



CROWMARSH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Held at Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall on Thursday 3rd February, 2022
starting at 7.30pm

Present:

Mr John Griffin (Chairman)	Mr Stephen Sherbourne
Prof Andrew Johnson	Mr Stuart Soames
Mr Julian Park	Ms Julia Streete
Mr David Rowley	Mr David Topliss
Mrs Liz Ryall	

Attending: Dr Yvonne Peet, (Finance Officer), and Mrs Sue Rance (Clerk) District Councillors Sue Cooper and Andrea Powell attended part of the meeting.

Apologies: Received from Mr Robin Smith, Mrs Fleur Stevenson and County Councillor Felix Bloomfield.

Declarations of interest: Cllrs Griffin and Johnson declared an interest in planning applications P22/SO318/FUL and P22/S0111/NBA as employees of UKCEH and took no part in the discussion.

The meeting was quorate.

NO.		ACTION
5263	CO-OPTION OF NEW PARISH COUNCILLOR An expression of interest in becoming a parish councillor had been received from Ms Julia Streete, a local resident living in Crowmarsh Gifford. After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Griffin and seconded by Cllr Park that she be co-opted. This was carried unanimously and after completing the declaration of acceptance of office, Ms Streete joined the meeting.	
5264	MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9TH DECEMBER 2021 The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.	

5265	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES</p> <p><u>Item 5252</u>: Repairs to the faulty floodlighting at the church are to be carried out by a local electrician. The finance officer will discuss payment for this with the church warden.</p>	RFO
5266	<p>REPORT OF THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR</p> <p><u>Double Yellow Lines Stephens Field and Bellamy Way</u></p> <p>The process is now underway to get double yellow lines marked around Stephens Field/Bellamy Way and residents have been contacted regarding the new proposals. We had a good on-site meeting with officers and the area Traffic team are now leading on this. I have requested a slight extension to the lines (as agreed on-site) past the frontages of No.24 & No.3 Bellamy Way for highway safety reasons. I have also, reminded officers that the long-term parking of the camper van on the road down to the river will need to be addressed and that it will need to be removed before works can proceed.</p> <p><u>Motorcycle Noise</u></p> <p>Feedback from the meeting with Matt Barber our Police Commissioner recently has been positive from parishes. We await to see what can be done to address the anti-social sound of noisy motorcycles along the A4074 & A4130.</p> <p><u>Street Lights</u></p> <p>I have asked the OCC Highways team to look at street lighting on Wallingford Bridge and The Street where there have been issues with lights failing. The Highways team are currently investigating. In the meantime, I would ask that you report any issues on the OCC FixMyStreet app.</p> <p><u>Night Works on the A4074</u></p> <p>Works are taking place every night this week to dress and prepare the A4074 for new line painting of the highway to take place later in the Spring. There will be restrictions in place between the stone masons at the White House junction and the Oratory School.</p> <p><u>OCC Councillor Priority Fund</u></p> <p>If there are any Community groups in the parish that believe they may qualify for some grant funding from my Councillor Priority Fund please ask them to get in touch. It would be good to hear</p>	

	<p>from any organisations in Crowmarsh.</p> <p><u>OCC Budget 2021/22</u></p> <p>The ruling administration at County Hall will be setting their Budget for the coming year at next week's full Council meeting on Tuesday 8th February. Any cuts to our rural services will not be welcome.</p> <p>I shall report back once the Budget has been set.</p>	
5267	<p>REPORT OF THE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS</p> <p>January Report Local Government Finance Settlement</p> <p>The government announced its provisional local government finance settlement on 16 December, the fourth consecutive one-year settlement. It amounts to a real-term cut in council funding for SODC and for many other councils around the country. While government has claimed the settlement amounts to a 4% increase in funding, just 1% of this is government funding, the rest requires local authorities to increase council tax by the maximum allowable without a referendum.</p> <p>Cllr David Rouane, leader of South Oxfordshire District Council, expressed disappointment at the settlement. "Despite the government's claims of an overall increase in spending, this amounts to a real-terms cut in our finances. Councils like ours around the country are working hard to balance the books – a job that is made significantly more difficult by government cuts and by the lack of any long-term clarity."</p> <p>"It's really not clear how the government expects councils to make medium or long term financial plans when it repeatedly provides one-year settlements – something it began doing long before the pandemic."</p> <p>The New Homes Bonus will continue though it's unclear what will replace it, adding to the uncertainty around budget setting in future years. The New Homes Bonus is worth around £2m a year in South Oxfordshire.</p> <p>The council will be responding to the government's consultation on the settlement proposals and intends to publish its response shortly.</p> <p>Vouchers for residents struggling</p> <p>With the cost of living crisis impacting families across the country, a reminder that the Council is supporting residents struggling to afford household essentials. Using money from the Government's</p>	

Household Support Fund, we are helping pay for vulnerable households' food, energy, and water bills and other essential household costs. The funds are not restricted to people who receive benefits, and a range of factors are taken into consideration when assessing applications. The scheme ends in March 2022. Please see details on our website (or guide anyone who may be in need of these to the website): Household Support Fund - South Oxfordshire District Council ([southoxon.gov.uk](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk))

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/coronavirus-community-support/household-support-fund/>

Homelessness in South Oxfordshire

The Council's housing team worked intensively in the weeks up to Christmas to ensure households at risk of homelessness had sustainable accommodation. Two placements were made over the Christmas period for people with a connection to the Vale of White Horse.

It is pleasing to report that the number of rough sleepers recorded as of 31 December 2021 was zero for both South and Vale. This is the first time since 2013 there has been no rough sleeping recorded across both Districts, and is testament to the success of the Councils' strategy of preventing homelessness. South Oxfordshire was the first council in Oxfordshire to adopt the groundbreaking Housing First approach to preventing homelessness, a system that has since been adopted across the county.

Garden Waste Collections

A reminder that we are now able to start taking on new customers for the garden waste service. Anyone interested should go to <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/garden-waste/> But you might like to consider making or buying a home composting bin to use in your garden so that you can have the benefit of home generated compost?

Parental Leave Policy

Following similar moves by councils across the country, South Oxfordshire District Council has adopted a new policy on parental leave for councillors. The policy aims to provide a positive and supportive environment for members with family responsibilities. It will help to ensure members are representative of our community, contribute towards increasing the diversity of experience, age and background of councillors, and also help us to retain experienced councillors. The new policy was agreed by council at the Full Council meeting on 9 December and can be viewed on the SODC website.

CCTV

The Council's CCTV reports have been published, detailing how CCTV is used in our town centres. In South Oxfordshire, CCTV was used to review 554 incidents, producing 59 evidence packs for possible court proceedings and supporting 54 arrests. You can view the report on the SODC website.

Planning Enforcement

The updated Planning Enforcement Statement has been approved by Council. The statement sets out the new approach to the triage and handling of complaints to improve efficiency and transparency and to help address the large backlog of complaints that has built up since the start of the pandemic. The team currently has some 700 live investigations with 241 matters still unallocated across the two Councils.

The Planning Enforcement Statement was previously been updated in 2016. The new Enforcement Statement and approach will be subject to quarterly appraisal as part of the Council's ongoing performance review process and the Statement itself will be reviewed after 12 months.

Updated Gambling Policy

At Full Council on 6 December, Council also agreed a new gambling policy. A key change is the passing of a "No Casino" resolution meaning that applications for casinos will not be considered in the District. This was agreed on the basis that the district is not a suitable location for a casino, that casinos bring the potential for criminal exploitation and money laundering.

Climate Action Plan

The council has been working on a Climate Action Plan which was reviewed at the Climate & Ecological Emergencies Advisory Committee in January. Dealing with this needs to be taken on by everyone and every part of the council so all of the heads of the various services provided have been asked to consider how their work can be modified to reduce carbon generation. There also needs to be encouragement to the wider population including parish councils to help if we are to achieve our targets of becoming carbon neutral by 2025 at a council and by 2030 as a district.

February Report

Infrastructure Funding Statements now available

SODC has published its Infrastructure Funding Statements for 2020/21 to provide an annual summary on developer contributions. Through Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106, we were able to secure £20,665,018 from local developers, which will go towards local infrastructure to support

the growth in our districts.

You can read more information on funds allocated to projects via the SODC website: <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/community-support/infrastructure-to-support-communities/>

As part of the budget-setting process for 2022/23, a prioritised list of projects which will use the SODC portion of these funds has been created; this new approach will ensure that 3rd party funds are used wherever possible for major projects, thus reducing the demand on the Council's reserves. The majority of these projects relate to the District's leisure centres, the Riverside pool, campsite and other facilities in Wallingford, tree planting projects and to the purchase of housing for social rent.

2022/23 Budget

The SODC budget is due to go through the democratic cycle of meetings (Cabinet, Scrutiny and then Full Council) during the first half of February, so hopefully it will be approved on 17th Feb and we can put in place delivery plans for the projects identified for the second full year of our current Corporate Plan (e.g. the roll-out of our Climate Action Plan). These come on top of our statutory obligations, of course. We are pleased to report that, thanks to bringing the Finance function back in-house from Capita, we have much better processes for budget-setting, scrutiny and approval. This has helped us to identify savings in our base budget while not compromising on the services we offer to residents. Although we still only have a one-year financial settlement from the Government, we are still obliged to set a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which takes us through to 2026/27. Our current projections indicate that we have been successful in closing the gap between revenue and expenditure since being elected in 2019 (one of our Corporate Plan priorities) and that Council reserves are in a much stronger position than the predictions we inherited.

OxLEP Apprenticeships webinars for parents and carers

OxLEP has asked us to promote their 'An introduction to apprenticeships for Oxfordshire parents and carers' (students welcome to attend too!) webinars in partnership with ASK, the University of Oxford and Abingdon & Witney College.

An apprenticeship can be the most financially sensible way of getting a university degree these days and we have heard that local Science Vale technology employers are finding it quite hard to get local recruits.

	<p>Covid-19 Grants available for businesses in South Oxfordshire</p> <p>Businesses based in South Oxfordshire in the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sectors are being urged to apply for support from the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant fund. The government has given £1,482,084 to South Oxfordshire to help support local businesses that have been struggling financially due to the recent Covid-19 Omicron variant.</p> <p>Cllr Leigh Rawlins, Cabinet Member for Finance and Property Assets at South Oxfordshire District Council, said: “Just as our local pubs, restaurants and hotels were gearing up to a busy Christmas, the Omicron variant came along at the worst possible time. We hope local businesses in these sectors can take advantage of this and other grants to help keep their doors open so we can all enjoy them now and in the future.”</p> <p>To apply, eligible businesses must have been open and trading from a property where they are responsible for paying business rates on 30 December 2021. The criteria of the grant is set by the government and rules of how the money is distributed cannot be changed by the council. Successful applicants could receive between £2,667 and £6,000 depending on the rateable value of the property.</p> <p>Business owners can find out the full criteria and complete an online application form via the district councils’ South and Vale Business Support website until midday on 18 February. Businesses can also stay up to date with all government grants given to the district councils by signing up to the South and Vale Business Support newsletter via their website.</p> <p>News about the future of the former SODC office site is expected in the near future.</p>	
5268	<p>PLANNING Decisions by SODC</p> <p>P21/S4814/LB 47 The Street Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8EA, Replacement of attic bedroom window. Recommend approval, but ensure that the new timber-framed unit is double-glazed (option 1). LISTED BUILDING CONSENT</p> <p>P21/S3778/HH Summerlea Cottage Pocock Lane North Stoke OX10 6ET Erection of a bespoke traditional (aluminium frame) 3/4 span greenhouse against the side of dwelling. PLANNING PERMISSION</p>	

[P21/S3465/HH](#)

Old School House Constitution Hill Mongewell OX10 8BS
Enlargement to existing dwellinghouse and annexe; creation of outdoor swimming pool and erection of new garden store.
PLANNING PERMISSION

Withdrawn

[P21/S4665/FUL](#) Sheringham House Crowmarsh Hill Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8BG

Removal of existing dwelling and garage. Erection of three detached four bedroomed two storey dwellings.

[P21/S3534/HH](#) 5 Carmel Terrace Mongewell OX10 8BX

Two storey side extension to dwelling. Window alterations to the Eastern elevation. Resubmission of P20/S3059/HH

Consultations

Cllrs Griffin and Johnson declared an interest in P22/SO318/FUL and P22/SO111/NBA as employees of UKCEH and took no part in the discussion.

[P22/S0318/FUL](#) Maclean Building, UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8BB
Installation of car port structure (dimensions approximately 11 metres width by 44 metres length by 7.5 metres height) fitted with 258 photovoltaic panels with accompanying installation of 19 dual 7.4kW floor standing electric vehicle chargers and a 50kW floor standing electric vehicle charger. Recommend approval.

Crowmarsh Parish Council supports this application and echoes the comments of District Councillor Andrea Powell.

We ask the Planning Officer to ask the applicant to consider making the EV charging points available to local residents overnight and at weekends, when not in use by members of staff or visitors, so as to make best use of the infrastructure and the investment.

[P22/S0111/N8A](#) Maclean Building, UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8BB
Installation of 220 photovoltaic panels to flat roof. Recommend approval.

Crowmarsh Parish Council supports this application for solar panels, which is in line with our environmental policy.

	<p>P21/S5196/FUL New Barn Constitution Hill Mongewell OX10 8BS</p> <p>Variation of conditions (see Schedule of Conditions) on planning application P20/S1342/FUL. Demolition of building. New dwelling with garden and laid out parking area and improved entrance. Amendments to approved scheme. No objection, given that planning permission has been granted for a similar scheme. The parish council still considers this an unsustainable location for additional housing, and highway concerns remain given the permission for 166 houses (now beginning work) and limited visibility at the bottom of Constitution Hill, even if the access conditions go some way to address that.</p>	
5269	<p>FINANCE</p> <p>a) <u>Grant Applications</u> A grant request had been received from Sue Ryder Palliative Care Hub. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Topliss and seconded by Cllr Ryall that a donation of £500 be made and this was agreed.</p> <p>b) <u>Payments made in January</u> The Finance Officer had circulated a list of payments to be authorized for January. In addition to salaries this included £105.07 for allotment insurance, £245 for printing neighbourhood plan leaflets and £104.87 for refuse collection.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Griffin and seconded by Cllr Park that these be approved and this was agreed.</p> <p>c) <u>Payments to be made in February</u></p> <p>The Finance Officer had circulated a list of payments to be authorized for February. In addition to salaries, this included £127.42 for refuse collection, £120.00 for printing invoice pads, £1,722.24 for dog bin emptying, £498 for speed surveys in The Street, Crowmarsh Gifford and at North Stoke, £175.78 for electricity at the pavilion, £203.35 for water supply at the pavilion, £1,200 paid to Glanville Consultants for professional services regarding the pedestrian crossing at The Bell and £850 for a sit on mower for the recreation ground.</p> <p>After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Ryall and seconded by Cllr Sherbourne that the payments be approved and this was agreed.</p> <p>The dog bin emptying service is no longer subsidized by SODC. The Finance Officer will continue to research possible alternative contractors.</p>	RFO

	<p>d) <u>Consider accounts for year to date</u></p> <p>The accounts status at 31st January 2022 was noted. There was £187,023.01 in the current account and £102,351.05 on deposit.</p> <p>The asset list will be reviewed at the March meeting. This will be circulated in advance.</p>	RFO
5270	<p>CHAIRMAN'S REPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairman reported that training for councillors and officers is available from OALC and encouraged members to attend courses. The Parish Council is able to cover the cost, including travel expenses. • Information has been received about 'Operation London Bridge' regarding preparedness for the death of a public figure. The Chairman will liaise with Revd Beer about this. 	JG
5271	<p>REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portway Crossing: the Newnham Manor planning application has been approved but the timescale is unknown at present. Roadway improvements will have to be made before work begins on the housing. • Pedestrian Crossing at The Bell. Glanville Consultants are working on the proposals for this. When their work is complete the County Councillor, Felix Bloomfield, will be consulted on the next steps. • The Finance Officer will ask the advice of the auditor on what level of reserves is appropriate for the parish council. • Watery Lane is on the strategic priorities list but there are currently no costings for the work. The surface has been inspected by the Rights of Way and Ridgeway officers. CIL money may be used for any projects within the parish. Cllr Ryall requested that she and her husband are invited to any future meetings about Watery Lane. The aim is to improve the surface for people using the path. Cllr Ryall requested the provision of a gate near to Newnham Farm as well as improved signage. Councillors confirmed their wish to support local farmers and encourage responsible use of the countryside. • North Stoke pedestrian crossing at the Springs: no action has yet been taken regarding this. There are no sight lines for pedestrians wishing to cross the road. The police were unable to complete a speed check recently due to a complaint from a member of the public. The Clerk will contact the roads policing section for an update. The situation will be discussed by the traffic and transport sub-committee. 	<p>RFO</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Traffic & Transport</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the list of strategic priorities has been updated, further consultation will take place. 	
5272	<p>REPORTS OF COMMITTEES</p> <p><u>Environment and Recreation Ground</u></p> <p>Mowing: Chris Strange is now doing the recreation ground mowing himself. Three types of mower are needed, a large and medium mower (already approved) and a heavy duty strimmer. These are being purchased second hand from a local supplier.</p> <p>Grass cutting: it will be necessary to let the contractor know that the recreation ground grass cutting will be done in house. A new specification will be needed and alternative quotes will be requested.</p> <p>Tree Planting at the Nature Area: a quote has been received from Scofell for £957.19 + VAT for the supply and planting of fifteen trees of species which are suited to the conditions. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Johnson and seconded by Cllr Park that this be accepted and this was agreed. It was also agreed to apply for a grant from the district councillors' fund. The Clerk will action this.</p> <p>It was noted that some trees at the nature area had been damaged in storms. Cllr Park offered to inspect the trees and if necessary Scofell will be asked to consider any appropriate action.</p> <p>Crowmarsh Youth football team has the opportunity to be funded to maintain the football pitches to a higher specification. The club has asked the parish council to sign an agreement to support this initiative which will be of up to ten years' duration. After discussion it was agreed that Cllr Johnson may do this on the council's behalf.</p> <p>Improvements to the pavilion: The grant application to SODC was for 50% of the total cost but the council may not be awarded the full amount. It was agreed to apply for a further grant from the FCC Community Action Fund (formerly Wren). Under the terms of this, the parish council is required to agree to third party funding of 10.75% of the total requested. After discussion it was agreed to accept the terms including the payment of the third party funding.</p> <p>Cllrs Johnson and Rowley are in discussion with the company who submitted the lowest tender for the improvements.</p>	<p>SSh/RFO</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>JP</p> <p>AJ</p>

	<p>Hourly charges for pavilion hire have been increased to £10 in line with the village hall charges. Fees will be discussed by the Environment and Recreation Ground sub-committee.</p> <p><u>Big Jubilee Lunch</u></p> <p>Cllr Rowley presented a cost summary for the Big Jubilee Lunch. Four marquees are being made available at a total cost of £125. This was agreed. Volunteers will be needed to erect and dismantle the marquees.</p> <p>Three quotes have been obtained for temporary toilets. It was proposed by Cllr Topliss and seconded by Cllr Sherbourne that the quote of £370 from Portable Toilets Limited is accepted and this was agreed.</p> <p>£200 expenditure on bouncy castle and swing boats was agreed, subject to adequate insurance.</p> <p>It was agreed that decorations may be made locally at little or no expense.</p> <p><u>North Stoke Village Green</u></p> <p>Cllr Soames reported that the village green at North Stoke is in a very poor state, overgrown and overrun with rabbits making it unusable. It was agreed to do a site inspection when the parish council meets at North Stoke in May. The Environment and Recreation Ground Management Committee will discuss this at their next meeting</p> <p><u>Traffic and Transport</u></p> <p>The Clerk will ask for a speed survey at the A4074 (Portway) to be carried out as well as at the Springs in North Stoke.</p>	<p>Env/Rec</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>5273</p>	<p>REPORTS OF REPS ON OUTSIDE BODIES</p> <p><u>River Users' Group (RUG3)</u></p> <p>The group met in October and will meet again in May. There is a project to plant more bankside trees upstream of Wallingford.</p>	

5274	<p>CORRESPONDENCE</p> <p>The following correspondence was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SODC updates • NALC updates • Rural Services updates • OALC updates • Healthwatch Oxfordshire Briefings • Chilterns Conservation Board update • Thanks from North Stoke for donation to British Legion Poppy Appeal donation • Active Places newsletter from Sport England • Update from Oxfordshire Youth • Notice of tree protection order at Lane End • Police & Crime Bulletins for December and January • Thames and Chilterns in Bloom notice on seminar on 10th February • Citizens Advice Update • Information on Operation London Bridge • Email from a resident about Crowfest music festival • Information from SODC Waste Team about litterpicking • Email from a resident about parking problems at Bellamy Way. 	
5275	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 3rd March at Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall, starting at 7.30pm.</p> <p>Agenda items to include: Review of asset list Plans for litter picking Consultation on the local transport and connectivity plan (ends on 9th April.)</p>	
	<p>The meeting closed at 22.00.</p>	