

SUNNINGWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on Monday 28 Sep 2020 via an online virtual meeting

Present:

Councillors

Colin Weyer (Chairman), Elizabeth Bennett, Paul Wooldridge, Mike Wykes, James Greenman, Paul Darby, and Oliver Isaacs.

In attendance:

County Councillor Bob Johnston. District Councillor Emily Smith
Allyson Austin, Thomas Rigault, Simon Pillar, Tom Alden, and Mike Woodward.
Brian Rixon – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

77/20

Questions and comments from visiting councillors and members of the public

Councillor Emily Smith, Leader of the Vale of White Horse District Council, commented on Neighbourhood planning and Affordable Housing and then asked the Parish Council to confirm that Vale Communication reports are reaching the Parish Council. There is a high workload for the Vale Cabinet including the need for a second budget.

Allyson Austin, the Artistic Director of Sunningwell School of Art, expressed concern about the state of Sunningwell Pond. There are a fair number of students who mistakenly believe the pond is the school's responsibility and therefore, by association, hers. Unfortunately, a failure in technology meant the Council could hear extraordinarily little of what Allyson was trying to convey.

Mike Woodward added his views and then asked whether the Council would allow a new volunteer body to have the freedom to develop a strategy and give their time to maintaining the pond. The Chairman said the Council is not allowed to make decisions on matters that are not formally on the agenda, but the subject will now be added to the October agenda.

Thomas Rigault raised concern about the increased traffic noise following the recent resurfacing of parts of the A34. Cllr James Greenman explained it is not a Parish Council matter. County Councillor Bob Johnston said it is the responsibility of Highways England. It was then suggested that the best approach would be to the local MP, Layla Moran.

Oxfordshire County Councillor Bob Johnston advised that real progress has been made regarding the Lodge Hill interchange on the A34. County Highways and Highways England are at the design stage with an exhibition due shortly. The work is likely to start in 2021 and the interchange fully open in 2022. It will unlock housing needs in Abingdon and allow the Vale to meet its housing obligations.

78/20

Apologies

District Councillor Debby Hallett.

79/20

Declarations of members' interests in respect of any item.

Cllr Mike Wykes is a member of the Village Hall Management Committee and therefore declared an interest on item 7 – Village Hall Lease.

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80/20 To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council held on 27 July 2020.

The minutes were approved and will be forwarded to the Chairman for signing in due course.

81/20 Village Hall car park resurfacing

As required by the S106 grant application procedure, two quotations to a similar specification have been received. Cllr Colin Weyer proposed that Chiswell Contractors should be appointed to renew the car park area at Sunningwell Village Hall.

It was unanimously agreed that the project should go ahead funded by S106 monies.

ACTION Cllr Colin Weyer

82/20 Bayworth Triangle parking area

The clerk has sent letters to the County Council officer Matt Archer seeking advice on the area by Bayworth Triangle where vehicles are parked. The Parish Council only owns the grassed area of the triangle but would like to take over and improve the parking area. No reply at all has been received from the County Council.

County Councillor Bob Johnston was approached, and, on 3rd August, he also wrote to the officer seeking some response even if initially just to say the department was too busy. Again, no response has been received.

83/20 Village Hall lease

Cllr Colin Weyer has delivered a letter to the Village Hall Management Committee from the Parish Council's solicitor containing a replacement sheet to the original signature list accepting the new lease. The original list was signed but, in hindsight, it was realised that each signature should have been witnessed by an independent person. The replacement list could be signed by all Village Hall Management Committee members in the presence of the same witness.

84/20 Traffic speeding in the villages

Cllr Paul Darby has been approached by parishioners reporting two near misses by vehicles exceeding the speed limit in Bayworth. There was also a confrontation with another driver.

Cllr Darby has raised the question of speed limits on Fix My Street, and a review was undertaken which concluded everything was correct except for one 30mph sign that was in the wrong place and will be moved.

The Council discussed speed limits within the Parish and agreed in principle that the 30mph limits in the villages of Bayworth and Sunningwell should be reduced to 20mph and that approval should be sought from the County Council.

This could be funded from S106 monies, but Cllr James Greenman suggested, and it was agreed, that the Council should get the scheme approved first and then agree funding. Cllr Colin Weyer agreed to progress this as soon as possible.

ACTION Cllr Colin Weyer

85/20 Road noise from the A34

This is referred to in item 77/20 above.

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86/20 Playground

Cllr Oliver Isaacs felt it was time to reopen the playground and circulated an example of a risk assessment, and signage, used by Wootton Parish Council.

A comment was made that the school adjacent to the playground has procedures to keep groups of children in separate bubbles and so reduce the risk of transmitting the virus. This though, has been significantly weakened by parents allowing the different groups of children to mix by using a playground that is clearly closed.

The Council discussed this and decided the right thing to do was continue the closure of the playground. The clerk had suggested, in a recent email, that the gates should have chains and locks to emphasis the decision made, but this has not yet been approved.

Cllr James Greenman said he would visit the playground to ensure the closure signs had not been removed.

ACTION Cllr James Greenman

87/20 Village green notice board

Cllr Paul Wooldridge met Bob Evans to discuss the design of the board and the range of information to be displayed. The location was agreed near where the footpath goes up the central area. It was acknowledged that the cost is likely to be around £2,500 and a proposal would be put before the October Council.

ACTION Cllr Paul Wooldridge

88/20 November firework display

It was agreed the November firework display should be postponed until Saturday 6 November next year, and the clerk should write to Storm fireworks thanking them and requesting the change and asking that the deposit paid be held towards the 2021 event.

ACTION Clerk

89/20 Quarry footpath survey

It was agreed the clerk should sent the Parish Council's survey and architect's report to the County Council's Rights of Way officer with a request to bring the matter to conclusion and thus remove the Department of Transport's Temporary Footpath Closure Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

ACTION Clerk

90/20 Parish Council meetings to continue online

It was agreed that Parish Council meetings will continue to be held online for the foreseeable future. This is permitted under regulations in place and the National Association of Local Councils strongly advise councils to meet remotely

91/20 Planning applications

On 18 August 2020 Cllr Mike Wykes wrote to the Chairman of the Vale of White Horse District Councils to express concern regarding the way in which comments made by the Parish Council are not being afforded due weight by planning officers. In particular, the case of Red Copse on Foxcombe Road, application P16/V2075/HH, and The Coach House, The Old Rectory, P20/V0342/HH and P20/V0343/LB.

About Red Copse, he concluded that the officers correctly had a clear and reasoned justification to consider the application acceptable.

After reading the officer's report on The Coach House, he agreed that the points made by the parish council were not adequately summarised in the report and were then either not mentioned or dealt with adequately. In today's council meeting it was agreed that Cllr Mike Wykes will write again about both cases and will agree the draft with Cllrs Weyer and Wooldridge to ask what test applied to show it was valid, because it was covered by a previous application.

ACTION Cllr Mike Wykes

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92/20	Payments due		
Bank transfer	Clerk	Salary, Office Expenditure.	537.56
Bank transfer	HMRC	PAYE	115.20
Bank transfer	Mark McCracken	Grass cutting and strimming in the Parish	135.00
Bank transfer	Ian Hutt	Grass cutting Sunningwell Parish Village Green	240.00
Bank transfer	M R White	Grass cutting Sunningwell Parish Village Green	168.00
Bank transfer	Treescape	VG willow tree overhanging 38 Sunningwell	480.00

93/20	The next Parish Council Meeting will be on Monday 26 October 2020 using video conferencing
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The Chairman closed the September meeting at 9:05p.m.