

MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF BERINSFIELD PARISH held on Monday 29th April, 2019 in the Church Hall, Wimblestraw Road, Berinsfield, Wallingford, Oxon.

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

1. **To receive the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 23rd April, 2018.** The Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 23rd April 2018 were approved.

2. **Report from Councillor Stuart Scott-Ely, Chairman of Berinsfield Parish Council.**
The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting and said he hoped that those present would take the opportunity to express their views and possibly concerns about the village.

Sadly, Councillor Scott-Ely had to report that a Member of the Parish Council, Councillor Ralph Adams, died suddenly earlier this year. Councillor Adams had served on the Parish Council for five years and had a keen interest in public transport, especially buses, and spent a lot of his time researching the routes and services in the area in an attempt to try and improve the bus services in the local area.

New play equipment

New play equipment was installed in the play area on the recreation ground last year and the play area was officially opened by the Chairman of South Oxfordshire District Council – District Councillor Lorraine Hillier on 7th July 2018, just prior to the start of the village Fete.

Village Fete and Funfair

The 60th anniversary celebrations arranged in the village last year by Caroline Wade and her Committee went extremely well and the Parish Council was very grateful to everybody who contributed to the success of the events. The fete was well supported and Hatwells fair also proved a success with no adverse comments about noise etc. being received by the Parish Council. Councillor Scott-Ely said he hoped that residents would support the fair when it returns again on the 27th – 30th June and the fete, which will be held this year on 20th July.

Village Litter Pick. Sunday 7th April. The Parish Council would like to thank everybody who participated in the Village Litter Pick on Sunday 7th April. The village looked so much better following the event. Councillor Scott-Ely thanked David Bumpass and his colleagues and the youngsters at the Berry Youth Centre for co-ordinating the event and providing the refreshments.

The Parish Council will shortly be replacing the litter bins on the recreation ground that were mindlessly vandalised earlier in the year. The money spent to replace the bins could have been put to a much better use, but hopefully there will not be a repeat of this vandalism when the bins are replaced.

Installation of telegraph poles in Colne Drive, Ock Drive, Fane Drive and Cherwell Road.

The Parish Council was aware that superfast broadband was coming to Berinsfield but did not receive any prior notice of the works to install the new telegraph poles in Colne Drive, Ock Drive, Fane Drive and Cherwell Road. It appears that a number of premises in Colne Drive, Ock Drive, Fane Drive and Cherwell Road are located too far from the serving cabinets to be able to get superfast broadband speeds. The premises are being provided with fibre to the premises under the better broadband programme and most of the coverage is being delivered overhead using a mix of existing poles and new poles. It was not possible to install the services underground as it would have been too expensive. There will be no further poles installed in the village in connection with the better broadband programme.

Berinsfield Community Investment Scheme and SODC Local Plan During the year the Parish Council was informed that the proposed Berinsfield Community Investment Scheme had been put on hold pending approval of the new SODC Local Plan. The meeting was informed that there is a proposal for 1700 new homes to be built on farmland to the east of the village. Councillor Scott-Ely stated that the Parish Council would continue to work hard with the South Oxfordshire District Council regeneration team to ensure that the promised new infrastructure which includes a new Sports Centre, Health Centre, School(s) and Community Hub are all delivered as part of any new scheme. There had been a period of public consultation on the Local Plan, which has now closed. If the Local Plan, which covers the whole district of South Oxfordshire, is approved by the Government Inspector, it will enable land in and around Berinsfield to be released from the Oxford Green Belt to facilitate the growth and regeneration of the village. The Local Plan does also contain provision to designate the central green in the village as protected green space.

Parking on pavements and grass verges. Unfortunately 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 for drivers and could cause an accident if a driver's vision is obscured when pulling out from a junction. The Parish Council would appreciate it if residents and visitors could try to park considerately. The Parish Council has met with the County Council and SOHA Housing in an attempt to try and identify areas where additional car parking spaces could potentially be provided, but at the present time there are no plans to dig up any green spaces to provide additional car parking areas.

Dogs fouling on public open spaces and pavements. One of major complaints made to the Parish Council is about dogs fouling on footpaths and open spaces in the village and dog owners not clearing up after their dog.

Hedges, shrubs and trees overhanging public footpaths. The Parish Council would like to remind residents that they 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, front and side 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 charge will be passed to the occupant of the property.

Berinsfield Emergency Plan. The Berinsfield Emergency Plan is on the Parish Council's website, but the Parish Council would like to be able to include details of owners of 4x4 vehicles who could potentially help out in an emergency with towing cars out of ditches etc. The Parish Council would like to hear from residents who have a suitable 4x4 vehicle and who would like to volunteer their services. Berinsfieldpc@aol.com.

Pavilion. The pavilion is now fifteen years old and is still well used by the football clubs based in the village. The Pavilion has a kitchen, meeting space and toilet facilities and is available for hire during the day time and some evenings. Further information can be provided by the Parish Clerk, upon request.

Website The Parish Council's website, www.Berinsfield-pc.gov.uk is available for use by any organisation in the village free of charge. Information can be passed to the Clerk either in writing or via email and she will be pleased to include it under the Community Activities section of the website. Information from the Parish Council and other organisations is also placed on the Parish Council's two notice boards in the village.

3. Financial Report

Copies of the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st March 2018 were circulated at the meeting for information. The accounts for the year 1st April, 2018 to 31st March, 2019 are being prepared ready for audit and this will be carried out in June, 2019

Council Tax 2019-20

The Parish Council has increased its portion of the Council Tax this year in line with inflation in order to continue to provide the services in the village.

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. There is still a small balance left if any organisations failed to submit an application by the deadline earlier this year.

4. **Parishes Against Gravel Extraction (PAGE).** Mr. John Taylor kindly attended the meeting to give an update on the proposals for gravel extraction in the area. Mr. Taylor reminded those present that the campaign started in 2010 with two objectives, to reduce the amount of sand and gravel required to be extracted to the lowest amount possible and to protect the areas that the PAGE Group covers, Dorchester on Thames, Warborough, Drayton St. Leonard, Benson, Berinsfield, Stadhampton, Newington and Berwick Salome. The total amount of sand and gravel required is now just over one million tons, with only 600,000 tons being required in the last year. The PAGE group submitted its views and arguments from a planning point of view and archaeological point of view during the public consultation which took place in 2018. There should be some information on the site allocation plans in July 2019 and then another round of consultation. The process is likely to run into 2020 or possibly 2021/22 but PAGE is committed to continue to fight. Mr. Taylor thanked Councillors Mrs. Alison Jones and Stuart Scott-Ely for attending the PAGE meetings and for their support. The PAGE Group will not be seeking a financial donation from Berinsfield Parish Council this year.

Councillor Scott-Ely thanked Mr. Taylor for attending the meeting to give an update on the work of the PAGE Group.

5. **Report from County Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale.** County Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale had prepared a report on the work of the County Council for the period April 2018 – March, 2019 and copies of the report were circulated to those present at the meeting and the contents were noted.

6. Public meeting.

a) A resident asked for information about the plans for Berinsfield to be expanded. Councillor Scott-Ely informed him about the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and the Berinsfield Regeneration Scheme, as per the information contained in his report earlier in the meeting. Councillor Scott-Ely also informed him that consultation had taken place on the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and that there would be examination in public on it later in the year.

Consultations took place in Berinsfield to assess how many houses the residents would be prepared to accept in return for new facilities in the village. I

The Parish Council has been informed that in order to get evidence of the best mix of housing for any new development in Berinsfield, South Oxfordshire District Council is inviting consultants to provide quotes for carrying out a Housing Needs Assessment. When appointed, the consultants will be carrying out the Housing Needs Assessment survey in the village probably in June 2019.

b) Request for trees to be planted on the recreation ground. A request was made for more trees or shrubs to be planted on the recreation ground. Councillor Scott-Ely informed the meeting that this was something that South Oxfordshire District Council had been considering when embarking on the regeneration scheme. If South Oxfordshire District Council do not proceed with the works, the Parish Council will consider planting trees, but planting would have to take place on areas away from the football pitches.

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.