

MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF BERINSFIELD PARISH held on Monday 25th April, 2022.

PRESENT : Councillor Stuart Scott-Ely, Chairman of Berinsfield Parish Council
5 members of the public
Annette Loveland, Clerk to the Parish Council

1. Apologies for absence were received from Councillors. S. Crawford, E. Croft, S. Crawford, K. Chrisp, M. Light, M. Mundy

Councillor Stuart Scott-Ely thanked everyone present for attending the Annual meeting of the Parish of Berinsfield.

Councillor Stuart Scott-Ely stated that this was the first face to face meeting for two years as the meetings in 2020 and 2021 had to be held virtually due to the Coronavirus pandemic. He said that it was good to be able to welcome those present and he hoped they would use the opportunity to make known their comments and concerns about the village. He explained that the Parish Council may not be able to directly address all matters raised as they may involve other agencies, but that he would ensure that any issues that come under the remit of Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, SOHA Housing or other agencies, would be passed on to them.

2. **Councillor Stuart Scott-Ely gave a summary of the main topics from the last year.**

Berinsfield Parish Council. During the last year three Councillors resigned from the Parish Council, Mr. Steve Perkins, Mr. Danniell Smith and Mrs. Rose Stockford and the Parish Council was extremely grateful to them for all the work they carried out for the Council and residents during their term in office. The casual vacancies were advertised and Councillors Samuel Henry, Daniel Scate and Kyle Mundy were co-opted to fill the casual vacancies. All Councillors will remain in post until May 2023, when the Parish Council elections will be held.

Solar Farm Funds. The Parish Council has continued to provide the facilities requested by residents via the consultation carried out in Your Village Voice. Following the installation of the adult gym equipment, a scented meditation garden was constructed in the Burial Ground and a bench has also been installed. Further planting will be carried out in the scented meditation garden during the summer. The next project will be to improve the BMX track located on the recreation ground.

Village Litter Pick. A village litter pick was arranged by the Church of St. Mary and St. Berin in March, but unfortunately it was not particularly well supported. Further litter picks are planned during the year and will be run by other organisations based in the village. Dates will be publicised on the notice boards and on social media.

Trees During the storm in October 2021 and Storm Eunice in February, two very large Poplar trees were uprooted in the village. The first tree that fell in October caused damage to the pavilion railings and light in the car park. The railings have been repaired and the light will be repaired in the near future. The second tree fell on the open space outside the Glyme Drive houses and fortunately it did not cause any structural damage. The Parish Council has regular tree surveys carried out and pollarding work will be carried out to the remaining Poplar trees located along the path through the recreation ground in the near future. Neither incident could have been predicted and in both instances the trees were uprooted due to the very high winds.

Parking on pavements and grass verges. There continues to be a lack of car parking in the village, but parking on pavements causes problems for people using mobility scooters or pushing prams and buggies. By parking on the grass verges, particularly near to junctions, it causes visibility problems to drivers and could cause an accident if a driver's vision is obscured when pulling out from a junction. The Parish Council asks residents and visitors to please try to park considerately and not obstruct pavements or park on grass verges.

Civil car parking enforcement. Civil car parking enforcement in South Oxfordshire has now been taken over by Oxfordshire County Council from Thames Valley Police. This means parking offences in those areas typically enforced by the police become the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council. Wardens will now regularly visit the village and will issue penalty notices for parking violations relating to parking on double yellow lines, vehicles being illegally parking in disabled car parking bays without displaying a blue badge, loading restrictions and parking across dropped kerbs where there is a crossing point, with or without tactile paving.

Dogs fouling on public open spaces and pavements. The Parish Council has recently appointed new contractors to empty the 21 dog litter bins located in the village. The new contractors will be checking the condition of the bins and will report each month on the condition and the usage of the bin. The bins will be numbered and if residents find any problems with the bins, either damage or the bin overflowing, the Parish Council would be grateful if this could be reported to the Clerk (Clerk@berinsfield-pc.gov.uk) or 01869 354135 quoting the number that the contractor has put on the bin.

The Parish Council is not authorised to fine anybody who allows their dog to foul on an open space or pavement and the Council does not have staff to patrol the village to look out for offenders. South Oxfordshire District Council can take action with regard to dog owners who allow their dog to foul on an open space or on a pavement, but asks anybody who sees this to note down as many details as they can to be passed to them. The following information is required to assist South Oxfordshire District Council to commence an investigation:-

- location of incident
- description of person in charge of the dog
- description of the dog
- name and/or address of person in charge of the dog
- date and time of incident

South Oxfordshire District Council will need a written statement from anybody witnessing a dog owner not picking up their dog's mess. Upon receipt of the above information they will start an investigation that could lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued. The current fine is £50. If a person refuses to pay they can be taken to the local Magistrates Court for the dog fouling offence and fined up to £1,000. Reports can be passed to the Clerk to Berinsfield Parish Council or direct to South Oxfordshire District Council.

Hedges, shrubs and trees overhanging public footpaths. Occupiers of all properties are responsible for cutting back any hedges, shrubs or trees that grow in their garden to ensure that they do not overhang public footpaths and cause obstructions for pedestrians. This includes paths that are at the rear of properties as well as the paths at the front and sides of properties. Failure to keep the public footpaths clear will result in Oxfordshire County Council issuing letters asking for the hedge, shrub or tree to be cut back and if this is not done promptly, they can arrange for contractors to carry out the work and the occupier will be

responsible for paying for it. Residents' help and co-operation in keeping boundary hedges, shrubs, or trees cut back from public footpaths is very much appreciated.

Berinsfield Emergency Plan. The Berinsfield Emergency Plan is on the Parish Council's website and is updated as and when necessary. Comments from residents are always welcome as are any offers from residents who may have a 4 x 4 vehicle that could be used in severe weather conditions.

Pavilion. The pavilion is now eighteen years old and is still well used by the football clubs based in the village. The Pavilion has changing rooms, a kitchen and meeting room. Further information can be provided by the Parish Clerk, upon request and is published on the Parish Council's website, www.berinsfield-pc.gov.uk

Website

The Parish Council's website, www.Berinsfield-pc.gov.uk is available for use by any organisation in the village. The Parish Council relies on information being passed to the Clerk either in writing or via email in order that it can be included on the website. Information from the Parish Council and other organisations is also placed on the two notice boards in the village, one outside the Information Centre on Fane Drive and the other just inside the gates of the Burial Ground.

Financial Report

A copy of the Income and Expenditure account for 2020-21 had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The accounts for the year 2021-22 are currently being reviewed by the Internal Auditor and should be submitted to the Parish Council for approval at its meeting on 9th May 2022. The accounts will be available for inspection with effect from 5th June 2022 and details of the dates will be posted on the Parish Council's notice boards and website. The accounts will be put on the Parish Council's website following the external audit

Council Tax 2022-23

The Parish Council did not increase its precept for the year 2021-22 but agreed to increase it from £124,500 to £126,990 for the year 2022-23. The money raised from the precept is used to provide the services carried out by the Parish Council in the village. The Parish Council is responsible for providing and maintaining the following facilities in the village :-

- The recreation ground and small open spaces areas in Kennett Close
- The play areas
- The pavilion
- Burial Ground
- Litter bins on land owned or leased by Parish Council
- Dog litter bins in the village
- Bus shelters
- Open spaces leased from South Oxfordshire District Council
- Allotments

Grant Aid

The Parish Council has been pleased to award grants to voluntary organisations in the village recently. In awarding the grants the Parish Council acknowledges the tremendous amount of commitment from the many volunteers and staff of the organisations it has supported.

3. **County Councillor's Report.** County Councillor Robin Bennett had prepared a written report which had been circulated to all present at the meeting and is available on the Parish Council's website, www.berinsfield-pc.gov.uk

4. **District Councillor's Report.** District Councillor Robin Bennett had prepared a written report which had been circulated to all present at the meeting and is available on the Parish Council's website www.berinsfield-pc.gov.uk

The meeting closed at 7.30 p.m.