



# CROMMARSH PARISH COUNCIL

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**Minutes of the On-line Parish Council Meeting  
Held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021,  
starting at 7.30pm**

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**Present:**

Mr John Griffin	Mr Stephen Sherbourne
Prof Andrew Johnson	Mr Robin Smith
Mr Ken McCrea	Mr Stuart Soames
Mr Julian Park	Mrs Fleur Stevenson
Mr David Rowley	Mr David Topliss
Mrs Liz Ryall	

**Attending:** District Cllrs Cooper and Powell, Dr Yvonne Peet (Finance Officer) and Mrs Sue Rance (Clerk).

**Apologies:** None.

**Declarations of interest:** None.

The meeting was quorate.

NO.	MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10 <sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020	ACTION
5119	The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 <sup>th</sup> December were approved as a true record.	
5120	<b>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING</b>  <u>Item 5109:</u> Highway works at Benson Lane. Cllr Griffin reported that an online meeting had been held to discuss plans for pedestrian crossings in Benson Lane related to the new housing development. This meeting was attended by representatives from OCC Highways, District Councillors, Parish Councillors, a local resident and Bloor Homes. The county council officer clarified that central refuges originally planned were not possible because of the width of the road. The northern crossing therefore consists of drop kerbs only and Bloor Homes will contribute £16,000 towards other highway safety work. It was agreed that a crossing aligned with footpath 2 was not appropriate and no action will be taken there, but further consultation will be held about the best place to site a crossing. Further funding was promised by Bloor towards the cost of a more suitable crossing.	

	Any other matters arising will be discussed at the February meeting.	
5121	<p><b>REPORT OF THE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS</b></p> <p><b>Happy New Year!</b></p> <p>We both sincerely hope that you were all able to enjoy a healthy and happy Christmas and New Year break; no doubt most of us are rather glad to see the back of 2020, and we look forward to more positive and productive initiatives during the coming twelve months. We would once again like to thank all those on the Parish Council and within the local community who have provided support, advice and often just a friendly chat to those who have felt more vulnerable over the past difficult year. The community support and spirit shown across the District has been remarkable and gives us great confidence when planning future projects and programmes designed to sustain the well-being, prosperity and social cohesion of our towns and villages.</p> <p><b>District Councillor Grants</b></p> <p>There is now less than one month left to apply for a Councillor Grant, and we have both already allocated some of the funds from our total pot of £5k each.</p> <p>Application forms and guidelines can be found here:  <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/community-support/grants/councillor-community-grants/">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/community-support/grants/councillor-community-grants/</a></p> <p><b>Support for residents during lockdown</b></p> <p>Our Community Hub continues to be available to help people access support and essentials during the lockdown if they have nobody else to turn to. With the shielding programme restarting, we're expecting to see an increase in the amount of support the hub will need to provide.</p> <p><b>The message to residents is that if anybody thinks they'll be in need of support they should not wait until they've run out of supplies before getting in touch.</b></p> <p>Anyone who needs support can fill in an online form at: <a href="https://southoxon.gov.uk/communityhub">southoxon.gov.uk/communityhub</a>, email <a href="mailto:communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk">communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk</a> or call 01235 422600.</p>	

The original plan over Christmas was for the hub to provide an emergency-only service but following the decision to move Oxfordshire into Tier 4 on Boxing Day, we decided to open the lines from 9am to 5pm on the working days between Christmas and New Year. During that time, we received seven calls that needed referring and we delivered four food parcels. All the residents supported were very grateful that the hub was open and that the team were on hand to offer them immediate relief.

The pace has picked up following the lockdown announcement – we made 14 referrals on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> Jan alone and around 60 people have requested help through the National Shielding Service system, mainly for supermarket slots, which is managed by central government. We will be contacting all of those people to ensure their needs are met.

The Community Hub is not the only support we provide our residents – Housing Needs have also seen an increase in people needing their support during the pandemic if they're at risk of being made homeless or sleeping rough – for more details visit [southoxon.gov.uk/housing](https://southoxon.gov.uk/housing).

We're also making sure everyone is aware that support is available to residents who are experiencing financial difficulties – to find out more please visit [southoxon.gov.uk/benefits](https://southoxon.gov.uk/benefits).

### **Business support**

Along with many other councils, we are currently waiting for the government to confirm and provide guidance on a couple of different funding schemes for businesses, including the scheme for businesses that were affected by the Tier 4 restrictions – in our case, to cover the period from 26 December to 4 January.

We're also awaiting details of the additional funding the [government announced](#) recently for businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, which could receive up to £9,000 in one-off grants to help them through latest coronavirus restrictions. We'll have full details on how it'll be administered as soon as the government guidance is available.

We appreciate that businesses will be frustrated by the lack of clarity on some of the schemes, however each time the government announces a new grant it takes time before they provide us with the specific details and we can then put proper systems and procedures in place.

### **What is currently available**

The picture of what grants are available is becoming quite complicated, as there are different schemes available for different types of businesses relating to the various levels of restrictions

that were in place at different times.

For more details about these grants, businesses should visit [www.svbs.co.uk](http://www.svbs.co.uk) – where all the most up-to-date information can be found.

### **Covid Vaccination Programme**

Although the nationwide programme is underway, it will still take several months for the whole population to be vaccinated, The key messages to all local residents are as follows::

- The vaccination programme is being phased in across the county following the national guidance on prioritising patients. Some people have already been vaccinated and others are waiting to be invited.
- Please do not contact your GP or another NHS service to seek a vaccine – GP practices are still open for providing care to patients and their phones could become swamped, so please wait until the NHS contacts you.
- When the NHS does contact you, please be ready and attend your booked appointments. It might be useful to have your NHS number to hand if you can (see letters from the NHS to you.)
- Please continue to follow all the public health guidance to control the spread of the virus, protect the NHS and save lives.

Our SODC Communications Team remains an active part of this system-wide communication approach.

### **Latest Covid Statistics for South Oxfordshire**

Covid-19 cases continue to rise in Oxfordshire with a total of 3,499 cases reported in South Oxfordshire up until 4 January and a daily rate of 84 new cases on 4<sup>th</sup> January.

To illustrate the growth in cases, in the week leading up to 4<sup>th</sup> January there were 765 new cases in South Oxfordshire, compared to 427 new cases the previous week and 199 in the week before that. The 16-29 and 30-44 age groups are currently the most affected, and as of 5<sup>th</sup> January our hospitals had 275 Covid-positive in-patients, of whom 29 were in ICU. The hospitals also reported that 947 staff were absent, of whom 485 are self-isolating or have Covid-19 themselves.

### **Civil Parking Enforcement**

The Council approved a recommendation at a special meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> December to move ahead with taking responsibility for managing on-street civil parking enforcement in collaboration with Oxfordshire County Council. We now expect this to move forward without delay and for powers to be transferred later in 2021. This will work alongside our existing off-street parking enforcement powers.

### **New CIL Spending Strategy**

Cabinet also approved a new CIL and s106 spending strategy last month, which will take effect from April 2021. Most of the changes affect how SODC and OCC can spend their allocation of CIL funds; the Parish allocation will remain at 25% for those parishes with a Neighbourhood Plan and 15% for those without. This means that OCC will now be able to claim funds to spend on libraries and SEN provision as well as on education and transport, while SODC will be able to invest in improvements to cycle networks, provision of electric charging points and access to nature. The new, more flexible, rules should release funds more rapidly and enable larger projects to be commissioned across the District rather than being spent piecemeal on small initiatives.

### **Local Plan 2035 – a final word (hopefully!)**

Now that the controversial South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 has been adopted by Full Council it carries full weight in the Planning Policy framework and provides protection against unwanted speculative development. Some improvements were made to the Plan during the Inspection phase, including some on community involvement in master-planning, the introduction of the new DES10 zero-carbon housing policy (where there was no such policy at all before) and the prioritisation of cycling and walking. However, the Inspector did not remove any of the strategic sites, nor reduce the housing delivery requirement, so we do expect major new applications to be progressed in the coming months or years for sites such as Chalgrove Airfield, Culham, Grenoble Road and Berinsfield. Each application will still have to satisfy normal planning conditions, as well as the conditions set out in the Plan for that site, but once a site is allocated in a Local Plan there is an assumption that planning permission will be granted.

	<p>Strategic Planning activity never stops, however, and we are already engaged in discussions across Oxfordshire and the broader Ox-Cam Arc initiative to create a longer-term strategic vision for the region, including employment opportunities (particularly in the area of green technology and innovation), digital infrastructure, environmental enhancements and community strengthening. And we are also investigating the feasibility of a joint Local Plan with the Vale of the White Horse, since we share so many interests and issues (e.g. the development of the Didcot Garden Town).</p>	
<p>5122</p>	<p><b>PLANNING</b></p> <p><b>Decisions by SODC</b>  <u>P20/S4178/FUL</u> The Old Walled Garden Mongewell Park Mongewell OX10 8DA. One-for-one replacement dwelling. Planning permission granted.</p> <p><b>Consultations</b>  <u>P20/S4746/HH</u></p> <p>Mere Cottage Mongewell Park Mongewell OX10 8DA  Erection of a proposed workshop/hobby room. No objection.</p> <p><u>P20/S4695/HH</u>  55B The Street Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8EA  Insertion of a new window to match existing.  Concern was expressed about the visual impact of a new window in the flint wall but otherwise it was agreed to make no objection.</p> <p><b>Major developments</b></p> <p>The plan for 100 houses on the Newnham Manor site is now expected to come to planning committee in March after a further round of consultation. This will be discussed at the February meeting.</p> <p><b>Neighbourhood plan</b></p> <p>The neighbourhood plan has now been accepted by SODC for the next stage, the Regulation 16 consultation, which will take place for the next seven weeks, finishing on 9 March. SODC will produce one or two printed copies of the documents for residents with no internet access. Posters to advertise the consultation will include named contacts for those wishing to view a paper copy. The chairman and vice-chairman each agreed to hold a copy of the documents.</p>	

5123	<p><b>FINANCE</b></p> <p><b>a) Payments made in January</b></p> <p>A schedule of payments made since the last meeting was presented. As well as salaries, refuse collection and the regular biomisting with Zoono, expenditure included £464.00 paid for 50% of the cost of new shutters at the pavilion, £122.11 paid to SSE for electricity at the pavilion in Quarter 3 and £78.03 paid to Castle Water for water supply at the allotments.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr McCrea that these payments be approved and this was agreed.</p>	
5124	<p><b>RESULTS OF RESIDENTS' SURVEY ON THE FUTURE OF THE FORMER SODC SITE</b></p> <p>A vote of thanks was made to Cllr Stevenson for all her work in collating the results of the survey, which have now been posted on the parish website.</p> <p>There were 183 responses in total.</p> <p>Of these, the most popular choices for use of the site were as follows:</p> <p>Sport/Leisure – 75.14%  Health/Medical – 49.15%  Entertainment/culture – 34.46%  Education/school – 33.90%.</p> <p>In response to the question on what residents would <u>not</u> like to see the site used for:</p> <p>General Housing – 86.44%  Affordable Housing – 70.62%  Care Home/ Retirement homes – 49.15%  Employment/Offices – 32.20%</p> <p>District Cllr Powell advised that the report from the property consultants is awaited and should arrive in the next 4 – 6 weeks, after which a local consultation will be set up. She will check the details of the brief given to the property consultants and report back to the parish council. There is no pressure to allocate more large sites for housing in Crowmarsh. A new school was not on the list of possibilities given to the consultants.</p> <p>District Cllr Powell confirmed that Benson Parish Council would be included in any consultation due to Benson's proximity to the site.</p>	AP

	<p>As the site is so large, the possibility of combining two or more options could be considered. District Cllr Cooper pointed out that the western end of the site is in the flood plain.</p> <p>The district council's economic development team is handling this project as a whole and the district council does need to consider the financial return on their investment but community uses would be given high priority. Cllr Smith suggested leasing the land to a third party.</p> <p>After discussion it was agreed to send the survey results to District Cllrs for their own information. Cllr Griffin will do this. The parish council will agree their response to the consultation at a later date when the framework is clear.</p> <p>District Cllr Cooper will speak again to local residents about the sewage problems which have been ongoing in Winters Field.</p>	<p><b>JG</b></p> <p><b>SC</b></p>
<b>5125</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>	
	The next meeting will be held online on Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> February 2021, starting at 7.30pm.	
<b>5126</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
	<p><u>Children's Play Area:</u> The District Council's advice is that playgrounds should be kept open with notices reminding residents of the need for social distancing and hand washing or sanitizing. Notices have been posted at the playground. District Cllr Powell said she had received a simplified sign that is being passed to Parish Councils and she would send this to us to consider.</p> <p>Cllr Rowley highlighted that some local residents have said they believe the playground should be closed due to Covid-19 risks, as it was in the first lock down. It was generally felt that the benefits to children outweighed the risks if the rules on social distancing and sanitation of hands etc. are observed. This is to be monitored by Chris Strange and if it gets too crowded and rules are not being observed, this will be reconsidered. District Cllr Cooper said that it would be a shame to close it as it is a good park.</p>	
	The meeting closed at 20.45.	