

**BIX AND ASSENDON
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
6TH JULY 2020**

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 Parish Council meeting held on 6th July 2020
7.30pm via Zoom**

Parish Councillors present:

Mrs. Ina Chantry (chairman), Mr. William Murdoch (vice-chairman) and Ms. Lisbeth Thiesen

Oxfordshire County Councillor David Bartholomew

Also present: Mrs. Jane Pryce (Clerk) and 9 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

053/20 Apologies for absence

The SODC councillors Lorraine Hillier and Jo Robb were unable to attend.

054/20 Members declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

None

055/20 Confirmation of the minutes on the 8th June 2020

The minutes were signed and agreed as true and accurate record of the meetings by the chairman. These will be scanned and forwarded by email to the clerk.

056/20 OCC Report from Cllr. D. Bartholomew (DB)

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

SPECIFIC REPORT FOR BIX & ASSENDON

READING TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2036 (INCLUDING THIRD READING BRIDGE)

DB emailed all clerks in his Division on 17th May to let you know that Reading is now consulting on its Transport Strategy 2036. Several proposals would have major impacts on South Oxfordshire including:

- North Reading Orbital Route (p97)
- A Third Thames crossing (see p98)
- North Reading Park and Rides (p111)

The consultation closes on 30 August and I urge you to respond here:

<https://consult.reading.gov.uk/dens/reading-transport-strategy-2036/>

In addition, you may wish to email the Leader of OCC ian.hudspeth@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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Also, Kidmore End Parish Council is coordinating a joint parish response and DB trusts they have been in contact.

The clerk confirmed she had received details of this but not for Bix & Assendon. These would be forwarded to council.

FMS WHITE LANE 1770645 (SOIL BUILD UP)

Whilst not deemed to be an immediate or significant risk, a request has been placed with the District Council who are responsible for street cleansing to sweep the road and thus resolve the matter.

OLD CYCLE PATH AT BIX

DB put the clerk in touch with the relevant OCC Cabinet Member to see if any funding is available for reinstating this path. I will follow the matter up at a Locality meeting later this week.

DB was asked about the excessive noise and speed of motorbikes using the A4130 and B480 and whether there was anything could be done. There were a number of suggestions. It was requested that incidents be recorded (time, place) on the parish WhatsApp by residents and be collated and given to the police.

057/20 SODC Report

Please see the full report on the website.

058/20 Clerk's Report

Cheque signing has proved to be a problem due to social distancing. But all outstanding payments have been made.

I checked the sight lines at Dobson's Lane triangle and the tree/bush was obscuring exit onto B481. I reported this via FMS and since then it has been cut back. It was revealed that member of the public has cut this back.

It was suggested that problems with sightline could be reported on FMS, some of the local WhatsApp groups or to the parish clerk.

The parishclerk@bixandassendon.org.uk email address has been sorted and it is working well.

I have been in contact with OCC about the Bix to Lower Assendon cycle path. It has been indicated that there may be a funding problem.

There have been discussions around the new SID (Speed Indicator Device). It seems it may be able to record speed/volume that OCC laser devices do. This will be useful in the future but positioning might be a problem. It will need to be mounted on a pole at a height of 2.1m. There are few poles of this height already in the parish and also the problem of mounting them at that height. It was suggested that it could be used to record if not left unattended. This is being looked into and also there may be extra insurance cover needed for that use.

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059/20 Casual Vacancy for councillors

It was suggested that a meeting of residents who were interested in becoming councillors (with social distancing) might be a good idea. It would allow them to ask questions about the work of being a parish councillor. With Ina Chantry and the clerk in attendance. This was agreed.

The prospective councillors introduced themselves. Sophie Roper, Sadie Hellon and Felix van Mierlo.

**060/20 Planning
William Murdoch**

a) Applications Received

P20/S1923/HH

Henley Cottage, Lower Assendon RG9 6AH

Erection of an outbuilding

Parish council response required by 10th July 2020

As this application response deadline is after this meeting, the current agreed response (by councillors), which is SUPPORTS, can be discussed. Any resident attending the meeting can present their views. No member of the public made objections.

b) BAPC Recommendations

P20/S1418/HH

Tanglewood, Henley Park, Fawley RG9 6HY

Part single storey and part two storey utilities extension to existing dwelling

BAPC response: Supports

SODC Target Decision Date: 23rd June 2020

P20/S1435/FUL

Land at Leys Cottage, Old Bix Road, Bix RG9 6BY

Proposed erection of a new hay barn and equipment barn in connection with existing equestrian use of land.

BAPC response: Supports

SODC target Decision Date: 19th June 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

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

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SODC Target Decision Date: 24th July 2019

c) SODC Decisions

P20/S1494/FUL

Former Halfacre, Section ff A4130 Running Between Bix and LA, Bix RG9 6DB
Variation of Condition 1 of P20/S0170/FUL for amended plans to entrance gates.
Variation of condition 1 - Approved Plans of application P19/S0284/FUL to omit the walls that surround the cart shed. Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission P18/S2039/FUL to provide a larger garage building and amended parking area.

BAPC response: Supports

SODC – GRANTED

Questions were asked about the development of the Smiths Centre building. It was confirmed that 70 flats were being made and that as a change of use, no further details had been received.

061/20 Traffic Calming Measures

a) Traffic calming working group draft plan

This document is available on the website.

b) Traffic calming across the parish

At the time the parish survey was conducted, CIL payments had to be spent in direct response to make repairs and improve infrastructure as a result of new builds. That is now not the case, the money can be spent across the community.

A resident of the parish had requested the parish council consider cancelling the purchase of the two VAS signs to allow the Traffic Calming Working Group to have as much money available as possible and to allow for a parish wide response to traffic calming

Cllr. Ina Chantry:

My own view is that it would be beneficial to cancel / place on long term hold the order for the following reasons.

1. While the survey showed considerable support for VAS signs in MA and Bix the question was asked on the understanding that CIL money has to be spent in direct response to make repairs or improve infrastructure as a result of new builds. That is not the case, the money can be spent on infrastructure across the community.
2. By retaining money we can plan and implement a parish wide programme that might not involve more signs but other strategies, however, unless we look at the problem as a whole we cannot plan for the future but only on an as need basis.
3. The survey question, while sent out with the best of intentions, alienated a significant number of people living in LA from the PC and a fresh start would allow for more people to be involved and for it to develop a stronger sense of community.
4. The SID / VAS/ Data Collection Machine SODC have paid for provides us with an opportunity to collect data from a wider range of locations to use in any planning.

The existing data collected seems to be more for Middle Assendon.

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Cllr. Lisbeth Theisen made the following statement:

“As you know I do not agree with reversing the decision on the VAS signs or delaying the installation for the following reasons:

- For years residents of Middle Assendon had been asking for traffic calming measures for traffic entering the village from the North
- The VAS signs and their position was agreed by the parish council following proper procedures and input from OCC.
- There was significant majority for putting them up in Bix and Middle Assendon
- At the time, we were of the understanding that CIL money should be used in the villages in which it had been generated
- Nothing has been done regarding traffic calming since the painting of the white lines and 30m circles in 2018
- The parish council has the funds and there is more CIL coming
- I fully support The Speeding and Traffic Calming Working Group which was set up in the beginning of this year. They presented a “Draft Implementation Plan” a little over a week ago, however this plan is only setting out, how the group will approach the issue, so cannot see that any actual measures will be implemented in the first 12 months, and in the meantime, nothing is being done

This is a case of doing something, not just been seen to do nothing. I understand why you have delayed the immediate installation as a damage limitation exercise, but it has to be understood that one group should not be able to block what benefits another group of parishioners.”

The installation of the 2 VAS signs (Middle Assendon and Bix) was agreed to be delayed.

It was suggested (by a parishioner) were the VAS signs the right approach for the parish? The Traffic calming working group would be looking into this.

062/20 Council email including Proposal and Approval of email policy

A policy for protocol in the use of a parish council email address for councillors was discussed and the proposal was approved.

Key points are:

Use must always be lawful

Not compromise the Council’s information or the Clerk’s computer system

Emails can be monitored

This policy would be available to read on the website.

063/20 Correspondence

Training courses available from OALC via Zoom. Councillors be aware that they are limited to 15 per session (so book with the clerk early).

Ina Chantry expressed in interest in the Charing and Facilitation skills course but at a later date.

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23rd July

Councillor Fundamentals
New online @ 2pm with Kim Bedford

20th August

Councillor Fundamentals
New online @ 6.30pm with Kim Bedford

7th September

Councillor Fundamentals
New online @ 7pm with Kim Bedford

Wednesday 9th September

The Experienced Councillor
Converted to online in morning with Frances Webster and Wellers Hedleys

Chairing and Facilitation skills

Converted to online in afternoon with Frances Webster and Wellers Hedleys

Wednesday 23rd September

Roles and Responsibilities for new councillors and clerks
Converted to two online sessions on the same day
Booking available soon
Elizabeth Howlett

Wednesday 21st October

Financial management for councillors
Online - 10.30am
Budgeting & financial control not Procurement as previously advertised
Online - 2pm with Steve Parkinson

Sat 7th November

Roles and Responsibilities for new councillors and clerks
Converted to two online sessions on the same day
Booking available soon
Elizabeth Howlett

064/20 Tree Preservation Orders

A proposal was tabled for some of the parish trees to be given Tree Preservation Orders. TPOs in the parish can be checked on the interactive map on the SODC website. The trees proposed would be marked on a map for residents to comment on and/or add to. There is an on-line tool for this but it was asked that residents email the clerk with suggested trees to prevent duplicate postings. Native trees had priority.

A resident was worried about Ash die back happening on the central reservation of the dual carriageway. They want to protect a large Ash tree on their property. The clerk was asked to

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report this and if the TPO officer and the resident were happy to share details this could be dealt with directly.

065/20 Allotment Report

Jane Pryce

No report

066/20 Finance

a) Cheques for payment

None

b) Payments received

23rd June 2020 HMRC VAT refund £659.71

Bank balance £12,266.16

The bank mandate failed again (to make Ina Chantry a signatory) as the signature of Lisbeth Thiesen had changed over time. Only the page affected has asked to be redone. This was completed and posted 29th June 2020.

On line banking will be investigated in the future.

067/20 Footpath Report

Jane Aiken

No report for this meeting.

Stickers had been reported, for Henley footpaths, to mask 'no cycling' but not observed in the parish

068/20 Village Hall report

Jackie Walker

In terms of the village hall committee, we had already been discussing the potential of installing solar panels and had requested a survey of the roof to look at the condition of the roof for this purpose and to identify any work required now or to come short/medium term. I feel it's important as Chair that I don't decide which direction we should take but try and collect all the options so we can discuss when we next meet, we are now looking at when that will be as we haven't met since February.

I have a Climate Emergency Working Group meeting in the morning, if possible, I may ask for opinion on the way to go for the hall.

The Montessori reopened the beginning of June and the term ends this Thursday 9th July, there was a smaller number of 12 attending but all children intending to return in Sept along with lots of interest from parents potentially looking to sign up their children to join the nursery. We have been given information and guidelines on reopening the bookings for the hall, currently this does not look feasible in the short term and will be discussed when we meet.

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Also, it was announced that Lisbeth Thiesen was to be the village hall committee's treasurer. A new representative from the parish council is still to be decided.

069/20 Transport Strategy update

Jackie Walker

Would the council like me to continue as their pc representative on this panel? This was agreed and thanked. The next meeting of the Transport Strategy Group is on the 17th of August 2020.

070/20 Any other business

None

071/20 Public Comments

As the Smiths Centre was causing more traffic on the Fairmile, would it be possible to extend the 40mph zone to there and hence to the turning for Lower Assendon (B480)?

It was asked if Jackie Walker could bring this up at the next HTC Transport Strategy meeting.

The clerk highlighted a list of possible developments reported in the Henley Standard which included Swiss Farm 73 units and south-western end of Fair Mile 15 units.

Next Meeting – Monday 7th September 2020 at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 8.55pm