

Parish Council notes

Crowmarsh Parish Council met on-line for the first time on Thursday 2nd April 2020.

Present: Cllrs John Griffin (Chairman), Stephen Sherbourne, Gaynor Hopkins, Stuart Soames, Ken McCrea, Fleur Stevenson, David Rowley and David Topliss, District Cllrs Andrea Powell and Sue Cooper, Dr Yvonne Peet (Finance Officer) and Mrs Sue Rance (Clerk).

Apologies were received from Cllrs Andrew Johnson, Julian Park, Liz Ryall and County Councillor Mark Gray.

Matters from the previous meeting

Most things could not be progressed at present because of the coronavirus pandemic. The memorial tree for Mr Bellamy has been planted near the pavilion. An article was to be published in Crowmarsh News about the damage caused to verges and roadside kerbs in The Street by inappropriate parking.

Finance

Payments were agreed including £234.52 for signage and £1,319.57 for new locks at the pavilion, and £715.00 to Albry Printing for 100 copies of the neighbourhood plan (which will come out of SODC grant money). Total payments since the last meeting amounted to £2,528.40.

Three parish councilors are able to authorise expenditure online: two out of the three are required to authorise each transaction.

The internal audit is in progress, but information will need to be sent to the auditor electronically. Now that internet banking with Lloyds Bank is up and running, we agreed to close the Unity Trust bank account, which was set up originally to make VAT payments on-line.

It was confirmed that we will continue to pay all our staff as normal for the time being. Mr Strange has a programme of maintenance tasks to do.

Planning

We will continue to comment online on any planning applications that come in, but the SODC planning committee is not meeting and large applications will be delayed.

There were no new applications. We maintain our objection to P19/S4673/FUL (New lodge house on garage site adjacent to plot 5, Mongewell OX10 8DA, amended on 28 February and 30 March). Following a meeting with the applicants' agent, we expect a new application to be submitted to redevelop the Springs Hotel, North Stoke.

Four recent applications have been approved: Summerlea Cottage (North Stoke), The Mill at North Stoke (Listed Building), Barracks Farm (South Stoke) and Maple Croft (Mongewell).

The draft Neighbourhood Plan is now on the website and some comments have already been posted.

Strategic priorities

It is hoped that a pedestrian crossing in Benson Lane will form part of the project to build the new SODC offices there. A design for a pedestrian crossing of The Street near The Bell will be commissioned as soon as possible so that this can be progressed when the situation allows.

Environment and Recreation Ground Committee

The playground, outdoor gym, pavilion, hard court and car park are all closed because of the coronavirus pandemic. The Crowmarsh Gifford recreation ground and North Stoke Village Green are open spaces available for daily exercise following government rules.

Cllr Rowley is in touch with Eibe about snagging issues and the parish council will retain about £6000 until the outstanding work has been completed.

Green and Tidy have mulched the planting beds and will advise on maintenance.

The smart lock has been fitted to the front door of the pavilion, but the new taps have yet to be fitted, so we will get quotes for sensor taps as a better alternative.

Traffic and transport

The 134 Going Forward minibus has stopped running. Thames Travel buses continue with a reduced service and no night buses.

Website

Cllr Stevenson reported that the website and Facebook page have been very busy and a new coronavirus page has been opened, with links to support and guidance. There is also guidance from the County Council on using footpaths and bridleways safely.

Future council meetings

It was agreed to hold on-line meetings until further notice, on the dates previously agreed for parish council meetings. It will not be required to hold the Annual Parish Meeting in May.

The next meeting will take place on-line on Thursday 7th May starting at 7.30pm. For details, please contact the clerk by email crowmarshparishclerk@gmail.com.