

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 2nd September 2019.

Parish Councillors present:

Ms. Lisbeth Thiesen, Mrs. Ina Chantry 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 3 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

064/19 Apologies for absence

Robert Walmsley expressed his regret for not being able to attend the meeting.

065/19 Members declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

None

066/19 Confirmation of the minutes on the 8th July 2019

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

067/19 OCC Report from Cllr. D. Bartholomew

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

SPECIFIC REPORT FOR BIX & ASSENDON

DOBSONS LANE, LOWER ASSENDON

Stage I of the remedial work was completed at the end of February. Stage II of the works should have started today with completion due by the end of the week.

It was confirmed that the work had started.

THIRD READING BRIDGE

This project has gained new momentum and there is a Steering Group meeting on 18th October.

In advance of this, I am taking a motion expressing concern to Full Council on 10th September.

FLYTIPPING

Further to my report in July subsequent to an enquiry by a resident, I have had the following response from the OCC Waste Strategy Manager:

HWRCs have always accepted all household waste free of charge. Charges have been made for non household 'DIY' waste for over 11 years. Prior to 2017 householders were allowed to deposit 3 items of DIY waste for free, and were charged £1/item thereafter. In 2017 charges were raised for the first time in 11 years and changed to £1.50/item (no items for free). Charges for tyres and plasterboard were also increased slightly. Asbestos has always been accepted for free and this remains the case. We have never accepted any type of waste free of charge at the HWRCs if the work has been carried out by a tradesperson.

Soil, rubble, hard-core, plasterboard (gypsum) other DIY type items are classified as construction waste, not household waste, and are expensive for the council to dispose of. The council is not obliged to provide residents with a disposal site for non-household waste. However Oxfordshire County Council recognises that many householders carry out small DIY projects from time to time, and by applying a small charge this allows HWRCs to continue accepting these discretionary types of non-household waste.

Fly-tipping is a serious environmental crime predominantly carried out by traders who do not wish to pay to dispose of their waste legally. We do not believe that a small increase in the charge for householders to dispose of non-household waste will drive people to criminal activity. Oxfordshire County Council consulted residents on changes to the HWRCs in 2015 and 2016. Responses indicated that residents would prefer to pay to deposit waste rather than have their local site close.

Flytipping data as presented to the resident includes flytips of all sizes and all types of waste across the time period. In order to make the direct correlation that fly tipping has increased as a result of the HWRC charges, we would need to see an increase in flytipping of the types of waste that we charge for, and not an increase in the types of waste that we don't. We requested backing data from all the districts, and analysis indicates that waste charged for at the HWRCs makes up a similar percentage of total flytips before and after the charging scheme was altered. We acknowledge that there has been a small increase in some districts, but chargeable HWRC waste is not the sole cause of flytipping increases across the county.

Flytipping is increasing nationally, in May 2019 the LAG reported a 40% increase in the number of flytipping incidents in England since 2012. This is a worrying trend and OCC and the District and City Councils are keen to see this reversed. We work together with the Environment Agency and Thames Valley Police to share intelligence and information, and have had several successful flytipping prosecutions in recent years. Our recently adopted Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy states that we will continue to improve the environment for local residents, taking enforcement action against those caught committing environmental crime.

To avoid Oakley waste recycling centre closing, it had been decided to charge for some items on non-domestic waste.

White Lane. The clerk asked for details in reporting the narrowing of White Lane due to soil. David Bartholomew requested it be reported on FMS with photos showing the measurement of the amount of narrowing. The clerk confirmed she would do this.

And missing give way sign in hedge, FMS log number: 1740192. If nothing had happened within a month of reporting, please let me know.

The Highways grant of £500 was asked about for a flashing speed sign? David Bartholomew confirmed that this would qualify but must come from OCC Highways and not show the speed of the vehicle but show the speed limit of the area it was positioned for. Also that the parish council would maintain.

A cost effective option is a Solar powered Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) about £5K which includes the pole and installation.

David Bartholomew was asked if buying a SID (estimate £2,500) is allowed to be bought from non-OCC companies? Yes, but must be maintained by the parish council and be used in conjunction with approval from the police.

The clerk later remembered this had been discussed with the police (about a year ago) and they were more than happy for parish councils to buy their own SID machines if used once training had been given. Which it has.

A photo of a black box on a pole had been installed by Lower Assendon and a resident asked what it was and for what? The photo was shown around but unsure. The clerk will email the photo to David Bartholomew.

068/19 SODC Report

Where reporting of fly-tipping as happened in some locations, CCTV has been installed at hot spots. Prosecution has been successful latterly in a number of recently cases. Why someone has fly-tipped has not been due to money saved, as shown in court cases.

All planning SODC meetings have been cancelled due to changes in the Local Plan (housing allocation). These meetings will be re-scheduled for October.

Polling station consultation survey closes on 27th September. This survey has been forwarded to councillors already.

Fly tipping in White Lane. Awaiting confirmation of land ownership. Rubbish tipped 1 metre from allowed access by SODC waste officers. As district has free access to the Land Registry it would be possible for them to find out. This was agreed by Jo Rob.

SODC councillor grants are now available till 10th January 2020 at £5,000 each councillor. Giving £250 - £5,000 to projects.

If a planning application goes to the Planning Committee, a SODC councillor representation can be given, if asked. A parish councillor representative at this does make a difference.

Free Electric blanket testing in Henley on 23rd October.

SODC Councillor Grants – apply on-line till 10th January 2020. The link for this will be forwarded.

The SODC Budgeting cycle is starting.

It was deemed, by the parish council, that planning courses are not useful to smaller parish councils and it was decided to submit ideas to devise a training course that would be more relevant. It was decided to liaise with this by email. The clerk would provide details.

069/19 Clerk's Report

A deer sign was requested for the Nettlebed Road, halfway between Nettlebed and Bix. There is a horse crossing sign half way (needs cleaning) and before a 'deer crossing for 2 miles' at Bix. I could not find the deer crossing path. A flashing deer sign was requested! The existing signage seems to be adequate.

The clerk made the parish council aware that the reason why SODC request that the CIL payment be delayed was to avoid an external audit if income above £25,000. We need to watch this.

The fire brigade giving a talk. The clerk is awaiting confirmation that she is contacting the right department. But so far 'Emergency Planning' department is willing to give a talk. They requested on what and to who – these details have been forward and I am awaiting answer.

A 'Fix-my-Street' report was made for a dumped fridge/freezer near Bix Manor Farm. Has it gone? It was confirmed it had.

070/19 Planning

a) Applications Received

No planning application received that a response is required today or after the meeting.

b) BAPC Recommendations

P19/S1539/HH

Oak House, Section of B480 through Lower Assendon, LA RG9 6AW

Erection of single storey side extension.

BAPC - NO OBJECTIONS

P19/S2379/HH

Crossleys, Old Bix Road, Bix RG9 6BY

Single-storey extension to existing garage with roof terrace over

BAPC - NO OBJECTIONS

P19/S1774/FUL

Handywater Cottage, LA RG9 6AH

Erection of two outbuildings and change of use of the land from a dwelling to a mixed use of dwelling house and bed and breakfast establishment (retrospective).

BAPC - NO OBJECTIONS

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 – NO OBJECTIONS

SODC Target Decision Date: 22nd August 2019

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

SODC Target Decision Date: 14th October 2019

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

SODC Target Decision Date: 24th July 2019

c) SODC Decisions

P19/S1695/LB

Hawes Farm, LA RG9 6AN

Remedial works to stabilise listed barn

BAPC - NO OBJECTIONS

SODC - GRANTED

P19/1465/HH

Mayflower Cottage, Lower Assendon RG9 6AH

Erection of a single storey outbuilding in the back garden

BAPC - NO OBJECTIONS

SODC - GRANTED

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

SODC - GRANTED

071/19 Allotment Report

The clerk inspected the allotment site on 24th August and lopped some overhanging branches (with the permission of the land owner). Plots 1b and 6b were needing work and rabbit proofing on the long side of plot 1 and plot 6b not done yet. There are reports of pigeon damage. Some pigeon deterrents will be made.

Overall the site looked productive and well maintained.

A parishioner asked if there was a vacant plot. The clerk will put them on a waiting list.

072/19 Footpath Report

Bix and Assendon Parish Council Footpath Report 2/9/2019

From Jane Aiken – parish Chiltern Society footpath representative.

The Chiltern Society path volunteers have installed three gates on paths at the Nettlebed Dairy Farm.

One is at the entrance to Famous Copse from path eight. The second gate is situated at the junction of the route from the pond and path eight near Famous Copse. The third gate is by the pond.

A flight of stairs has been constructed up a steep area just beside the pond.

All this work will allow easier access between these paths.

Jane Aiken was thanked for her report.

073/19 Correspondence

Conversion of property know as: Old Post Office to a double garage and erection of 1 new residential dwelling to be known as: Orchard Lodge.

Proposed change of use of office buildings to 78 residential dwelling at The Smith Centre, Fairmile. This is not a consultation but I have been asked to hold a copy of the application in the event that an owner/occupier of neighbouring properties wants to inspect it.

William Murdoch has the plans at the moment.

A query – would a change in speed from 30mph to 40mph between Lower and Middle Assendon help to reduce speed when entering either village? This would allow larger 30 signs when entering the villages. It had been observed that Shiplake had changed from 30 to 40 recently. The clerk did explain this is more to do with preventing rampant housing development. A reduced speed can help developers argue for fields to be used for housing. As Shiplake found out. This change is quite amazing expensive as surveys need to be done. There is no data to suggest this would help with speeding vehicles. And see next paragraph.

The old SODC dump is a large site (where the allotment site is). The clerk haven't had SODC ask for the code for checking vents. In fact all the vents are so old and not the ones that can be monitored. SODC has not denied or confirmed that it is their land – would they sell it to the parish council for a £1? And turn it into a wildlife area? Which it is already. Only perceived expense is Ragwort and Japanese Knotweed removal.

The clerk was asked to pursue this and get details of any expenses incurred by SODC from this area.

074/19 Finance

a) Cheques for payment

Clerk's wages and office rent for August/September £470.68

Donations/Subscriptions

Nettlebed & District

Commons Conservators	£100.00
Bix Parochial Church Council	£500.00
Henley & District CAB	£100.00
Chiltern Conservation Board	£ 50.00
Sue Ryder	£100.00
Air Ambulance	£100.00
The Open Spaces Society – sub	£ 45.00

All of above were agreed in the budget.

b) Payments received

Interest: £9.33

Bank balance £18,153.15

075/19 Community Infrastructure Levy – Proposals

Total CIL 2019/20 payments = £9,246.86

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.

And two flashing signs for approach to Bix from Nettlebed and the other for entering Middle Assendon from Stonor B480 were agreed.

There will be public consultation on this.

Jackie Walker confirmed that Henley Town Council were very interested in the proposed cycle path. Running along between Old Bix Road and A4130 heading for Henley. Sustrans (the cycling charity) is helping HTC with planning of new cycle ways so a contact there may help to get the ball rolling as well funded. Such modes of transport (cycles and foot) are now actively encouraged, this path is showing interest. This may also extend to Nuffield.

The clerk had a meeting with a senior CIL Oxfordshire officer and seems a lot has changed in the spending criteria. A 'wish list' should be compiled to confirm the projects that can be funded. Artists, community projects and sports are now also covered. But the clerk unsure what is offered but help and advice has been given already.

076/19 Village Hall Report

Jackie Walker

Henley, Heating & Plumbing suggested making an access panel to the stop cock. The men's toilet is continuously flushing so a sensor is going to be put in.

A sub-committee is being formed to inspect and suggest maintenance of the internal structure. A survey of the roof is being looked at.

We have assured the Montessori school that booking enquires or requested are not to be made through them but via the booking secretary.

Post code is not registered and this is being sorted. And a post box is required.

A secretary is still required. Please contact Jackie on 01491 576734

Next meeting is the 17th September.

077/19 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. The questionnaire is almost complete. It was decided to also put an insert into the Link. The clerk would find out the deadline for this.

OALC Training sessions available:

Wednesday September 18th

Roles and Responsibilities for new councillors and clerks

Full day

Elizabeth Howlett, Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot OX11 7JN

Wednesday October 2nd

Budgeting and financial management for councillors

Half/ morning

VAT for clerks (and councillors!)

Half/ afternoon

Begbroke Science Park, Woodstock Room, Begbroke OX5 1PF

Thursday 21st November

NEW Planning – How local councils fit into the planning system and effective responses to planning applications

Half/ morning

West Oxfordshire District Council, Witney, OX28 1NB

An updated USB stick backup of council business was given to the chairman and swapped for the previous update. This forms an offsite backup.

078/19 Public Comments

Henley Town Council has declared a climate emergency. A working party has been formed and will look to include the local surrounding parishes and inform them of measures being introduced.

Next Meeting – Monday 4th November 2019 at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm