

Bix and Assendon Parish Council

Clerk - Mrs. Jane Pryce, 56 Galsworthy Drive, Caversham Park Village, Reading, Berkshire RG4 6PP
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The minutes of Bix & Assendon Parish Council meeting held on 8th July 2019.

Parish Councillors present:

Ms. Lisbeth Thiesen, Mrs. Ina Chantry, Mr. Robert Walmsley and Mr. William Murdoch.

Oxfordshire County Councillor David Bartholomew

South Oxfordshire District Councillors: Jo Robbs and Lorraine Hillier

Also present: Mrs. Jane Pryce (Clerk) and 1 member of the public

Key: BAG – Bix & Assendon Grapevine alert email service to residents

CIL – Community Infrastructure Levy

OALC – Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils

049/19 Apologies for absence

None

050/19 Members declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

None

051/19 Confirmation of the minutes of 13th May 2019

The minutes were declared true and accurate and signed by the chairman.

052/19 OCC Report from Cllr. D. Bartholomew

The full report can be found attached to the minutes and on the website.

Three subjects from this report were discussed: Oxfordshire new joined-up health and care system, Fire and Rescue Service and Help for residents applying to the EU settlement scheme.

1. The new health and care system is still new and a work in progress.

2. FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE AMONG THE BEST FOLLOWING INSPECTION

Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service is one of only four fire and rescue services to be given an 'outstanding' judgement in any category following inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

Following the second out of three tranches of inspections it is the highest scoring County Council Fire and Rescue Service as well as amongst the top ten services in England. The service was inspected by HMICFRS in November 2018, in the first full assessment of fire and rescue services in England for several years. The inspection assessed how effectively and efficiently Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service prevents, protects the public against and responds to fires. It also assessed how well the Service looks after staff. The service, which was in the second tranche of fire and rescue services to be inspected, was rated

as 'outstanding' for promoting its values and culture. The inspectorate found that Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service was 'good' across all three core areas.

It was suggested that the village hall could be used as a venue for a talk on fire protection.

A BAG was suggested for the EU settlement scheme.

SPECIFIC REPORT FOR BIX & ASSENDON

IMPACT OF HWRC CHARGES ON FLY-TIPPING

A resident has contacted District Councils and received fly-tipping data. I have passed this to OCC officers for comment. District colleagues may wish to follow-up on the District aspect.

DAMAGED/ SIGNS ON DUAL CARRIAGEWAY

I am pleased to report that the damaged signs on the dual carriageway have finally been replaced.

But nearby tree/s obscured it – the clerk requested Robert Walmsley to photo this to report it via 'Fix-my-Street'.

DOBSONS LANE, LOWER ASSENDON

Stage I of the remedial work was completed at the end of February. Further monitoring and assessment has taken place and I am advised that Stage II of the works will take place in late August.

The clerk asked about a Deer sign being removed but not replaced log. 1686811 on 'Fix-my-Street' but as this was only recently reported, it was requested to wait a month and if no action, please email him.

A question was asked about White Lane potholes and hedge/verge infringement. But the problem needs to be reported on FMS.

The fly tipping reported that not been given a log number but this would have been reported to District so the clerk will email Jo Robb.

The central reservation at Bix turning right from Rectory Lane sight lines are being blocked by grass. This was again asked to be reported. The grass had been cut.

053/19 SODC

Local Plan

The Local Plan continues to dominate discussion at the Council, and several meetings have been held with Officers to discuss the way in which the emerging plan has evolved and the data upon which it was based. Officers have produced a briefing paper containing four possible options, which are explained in full along with the benefits, drawbacks and risks of each; this report was submitted to the Scrutiny Committee and was published on the council's website on 18 June.

Option one – make no changes to the plan and allow it to continue to be examined by the government's independent inspectors.

Option two – allow the plan to continue to be examined by the government’s inspectors but recommend a series of main modifications that will be considered by the inspectors.

Option three – withdraw the plan, revise it, and then resubmit the revised plan following an additional public consultation.

Option four - withdraw the plan and start the whole plan-making process from the beginning.

Council officers have recommended councillors choose Option One. The Scrutiny Committee in June adjourned and requested more time to receive and consider additional information at their subsequent meeting on 2nd July. At this meeting, scrutiny voted down two separate motions to recommend Options 1 and 2 and instead voted in favour of recommending Option 3.

Cabinet met today (Monday 8th July) and will meet again on Wednesday 10th July to consider all available information received to date, any outputs from Scrutiny plus further input from Oxfordshire County Council. This intensive information-gathering period is designed to ensure that any decision taken by Full Council on 18th July is properly researched and that the implications of any decision are clearly understood.

Finances

Council is looking to strengthen SODC’s finances, seeking innovative ways to increase revenue and manage costs effectively without continuing to dip into SODC reserves to fund the operating budget. Budgeting starts in September.

A lot of money has been used in the demolition of the old SODC offices.

The insurance only covered the rent of an office. Arson was not covered in the insurance.

New SODC Website on its way

The new SODC website is under development and should be a vast improvement on the current one. The aim is to make the website more modern and user-friendly. The timetable for go-live is not yet known but we will let you know as soon as I hear.

Recycling and Waste

South Oxfordshire was recently ranked in a DEFRA survey as the top recycling district in the South East of England, and third nationally, recycling 63% of its waste.

Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall’s recent programme exposing the export of recycling waste to Malaysia has rightly concerned both residents and Councillors. Liz Hayden, SODC’s head of housing and environment, tells us that by weight, around 90% by of the waste plastics Biffa trades from their sorting and transfer facilities, is sent to companies in the UK, including for reprocessing into secondary raw materials. Around 10% (mainly comprising LDPE film like bread bags) is exported, predominantly to reprocessors in the EU.

Low grade “C grade” film like plastic carrier bags, which makes up 2-3% of plastic waste by weight is considered at greatest risk of not being properly recycled if exported and is therefore sent to energy recovery in the UK.

Residents can find out full details of the destinations of waste collected in our district by visiting www.wastedataflow.org.uk. Anybody can register for public access and run reports on the waste and recycling figures reported by all local authorities in the UK.

Separately, if residents do experience any problems with their bins not being collected by Biffa, to whom the Council outsources rubbish collection, they need to report this online by visiting southoxon.gov.uk/missed-bins before midnight on the next working day after the collection was due, or by calling 03000 610610 before 5pm on the next working day.

Planning Training for Town and Parish Councils

In September, Planning are running training events for town and parish councils. The sessions for SODC are as follows:

Tuesday 17 September at Cornerstone, Didcot
2pm-4pm OR 4pm-6pm

Please contact Emily Hamerton if you would like further details. 07717 255 179

The clerk asked if any councillors wanted to attend. William Murdoch was interested. A more focused course was needed which the councillors would provide further information.

Please let us know if there are any objections to a planning application.

Information about taxi licensing was discussed as the taxi booked can be handling confidential information ie. holiday taxi bookings might give away when the house was empty.

054/19 Clerk's Report

A councillor asked about the new bus shelter at Swiss Farm – was it within the B&A boundary? Yes – it is Henley.

I am now chairman of the Greys WI centenary committee and fund raising for this. Would the parish council be willing to contribute to the village event being organised for the 100 years on the 5th August 2020?? A fifth of the membership is from the parish of Bix & Assendon. It was agreed to donate £100 by the end of financial year.

For the minutes, the clerk stated that all councillors 'Declarations of acceptance of Office' had been received and signed.

A deer signs was also requested on the Nettlebed Road, halfway between Nettlebed and Bix. The clerk will liaise with the Nettlebed clerk about this. This will come up in their parish council meeting once the co-ordinates are obtained.

055/19 Planning

a) Applications Received

P19/1465/HH

Mayflower Cottage, Lower Assendon RG9 6AH
Erection of a single storey outbuilding in the back garden
BAPC response required by 24th July

P19/S2047/HH

Lambridge Wood Farm, Bix RG9 4RZ
Roof conversion and extension to the Old Stables. Rear extension to existing garage to provide additional storage.
BAPC response required by 23rd July

b) BAPC Recommendations

P19/S1273/FUL

Bosley Patch, Swiss Farm, Marlow Road, Henley-on-Thames RG9 2HZ
(Retrospective) Erection of barn for storage, processing of fruit and vegetables, cool storage of perishable flowers, staff rest area and basic food prep for staff.

BAPC - NO OBJECTIONS

P19/S1117/HH

Lower Assendon Farm, Old Bix Road, Lower Assendon RG9 6AG

Proposed demolition of existing outbuildings and stabling, proposed construction of new stabling

BAPC - NO OBJECTIONS

P19/S1548/FUL

Grey Lodge, Old Bix Road, Bix RG9 6BY

Demolition of existing dwelling and studio and replacement with a new house.

BAPC - NO OBJECTIONS

c) SODC Decisions

P19/S0756/HH

Mulberry House, Old Bix Road, Bix Oxfordshire RG9 6BY

Construct stables. Renewal of planning permission P16/S0795/HH.

The parish council gave no response

SODC - GRANTED

P19/S0868/HH

Campions, Henley Park, Fawley RG9 6HY

Replacement garden room

BAPC - NO OBJECTIONS

SODC – GRANTED

P19/S0284/FUL

Half acre, Section of A4130 Running between Bix & Lower Assendon, Bix RG9 6DB

Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission P18/S2039/FUL to provide a larger garage building and amended parking area. The demolition of existing dwelling and redevelopment to form two dwellings.

BAPC - NO OBJECTIONS

SODC - GRANTED

056/19 Allotment Report

Reports of low overhanging branches from wood across access track. The clerk spoke to the owner of the wood and he was willing to have them lopped.

Ina Chantry agreed to cut them back.

057/19 Footpath Report

No report this meeting.

058/19 Correspondence

A new house at Bix is named White Cottage, RG9 6DB

Jim McWhirter is leaving Nettlebed and the COMET bus service administration. The new organisers are Clare and Paul Harword. It was agreed to put this information on BAG and to also promote the use of the COMET bus.

Matthew Beesley asked if the parish council would donate a gazebo or two? This was deferred to the village hall committee. Please see their agenda item below.

059/19 Finance

a) Cheques for payment

Clerk's wages and office rent for June/July £470.68

Jefferies Accountancy Services for Internal Audit £357.00

South Oxfordshire District Council (Uncontested election fee) £100

P. Wyatt – grass cutting £160

b) Payments received

Bank balance £ 19,231.50

060/19 Community Infrastructure Levy – Proposals

CIL payments received:

Walnut Cottage, MA £2,723.30

Half Acre, Bix £112.32

The Fox, Bix £3,978.00

Foxwell Cottage, Bix £2,432.86

Total CIL 2019/20 payments = £9,246.86

CIL spending so far:

The EOY 2018/19 CIL report has been submitted showing £2,418.75 (Walnut Cottage, Middle Assendon) not spent.

The sum of £594 from CIL generated at Bix was used to fund the village gate.

It was decided to have a questionnaire so that the parishioners could voice their thought on this. Jane Pryce will liaise with Chris Chantry on this.

Only £5,142.06 CIL payments were for Middle Assendon.

The remaining CIL payment of £6,523.18 should be used for Bix. It is likely that more CIL monies will be generated from Half Acre once building is complete.

Also be aware there is a £500 OCC Highways grant 2019/20 available.

Speed Indicator Devices that were strapped to posts and used in tandem with a speed check were agreed and options/costings will be obtained. Estimate around £2,500 for a basic model.

Question: The use of CIL for mitigation of the developments also needs to be clarified. Could it be used more like a pot for the whole parish/community?

Answer: The information is that you must spend it on mitigation unless the development has no impact or cannot be qualified or improved. If the parish council is found to have spent the money unwisely/inappropriately then the money has to be returned. The annual CIL spending reports provided by the clerk to the CIL liaison team would provide this information so needs to be carefully thought out.

It was asked what measure was most effective? This advice would be sought from the police.

061/19 Village Hall Report

Jackie Walker (the chairman of the village hall committee hoped to attend later but was delayed).

A report was emailed:

“All appears to be running fine. There are problems with the plumbing, kitchen tap, ladies toilets - there is a plumber arranged to come and investigate in the summer holiday. The committee will be reviewing the hall condition with the aim of putting together a list of potential future projects. Any booking inquiries or information on the clearing away of school equipment etc., should be made to the booking secretary only (not to members of the school staff). We will look to decide on any purchase of gazebos at our next meeting on September 17th.”

062/19 Any other business

It was discussed that the BAG questionnaire could also raise awareness of the parish council and may interest someone to become a councillor.

Internal audit passed with following comments:

Risk Register updated – what is the situation with Japanese Knotweed? The answer was – it seems to be dying but needs checking regularly and reported to OCC if any sign.

A cheque for £55 was cashed early even though dated 1st April – please keep in mind for next financial year.

The clerk misread a receipt for refreshments – was £83.55 but cheque £88.55. It was decided that £5 will remain as a kitty for next year's litter pick.

Question about COMET bus payments as one was made at a lower price and another much higher but it was the change from quarterly to annual payment.

Q. Letter from Open Spaces saying the pc paid by direct debit but there was a cheque?

A. Computer generated letter that stated incorrectly we paid by DD.

Annual IT support cost seems high £480. The cost was also the admin for BAG.

Which also relates to £138.60 for constant contact.

OALC cheque had been cashed even though dated 1st April so not in cashbook – please put in correct year.

It was noted that banks ignore any post-dated cheques so the clerk was asked not to post them until the new financial year.

063/19 Public Comments

A charging point for electric cars was discussed.

Next Meeting – Monday 2nd September 2019 at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 8.50 pm