

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BERINSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL held on Monday
6th January 2025 at 7.15 p.m. in the Church Hall, Wimblestraw Road, Berinsfield, Oxon.

PRESENT : Councillor S. Scott-Ely - Chairman
Councillor P. Bridge
Councillor I. Bunyan
Councillor K. Chrisp
Councillor T. Eltham
Councillor Mrs. A. Jones
Councillor D. Scate
Councillor Mrs. L. Sweetland

Also present :-
One member of the public
District and County Councillor Robin Bennett
Annette Loveland – Locum Clerk

1. Items raised by Members of the public.

a) **Footway in Wimblestraw Road, Berinsfield.** A member of the public attended the meeting to inform the Parish Council that her husband had fallen on the footway in Wimblestraw Road and had been injured as a result of this. This matter had previously been reported to the Clerk, who had contacted Oxfordshire County Council Highways Department to ask for the path to be inspected and for repairs to be carried out. The Highways Department has informed the Parish Council that the path will be considered for future slurry sealing works, but no date has been specified for this. The Parish Council agreed to contact the Highways Department again to ask if the works could be expedited due to the poor condition of the path.

b) **Footpaths and Bridleway requiring maintenance.** Members of the Parish Council reported that the Roman Road, through the centre of the recreation ground, was very uneven and that large cracks were appearing. It was also reported that the footpath alongside Fane Drive, leading from the junction of Colwell Road to Green Furlong, was in a poor condition and required attention. It was agreed that these matters should be reported to Oxfordshire County Council, Highways Engagement Team.

2. **Apologies for absence** were received from Councillors Mrs. Beeby, Crawford and Woodington.

3. **Declarations of Interest.** There were no declarations of interest on items contained in the agenda.

4. **County Councillor's Report.** County Councillor Robin Bennett had prepared a written report and this had been circulated to all those present at the meeting.

a) HIF1 The Parish Council noted the following information regarding the approval of the HIF1 scheme, subject to a number of conditions.

- the dualling of the A4130 carriageway (A4130 Widening) from the Milton Gate Junction eastwards, including the construction of three roundabouts;
- a road bridge over the Great Western Mainline (Didcot Science Bridge) and realignment of the A4130 north east of the proposed road bridge including the relocation of a lagoon; how

- construction of a new road between Didcot and Culham (Didcot to Culham River Crossing) including the construction of three roundabouts, a road bridge over the Appleford railway sidings and road bridge over the River Thames;
- construction of a new road between the B4015 and A415 (Clifton Hampden bypass), including the provision of one roundabout and associated junctions; and
- controlled crossings, footways and cycleways, landscaping, lighting, noise barriers and sustainable drainage systems.

Councillor Bridge asked if there was any information about the £1m funding that was secured by Oxfordshire County Council through the Housing and Growth Deal to investigate future changes to the Golden Balls Roundabout. County Councillor Robin Bennett informed the meeting that he did not have any information regarding this.

b) Local Government Reform. County Councillor Robin Bennett informed the Parish Council about the proposals to reform local councils. County Councils in two-tier areas have until 10th January to write to the Government stating how they wish to proceed. Oxfordshire County Council is meeting on 9th January to discuss this. The proposals may mean that the County Council elections due in May 2025 have to be postponed.

c) 20 mph Speed Limit in Berinsfield. Councillor Bridge asked what the next step would be to ensure compliance with the 20 mph speed limit now it is in place in Berinsfield. County Councillor Robin Bennett suggested that the Parish Council should liaise with Thames Valley Police with regard to obtaining speed watch equipment that could be used by Parish Councillors and other members of the community to check the speed of vehicles in the village.

d) Oxfordshire County Council Minerals and Waste Plan. Councillor Bridge enquired if the new Minerals and Waste Plan would be considered prior to construction starting on HIF1. County Councillor Robin Bennett informed the meeting that Oxfordshire County Council should be progressing with the plan, but have not yet started the consultation.

5. **District Councillor's Report** District Councillor Robin Bennett had prepared a written report and it was circulated to all those present at the meeting.

a) Joint Local Plan District Councillor Robin Bennett informed the meeting that the Joint Local Plan has been submitted and examiners have been appointed. The District Council is waiting to be informed of the date of the hearing.

b) Regeneration meeting held on 10th December, 2024. Councillor Stuart Scott-Ely informed Members of the Parish Council that he had forwarded historic documents to South Oxfordshire District Council relating to proposals for the strategic land review and other schemes that have not proceeded in the village. He also mentioned that leases between the Parish Council and South Oxfordshire District Council for land in Berinsfield have not been renewed and that he would raise this matter at the Berinsfield Garden Village Steering Group meeting to be held on the 8th January, 2025.

c) Performing Arts Grants. District Councillor Bennett advised that organisations in Berinsfield should consider applying for grants to enhance the cultural landscape and improve the quality of life for residents in Berinsfield. Details can be found on the website www.southoxon.gov.uk/grants.

The Chairman, Councillor Stuart Scott-Ely thanked County and District Councillor Robin Bennett for providing the reports and for attending the meeting. The reports 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 2nd December, 2024. It was proposed by Councillor Mrs. Jones, seconded by Councillor Scate, and AGREED that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2nd December, 2024, should be APPROVED.

7. To consider planning applications and decisions.

a) **Planning application P24/S3847/HH** Erection of two-storey side extension and replacement of existing tile hanging with cladding at 33 B Cherwell Road, Berinsfield OX10 7PB The Parish Council considered this application and it was AGREED that South Oxfordshire District Council should be informed that Berinsfield Parish Council have no strong views on the application, but consider that the Case Officer should visit the site to view historic development that has already taken place to ensure that it complies with current legislation.

b) **Planning application P24/S3615/FUL Extension to skatepark and construction of hard surfaced pump track at Berinsfield Recreation Ground, Lay Avenue, Berinsfield, OX10 7NX.** The Parish Council considered this application and it was AGREED that South Oxfordshire District Council should be informed that

a) Berinsfield Parish Council consider this application should be approved.

b) An extensive consultation was carried out with the young people in the village who confirmed they wanted the facilities. The projects are being funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, via South Oxfordshire District Council, and are conditional on being used by 31st March, 2025.

c) The Parish Council noted the comments made by Thames Valley Police and is not aware of any reports of anti-social behaviour in this area. It would be very embarrassing for all concerned should the application be refused.

c) **Planning application P24/S4020/S73 Variation of condition 3 (Temporary Permission) on application P15/S2486/FUL – to adjust the proposed operational lifespan of the project from 25 years to 40 years. (Construction and operation of a solar photovoltaic farm including perimeter fencing, inverter and transformer stations, below ground cabling, CCTV substation internal access road and landscaping/biodiversity enhancements) Solar Farm, Burcot Lane, Berinsfield, Wallingford OX10 7PG** The Parish Council considered this application and it was AGREED that South Oxfordshire District Council should be informed that Berinsfield Parish Council are generally supportive of the application. It would however, be beneficial if the applicants could visit the site to ensure that the fencing and ditch are maintained.

8. Contracts for the works to the Skateboard Park and Pump Track. The contract documents relating to the extension to the Skateboard Park and for the construction of the Pump Track have been amended in accordance with requests made by the Parish Council. The Parish Council was informed that the works can only take place if planning permission is granted and it was AGREED that the Chairman, Councillor Scott-Ely should be authorised to sign the contract document with Bendcrete Leisure Ltd for the extension to the Skateboard Park and with Clark and Kent for the construction of the Pump Track.

+9. **Abbey Woods Spinney.**

a) Budget and tree planting. Hendriette Knouwds, the Garden Communities Project Manager at South Oxfordshire District Council had emailed a revised budget for the works to be carried out in the Spinney. The Chairman reported the information to the Parish Council. The Parish Council noted that approximately £600 will still be available from the total budget of £9,000 to purchase and plant two Scots Pine trees, to comply with the replacement planting condition contained in the consent letter from South Oxfordshire District Council, dated 9th December, 2024, relating to works to trees in the Spinney protected by Tree Preservation Order No. 09S156.

b) Use of Abbey Woods Spinney area. Councillor Mrs. Alison Jones commented that the Abbey Woods Spinney should be available for community use first and foremost. The running of Forest School classes would be in addition to this. If the Forest School classes are to be run on a commercial basis, the Parish Council will require the organisers to enter into an appropriate licence and to take full responsibility for ensuring that the area to be used is litter picked and fit for purpose before use.

c) Request for storage facilities for tools to be used by volunteers. The Parish Council was informed that alternative arrangements have now been made for the storage of tools in the village.

10. Postal address for Clerk and RFO to the Council. The Parish Council was informed that the postal address for Alex Marasco, Clerk and RFO to the Council is Berinsfield Parish Council, PO Box 4987, Swindon DO, SN3 9GQ.

11. Date for meeting of the Allotments, Playing Fields, Open Spaces, Burial Ground and Skateboard Park Committee. It was AGREED that the next meeting of the Allotments, Playing Fields, Open Spaces, Burial Ground and Skateboard Park Committee should be held on Wednesday 5th February, 2025 at 7 p.m. in the Pavilion, Lay Avenue, Berinsfield.

12. Social Media. It was AGREED that the Clerk should investigate setting up a social media page for Berinsfield Parish Council.

13. Method of receiving Agendas, Minutes and Correspondence. The Parish Council AGREED that all Agendas, Minutes and Correspondence should be sent out electronically, but that Councillors should notify the Clerk if they require paper copies.

14. Interim Internal Audit. It was noted that an interim internal audit is currently being carried out by Theresa Goss, Internal Auditor. Councillor Mrs. Sweetland AGREED to verify the bank reconciliations with the statements at the time the former Clerk hands over the duties to Alex Marasco. The reconciliations for the three accounts as at 31st December, 2024 were verified and signed by Councillor Mrs. Sweetland at the meeting.

15. Berinsfield Health and Wellbeing Grants Panel Meeting. The Parish Council was informed that, at the request of Nicky Wyer, grants have been paid to the recipients. Councillors Dan Scate and Mrs. Alison Jones gave a brief report about the grant allocations procedure. The Chairman, Councillor Stuart Scott-Ely, thanked Councillor Dan Scate and Mrs. Alison Jones for agreeing to sit on the Grant Panel and for participating in the awarding of the grants.

16. Berinsfield Neighbourhood Development Plan Referendum. The Parish Council noted that the referendum will be held on 6th February, 2025. For further information please see <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/local-plan-and-planning-policies/neighbourhood-plans/emerging-neighbourhood-plans/berinsfield-neighbourhood-plan/>

17. Correspondence and Items for Information.

a) **Pétanque Court.** The Parish Council noted that the Garden Communities Project Manager from South Oxfordshire District Council and representatives from SOHA Housing, the owners of the open space where the proposed Pétanque is located, would be meeting urgently to discuss the project.

b) **Berinsfield Regeneration Strategy.** The Parish Council has been informed that a further consultation is being carried out by South Oxfordshire District Council in connection with the Berinsfield Regeneration Strategy. The consultation should be launched by 10th January, 2025 and the closing date for receipt of responses is 4th February 2025. Although Parish Councillors will be able to submit their own responses, it was AGREED that a Parish Council response should be submitted and that the Clerk should email the survey documents to all Councillors and collate responses to prepare a Parish Council response.

c) **Installation of new benches.** The Parish Council noted that the seven Keyston Benches from Wicksteed Leisure would be delivered and installed in February 2025. The Parish Council would like to know when the benches will be delivered in order that representatives from the Council can meet with the Installation Team to confirm where the benches should be installed.

d) **Parking at the Health Centre and Pharmacy.** It was noted that the Health Centre and Pharmacy have been contacted to ask if they can advise delivery drivers not to park on the pavements. Councillor Bunyan reported that a member of staff from the Health Centre had been seen speaking to a delivery driver, who then moved his vehicle to the other side of Fane Drive.

e) **Footpath in Glyme Drive.** The Parish Council noted that Oxfordshire County Council Highways Department have visited Glyme Drive to inspect the footpath and arrangements are being made to carry out repairs.

f) **Men in Sheds.** The Parish Council had been asked by staff at the Berin Centre if it had a site at the pavilion that might be suitable to locate a shed for the Men in Sheds scheme. It was AGREED that a site meeting should be convened between representatives from the Berin Centre and the Parish Council to discuss this request in more detail.

g) **Clerk's Training.** The Parish Council noted that the Clerk had completed his Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration training. He is also undertaking the Introduction to Local Council Administration training.

h) **CCTV Camera.** The Parish Council noted the information provided by a resident about a CCTV camera being located on a pole by the Roman Road to the north of the village. The camera has since been removed.

i) **Commemorative Plate.** It was noted the Clerk is awaiting a response from the Library Manager as to whether the Commemorative Plate that was presented to the village by the relatives of the American Airmen who served at Mount Farm during World War II could be displayed in the Library.

j) **Meeting with Mr. Freddie Van Mierlo, MP.** Members of the Parish Council AGREED that they would like to meet with Mr. Freddie Van Mierlo at the Pavilion in Lay Avenue on Friday 11th April 2025. Mr. Van Mierlo's office will be contacted to make the arrangements.

k) **Repairs to Play Equipment, Lodden Avenue and Lay Avenue play areas.** It was AGREED that the quotations received from Wicksteed Leisure Ltd. for the supply and installation of parts required to maintain the play equipment in the sum of

Lodden Avenue Play Area £968.17 plus VAT

Lay Avenue Play Area £447.76 plus VAT

should be accepted and an order placed with Wicksteed Leisure for the works to be carried out.

l) Bank Mandate and signing instructions. The Parish Council AGREED that Alex Marasco should be added to the Berinsfield Parish Council bank mandate and that the signing instructions should be amended to specify that all payments should be authorised by a second signatory. The names of retired Councillors will be removed from the mandate.

m) Traffic Regulation Notice, Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. It was noted that Drayton St. Leonard, Stadhampton Road, (Haywards Bridge) would be closed on 13th and 14th February between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. in order to carry out trial holes.

18. Statement of Accounts for payment in December 2024 and January 2025. It was AGREED that the statements of account for payment in December, 2024 in the sum of £39,000.34 and January 2025 in the sum of £792.28 should be APPROVED.

19. Bank Statements. The bank statements and reconciliations for December 2024 for the Parish Council's three accounts were circulated at the meeting and Councillor Mrs. Sweetland signed the reconciliations.

20. Items of report to Chairman.

a) Fire and Burglar Alarms at the Pavilion. Councillor Bridge informed the meeting that he had recently been called by the Remote Monitoring Service due to an alarm sounding at the pavilion. He attended and the alarm was no longer sounding. The problem appeared to be with the fire alarm panel and the Caretaker called an Engineer to deal with this.

Councillor Bridge informed the Parish Council that he would like to be removed from the call out system. Councillor Eltham agreed to take his place and his details will be forwarded to Remote Monitoring Service. The company will also be asked to remove Annette Loveland's details and will be given contact details for Alex Marasco.

b) Bollards around the open space in Green Furlong. It was reported that there are several damaged bollards around the open space. It was AGREED that South Oxfordshire District Council would be contacted again to ask them to inspect the area and arrange for the bollards to be replaced.

c) Padlocks for the toilet and shed located in the Burial Ground. It was AGREED that new Squire combination padlocks should be purchased and installed on the buildings in the Burial Ground.

d) Christmas Lights. Mr. T. Garvey had very kindly volunteered to put the solar Christmas lights on the trees around the village this year. The Parish Council is very grateful to him for undertaking this task as without him carrying out the work, it would not have been possible to have the lights this year. A letter will be sent to Mr. T. Garvey to thank him for volunteering his time to install the lights, which had been very much appreciated by the residents of Berinsfield.

e) Car parked over pedestrian walkway from Fane Drive to pavement at the side of 2 Colwell Road, Berinsfield. The Parish Council was informed that a car is being parked across the pedestrian walkway leading from Fane Drive to the pavement at the side of 2 Colwell Road, Berinsfield. This is causing an obstruction and is a safety issue for people using mobility scooters who have to use the road instead of the pavement. It would be appreciated, as a courtesy to other residents, if this vehicle could be parked in a more suitable position. The Parish Council will take appropriate action to try to resolve this matter.

21. Date of next meeting – 3rd February, 2025.

