of setting up	

MB/GH/ PA	<b>Potholes</b>	a second site meeting with 2 different sub-contractors, regarding the Holcombe Lane pothole, to determine the best way forward in terms of a treatment. Due to the level differences between the end of the adjacent driveway and the carriageway, it isn't a straightforward repair, and a road closure will be required, so there will be a lead-in time for that. RB will provide an update as soon as he has further information. DH has spoken to contractors regarding the closure that would be for two days. PA originally reported the pothole on Fix My Street. This report has now been closed with the status changed to no further action indicating it was now work in progress.	
116h/21 JN	<b>Responsible Financial Officer</b>	There is currently a good cash balance and a sum of up to £2000 could go towards something of need for the village. Suggestions put forward was a speed camera or trees and it was agreed that parishioners would be consulted for ideas. It was agreed that the Parish Council should have 3 or 4 signatories for cheque signing. Payment of invoices can only be approved at a meeting or by everyone by email. Approved for payment were cheques for Clerk pay and Audit of accounts.	JN/MB  JN
116i/21 DH	<b>Footpaths</b>	No updates.	
116k/21 EG	<b>Upcoming Training Events</b>	None.	
117/21	<b>AOB</b>	<b>Change of Responsible Financial Officer.</b> John Polhill is to accept the role, proposed by DH and seconded by MB, taking over from JN, with an informal meeting/handover/training to be mutually arranged. To be formalised at the next meeting on checking if JP needs to be voted in as councillor. <b>The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.</b> Lighting beacons was discussed as proposed by the Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire. Also discussed and agreed by all was planting a canopy of trees on the verge through the village. <b>Chilterns AONB expansion.</b> It was agreed not to respond to the consultation on the grounds it was being used for the wrong purpose. <b>Hedge cutting.</b> JN will email Jon Beale re hedge and tree cutting on A329.	EG  JN
118/21	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> November 2021	

Signed: ..... Chairman

Date: .....

## **Appendix 1 – Cllr David Turner’s September 2021 Report**

### **SODC Councillor’s Monthly Report September 2021**

**Waste Collection Problems.** SODC and the Vale of White Horse District Councils are currently experiencing problems with their contractor BIFFA who have a shortage of HGV drivers. The cause is two-fold these being drivers isolating due to COVID and the drivers who have gone back to mainland Europe following the implementation of BREXIT at the 31<sup>st</sup> December and not returned to the UK. Currently the effect has been to suspend the Brown Bin collections. Various options for collections are currently being discussed with BIFFA. We will keep you informed when they are concluded.

**Mill Lane Ditch.** Homes in Chalgrove to benefit from flood alleviation works. Homes and infrastructure within the Mill Lane area of Chalgrove are set to be better protected from potential flooding thanks to work being carried out by South Oxfordshire District Council. From the end of August/early September, the District Council will begin work to create a new flood relief channel designed to help homes along Mill Lane which have suffered from flooding on a number of occasions, most recently in 2014. The work will see the new 520m long channel created at Langley Field Farm which will help to ensure that water flows away from the residential area when water levels are high or when there’s heavy rainfall. The new flood channel will allow water to pass through the private land to the west of Mill Lane and re-join the existing flood relief system downstream, well away from local properties. The project, which is expected to take around eight weeks, is being led by South Oxfordshire District Council, with significant financial contributions from Oxfordshire County Council and the Environment Agency. The work is expected to cost just under £149,000.

**Brook Vegetation Clearance 39-53 High Street Chalgrove.** I have been in touch with SOHA who have agreed to do this again.

**Covid-19 rates still rising.** Over the last few weeks Covid cases have risen again in South and Vale and across Oxfordshire. There’s been a 32 per cent increase in Oxfordshire: for the seven days up to 20 August there were 2,341 cases in Oxfordshire compared with 1,769 cases the week before. This is equal to a weekly rate of 338.5 per 100,000 residents. Rates in the over 60s are also increasing. In the seven days up to 20 August there has been a total of 174 confirmed Covid-19 cases in that group. This is an increase from 140 new cases in the previous week. This is the equivalent to a weekly rate of new cases of 105.2 per 100,000 residents. There are 37 hospital patients. In South Oxfordshire the Covid infection rate reported up to 24 August is 351.3 per 100,000 of the population (a rise in weekly rates reported 13 August of 230.2) and in Vale it is 326.5 (a rise from weekly rates reported 13 August of 227.2). The national change in rules on self-isolation for fully vaccinated people took effect on 16 August. We continue to support messages to residents to get tested regularly and, if they feel unwell, book a PCR test, as Covid-19 is still very much around.

**Vaccinations.** Better Leisure help with vaccine uptake

Our Better leisure facilities have been invited to join Public Health England’s drive to boost the uptake of the Covid vaccination among young people. Better is the only leisure operator in the country to be involved in the initiative and joins a number of leading businesses across different sectors such as Asda, National Express and Uber, to have pledged their support for the UK’s vaccination programme, by offering incentives to vaccinated customers. They are offering anyone between 16-30 years old a £10 voucher to be used against any membership at a Better-operated leisure facility and a three-day free pass to any of its leisure centres or gyms. In order to take up the offer, local residents need to complete the form available on the Better website <https://www.better.org.uk/healthy-communities> and follow the simple instructions. Customers will need to present their vaccination card or alternative proof on their first visit to their local Better leisure centre or gym.

**400,000+ jobs in South and Vale.** The latest vaccination figures as reported on 19 August show that 403,657 jobs have been given across South and Vale, with 25,420 to children and young people (2,675 jobs given to under 18’s and 22,745 18-24 year olds so far). In South Oxfordshire 211,252 total jobs

(including 1,480 jobs for under 18's and 12,294 for 18-24 years olds). In the Vale 192,132 total jobs (including 1,195 for under 18's, and 10,451 for 18-24 years olds)

**Vulnerable residents** will be asked their views on support after shielding as the Government is no longer advising vulnerable people to shield following the easing of lockdown restrictions, Oxfordshire's County, City and District Councils are working together to contact clinically extremely vulnerable residents to let them know that help is still available and to ask them what future support they may need. Residents who had been shielding during the pandemic or who are clinically extremely vulnerable will receive a letter with information about support, including information about the Move Together initiative and inviting them to fill in an anonymous survey about their experiences after shielding. The feedback from the survey will help the councils plan the next steps of support for residents who might get very unwell from coronavirus.

**Biodiversity in South and Vale.** South and Vale councils are supporting the Habitat Banking Pilot Scheme run in a partnership including four Wildlife Trusts – Berks Bucks and Oxon, Warwickshire, Cheshire, and Surrey Wildlife Trusts - and the environmental impact investment advisors Finance Earth. Habitat Banking is designed to address developers' need to deliver biodiversity net gain (BNG), which will soon be made law through the Environment Bill. The scheme enables habitats to be created or restored before any biodiversity loss is caused by developments. The scheme has recently been successful in its funding application to the Government's Natural Investment Readiness Fund, and the funding will enable the partnership to create three pilot habitat bank sites in Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, and Cheshire over the next year.

**Covid-safe transportation funding.** This gives invaluable support to residents across southern Oxfordshire. Vulnerable residents in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse have been able to get to vaccination appointments and receive food parcels thanks to £136,363 of funding awarded to local voluntary and community organisations to provide Covid-safe transportation. The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils were able to grant aid 12 organisations.

**Council leader pledges South Oxfordshire's support for Afghan refugees.** Cllr Sue Cooper, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council, said: "Many people in Afghanistan are now facing a truly awful situation and we in the UK have a moral duty to offer as much support as possible to those who feel they are no longer safe there. "As a District, we have previously supported people in similar situations, and we will do our best to work with our partners across the South Oxfordshire community and beyond to offer what help we can to people from Afghanistan who are granted refugee status. "However, we can only provide support where funding has been made available by the government, and this applies across all stages of the resettlement process, from health and wellbeing support, to housing, food, and education. It is vital that we act now, so I urge the government to make funding available as soon as possible so that councils and service providers across the country can put their support plans into action as quickly as possible." "People in South Oxfordshire will be well aware that we are short of affordable housing to meet the needs of our residents. To meet this need, and to ensure we can support refugees, the government must provide the additional resources required to make affordable housing more widely available in our district." In addition, the council has agreed to resettle at least one family from Afghanistan under the UK's existing Afghan Locally Employed Staff (ALES) Resettlement Scheme. This scheme supports locally employed staff in Afghanistan, often in dangerous and challenging situations, in recognition of their commitment and bravery shown supporting UK forces since 2013. South Oxfordshire District Council will now put further plans in place, alongside other service providers, to offer support to those from Afghanistan who are now granted refugee status following events this week.

**Five-year land supply.** In late June in an appeal decision at Little Sparrows, Sonning Common, the planning inspector considered that on the basis of the information before him at the time of that decision, South Oxfordshire District Council could not adequately demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Following subsequent external legal advice on this decision and our more recently published figures, we

wanted to confirm the position that the council continues to retain a five-year housing land supply of 5.33 years for the period 2021-2026, as published by the Council on Friday 25 June and that the local plan 2035 remains in place in respect of current and future application decisions. The council continues to consider its options in response to this appeal decision.

David Turner  
SODC Councillor (Chalgrove Ward)  
September report issued 30<sup>th</sup> August 2021

## **Appendix 2 – Cllr Robin Bennett’s September 2021 Report**

<b>Title</b>	County Councillor’s Report
<b>Author</b>	Cllr Robin Bennett
	Berinsfield & Garsington Division
<b>Date</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
<b>Contact</b>	<a href="mailto:robin.bennett@oxfordshire.gov.uk">robin.bennett@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a> 07979 646815

Things at the Council – as in life generally - are beginning to return to some kind of normal; Today I attend my first Planning & Regulation committee meeting, and OCC Full Council meets next week in Oxford for the first time. I have submitted a question on our provision for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (currently lower than the national average).

### **County libraries set to return to pre-pandemic opening hours**

Return of pre-pandemic opening hours at almost all the county’s libraries from Monday, 6 September. Residents can visit the [county council’s library webpage](#) to check the opening hours for their local library. The opening hours are also available on the library app (search Oxfordshire Libraries in the app store) and on Google business listings.

### **Saturday music sessions for children set to launch across Oxfordshire**

New music sessions across the county on Saturday mornings for children aged 6-13 will offer a fun, safe supportive atmosphere to make new friends and improve by performing with others. The 90-minute Saturday music centre sessions are available through school term times from 18 September and are available in Bicester, Oxford, Didcot, Thame and Witney.

Most school choirs and bands have not been able to rehearse together for more than a year, and children learning to play an instrument have had to rely on remote instruction, so this is welcome news – culture is vitally important for all of our wellbeing.

To book, visit the [council’s webpage](#), select the nearest venue and reserve a place.

Our instructors are DBS checked and risk assessments and safety precautions are being taken to reduce the risks of COVID-19 transmission.

### **First in planned wave of new 20mph zones approved**

A 20mph speed limit will be introduced in Cuxham later this month, becoming the first of five trial sites, which could pave the way for a countywide road safety programme.

This followed a consultation process in which 82 per cent of residents responding were in favour of the speed reduction. The council is currently in the process of consulting on four more 20mph trial sites across the county, in Long Wittenham, Wallingford Central, Wallingford North and Kirtlington. It is believed there is the potential to have around 85 per cent of Oxfordshire’s 30mph roads reduced to 20mph, subject to local opinion and available funding.

This 20mph approach will help to make active travel, public and shared transport the natural first choice, improving the experience of being on streets and making healthy travel safer.

As part of this process, Oxfordshire County Council is committed to working with the campaign group 20’s Plenty, local communities, Thames Valley Police, bus companies and other stakeholders.

### **Civil Parking Enforcement**

The government has approved Oxfordshire County Council’s bid to take on responsibility for civil parking enforcement. The council already enforces parking in Oxford City and West Oxfordshire and will now take over from Thames Valley Police in South Oxfordshire, the Vale of White Horse and Cherwell districts, ensuring continuity across the whole county when the change comes into place, which is currently expected to be on 1 November 2021.

The aim is for the new arrangement to be self-funding, with the extra pay and display spaces helping to pay for enforcement costs, although with some funding from the three districts.

Parking offences will be enforced by a contractor on behalf of the council. Penalty charges range from £50-£70 but will be reduced by 50 per cent if paid within 14 days.

## How can I feed into CPE?

With the rollout of CPE, local intelligence will be essential in ensuring enforcement is directed to the right locations and we welcome input from councillors, local residents and businesses on parking in their areas where vehicles parking illegally maybe causing a hazard or safety issue.

If you are aware of areas where parking enforcement is an issue, please contact the parking team via **CPEenquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk** and Officers will pass the information across our enforcement teams who will be developing deployment plans for the new areas.

## Councillor Priority Fund

The Councillor Priority Fund (CPF) is a sum of £15,000 per councillor that runs over the course of two years until 31 March 2023. The fund is now open for applications and each councillor can use their fund to support community projects and organisations.

Any eligible organisation can approach me directly to apply for this fund, and would then have to complete the form available for download on the county council website.

## Covid-19 Vaccinations

While we await a government decision on school-age vaccinations, with schools reopening this week, those aged 18 or over can [book a vaccination](#) on the national booking service (people do not need to wait to be invited). The timing for the second dose is eight weeks for all. The latest vaccination figures are updated daily at the [NHS England website](#).

You can book a vaccination on the [national booking service](#) if any of the following apply:

- you're aged 18 or over
- you're at high risk from COVID-19 ([clinically extremely vulnerable](#))
- you have a condition that puts you at higher risk ([clinically vulnerable](#))
- you have a learning disability
- you're a frontline health or social care worker
- you're a main carer for someone at high risk from COVID-19.

People wishing to rebook their second appointment are able to check availability first on the [national booking service](#) before cancelling and rescheduling their existing second dose appointment.

## Symptom-free testing

There are a range of options to access twice-weekly lateral flow tests. These include: ordering a home test kit online; collecting home test kits from pharmacies; or collecting a home test kit from one of the county council's libraries.

With one in three people with COVID-19 not having any symptoms, twice-weekly testing will remain crucial to help us find these cases and prevent the spread of infection. This applies even if people have been vaccinated. All the [symptom-free testing information](#) is available on our website.

## Symptomatic testing

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you must self-isolate and [book a PCR test](#) as soon as possible. More information is available on the county council's [symptom testing pages](#).

A reminder of the county's symptomatic test sites:

- Oxford Parkway (OX2 8HA)
- Osney Lane, Oxford (OX1 1NY)
- Woodford Way car park, Witney (OX28 6JS)
- Oxford Brookes University (OX3 0BP).