

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BERINSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL held on Monday 6th June, 2022 in the Church Hall, Wimblestraw Road, Berinsfield, Oxon.

PRESENT : Councillor S. Scott-Ely Chairman
Councillor P. Bridge
Councillor K. Chrisp
Councillor B. Fearneyhough
Councillor Mrs. A. Jones

Also present:
Annette Loveland, Clerk to the Council
One member of the public

1. Items raised by Members of the Public

a) School bus service. A member of the public attended the meeting to inform the Parish Council about problems being encountered with regard to the school bus service. The member of the public who attended stated that she pays £890.00 per annum to get one child to Fitzharry's School in Abingdon. Recently there have been problems with the bus not turning up on time to take the pupils to the Abingdon Schools. Oxfordshire County Council are aware of this and it appears that the bus operator, Charlton Services, is short of drivers and another bus company has been brought in for a temporary period to help out. The pupils are getting to their schools late. The member of the public who attended the meeting informed the Parish Council that she has to pay for her child to travel on the bus due to the fact that Fitzharry's is not a catchment area school. When choosing a school for her child she put her preferred choices as Didcot Girls School and Wallingford School. She did not specify a third choice. As the two schools of choice were over-subscribed, the child was allocated Fitzharry's school and as such her parent has to pay for her school travel. Pupils attending John Mason school do not have to pay to travel.

The member of the public informed the meeting that she works and has to leave the village before the school bus picks her child up. Due to the bus now running late on a regular basis the child is on her own in the village and has to contact her mother at work in order to get her to contact the school to inform them that she will be late. The Parish Council agreed that this was not acceptable and agreed to refer the matter to County Councillor Robin Bennett to inform him of the problems with the school bus service and also to ask him to make enquiries as to why parents who have children at Fitzharry's school have to pay for transport when parents who have children at John Mason school do not have to.

b) Jubilee Colour Fun Run. Councillor Bridge informed Members that Reverend Teresa Stewart-Sykes had asked him to thank the Parish Council for making the funding available for the purchase of the colour used during the fun run on Thursday 2nd June.

c) Rugby. Councillor Bridge informed the meeting that he had been asked whether there was any possibility of rugby being played on the recreation ground and whether it would be possible for rugby posts to be erected, as a trial, to see what interest there would be in playing rugby in the village. The Parish Council had already agreed to arrange a meeting of the Pavilion Committee in order to discuss use of the pavilion and recreation ground and it was agreed that an invitation should be extended to anybody who might be interested in the possibility of setting up a rugby club in the village.

2. **Apologies for absence** were noted from Councillors Bunyan, Crawford, Croft, Henry and Scate.

3. **Declaration of Interests.** Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests under consideration at the meeting.

4. **County Councillor's Report.** County Councillor Robin Bennett had prepared a written report, which had been circulated to Members of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council noted the contents of the report and in particular the item about £10.4 million being awarded for active travel improvements in Oxfordshire that will support infrastructure improvements across the county, including £400,000 for feasibility work on the Berinsfield-Oxford link and £237,500 for the School Streets programme.

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

Members noted the contents of the report, including the information about the virtual meeting between Officers from South Oxfordshire District Council, representatives from Berinsfield Parish Council and Mr. Neil Homer to discuss whether a new Neighbourhood Development Plan could be funded from the Garden Village grant scheme and if so, how it could be used to work alongside the Garden Village scheme. A further meeting is planned for 15th June when a proposal from Mr. Neil Homer will be available for discussion.

Councillor Chrisp referred to the item about EV chargers in Council car parks and said that he had visited the Wallingford site in the Cattlemarket car park.

It was AGREED that District Councillor Robin Bennett should be thanked for preparing the reports, which are available on the Parish Council's website, www.berinsfield-pc.gov.uk

6. **To receive and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th May, 2022.** It was AGREED that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th May, 2022 should be APPROVED.

7. **To consider planning applications and decisions received to date.**

a) **Planning application No. P22/S1922/PDH** Single storey rear extension, depth 6 m, height 3.29m, height to eaves 2.79m. 73 Fane Drive, Berinsfield, OX10 7NF The Parish Council noted that the Planning Officer is currently processing this notification that seeks a determination from the District Council as to whether their prior approval is required for an extension which could be built under the new permitted development rights. The Parish Council noted that it was not able to comment on the application.

8. **Casual Vacancy on Berinsfield Parish Council.** The Parish Council noted that the casual vacancy has been advertised and that the Electoral Services Officer from the District Council will notify the Parish Council on 17th June if an election has been called. If an election has not been called on that date, the Parish Council can advertise the vacancy for co-option.

9. Correspondence and Items for Information.

a) **20 mph Speed Limit.** At the meeting of Berinsfield Parish Council held on Monday 9th May, it was agreed that discussion on this matter should be deferred until the next meeting to enable Members to consider whether there are any areas in Berinsfield that would benefit from having a 20 mph speed limit.

The Parish Council considered that the provision of a village speed limit was possibly a matter for the Berinsfield Garden Village Team to look at in the future, but in the meantime, it was AGREED that Berinsfield Parish Council should not apply to Oxfordshire County Council for 20 mph speed limits in any areas of the village.

b) **Oxfordshire Code of Conduct.** The Parish Council noted the information contained in the agenda regarding the new model Code of Conduct and a copy of the document had also been circulated to Members with their agenda. It was proposed by Councillor Bridge, seconded by Councillor Chrisp and AGREED that Berinsfield Parish Council should adopt the Oxfordshire Code of Conduct for its use with effect from 6th June, 2022. Copies of the Code of Conduct will be circulated to all Members of the Parish Council and the Code of Conduct will be posted on the Parish Council's website.

c) **Neighbouring Parish Council Joint Committee – HIF1** Berinsfield Parish Council had been invited to appoint representatives to attend the virtual meeting of the Neighbouring Parish Council Joint Committee. Councillor Stuart Scott-Ely had attended the meeting as a guest and he gave the Parish Council a brief report about the aims of the Joint Committee. The Parish Council was asked if it wished to consider joining the Neighbouring Parish Council Joint Committee. The general opinion of the Parish Council was that it was not against the plans to construct the new road and it was AGREED that the Chairman of the Neighbouring Parish Council Joint Committee should be informed that the overwhelming view of the community is to support the new road network as this will become even more important to Berinsfield when the strategic allocation of 1700 new homes are built.

d) **Briefing on Oxford Transport Plans.** It was AGREED that Councillor Stuart Scott-Ely would join the virtual meeting to be held on 8th June 2022.

e) **Financial Controls.** The Parish Council discussed improving its financial control mechanisms as recommended by the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils and the Parish Council's internal auditor. It was AGREED that with effect from 6th June 2022 original copies of the monthly bank statements for the Parish Council's three accounts will be made available for inspection by all Councillors at each Parish Council meeting.

f) **South Oxfordshire Councillor's Grant Scheme.** The Parish Council noted that South Oxfordshire District Council has launched a new round of funding from the Councillor Community Grants Scheme. The Parish Council would like to provide a flag pole in the village and it was AGREED that quotations should be obtained and an application should be submitted for funding from the South Oxfordshire Councillor's Grant Scheme towards the cost of this.

g) **Neighbourhood Development Plan** The Parish Council noted the information contained in the agenda regarding the virtual meetings with representatives from the Parish Council and Mr. Neil Homer, the Parish Council's retained Neighbourhood Development Plan Consultant and with representatives from South Oxfordshire District

Council, the Parish Council and Mr. Neil Homer with regard to the possibility of obtaining funding from the Garden Village grant scheme to enable the Parish Council to prepare a new version of the Berinsfield Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Mr. Homer suggested that the Parish Council should consider making a grant application to Locality towards the cost of preparing a new Neighbourhood Development Plan as well as submitting an application to the Berinsfield Garden Village Grant scheme.

The Parish Council considered this suggestion and it was AGREED that the Clerk should be authorised to submit an application to Locality for funding towards the cost of preparing a new Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Parish Council was informed that a further meeting with Officers from South Oxfordshire District Council and Mr. Neil Homer was planned to take place on 15th June, 2022 and it was AGREED that the Chairman, Councillor Stuart Scott-Ely and the Clerk should be authorised to attend the meeting with the aim of trying to get a meaningful support package for a Berinsfield Neighbourhood Development Plan, version 2.

h) **County Wide Renewable Energy Strategy.** The Chairman of CPRE South Oxfordshire has contacted Berinsfield Parish Council to ask if it would support a county wide renewable energy strategy for the location of renewable energy as more of Oxfordshire's farmland is targeted by solar companies. The Parish Council discussed this and it was AGREED that the Chairman of CPRE South Oxfordshire, should be informed that Berinsfield Parish Council support the case for a county-wide renewable energy strategy.

10. **Statement of accounts for payment in June.** The statement of accounts for payment in June in the sum of £10,670.01 was APPROVED by the Parish Council.

11. **To inspect the Parish Council's bank statements.** Councillors noted the balances shown on the bank statements for May, 2022 for the Parish Council's three accounts.

12. **Items of report to the Chairman.**

a) **Overgrown hedges.** Councillor Chrisp reported that the hedges at the following properties were overhanging public footpaths. 55 and 59 Evenlode Drive and 12 Cherwell Road. The information will be reported to the relevant agencies.

b) **Dip in a footpath.** Councillor Chrisp reported that there was a large dip in the footpath at the side of 33 Cherwell Road.

c) **Rubbish behind the Village Inn, Fane Drive.** It was reported that there was a substantial amount of rubbish in and around a bin in the car park of the Village Inn, Berinsfield. As this is private property, it was AGREED that a letter should be sent to the owner of the property to ask for his co-operation in getting the rubbish removed.

d) **Tree Stump Glyme Drive.** The Clerk was asked to contact Complete Tree Services with a view to getting the remainder of the stump from the fallen tree removed.

e) **Funding for Civic purposes.** Councillor Mrs. Jones asked the Parish Council to consider including funds in its budget for 2023-24 for Civic purposes. It was AGREED that the sum of £2,000 should be included in the Parish Council's budget for 2023-24 for Civic purposes.

f) **Bollards in Fane Drive and around the car parking area by the Library, Berin Centre and Sports Centre.** Councillor Bridge informed the meeting that he and the Clerk had met with an Officer from Oxfordshire County Council Highway's Department to look at various highway issues in Berinsfield. The bollards in Fane Drive near to the Church and shops will be replaced with bollards made of more suitable material and the bollards around the edge of the car parking area near the Library, Sports Centre and Berin Centre will be removed and the holes filled in.

13. Date of next Parish Council meeting – 4th July, 2022

