

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BERINSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL held on Monday 8th April, 2024 at 7.15 p.m. in the Church Hall, Wimblestraw Road, Berinsfield, Oxon.

PRESENT : Councillor S. Scott-Ely - Chairman
Councillor P. Bridge - Vice Chairman
Councillor Mrs. Beeby
Councillor I. Bunyan
Councillor K. Chrisp
Councillor S. Crawford
Councillor Mrs. A. Head
Councillor Mrs. A. Jones
Councillor D. Scate
Councillor Mrs. L. Sweetland
Councillor A. Woodington

Annette Loveland, Clerk to the Council
County and District Councillor Robin Bennett
One member of the public

1. Items raised by Members of the public

There were no items raised by Members of the public.

2. **Apologies for absence** were received from Councillor Henry.
3. **Declarations of interest.** Councillor Mrs. Jones declared an interest in item No. 11b on the agenda, the grant aid application submitted by the Berry Youth Centre.
4. **County Councillor's Report.** County Councillor Bennett had prepared a written report, which was circulated to all members of the Parish Council. The Parish Council noted that County Councillor Bennett had met with County Officers regarding the safety concerns raised by residents on the A415. He has also asked for an update about the A4074 corridor study and he will let the Council know when he has further information.

Councillor Bridge asked County Councillor Bennett if there was any information regarding the HIF1 scheme. County Councillor Bennett informed the meeting that the enquiry should be finished by the middle of May, 2024.

The information contained in County Councillor Bennett's report was noted by the Parish Council.

5. **District Councillor's Report.** District Councillor Bennett had prepared a written report, which was circulated to all Members of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council noted the information about the District Council's empty homes policy and noted there were currently 400 empty homes in South Oxfordshire.

District Councillor Bennett referred to the Police and Crime Commissioner election on 2nd May and suggested that residents should emphasize to candidates that road safety is an important issue.

Councillor Bridge asked if South Oxfordshire District Council had revised the areas that it would not mow in Berinsfield during the summer of 2024. They had previously left the grass to grow on a section of the Green by the Library and in Kennet Close, both areas being entrances to the village which gave the village a very unkempt look. Suggestions had been made that the open space area in Fane Drive, from the Boxing Club to the junction with Burcot Lane, would be a more suitable area to leave to grow during the summer. District Councillor Bennett informed the meeting that he would raise this at the Garden Village meeting to be held on the 10th April, 2024.

The contents of District Councillor Robin Bennett's report were noted by the Parish Council.

Copies of the County and District Councillor's reports are on the Berinsfield Parish Council website, www.berinsfield-pc.gov.uk

6. **To receive and approve the Minutes of the meeting of Berinsfield Parish Council held on 4th March, 2024.** It was AGREED that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 4th March, 2024 should be APPROVED.

7. **To receive and approve the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of Berinsfield Parish Council held on 18th March, 2024.** It was AGREED that the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 18th March, 2024 should be APPROVED.

8. To consider planning applications and decisions received to date.

a) **Planning application No. P24/S0105/FUL Erection of a four bedroom dwelling house including associated parking – amenity space and new dropped kerb.** Land adjacent to 150 Fane Drive, Berinsfield OX10 7PW The Parish Council considered this planning application and it was AGREED that South Oxfordshire District Council should be informed that the Parish Council have no strong views on the application.

b) **Planning application No. P24/S0942/FUL Change of use from amenity land to residential with new drive and single storey extension to side of house.** 14 Glyme Drive, Berinsfield, OX10 7PD The Parish Council considered this planning application and it was AGREED that South Oxfordshire District Council should be informed that the Parish Council support the application.

c) **Planning decision P24/S0045/LDP** Taxi parked on drive. Land at 2 Colwell Road, Berinsfield, OX10 7NS. The Parish Council noted that South Oxfordshire District Council certified on 23rd January, 2024 that the parking of a taxi on the private drive for use by the occupier of the dwelling does not constitute a material change in the use of the land and does not require planning permission from the Local Authority.

d) **Planning decision P24/S0453/FUL** Revised access track and entrance splay to building and hard standing permitted by P20/S4020/FUL (As amplified by speed survey data received 29 February 2024) Field at Wally Corner, Dorchester Road, Berinsfield. The Parish Council noted that South Oxfordshire District Council has granted planning permission in respect of this application.

9. **Berinsfield Neighbourhood Development Plan.**

a) **Proposed amendments to text in Neighbourhood Development Plan.**

Councillor Scott-Ely informed the meeting that Ricardo Rios and Cheryl Sopett had proposed some amendments to the text in the Neighbourhood Development Plan and that details of these had been circulated to all Members electronically. The Parish Council considered the amendments and it was AGREED that Ricardo Rios and Cheryl Sopett should be informed that the Parish Council accept the recommendations and amendments detailed in emails from Cheryl Soppet and would be grateful if they could be implemented in the text of the Neighbourhood Development Plan on behalf of the Parish Council.

b) **Policies map.** Mr. Neil Homer, Consultant, had prepared a Policies map to be included in the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Parish Council reviewed the document and AGREED that the following amendments should be made to the map :-

- i) Identify the location of Abbey Woods Academy (adjacent to No. 3) and include in the list of facilities
- ii) Merge No. 12 with No 2 and call it Green Furlong including the Church Green area with mature trees.
- iii) Show the Roman Road (marked in green) clearer where it goes through the recreation ground (No. 1)
- iv) Show the arrow from No. 13 in a colour that stands out against the orange of the central open space. Possibly change all the arrows for a brighter colour.
- v) Show the brown and white hatching for the sports and recreational facilities rather than brown over orange.

It was AGREED that the above comments should be passed to Mr. Neil Homer for the relevant amendments to be made to the Policies Map.

10. **UK SPF Funding for Berinsfield** The Parish Council was informed that South Oxfordshire District Council had made an application for UK SPF funding to be used to provide a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) in Berinsfield. The proposed location for the (MUGA) was land at the side of the Abbey Sports Centre and Youth Centre. The UK SPF funding has to be used on a project that can be delivered by March 2025 and due to the land being owned by Oxfordshire County Council and a new leasing agreement being required before work starts, it is possible that the project would not be able to be completed in time to secure the funding. In order to be sure of obtaining the funding, South Oxfordshire District Council had asked the Parish Council to suggest alternative projects that could be completed by March 2025 and the following recommendations had been made :-

- a) Install drainage on the recreation ground at the rear of Abbey Sports Centre
- b) Repair and extend the skateboard park
- c) Replace the BMX track with a pump track

Staff at South Oxfordshire District Council had costed the three projects and asked the Parish Council to prioritise them. Following discussion, it was AGREED that South Oxfordshire District Council should be informed that the Parish Council would like the UK SPF funding of £131,000 to be used for the following projects:-

First Project. Install land drainage in the recreation ground (total area 8.27 acres) located at the rear of the Abbey Sports Centre, including replacing the drainage system located under one football pitch that was installed 20 years ago.

Second Project, subject to funds being available

Replace the BMX track with a pump track, possibly a scaled down version in order to use funds not required for the land drainage.

The Parish Council chose these two projects as they considered they would provide the most benefit for the residents of the village and the wider community. The drainage of the recreation ground will ensure that the area can be used for sport and community events throughout the year, whereas at the present time this is not possible due to the area becoming waterlogged during periods of bad weather.

If funding permits, the Parish Council considered that a scaled down version of the pump track would provide a new wheeled sport for young people.

The Parish Council considered that both projects would encourage residents of all ages to enjoy the benefits of being outside whether it is participating in team sports such as football, rugby, riding BMX bikes on the track, or just being spectators. The ability to use the recreation ground all year round will provide an opportunity for residents to consider forming teams to play other sports. The recreation ground is used for community events, but mainly in the summer due ground conditions, but the installation of drainage would allow the area to be used throughout the year.

The Parish Council had been asked by South Oxfordshire District Council if it could contribute funds towards the completion of the substitute projects, but as the budget for 2024-2025 has been agreed, the Parish Council does not have any funding available in the current financial year to contribute towards the projects .

The Parish Council was asked if it would be prepared to take responsibility for delivering the project before March 2025. The Parish Council agreed that it would be prepared to take responsibility, subject to the money from the UK SPF fund being available to the Parish Council before it had to pay contractors.

The Parish Council has already put an expression of interest in to South Oxfordshire District Council for funding from the CIL scheme to provide drainage in the recreation ground. South Oxfordshire District Council had asked the Parish Council to withdraw this if it received funding from the UK SPF scheme. The Parish Council agreed to inform South Oxfordshire District Council that it would prefer not to withdraw its expression of interest for CIL funding until it has confirmation that UK SPF funding would be available for the drainage installation.

As the land at the rear of the Abbey Sports Centre is leased by the Parish Council from Oxfordshire County Council, it was AGREED that Oxfordshire County Council should be asked for permission for drainage to be installed in the 8.27 acres of land at the rear of the Abbey Sports Centre, Berinsfield.

11. **Correspondence and Items for Information.**

a) Application for Grant Aid. The Parish Council considered an application for grant aid from the Berry Youth Centre for the following projects :-

i) The sum of £625.00 is required towards the cost of the Youth Centre's holiday scheme for young people to ensure they can continue to subsidise it and put on extra curricular activities through the school holidays.

ii) A further sum of £625.00 is required to assist with core costs of running the Youth Centre.

It was noted that the Berry Youth Centre had not submitted their accounts with their application. It was proposed by Councillor Chrisp, seconded by Councillor Scate and AGREED that the Berry Youth Centre should be awarded a grant of £1,000.00, subject to them providing a copy of their most recent accounts for the Parish Council's review at its next meeting on the 13th May, 2024.

b) **Defibrillator.** The Parish Council noted that the warranty was about to expire on the defibrillator located at the Dental Practice in Fane Drive. The defibrillator is still in working condition and the battery and pads are checked regularly and replaced within the time scales recommended by the manufacturers. All of the Parish Council's defibrillators have been provided with the assistance of grants and it was AGREED that the Clerk should be asked to apply for grant funding to enable the defibrillator to be replaced at the appropriate time.

c) **Vandalism in Berinsfield Burial Ground** The Parish Council noted that there had been incidents of vandalism in Berinsfield Burial Ground during the period 23rd – 25th March, 2024. Members were very sorry that this had happened and for the upset it had caused to many families living in the village who have relatives interred in the Burial Ground. The vandalism had been reported to Thames Valley Police by the Clerk and by residents. The gates to the Burial Ground are locked at night and there are CCTV cameras located at the site. The Parish Council discussed the possibility of the fence along the Fane Drive edge of the Burial Ground being repaired and as this is owned by South Oxfordshire District Council, an approach will be made to them in this respect. Information was provided by Councillor Scate at the meeting about a CCTV that will work without wifi and electricity and it was proposed by Councillor Chrisp, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Jones and AGREED that the Parish Council should purchase a camera at a cost of £150.00.

d) **Hatwells Fair.** The Parish Council was informed that Hatwells would like to bring their fair to Berinsfield from 17th – 24th June, 2024 and the fair would operate from Thursday 20th until Sunday 23rd June, 2024. The Parish Council AGREED that the fair can use the recreation ground from 17th – 24th June, 2024 subject to complying with the conditions contained in the Hire of the Recreation Ground agreement and paying the appropriate fee. Arrangements will be made to distribute letters to all properties in Lay Avenue and those in Evenlode Drive that face Lay Avenue to ask them to keep the road clear of vehicles on Monday 17th June and Monday 24th June to allow the fair vehicles to get to the recreation ground.

e) **Summer of Skate** The Parish Council AGREED that South Oxfordshire District Council can use the skateboard park in order to put on skateboarding events for young people on:-

1st August from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m.

23rd August from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m.

subject to complying with the conditions contained in the Hire of Recreation Ground agreement. There will be no charge for the use of the skateboard park.

f) **Oxfordshire County Council. New Disabled Persons Parking Place.** The Parish Council noted that a new disabled persons parking place will be created in Fane Drive, Berinsfield on the west side in the parking area adjacent to No. 2 Colne Drive.

g) **20 mph Speed Limit in Berinsfield.** The consultation on the proposal to make an order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to introduce a 20 mph speed limit within Berinsfield closed on 29th March, 2024. The proposed 20 mph speed limit will replace the existing 30 mph speed limit in the village. The 40 mph speed limit on the A4074 and A415 will remain unchanged.

h) **South Oxfordshire District Council – South Capital Grants 2023-24.** The Parish Council was informed that it had been awarded a grant of £4,305.00 by South Oxfordshire District Council towards the cost of providing a high slide in the Lodden Avenue play area. The quotation for the supply and installation of a tall slide and safety surface is £11,480.79 and it has already been agreed that the funding included in the budget for 2023-24 could be carried forward to 2024-25 due to the fact that the Parish Council would not be informed if it had been successful in obtaining the grant until April, 2024. It was AGREED that the grant acceptance form should be completed on behalf of the Parish Council and signed by the Clerk and Chairman.

i) **Flooding in South Oxfordshire.** The Parish Council has been contacted by the Vice-Chairman of Berrick Salome Parish Drainage Group, a recently formed group of Parish Councillors and Parishioners who are attempting to improve resilience to flooding across villages in South Oxfordshire. The group are investigating whether there is interest and potential mutual benefit for Councils to co-operate on drainage/flooding issues, possibly pooling experience, knowledge and some specific efforts to maximise effectiveness. The Parish Council agreed to complete and return the short questionnaire in the first instance and Councillor Mrs. Sweetland agreed to act as the Parish Council's representative at any subsequent meetings of the Group.

12. **Statement of accounts for payment in March and April, 2024** It was AGREED that the statement of accounts for payment in March 2024 in the sum of £9785.10 and April 2024 in the sum of £9262.85 should be approved.

13. **Bank statements.** The bank statements for March were circulated at the meeting and the balances were noted by the Parish Council.

14. **Items for report to Chairman.**

a) **Meeting regarding noise from motorcycles on the A4074.** Councillor Bunyan confirmed that he had been attending the joint meetings convened to discuss the noise from motorcycles on the A4074.

b) **Oxfordshire County Council Day.** Councillor Chrisp informed the meeting that he had attended the Oxfordshire County Council day at County Hall on 20th March, 2024.

15. **Date of next meeting – 13th May, 2024.**

16. **Confidential item.**

a) **Staffing matters.** To consider the salary scales for the Pavilion Caretaker and the Clerk to the Council.

