

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BERINSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2024 at 7.15 p.m. in the Church Hall, Wimblestraw Road, Berinsfield, Oxon.**

**PRESENT** Councillor P. Bridge Vice Chairman – in the Chair  
Councillor I. Bunyan  
Councillor S. Crawford  
Councillor Mrs. A. Head  
Councillor Mrs. A. Jones  
Councillor D. Scate  
Councillor A. Woodington

Ms. Sarah Wilson, SOHA Housing  
Ms. Emma Langstaff, SOHA Housing  
District and County Councillor Robin Bennett  
Annette Loveland, Clerk to the Council  
Four members of the public

1. Items raised by Members of the public

**a) Presentation by Ms. Sarah Wilson from SOHA Housing regarding consultations on proposals for open space areas owned by SOHA Housing.**

**i) Triangular shaped open space area in Lodden Avenue.** Sarah informed the meeting of proposals to create a pocket park, including some benches and litter bins, wild flowers and bulbs, on the triangular shaped open space located in Lodden Avenue. Residents present at the meeting expressed their concerns about having benches in the area as it could encourage use of the area in the evenings. Sarah noted their concerns and agreed that benches would not be installed in the area. Wild flowers and bulbs would be planted and one litter bin would be installed. The area will be maintained by SOHA Housing's ground maintenance contractors, who will also empty the litter bin regularly. The benches that were proposed to be installed in the open space will be located elsewhere in the village.

**ii) Pétanque court.** There are proposals to create a Pétanque court on the open space area between Wey Road and Leach Road, which is accessed from Fane Drive. The surface of the court would be fine gravel. SOHA Housing will provide some sets of Boules to be collected from a central point in the village and the families living in the houses around the open space will be provided with sets for their use. Councillor Bridge expressed concern as to how the gravel would be kept clean and the Council was informed that SOHA Housing's ground maintenance contractors would be responsible for this. Sarah informed the Parish Council that the residents living around the open space were in favour of the proposal to create the court.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Bridge, thanked Sarah and Emma for attending the meeting and making the presentation.

**b) Christmas Tree.** One of the residents present at the meeting stated that one of the Christmas Trees planted at the junction of Fane Drive and Burcot Lane was not very healthy. The Vice-Chairman informed the meeting that the Parish Council would inspect the tree and if necessary, arrange for a replacement tree to be planted.

c) **Donation of a bench for the Burial Ground.** A request was received from a resident who wished to donate a bench to be sited in the Burial Ground. The Clerk informed the meeting that there are currently two empty concrete bases along the peripheral path in the Burial Ground where benches have had to be removed for safety reasons. It would therefore be possible to accept a donation of a new bench. The Parish Council thanked the resident for his donation and he confirmed he would make arrangements to purchase and install the new bench in the Burial Ground.

d) **Shop and flats located at the junction of Fane Drive and Chiltern Close, Berinsfield.** A resident provided photographs of furniture and rubbish which has been deposited at the rear of the premises located at the junction of Fane Drive and Chiltern Close. The yard at the rear of the premises adjoins the residential area of Chiltern Close and the items are visible to residents and visitors to Chiltern Close. South Oxfordshire District Council has been informed of the problem and is taking relevant action to try to get the owner of the premises to clear the furniture and rubbish from the area.

2. **Apologies for absence** were received from Councillors Scott-Ely, Eltham and Mrs. Sweetland.

3. **Declarations of interest.** There were no declarations of interest in items listed on the agenda for the meeting.

4. **County Councillor's report.** County Councillor Robin Bennett had prepared a written report, which was circulated to all present at the meeting. The contents of the report were noted by those present at the meeting.

County Councillor Robin Bennett informed the Parish Council that he had attended meetings at County Hall regarding the school transport scheme and understood that there should not be any problems for residents of Berinsfield during the next school year. He asked that he should be informed if any residents encounter problems with the school transport system with effect from September, 2024. [Robin.bennett@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Robin.bennett@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

5. **District Councillor's Report.** District Councillor Robin Bennett had prepared a written report, which was circulated to all present at the meeting. It was noted that South Oxfordshire District Council has become a registered social landlord for the first time since 1997 when the District Council's housing stock was transferred to SOHA Housing.

The Councillor Community Grant Scheme will open on 14<sup>th</sup> August. Funds can be used to support local "not for profit" organisations whose work benefits residents, now also including Parish Councils.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Bridge mentioned the Housing Survey that has recently been sent to all residents in the village and said that he hoped residents would take the time to complete it and return it.

Councillor Crawford referred to the need for another access to the village when the Mount Farm development commences. District Councillor Bennett informed the meeting that comments would be able to be made on this when the planning application was out for consultation.

Copies of the District and County Councillor reports are available on the Parish Council's website, [https://www.berinsfield-pc.gov.uk/Full\\_Council\\_32260.aspx](https://www.berinsfield-pc.gov.uk/Full_Council_32260.aspx)

6. **To receive and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2024.** It was AGREED that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2024 should be APPROVED.

7. **To consider planning applications receive to date**

a) **Planning application P24/S2449/AG Extension to agricultural storage building, Land at Wally Corner, Dorchester Road, Berinsfield.** The Parish Council considered this application and it was AGREED that South Oxfordshire District Council should be informed that the Parish Council support the application.

8. **UK SPF Funding for Berinsfield. Design and construction of a new pump track. Design and construction of an extension to the existing skateboard park. Repairs to the existing skateboard park.**

a) Deed between South Oxfordshire District Council and Berinsfield Parish Council in respect of a grant of £151,460 being UK Shared Prosperity Funding to carry out the design and construction of a new pump track and design and construction of an extension to the existing skateboard park and repairs to the existing skateboard park. It was proposed by Councillor Scate, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Jones and RESOLVED that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk should be authorised to sign the deed on behalf of the Parish Council to accept the funding of £151,460 from South Oxfordshire District Council.

b) Standard Conditions for Grants. It was proposed by Councillor Woodington, seconded by Councillor Scate and AGREED that the Vice-Chairman and Clerk should be authorised to sign the Standard Conditions for Grants document on behalf of the Parish Council.

9. **Abbey Woods Spinney.**

a) Grant from South Oxfordshire District Council of £6,000 for the creation of a pocket park in Abbey Woods Spinney and a grant of £1,368 for the purchase and planting of Hornbeam trees on side of path leading from the Pavilion to the Library and Flowering Cherry trees at the rear of the War Memorial.

b) Allocation of CIL funding of £3,000 for the creation of a pocket park and forest school space at Abbey Woods Spinney. The funds are to cover the costs associated with project planning, materials, labour and any other necessary expenses related to the implementation of the initiatives.

It was proposed by Councillor Crawford, seconded by Councillor Mrs. Head and AGREED that the Vice-Chairman and Clerk should be authorised to sign the grant and CIL offers on behalf of the Parish Council.

c) Abbey Woods Spinney project. The Parish Council considered the information contained in an email from Hendriette Knouws, Garden Communities Project Manager regarding the design and construction of the proposed Abbey Woods Spinney project, as per the plan circulated to all members of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council considered the plan of the landscape proposals for the Abbey Woods Spinney area and did not make any further comments on this.

The members of the Parish Council who were present at the on-line meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, called to discuss this project, pointed out that it was not agreed that the community should be involved with the construction work. The construction work should be carried out by contractors and any community involvement should take place when the groundwork was in place and consist of cosmetic type work and possibly making the Willow panels.

It was AGREED that this information should be relayed to the Garden Communities Project Manager in the first instance before discussing the proposals for Leaves of Green to be involved with co-ordinating the materials and delivery and supervising a community build.

The Parish Council also considered that the tree works should be carried out by qualified tree surgeons and will request more information about the works that have been recommended.

**10. Berinsfield Neighbourhood Development Plan.** The Parish Council noted that the Berinsfield Neighbourhood Development Plan has been submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council. The submission consultation commenced on the 25<sup>th</sup> July and will run until 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2024. The Vice-Chairman encouraged Members and residents to view the Plan on the Parish Council's website, [www.berinsfield-pc.gov.uk](http://www.berinsfield-pc.gov.uk) or to look at the hard copy that is on deposit in Berinsfield Library.

**11. Berinsfield Health and Wellbeing Grant Scheme.** It was noted that the Parish Council is currently seeking to recruit two volunteers to sit on the Grants Panel. An advertisement has been placed in The Village Voice asking for any interested parties to contact the [Clerk@berinsfield-pc.gov.uk](mailto:Clerk@berinsfield-pc.gov.uk)

**12. Correspondence and items for information.**

a) **Berinsfield Local History Group.** The Library Manager has informed the Parish Council that she will be leaving her post at the end of August and has asked for the Council's help in maintaining the momentum of holding the very successful meetings of the Berinsfield Local History Group. The Library Manager has informed the Parish Council that Mr. Bill King would be prepared to give a talk about Mount Farm. This would incur a fee of £50 for the speaker and £50 for the hire of the Berinsfield Community Association premises. Mr. Marc Hiles has also expressed his willingness to speak at a meeting in October or November and then regular members of the Group should be able to arrange speakers for 2025. The Parish Council noted that the Library Manager had suggested that perhaps some meetings could be held in the evening to encourage more participants and that voluntary contributions could be requested to help pay for the hire of the Berinsfield Community Association premises.

The Parish Council was informed by the Clerk that there was a small balance left in the grant aid budget for 2024-25 and it was proposed by Councillor Bunyan, seconded by Councillor Scate and AGREED that the sum of £100.00 should be allocated for the use of the Berinsfield Local History Group to book Mr. Bill King to speak about Mount Farm and to hire the Berinsfield Community Association premises as a venue.

**13. Statement of Accounts for Payment.** It was AGREED that the statement of accounts for payment in August 2024 in the sum of £14,094.34 should be APPROVED.

**14. Bank Statements.** The bank statements for July were circulated at the meeting. The balances were noted and the reconciliation for the current account signed by the Vice-Chairman.

**15. Items of Report to Chairman.**

a) **Request for double yellow lines to be installed on the bend located opposite Corrigan Gym.** Councillor Woodington asked if it would be possible for the Parish Council to ask Oxfordshire County Council to install double yellow lines in Fane Drive on the bend located opposite the Corrigan Gym. Vehicles are regularly parked on the bend and it severely restricts visibility for drivers who cannot see oncoming vehicles. It was AGREED that a request should be made to Oxfordshire County Council to ask them to assess the area with a view to installing double yellow lines.

**16. Date of next meeting – 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024**

**17. Confidential Item**

a) Recruitment of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

