

NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Meeting held via Zoom on Thursday 16th July 2020

Attendees	Cllr. James Nettleton (JN) Cllr. Mike Black (MB) Cllr. Peter Ablett (PA) Cllr. Duncan Howlett (DH) Cllr. Lorraine Lindsey-Gale (LLG) (OCC) Bianca Rush (BR) (Clerk)
Apologies	Cllr. David Turner (DT) (SODC) – SODC Full Council Meeting Cllr. Graham Howlett (GH)

Ref	Item	Notes	Action
34/20	Introduction	The Chair (JN) opened the meeting and welcomed all present.	
35/20	Apologies	Cllr. David Turner (DT) Cllr. Graham Howlett (GH)	
36/20	Minutes of the Last Meeting	Minutes of last meeting approved.	
37/20	Matters Arising	Local Electricity Bill Newington Newsletter	
38/20	Open Forum & Village Matters	Broken drain on Thame Road (8h) Broken Stiles on Public Footpaths Church Revival – Could we have a village meeting?	
39/20	District Councillor Report (DT)	The only item to add at present is that the Examination in Public of the SODC Local plan will now allocate the whole day of 28 th July starting at 10:00 AM and not just the afternoon. This is due to the high level of speaker contributions.	
40/20	County Councillor Report (LLG)	<p>LLG reviews her monthly report for July, highlights new Didcot bridge (Clifton Hamden / Shillingford) which should improve access to these villages and ease traffic. Hope to be complete by 2025.</p> <p>Discussed Chalgrove development plans and Stadhampton Bypass – this is all to be discussed at the SODC consultations over the next few weeks.</p> <p>Also highlighted all the good work that has gone on throughout the current lockdown.</p> <p>Now looking to get libraries back open. 11 of 44 currently open.</p> <p>SODC Local Plan Consultation is also a focus.</p> <p>Raised issue of the broken drain on Thame Road, MB updated LLG of progress. Highways are scheduled to come back and</p>	

		<p>close the road to assess the situation – they are currently planning the traffic controls to be in place during this assessment. LLG offers support if we need it in future.</p> <p>JN raises the Chalgrove development plans to discuss with LLG. Newington response will be united with Stadhampton, to submit the same response. There are numerous grounds on which we could oppose the plans, and we are keen to identify the strongest grounds to identify within our response – e.g. noise / traffic / pollution / logistics / etc. LLG recommends that we go with the strongest objections within our arguments. DH raises the issue of the actual need for the development – is there a true need? PA questions if a huge proportion of SODC's housing need is 'overspill' from OCC. If these houses are for people working in the city centre, they should be placed within cycling distance of the city centre so as to reduce traffic. All raised issue of traffic and heavy vehicles.</p> <p>Action: JN asks all to send him the main points we think should be raised in the Chalgrove development response.</p>	
41a/20 MB	SAD Speed Awareness Device	<p>Device has been paid for.</p> <p>MB contacted Jon at Highways to find out if we could get a cheaper unit, however he has recommended proceeding with a new unit.</p> <p>New unit has been ordered, and we are awaiting all the bits. Should MB visit Brian Tuckwell to make sure he is happy with the placement?</p> <p>Also raised the point of if we should record speed? Jon says it is too close to the change of limit to record speed. Jon thinks that we wouldn't get the value out of recording speed. We are now awaiting the installation date.</p>	
41b/20 DH/GH	CommLiaison/ Notice Board	No updates.	
41c/20 DH/GH	Planning Applications	Chalgrove Application – JN has been speaking to Steven Dawson, Chair of Stadhampton to prepare a united approach. He is constructing a response, and has managed to get an extension to the consultation deadline until 1 st September. JN advises that we don't submit a response until we have received Stadhampton's response.	
41d/20 PA/MB	Church Revival	<p>PA has been Chairing the group for nearly 3 years and has decided to step down, therefore BR is going to take the role as Chair moving forwards.</p> <p>PA summarised some of the great progress made so far.</p> <p>BR gave overview to some of the next steps and fundraising plans.</p> <p>JN raised suggestion from GH of arranging a get together at the church, a meeting/village consultation of sorts, to get additional feedback.</p>	

		<p>PA suggests another edition of 'Newington News' so that we can share progress. Focus to be the church revival plans. MB – Lets use the newsletter as an opportunity to recruit more volunteers.</p> <p>MB – Car Park; we have two quotes, he and DH met two contractors in June to find out the next steps. MB raises question as to whether we submit the plans to the planning authority? What is our next step? We need to decide or nothing will happen! Is it the PCC or the church group? PA suggests that we talk to the DAC formally, to find out if they are happy with the car park plans before we submit a planning application. DH is happy with this, and suggests we contact SODC to find out the cost of a planning application.</p> <p>Action: Contact DAC to find out if we will get their permission for car park. MB / PA</p> <p>Action: Contact SODC to find out the costs of planning. MB</p> <p>Action: Do we have a fighting chance of securing the money? BR to look into this – is this worth pursuing? Decide if this is worth it before we spend money on the planning application?</p> <p>DH questions if the project will be sustainable in the long run – will we generate enough money from the new building to keep it running, or will we have a white elephant?</p> <p>NPC fully support and wish the group best of luck with their funding applications.</p>	
41e/20 MB/JN	Event Co-ordination	No events at present because of Covid.	
41f/20 BR	Website Management	No updates.	
41g/20 PA/MB	Neighbourhood Plan	No updates.	
41h/20 MB/GH/ PA	New Highways/ Potholes	No updates.	
41i/20 JN	Responsible Financial Officer	Creative Site Design £99 for annual web hosting. MB proposed, DH seconded.	
41j/20 DH	Footpaths	BR raised issue of broken stiles, DH agreed to fix these. Action: DH to repair stiles.	
41k/20 BR	Upcoming Training Events	None.	
42/20	AOB	<p>VAT Reclaims – JN may be able to reclaim VAT. Action: JN to look into this and report back.</p> <p>Local Electricity Bill – PA; are we all happy to support the bill? All fully in favour. MB could we suggest that all 3,000 new homes in Chalgrove have solar panels on the roof.</p>	

		<p>Newington News – All are happy for us to send this out. MB will put everything together if people send him the text. Action: PA to draft something up and send it round to everyone.</p> <p>Broken Drain – LLG is involved, we have some signs at end of Holcombe Lane warning of uneven surface Action: MB to contact Highways to ask them to take these signs down. MB – Is speeding in Holcombe Lane still an issue? Only an issue with delivery drivers</p> <p>Gravel extraction/PAGE 2020 – JN states that Berinsfield are now supporting the gravel extraction. Development has blackmailed Berinsfield to give them a new school, and leisure centre etc. This could be a big hit for us. LLG states that there is a delay now, and we are unlikely to get a decision before the autumn. JN says that Nuneham Courtenay is now off the hook since they do not have the volume of gravel that was hoped. JN has been told unofficially that we are likely the preferred site for gravel extraction now, and we are keen to fight it. JN is now the Treasurer of PAGE 2020, we seem to be the preferred site. Berinsfield are now supporting gravel extraction, having been bribed with schools etc.</p>	
43/20	Date of Next Meetings	Thursday 15 th October 2020 Thursday 17 th December 2020	

Signed: Chairman

Date:

Appendix 1 – Cllr David Turner’s July Report

SODC Councillor’s Monthly Report July 2020

SODC Councillor’s emergency £2000 budget for volunteers. I emailed your clerk and chair details of my budget for your comments and thoughts on 30th March 2020. This contained details of eligibility criteria. To date I have now received two requests. These are: (a) A group providing food parcels to the most vulnerable and applied for by Chalgrove Parish Council. I awarded this group £500 and (b) Chalgrove Transport Scheme for medical related transport necessary protection items. I will award this group £400 as soon as they have approval from the medical establishments. I do of course realise that many people are helping each other privately which is great. Please respond to me as appropriate to your communities’ needs if you think my fund would be suitable and qualify.

SODC Local Plan. I have already emailed the timetable for the Examination in Public which commences on 14th July. The Chalgrove Airfield item (STRAT7) will be on 28th July. I have registered to speak as has the Chairman of Chalgrove Parish Council and the Chairman of the Chalgrove Action Group-SHIELD. I would be interested to know if any other representatives of Parish Councils and Parish Meetings or others in our Chalgrove Ward have registered or tied to register and have had no response.

SODC Virtual meetings We are currently working on providing a system that will allow the general public, town and parish councils and other external organisations to contribute directly to our virtual committee meetings, which we will be testing shortly – should the tests be successful, we are hoping to implement the new system as soon as possible. On 18 May the Chief Executive took a decision, under emergency powers, for the councils to hold virtual meetings including the adoption of virtual meeting procedure rules. The priority, at that time, was to ensure the councils used a safe platform for the transmission of live meetings which would be accessible for members of the public. The software we use for our virtual meetings meant we couldn’t initially include invitations to external parties like towns and parishes, although we made it clear that they would, along with any other interested parties, be able to provide written statements, which many have done. To date these meetings have been successful and allowed the councils to maintain a transparent democratic decision- making process. We agreed to review this arrangement after six months but made it clear that the operation would be kept under review with the ambition to return to public speaking as soon as possible. Officers have been actively investigating and working on options to allow external parties like towns and parishes and members of the public to address council committee meetings using the current meetings platform. We believe we have found a solution, which we will be testing over the coming weeks with the intention of introducing it for the meeting of the Joint Audit and Governance Committee on 13 July and then hopefully rolling it out for all meetings (including the Planning Committee) after that. All of our meetings need to continue in the meantime, particularly the planning committee, following the government’s guidance that we should do all we can to continue the planning process.

Planning enforcement update. Our Planning Enforcement colleagues continue to adapt the way they work remotely to provide their service. Given social distancing regulations and other pressures on staff during COVID-19 this has been quite challenging. However, since Easter the team has been carrying out limited social distancing site visits, while recognising local situations where occupiers may be self-isolating or shielding. New case requests for investigations, and expectations of the Planning Enforcement service, have now returned to pre-Covid19 levels. However, as a result of the ongoing challenges, the team cannot currently provide our ‘normal’ level of service but are working hard to balance outstanding and new casework. Our Planning Enforcement team would like to thank you for your continued support and understanding while they work hard to deliver this service.

New Thames Champion for South Oxfordshire. Cllr Jo Robb is taking on the newly created role of Thames Champion. The River Thames is one of our most precious natural assets and Cllr Robb will be networking with river users, councillors and neighbouring councils to improve access to the river, and to protect and enhance its biodiversity and cleanliness.

Improvements for cycling across Oxfordshire. Oxfordshire County Council has announced a series of improvements aimed at making cycling safer and more attractive for a range of journeys across Oxfordshire, with funding from a £2.9m two-stage Government grant. The first phase will involve:

Purpose-built cycle parking areas, particularly in market town squares, close to rural bus stops, and at park and rides

Priority given to cycles, from changes to traffic light timings to prioritise people travelling by bike to adapting the road network to allow more space for bikes

An upgraded maintenance scheme for cycle paths and cycle routes, with improved signage and route markings.

As part of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, along with the other districts, we are working with the county council on a series of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs), with Didcot among the first locations to benefit.

Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Along with other district councils, we're helping to prepare the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, which will set out the long-term plan for the whole county.

David Turner

SODC Councillor (Chalgrove Ward)

30th June 2020

**REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS – JULY 2020
BY COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE**

Didcot Housing Infrastructure Fund

An important milestone in the development of a major infrastructure project for Oxfordshire was announced on June 19th.

Oxfordshire County Council can confirm it has reached a funding agreement with Homes England for £218m from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) dedicated to providing access to the Didcot Garden Town area. The HIF scheme is administered by Homes England to help support the delivery of much-needed housing and supporting infrastructure.

This funding will allow the council to improve travel for residents, communities and business whilst supporting thousands of new homes and jobs. All schemes include segregated walking and cycling routes and will facilitate new bus services which will give people real sustainable travel choice.

This sum of £218m (towards infrastructure costs of £234m) will deliver:

- Widening the A4130 from A34 Milton Interchange towards Didcot from single to dual carriageway;
- A new bridge over the A4130, Great Western Railway Line and Milton Road into the former Didcot A Power Station site;
- A new Didcot to Culham bridge between the A4130 and A415; and
- A Clifton Hampden bypass

The lack of suitable crossings over the railway line and river coupled with significant housing and employment growth in the past three decades has resulted in severe congestion in the Didcot Garden Town and the surrounding area. The new infrastructure not only provides opportunities for sustainable travel along the new routes but enables traffic demand management measures to be implemented elsewhere to prioritise non-motorised traffic, where appropriate. It also provides new opportunities to connect areas of employment and housing for those on foot and bike using existing public rights of way.

A comprehensive landscaping strategy will be implemented that will include tree planting to make the routes greener and provide screening, helping to minimise their impact on the landscape. Improvements to biodiversity will also be made where possible in line with the completion of a full Environmental Impact Assessment.

This funding will enable direct and convenient, sustainable access between new and existing homes and key employment sites in and around Didcot. The HIF schemes have been identified as essential in Local Plan development to deliver sustainable growth across South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse districts and Oxfordshire County Council has been working in partnership with the two district councils to help enable this necessary infrastructure.

Oxfordshire County Council held a consultation to hear residents' views on plans to support growth around Didcot in late 2018 and a second round in March-April this year. Analysis of the responses received to this latest consultation will be published shortly.

COVID-19 Update

From 4th July the Government is introducing further measures to ease the lockdown, but it is vital that we still remain vigilant. The County Council is working with partners across the County on plans to reduce the spread of the virus and to prepare for a response to any potential local outbreaks. This will enable us to return life to as near normal as possible for as many people as possible, in a way that is safe.

Libraries and Registration Offices

Much of the hospitality, culture and leisure sector will restart from 4th July, albeit with social distancing in place. We will be opening our libraries and registration offices gradually in the coming weeks and months. We are now able to register births again, and are currently registering babies born up to the end of April. We are planning a phased approach to opening our public buildings, with every precaution being taken to make sure this happens safely.

Safety Measures to protect Shoppers

In the public realm, people will notice signs to remind them to socially distance, and changes such as increased pavement space and one-way systems for pedestrians on narrow streets. We have also put in place changes to the road network to help support our town centres thrive again.

Good Neighbour, Safe Neighbour Scheme

With the easing of lockdown, there is the potential to leave a number of vulnerable people without support. Our new Good Neighbour, Safe Neighbour scheme can help. It has been devised by Oxfordshire's six councils to encourage people to check in on their neighbours and for people to contact their local council if they are concerned. I have attached a leaflet with this report, and would ask for it to be sent out to voluntary and community groups in your area.

Local History Comes to the Fore during Lockdown

People in Oxfordshire have been using lockdown to research their family history and local history more generally in far larger numbers than normal.

Many of the Oxfordshire History Centre's online resources had until recently only been available in the centre itself or from the county's libraries. However the refreshed www.oxfordshirehistory.org.uk website is now more publicly accessible.

This saw the site receive an average of 8,500 visits per month in April and May compared to a monthly average of 5,000 during 2019/10. It's wonderful that increased amounts of our family and local history information is freely available for the first time and it's clear that people have been enjoying those opportunities in greater numbers during the lockdown period.

Meanwhile an Oxfordshire History COVID-19 '**Lockdown Pictures and Stories**' Facebook group was set up by Oxfordshire County Council's History Service at the end of April, for local residents to share their experiences of lockdown in words and pictures, as a publicly accessible legacy for future residents and communities. It has been accumulating members who have posted photographs and videos, which we have captured and archived. Hundreds of pictures have now been submitted.

It's also important that we document this unusual phase in the history of our county and the nation as a whole. We're glad that people are providing photographs and videos so that future generations can better understand and appreciate what the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 was all about in Oxfordshire.