



CROMMARSH PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Held at Crommarsh Gifford Village Hall on Thursday 5th March 2020,
starting at 7.30pm**

Present:

Mr John Griffin (Chairman)	Mr David Rowley
Prof Andrew Johnson	Mr Stephen Sherbourne
Mr Ken McCrea	Mr Stuart Soames
Mr Julian Park	

Attending: Dr Yvonne Peet (Finance Officer) and Mrs Sue Rance (Clerk). District Cllrs Andrea Powell and Sue Cooper and County Cllr Mark Gray attended part of the meeting. Two members of the public attended part of the meeting.

Apologies: Received from Ms Gaynor Hopkins, Mrs F Stevenson and Mr David Topliss. It was noted that Ms Hopkins would be unable to attend meetings for the time being due to family commitments. Mr Jon Grove had tendered his resignation as a councillor due to family commitments.

Declarations of interest: None.
The meeting was quorate.

Mr and Mrs McNeill reported that there are ongoing problems with the sewage system, which affect Winters Field and will also affect the new district council offices when they are rebuilt. Thames Water has reported that there are three holding tanks on the site of the district council offices. These have been filled in with gravel. On 14th February effluent was pouring out of the drains and the riverside car park was flooded with raw sewage. District Councillor Cooper will report this matter to Mr John Backley of SODC.

NO.		ACTION
4984	MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6TH FEBRUARY 2020 Corrections to previous minutes: <u>Item 4973:</u> Final sentence to be re-worded as follows: Cllr Johnson would like more trees at the nature area and will follow this up with Zak Etheridge of the Wallingford Wildlife Group. <u>Item 4981:</u> Crommarsh is listed in the OALC Newsletter as one of 35 parish councils out of 249 in Oxfordshire that have a community resilience plan. <u>Item 4980:</u> Reworded as follows: Cllr Rowley reported on the environmental planning talks he had recently attended.	

	Subject to these corrections, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 th February were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.	
4985	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p><u>Item 4971:</u> Cllr Griffin is arranging for a certificate to be printed to recognize Cllr Hannigan's 35 years' service as a parish councillor.</p> <p><u>Item 4972:</u> Parking at Stephens Field: County Councillor Gray advised that the parish council should now take this matter forward themselves.</p> <p><u>Item 4973:</u> District Cllr Powell reported that there is now a short-list of names for the new District Council offices.</p> <p><u>Item 4975:</u> Replacement bus shelter at Portway: The County Council has suggested an improved wooden shelter with a bench seat to replace the brick-built one which was accidentally destroyed. This was agreed to. A replacement litter bin will also be needed.</p> <p><u>Item 4976:</u> Traffic calming measures in South Stoke: Cllr Ryall has this in hand. Meanwhile South Stoke Parish Council has asked for advice on speed indicator devices.</p> <p><u>Item 4978:</u> The Clerk reported that the bus company had denied any responsibility for the damaged bench. A quote had been received for a replacement and it was agreed to proceed with this. The Clerk will order a plaque for the new bench.</p>	<p>JG</p> <p>JG</p> <p>ER</p> <p>Clerk</p>
4986	<p>REPORT OF THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR</p> <p>County Councillor Mark Gray reported as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £500,000 of government money has been allocated to support local bus services; these funds must be spent within the coming financial year. Most of the money will probably go to services in the city of Oxford. Cllr Griffin commented that it would help the local community if the 136 and X38 Sunday services could be reinstated. ➤ £70,000 has been allocated to Oxfordshire Youth to support youth clubs. ➤ £200,000 has been reserved for youth services, and consideration will be given to what could be provided. ➤ Only 14% of those members of the public who responded to the consultation, opposed the proposed zero emissions zone in Oxford. This will 	

	<p>be introduced next year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ County Councillor Gray would like to see a dial-a-ride service set up locally and run by a third party. ➤ County Councillor Gray offered £350 for tree planting in Crowmarsh Gifford. 	
4987	<p>REPORT OF THE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS</p> <p>Local Plan</p> <p>As we all know, OCC voted to take over the SODC emerging local plan, should it be asked to do so by the Secretary of State, at its last Council meeting. Immediately after this vote, Sue wrote to Mr Jenrick and we sent a link to this letter to all Parish Councils. At the time of writing, we have had no direct response to this letter, but nor has the SoS asked OCC to take over our Plan-Making powers, so we remain in suspense! Rest assured that there is a lot of behind-the-scenes activity going on to reach a positive outcome and hopefully we will be able to move on before too long. We always wanted to be able to make significant changes to the Plan during the inspection process, but were advised that this wasn't possible, which is why we were going to recommend its withdrawal. If we are, after all, able to make the kind of changes we have been seeking during the examination in public, then we would certainly consider this to be a pragmatic option. As I write, we have a Cabinet meeting and a Council meeting programmed for Thursday 5th March in case, as has been implied by MHCLG officials, the Secretary of State lifts his direction on our plan so that we can actually discuss it.</p> <p>Council Budget and Council Tax</p> <p>Council has met twice during February to approve the budget for 2020/21 and to set the Council Tax (this latter process was delayed by the Police & Crime Commissioners not setting their rates in time, once again due to a delay from central Government).</p> <p>Young care-leavers up to the age of 25 will now receive a 100% discount on Council Tax to help them adjust to independent living.</p> <p>Motions passed at Council Meeting on 20th February</p> <p>Four motions were passed at the most recent Council meeting, covering the rules on 5-yr housing land supply, safety for people hiring taxis, the rules on permitted development (i.e. conversion of office buildings into residential accommodation) and a motion to condemn all racially or religiously motivated hate crimes and to</p>	

adopt accepted definitions of anti-semitism and islamophobia.

For further details see

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/news/2020/2020-02/motions-agreed-south-oxfordshire-district-council>

New Crowmarsh building - exhibition and feedback day

We had a great turnout for the exhibition at Milton Park on 13th February, and lots of useful feedback on the proposed design, features and name for the new building. We have set up a project website at <https://southoxfordshirehq.wordpress.com/> which will be updated as the project rolls out.

Some people have questioned the need to build a new Council office at all, so it's worth pointing out that we currently spend several hundreds of thousands of pounds each year renting, heating, lighting and maintaining 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park. Any homeowner will appreciate that it's more financially sensible to own your own home and to invest in making it as cheap to run as possible. Some have also queried the increase in the overall budget for this project, following a leak of confidential information by an opposition councillor to the press (not very sensible, given that we have not yet started the procurement process for building contractors). The original budget was set back in 2017 before any design work or consideration of environmentally sustainable construction methods had been taken into account. These days, the original budget would not even cover the costs of rebuilding the pretty inefficient building that was burned down, so while we accept that the budget has increased, we're also very confident that this is a prudent investment in the future financial stability of the Council (even if we merge with Vale, since they will be sharing the offices as before).

We are looking forward to the Community Café on 14th March at which we'll be displaying much of the same material that was used on 13th Feb. A team from SODC will be on hand to answer any questions, and by then Cabinet will have decided on a name for the new building, so that news will be hot off the press.

Capital Grants

The Community Grants Panel met on 18th February and after a lengthy meeting considering all the many applications, it agreed to award nearly £320k to 11 of the organisations which had applied for funding. The total value of the 19 bids submitted was nearly £760k, so it was inevitable that some applicants were

AP

	<p>going to be disappointed. This was the first time using the new Capital Grants policy, which required applicants to indicate how their project would include carbon-reducing or energy-saving measures to support the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration. There were no submissions from Crowmarsh this year.</p> <p>Recycling centres closing for deep clean</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council will be closing their recycling centre at Oakley Wood on 31st March and 1st April to carry out a deep clean. You can find out more information on the closures of the waste recycling centres on the county council's website.</p>	
4988	<p>FINANCE</p> <p>a) <u>Payments made in February</u></p> <p>A schedule of payments made since the last meeting was presented. This included £320.46 for the annual OALC subscription, £1,810 paid to Slade Legal for the land registration of North Stoke Village Hall, £1,920 paid to Carroll and Partners for drawing up design/reconfiguration plans for the pavilion and £594 paid to Arrow Fencing for a new pedestrian gate at the recreation ground.</p> <p>The Finance Officer reported that a BACs transfer had been successfully made for a salary payment. Cllr Griffin will register for internet banking.</p> <p>After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr McCrea that these payments be approved and this was agreed.</p> <p>b) <u>Consider accounts for year to date.</u></p> <p>Income for February was £1,730 including £210 from the feed-in tariff. Expenditure was £5,836 including grass cutting by Mr Cottrell at Newnham Church. Income to 29.2.2020 was £212,676 and expenditure was £102,694. Reserves stood at £176,103.</p> <p>c) <u>Agreement on CIL monies due for October 2019 – April 2020</u> It was proposed by Cllr Griffin and seconded by Cllr Sherbourne that we ask SODC to pay the 15% Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) due to the parish council. This was agreed. These funds need to be spent on infrastructure projects and the Finance Officer will report back annually on this.</p>	

d) Review of Fixed Assets

- The Finance Officer reported that the schedule of fixed assets has been updated to include the three speed indicator devices and the new gate at the recreation ground. Some items of low value (less than £100) have been removed from the schedule. The value of fixed assets has increased from £816,154 to £820,266. This was approved.

e) Update on staff contracts of employment

Contracts of employment for the Finance Officer and Clerk have now been completed and signed. Copies of all staff contracts are now ready for the auditor. The Finance Officer will send the documents in on 20th April.

f) Charity Commission Return

The Clerk reported that the Charity Commission return for North Stoke Village Green has been completed on the Charity Commission website.

g) Requests for Grants and Donations

The Finance Officer reported that the Local Government Act 1972 allows parish councils to make grants and donations under Section 137, based on the number of electors in the parish. The rate per elector for 2019/2020 is £8.12 and for next year it will be £8.32.

Citizens' Advice Bureau: It was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr McCrea that a grant of £500 be made and this was agreed.

Home-Start South Oxon: it was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr McCrea that a grant of £200 be made and this was agreed.

Clean Slate: A request for a grant had been received but as a grant of £100 had already been made during the current financial year, it was agreed to defer this until May.

h) Allotments

It was agreed to keep the annual rental to £15 as last year. This is the same figure as that charged by the Emery and Owen Trust for the allotments near Thames Mead. It is thought that one of the Botany Allotments may be available. Cllr Sherbourne will

**SSh
RFO**

	check and the Finance Officer will issue the invoices for 2020/21.	
4989	<p>CHAIRMAN'S REPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to planned elections for the Police Commissioner, North Stoke Village Hall would not be available for the May parish council meeting on 7th May. It was agreed to reschedule this meeting to Thursday 14th May at North Stoke Village Hall, subject to availability. Cllr Soames will check. Cllr McCrea tendered his apologies for this meeting. • Annual Parish Meeting: it was agreed to hold the annual parish meeting on Monday 11th May at 7.00 for 7.30pm at Crowmarsh Gifford School if possible. The Clerk will check on availability. It is planned to make a presentation to Mr Nigel Hannigan at that meeting. 	<p>SS</p> <p>Clerk</p>
4990	<p>REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assuming a toucan crossing at Portway is provided as part of the Newnham Manor housing development, Cllr Sherbourne hopes to obtain funding from SODC for a pedestrian crossing in Benson Lane. A crossing outside The Bell will also be needed and this could possibly be funded from CIL money received by the parish council. • It is hoped to obtain two speed indicator devices for North Stoke, one north and the other southbound. • Resurfacing is needed at Watery Lane and on the footpath into North Stoke village from the main road. Cllr Sherbourne will enquire from Grundon about possible assistance with this. • As Chairman of Crowmarsh Village Hall, Cllr Sherbourne plans to apply to the parish council for a grant towards the planned village hall extension. • There was a discussion on the damage caused by cyclists using the Ridgeway Path and it was noted that plans are in hand to provide an alternative route along part of the path. 	<p>SSh</p>
4991	<p>PLANNING</p> <p>Decisions by SODC</p> <p>P19/S4548/LB The Mill House The Street North Stoke OX10 6BL Retention of Listed Building Consent application for internal works to Grade II Listed Building including completion and reinstatement of elements including staircases, fireplaces, doorways, partitions, replacement of modern bathrooms and general refurbishment works. LISTED BUILDING CONSENT</p> <p>P19/S4659/HH 10 Wallingford Road North Stoke Wallingford OX10 6BB. Proposed ground and first-floor side extension.</p>	

Proposed ground floor rear extension. PLANNING PERMISSION
P20/S0004/FUL Barracks Farm Wallingford Road North Stoke
OX10 6AZ (South Stoke parish). Change of use of farm workshop
for B2 use. PLANNING PERMISSION

Consultation on applications

P20/S0545/FUL The Woodyard Constitution Hill Mongewell.
Construction of a single detached dwelling that will re-use the
existing building as an ancillary garage / outbuilding; amenity
space provision and associated works.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL – Mongewell is not a sustainable
settlement for new house building as it has no public services.
The previous approval was a replacement for a barn, the most
recent application (which we recommended for refusal) was put
forward as infill: this is neither. Loss of green site/trees. Access
near the blind corner at the bottom of Constitution Hill is
potentially dangerous, especially given that 166 more dwellings
were given permission on the Carmel College site and will need
to use this access road. Developing this site will prevent possible
widening of the road here.

P20/S0550/HH 1 Park View Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8BJ

Demolition of existing summer house, erection of new summer
house. (Existing already removed for safety reasons).
Recommend NO OBJECTION.

P19/S4673/FUL New house adjacent to plot 5 Mongewell Park
Mongewell OX10 8DA. Amendment reducing the size and
reorganising the parking. RECOMMEND REFUSAL for previous
reasons (excessive size, height, intrusive position in front of the
wall, forward of the line of the other houses, and lack of parking
provision): this still represents a cramped development out of
character with the neighbourhood.

Discharge of conditions

There's a long list of these for Benson Lane (Bloor), plus one for
CABI, but we are not consulted on these. Travel plans are
important.

There is no agreement on the suggestion of a gate between the
Benson Lane (Bloor) development and the village hall, but the
village hall is independent of the council and their committee is
strongly opposed to it. We agreed that connectivity through to The
Street was much more important, either through the existing track
(not marked as a public right of way on the definitive map but
clearly used in the past) or through the Bell car park (which might
be more negotiable as they would benefit from extra business
from the development). We are very keen that the integration of
the development can be maximised so it is really part of the
village not an enclave. We are also very keen on good traffic

	<p>management on Benson Lane, where we have installed a SID – this will become even more important when the council offices are occupied.</p> <p>County council Gravel extraction and marina at White Cross Farm is coming to committee in March.</p> <p>Neighbourhood plan A revised SEA is now being produced – Nick and Nigel anticipate consultation on the plan in April.</p>	
4992	<p>REPORTS OF COMMITTEES</p> <p><u>Environment and Recreation Ground</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shutters in the kitchen at the pavilion have been replaced • New taps have not yet been fitted in the toilets at the pavilion. • Tree planting is to take place on SODC land at the riverside in consultation with Zak Etheridge of Wallingford Wildlife Group. County Councillor Gray will pay £350 towards this and it was proposed to fund £370 from parish council funds. This was agreed. It is planned to increase the number of trees by 5-10% as part of the climate emergency measures. Trees will be selected to suit the location. Zak Etheridge is looking for a location to plant black poplars and discussions are being held on this. • Cllr Johnson reported the family of Mr John Bellamy would like to plant a memorial tree near the pavilion on the recreation ground with a plaque. The family will pay for the tree and the parish council will provide the plaque. The tree is being planted this week. Cllr Griffin will draft the wording for the plaque. • Carroll and Partners have been commissioned to draw up plans for modifications at the pavilion. The financial commitment is for no more than £10,000 and there is no obligation to proceed beyond the planning stage. It was noted for the future that if there are a number of contractors on the site at one time, then risk assessments need to be put in place. • Cllr Sherbourne expressed concern that the draft plan included the provision of a vending machine. This is not part of the design at present. • New Playground: Cllr Rowley has had a meeting with Eibe. There is a retention amount of about £6,000 which was kept back for twelve months following completion, exact figure to be confirmed; if there are no outstanding issues this would be due to be paid back early in April. There are 	JG

	<p>a number of items requiring attention, including some benches. Some benches are under guarantee but others are not; however spares have been provided for those which do not have a guarantee. Some of the other items being discussed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Wobbly Bridge – two posts are leaning in slightly and this has been raised with Eibe. Two more posts and a brace may be fitted. ➤ The climbing net pole was moving at the base last year in the hot weather; the net corners have been tightened but if the ground round the concrete base dries out more it may happen again. Cllr Rowley would like Eibe to look at and hopefully resolve this now. ➤ The black sleeves around the chains on the zip wire and rocker have split near the seats. This is being investigated. Tape has been put round them at present. Spares have been requested. ➤ Cllr Rowley has asked for a list of spares that are most likely to be required. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green and Tidy have made some improvements to the soft landscaping and have been asked to add mulch to the planted beds after weeding. • The Smart lock is to be fitted in the next few days. The door will not go back at right angles because of the smart lock so not as set out in Part M of the building regulations for disabled access, however our situation allows greater turning space so may be acceptable. To be discussed with Building Control in due course. • The architect, Michael Simpson, has been asked to guess what the costings for all the current proposed improvements to the pavilion would be. His original estimate was in the region of £100,000 so the council will need to apply for grants to fund this. Funding may be available from SODC for toilets so the council could possibly apply for £50,000 from them and fund the other say £50,000 from parish council funds. <p><u>Traffic and Transport</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Soames reported that he reported on 'Fix my Street' that the County Council had not removed its signs at the culvert in North Stoke, and this has now been actioned. 	
4993	<p>UPDATE ON WEBSITE</p> <p>The website has been updated with documents requested by the auditor.</p>	

4994	REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES No updates at present.	
4995	CORRESPONDENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the council's decision to register Crowmarsh Village Stores as an asset of community value, a letter had been received from Mr Townsend expressing concern about the parish council's lack of consultation with him as owner. The Chairman will visit him to discuss this matter. • OALC bulletin on coronavirus about the need to be aware of vulnerable people in the community. 	JG
4996	DATE OF NEXT MEETING The next meeting will take place on Thursday 2 nd April at Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall. Cllr Griffin gave his apologies for this meeting, which will be chaired by Cllr Sherbourne.	
4997	ANY OTHER BUSINESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Sherbourne reported that vehicles are parking on the grass verges in The Street, which is very dangerous. It not only damages the verges but blocks the view of motorists turning out of their driveways and from Home Farm. A notice will be published in Crowmarsh News. 	SSh
	The meeting closed at 10.00 pm.	