

**BIX AND ASSENDON  
ANNUAL 'ELECTORS' PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021**

Clerk - Mrs. Jane Pryce, 56 Galsworthy Drive, Caversham Park Village, Reading, Berkshire RG4 6PP  
Tel: 01189 475915 Email: parishclerk@bixandassendon.org.uk

**The minutes of the Bix & Assendon Annual 'Electors' Parish Council meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021 7.30pm at St. James Church, Bix RG9 6DA**

**Parish Councillors present:**

Mrs. Ina Chantry (chairman), Mr. William Murdoch (vice-chairman), Mr. Fredrick van Mierlo, Ms. Sadie Hellon and Ms Sophie Roper

Oxfordshire County Councillor David Bartholomew  
SODC councillor Jo Robb

Also present: Mrs. Jane Pryce (Clerk) and 2 members of the public

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

CIL – Community Infrastructure Levy

OALC – Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils

FMS – Fix My Street – website to report highway problems

**032/21 Apologies for absence**

None

**033/21 Members declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

None

**Additional agenda item for election of the chairman and vice-chairman.**

Ina Chantry was proposed as chairman by Fredrick van Mierlo and seconded by Sadie Hellon. William Murdoch was proposed as vice-chairman by Fredrick van Mierlo and seconded by Sadie Hellon. The forms were signed by the councillors and witnessed and signed by the returning officer.

**034/21 Confirmation of the minutes on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

These minutes were signed by the chairman, Cllr. Ina Chantry and declared a true and accurate account of the meeting.

**035/21 Matters arising from the minutes**

The splitting out of assets inspection form per councillor has been emailed to the councillors.

The flooding at Broadplat (Greenmarsh Farm corner) – this has been reported on FMS.

**036/21 OCC Report**

**GENERAL OCC REPORT**

Subjects are:

COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTION

OXFORDSHIRE TO BENEFIT FROM ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE GROWTH

MAJORITY OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN OFFERED FIRST CHOICE PRIMARY COVID STATISTICS

## **SPECIFIC REPORT FOR BIX & ASSENDON**

### **ELECTION RESULT**

I am delighted to have been returned as your County Councillor for another four years. However, across the county, the Conservative Independent Alliance have lost their majority and the council is now under no overall control. I will update the parish further at the next meeting when the situation will have become clear.

### **DAMAGED SIGN NEAR A4130/B480 JUNCTION**

Less than two years after re-installation, the sign in the Henley direction has again been totally demolished. It has been reported on FMS by the parish clerk and the reference is 2647832. I have highlighted the issue to officers and they have advised a replacement is in hand.

### **RESTORATION OF OLD CYCLE PATH FROM LOWER ASSENDON TO BIX**

I reported at the last meeting that I had met with the parish chair, the clerk, Cllr Robb and SODC officers to discuss this proposal. The idea now is to expand this to become a cycle path from Henley to Nettlebed. There would be three sections:

- The Henley to Lower Assendon section which already exists as a shared use path
- The Lower Assendon to Bix section which was the original subject of discussion
- The Bix to Nettlebed section that already exists as a path but needs siding-out/improving

SODC officers have indicated that 50% of the costs could be covered by CIL monies, subject to agreement by OCC officers, to whom I have relayed the proposal and met with an encouraging response. I have chased officers for an update.

The layby being created opposite the Golden Ball by vehicles was now a muddy eyesore. The land is unregistered. Options were discussed and Cllr David Bartholomew will come back to the council on this and requested a photo and location – Cllr Sophie Roper agreed to provide this.

### **037/21 SODC Report**

Subjects include:

**Elections – 6 May**

### **Assets of Community Value**

Cllr Ina Chantry was interested in this (but would ask Chris Chantry to attend) and the clerk gave the login for registration to her.

### **Collaborative Housing**

**Local Plan 2035 and Bioabundance**

**Grant Funding for New Affordable Homes**

**Town and Parish Council Forums**

### **038/21 Public comments/questions**

None

### **039/21 Clerk's Report**

Preparing for the audit of the 2020/21 accounts and submission for the Internal part was done in March/April. Sign off as below 050/21. These papers now go to the external auditors

**BIX AND ASSENDON  
ANNUAL 'ELECTORS' PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021**

and the form/accounts will be on the website and the 'Notice of the period of public rights' will also be on the website and the noticeboards.

A lot of discussion with Highways about speed/volume devices. Eventually agreed on Dobson's Lane triangle road sign and telegraph pole at Oak Rise, LA. To get a better picture of speeding, mid/late September was decided. These devices cost £120 each for one week.

The new VAS sign at Middle Assendon was being masked by tree growth and was not working. A new location was suggested and will be discussed at the Highways meeting on Thursday.

Ina Chantry/Freddie van Mierlo also suggested one at Bix near the new bus stop.

Speed/volume devices suggested where the dual carriageway (from Bix) becomes a single carriageway. The clerk was asked to install them in maintenance laybys. But, first, this will be discussed at the meeting on Thursday.

I checked the Bix parish assets and I notice that the new bus shelter needs a clean as loads of green slime. The salt bin at Village hall was again full of water and rubbish. And village gate and sign are dirty.

Cllr. Sophie Roper checked Lower Assendon assets and the noticeboard catch was held by a twig- works for me and easy to replace as the nail used before was always being lost. And bridge over ditch on Dobson's Lane triangle may have one plank with dry rot. It was agreed to ask Paul Wyatt to fix this. And tree guard at WW2 memorial tree is leaning so needs to be straighten and ivy removed? Clerk has reflectors so will replace the 2 missing. The village gates need a wash down. Ivy needs removing from White Beam WW2 tree. Clerk will update Assets register for update on tree type. Thank you, Cllr. Sophie Roper, for the detailed report.

#### **040/21 The Resignation of the Clerk**

The clerk had given her resignation to the chair with effect from 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2021. Three months' notice was advised if the new clerk had no experience. If the new clerk has experience, then 1 month was advised. This was agreed.

It was decided that the new clerk would receive a laptop and a printer as the current clerk used her own. Also, hours worked would be looked into as the current clerk maybe doing unbilled hours.

#### **041/21 Planning**

Cllr, William Murdoch

##### **a) Applications Received**

None requiring a parish council response within timeframe for this meeting. But see below.

##### **b) BAPC Recommendations**

###### **P21/S1233/FUL**

Benwells Farm Barn, Land adjoining Benwells Farmhouse, Bix RG9 4RT  
Variation of conditions 5 (Scheme of Landscaping) & 8 (Bat Licence) on  
planning application P18/S1066/FUL (Conversion of existing barn to residential use)

**BIX AND ASSENDON  
ANNUAL 'ELECTORS' PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021**

BAPC supports

Target Decision Date 2nd June 2021

**P21/S1058/HH**

7 The Green, Middle Assendon RG9 6AT

Single Storey Side Extension

**BAPC response SUPPORTS and a request that 'the parish council would not object to applications for any single access/dropped kerb to drive applied for'.**

**P20/S2280/FUL**

Land adjacent to Drews Wood Cottage, Bix RG9 5DL

Temporary (3 years) siting of mobile homes (essential rural workers dwelling)

BAPC response – SUPPORTS

SODC Target Decision Date 16th December 2020

**P19/S4395/HH**

The Barn, Broadplat Lane, Bix RG9 4RS

Alterations to external openings with new glazing, raised chimney stack, new external timber cladding, roof alterations and installation of new rooflights/repositioning of existing rooflights

BAPC response - NO OBJECTIONS

SODC Target Decision Date: 27th January 2020

This application was amended in August. The pc submitted the same decision but the target decision date has not been changed.

**P19/S1548/FUL**

Grey Lodge, Old Bix Road, Bix RG9 6BY

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

BAPC response - NO OBJECTIONS

SODC Target Decision Date: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Again – no change.

**c) SODC Decisions**

**P21/S0089/HH**

1 Chestnut Close Middle Assendon RG9 6AY

New single storey Porch extension, plus change garage flat roof to pitched roof.

No response from the parish council

SODC target decision - Granted

**P21/S1099/HH**

6 Valley Cottages, Middle Assendon RG9 6AR

Dropped kerb

BAPC no objections

SODC Granted

**P20/S4876/FUL**

Swiss Farm Caravan Park, Marlow Road, Henley-On-Thames RG9 2HY

Bespoke 5\* Holiday Lodge Development for 24 Holiday Lodges in Lieu of Camping on the existing camping field.

**BIX AND ASSENDON  
ANNUAL 'ELECTORS' PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021**

BAPC OBJECTS: Not appropriate in an AONB  
WITHDRAWN

**P20/S4581/FUL**

Windmill House, Lower Assendon RG9 6AN  
Proposed storage building.  
SODC Decision Granted

**042/21 20s Plenty project**

This was discussed as an interesting project. First was suggested that 20mph stickers on bins be done. The clerk was asked to check if the stickers were free or as below £1 each as Nettlebed had started this campaign and bought stickers. Cllr. David Bartholomew stated that the parish would be need to consulted on this so a BAG survey was suggested as well as a WhatsApp discussion raised. Also posters on noticeboards.

Be aware that lower speed limits can result in more possible development.

**043/21 Verge opposite the Golden Ball**

The verge is unregistered land. This is being looked into – please see agenda item 036/21

**044/21 Speed Awareness Stickers for bins**

At Bix 11 houses face the A4130 and would need 40mph speed stickers. Plus, there are two bins for each residence. 20 stickers requested.

At LA and MA 100 stickers for 30 mph. It was suggested that the 20s plenty project could be used to put 20mph stickers on bins? And maybe cause driver to consider their speed more? This will be discussed as the project needs more consideration.

Costs: - £1 each + post & packaging for 20mph  
Or £9.99: for 12 Amazon for 30mph  
£1.50 each from Stickerzilla for 30/40mph  
£1 each for a 100 Esyt - £99.99 30mph

It was thought that a cap on spend for this would be £500.

**045/21 New dual carriageway sign**

FMS alert has been raised plus email to OCC and OCC to Highways has been done but the clerk noticed not done yet. Also please see agenda item 036/21.

**046/21 Grass cutting**

As the Henley Town Council cut the grass on the LA triangle and their policy is now 'NO MOW May' – is this acceptable to the council? This was agreed but it was assumed that this would reduce the bill for cutting. The clerk listened to the HTC meeting on this and parks manager admitted that it was a complete waste of time as there was no machine available to him to stop grass cuttings being left. Wild flowers cannot compete with grass if grass is being feed by grass cuttings.

And HTC grass cutting annual cost goes from £300 to £350 for 2021.

**BIX AND ASSENDON**  
**ANNUAL ‘ELECTORS’ PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021**

**047/21 New Resident’s Welcome Pack**

The idea of a new Resident’s Welcome pack is proposed. This was agreed. Costs – would be very little cost – who will monitor for new residents.? The clerk had done this at Nettlebed and was very well received. Contents of pack were discussed. A welcome letter from the chairman of the parish council, details of bins collection dates, introduction to the BAG email alert, WhatsApp groups, COMET bus service, Village hall (Jackie Walker), the Nursery School at Bix, Church services (Cllr William Murdoch), school catchment area, council tax information, walks, post office availability, doctors, etc.

**048/21 Armistice Tree and Covid Memorial Trees**

The church will need to confirm any planting of trees. The diocese would have to be contacted. It was suggested that 3 silver birches to mark the Covid pandemic and another tree for Armistice tree. This will be discussed again at next meeting.

For the Armistice tree – is the ‘Tommy’ a fitting mark (see below) with the tree? These are metal cut outs depicting a soldier and help support the Royal British Legion. Please see agenda item 049/21. This will be discussed again at the July meeting. A date for this was decided on – 18<sup>th</sup> September. With stalls to help in fund raising for the church (the community hub extension) and maybe refreshments/food at village hall.

Blessing for the trees would be nice.

**049/21 Correspondence**

The Royal British Legion – VE day on 8<sup>th</sup> May but a ‘Tommy’ can be purchased to mark this. A brochure was handed round. Most are £200.

**050/21 EOY Accounts and Audit 2020/21**

There were a few minor errors which were quickly rectified. The extra column, to denote invoice numbers be put in spreadsheets (which was requested last year) has been a great help. The Risk Register was only missing two level codes of risk. Which will be updated.

The AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return) passed by the Internal Auditor and Governance statements were agreed. Pages 3, 5 and 6 were signed by the RFO and the chairman and minuted.

**051/21 Finance**

**Payments:**

**COMET bus**

Annual payment for COMET bus of £494 has been paid but as social distancing has strictly curtailed numbers, a number of other parishes have asked for additional trips. To do this, an additional payment is required of £241.58 as a share of the 5 parishes that fund this. Council was unsure. Cllrs. Sadie Hellon and Sophie Roper asked for additional information which the clerk will forward.

**Insurance Zurich:**

5-year £390.14

3-year £400.16

1-year £410.17

Due 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021

**BIX AND ASSENDON  
ANNUAL 'ELECTORS' PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021**

Decision was for 5 years.

Chris Chantry for **website and BAG** £960

Jane Pryce **wages** for April/May £235.34 plus audit payment of £357.00 (VAT £59.50) = £592.34

Ina Chantry for **Zoom expenses** £43.17 (3 months)

A new charity donation was done last year for the **Oxfordshire Association for the Blind** £100. This was missed for the budget 2021/22 but should a donation be made for this year? This was agreed.

There were questions about how charity donations were decided and this was clarified. The new councillors requested that they could think about this and discuss further at a later meeting.

**Bank**

Income: £45 allotment payments and £3,500 first half precept.

Bank balance: £13,164.19

CIL payment for P17/S084/FUL Henley Park – replacement dwelling. £5,644.02 being held by SODC for now.

**030/21 Any other business**

**Training available to councillors**

14 <sup>th</sup> June 1.30pm	<b>FREE</b> OCC Gypsy and Travellers Service <b>13 places available</b>	afternoon	Peter Gammond	Join Peter Gammond, Service Manager for Oxfordshire County Council, Gypsy and Traveller Services for a free session on what the service does; how to avoid an unauthorised encampment and what to do should the situation arise despite your best efforts.  This will be followed by the opportunity for questions and answers.
---------------------------------	--	-----------	---------------	---

**BIX AND ASSENDON**  
**ANNUAL 'ELECTORS' PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021**

Thurs. June 24 <sup>th</sup> 10.30am	Employing Staff with Confidence  12 places available	Half day morning	Chris Moses	<p>The training is aimed at Councillors and Clerks who want to avoid the numerous legal and practical pitfalls associated with being an Employer. It will provide an overview of the essentials of getting it right when employing a Clerk or other members of staff.</p> <p>The course starts with recruitment and interviews, moves to induction and the legal requirements of taking on new staff, issuing contracts, and then managing sickness and disciplinary issues.</p> <p>It will also ensure that attendees are brought fully up to date with the latest legal changes.</p>
Tuesday Sept. 14 <sup>th</sup> 10 am	Roles and Responsibilities  9 places available	Full day over two sessions	Liz Howlett	<p>This course, aimed at newly elected councillors, will be in two online sessions on the same day 10 - 12 and then 1 - 2.30pm.</p> <p><b>Session One</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terminology</li> <li>• Collective responsibility</li> <li>• Chairing a meeting</li> <li>• Relationships</li> <li>• The Agenda</li> </ul> <p><b>Session Two</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Disorderly conduct</li> <li>• Managing difficult situations</li> </ul> <p>Practical tips</p>
Wed. Sept. 29 <sup>th</sup> 6.30pm	Councillor Fundamentals  7 spaces available	Evening Session	Kim Bedford	<p>In this session we will set the scene of local government;-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roles and responsibilities concerning the five main components of the council - Council, Councillor, Chairman, Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)</li> <li>• The importance of the law in meetings with an effective agenda and accurate minutes</li> <li>• Council delegation through committees; ways of managing your responsibilities; the place of Annual Meetings</li> <li>• Making a council plan for delivery of services to and for your community</li> </ul> <p>Not forgetting - compliance through governance arrangements with full transparency</p>



**BIX AND ASSENDON**  
**ANNUAL 'ELECTORS' PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021**

Tuesday October 12 <sup>th</sup> 10.30am	Appraisals for Parish Council Staff	Half day morning	Chris Moses	The Purpose of Appraisals Overcoming Staff Worries The Appraisal Form Preparation for an Appraisal
Tuesday October 26 <sup>th</sup> 1.30pm	Budgeting	Half day PM	Steve Parkinson	This session is aimed at officers and councillors of parish & town councils, who are involved in preparing, approving and monitoring budgets.  Topics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• setting a budget and precept</li> <li>• Contingencies and reserves</li> <li>• how the council tax base affects the budget</li> <li>• Inflation</li> <li>• budget monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the end of this session you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how and when to prepare a budget</li> <li>• Know how to approve and issue a precept</li> <li>• Be aware of the factors that affect a budget</li> <li>• Understand how to manage a budget</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Thurs. November 25 <sup>th</sup> 10am	Roles and Responsibilities	Full day over two sessions	Liz Howlett	This course, aimed at newly elected councillors, will be in two online (Zoom) sessions on the same day 10 - 12 and then 1 - 2.30pm.  <b>Session One</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terminology</li> <li>• Collective responsibility</li> <li>• Chairing a meeting</li> <li>• Relationships</li> <li>• The Agenda</li> </ul> <b>Session Two</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Disorderly conduct</li> <li>• Managing difficult situations</li> <li>• Practical tips</li> </ul>

Next Meeting – Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 9.40 pm