

**EYE & DUNSDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a Meeting held on March 15<sup>th</sup> at 6pm at Dunsden Village Hall**

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**Present:** Cllrs David Woodward, Ian Pringle, Richard Berkley, David Bartholomew (OCC +SODC) and Leigh Rawlins (SODC)

**036/22 Apologies for absence** Naomi Baylis, Clive Leeke.

**037/22 Declarations of interest** None

**038/22 Minutes of the last meeting** David Woodward proposed that the minutes from the meeting on February 15<sup>th</sup> 2022 were signed. This proposal was seconded by Ian Pringle. The minutes were signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

**039/22 Matters arising from the minutes**

033.03/22 The Clerk was asked to report to Tarmac that EyeMarsh Drain is not effectively draining the gravel pit due to a course change. The Clerk will ask if there has been any progress with this. **(Clerk to action)**

**040/22 County Councillor's report** Cllr Bartholomew summarised his local reports. The full report will be attached to the minutes. Cllr Bartholomew had spoken to the Road Safety Officer about speed checks to try to sort the ongoing problem of motorbikes racing along the Henley Rd. He has used his Councillor grant to book a week's survey at a point near the Flowing Spring. Cllr Berkley expressed a wish for the PC to pay for a second one halfway between the Playhatch roundabout and the Caversham traffic lights. The Vice Chairman was asked to send a Google map with a pin to mark the position. **(Vice Chairman to action)**

**041/22 District Councillor's Report** Cllr Rawlins summarised his report which is attached to these minutes. Cllr Rawlins mentioned again the idea of local parishes working together to promote AONB extension. The Clerk was asked to forward him an e-mail regarding a proposed meeting to discuss this. **(Clerk to action)**

**042/22 Public Question Time/Correspondence** Two residents who live near Foxhill Close in Playhatch have complained about the continuous noise of the gravel conveyor . The Clerk was asked to write to Tarmac. **(Clerk to action)**

**043/22 Financial Position**

043.01/22 The present financial situation had been previously circulated.

043.02/22 It was agreed to pay invoices totalling £817.49. Ian Pringle proposed the accounts be paid. This was seconded by Richard Berkley. **(Clerk to action)**

043.03/ 22 The revised salary pay scales backdated to April 2021 were agreed. **(Clerk to action)**

043.04/22 It was decided not to spend on a further warranty cost for the PC laptop but agreed to spend about £170 on an upgrade that means that the laptop will last a year or two longer before replacement. **(Clerk to action)**

**044/22 Planning Matters**

**New Applications:** None

**Applications Granted:** None

**Appeals:** APP/Q3115/X/22/3291164 Roof Extension. Rear single storey extension P/S4648/LDP Rose Cottage Row Lane Dunsden RG4 9PS It was decided not to make a response to this appeal.

**045/22 Eye & Dunsden Village Hall** A temporary manager for the village hall has been found. Bookings are increasing some from people from a wide area.

**046/22 Neighbourhood Development Plan** Good progress is being made and the next newsletter was about to go out. The plan is moving towards Regulation 14 public consultation in a few months' time.

**047/22 Community Orchard** Nothing to report

**048/22 Highways, Footpaths & Open Spaces**

048.01/22 Sandpit & Tagg Lane. Ian Pringle is to contact David Bartholomew with regard to the last remaining work. **(Ian Pringle to action)**

048.02/22 Signage replacement deferred

048.03/22 Playhatch permissive path. The possibility of a permissive path between Playhatch and the Flowing Spring is to be considered. **(Vice Chairman to action)**

048.04/22 Light in phone box. An electrician to change the present light for the previously purchased LED unit has been found and a quotation is being sought. **(Clerk & Ian Pringle to action)**

048.05/22 The Clerk is still seeking quotations for the repair of the doors on the notice board at Playhatch. **(Clerk to action)**

**049/22 Allotments** All rents now paid.

**050/22 Website** Naomi Baylis is looking at the website and is getting quotes for compliance. Dayid Woodward has found a template which is said to be WCAG compliant.

**051/22 Minerals/Playhatch & Sonning pit Liaison Groups.** The Clerk will ask Chris Dance for a (possibly virtual) meeting date. **(Clerk to action)**

**052/22 Platinum Jubilee**

052.01/22 The Clerk was asked to research renting or purchasing a fire basket to be erected on the green or in the field outside the village hall and set alight for the Jubilee. **(Clerk to action)**

052.02/22 The grant for the trees to be planted at the village hall has been accepted by the SODC Councillors.

**053/22 Consultations** It was decided not to respond to the CIL consultation or Abingdon. A response to the SODC Design Guide noting the lack of reference to Neighbourhood Plans had been circulated among the Councillors and the Clerk was asked to immediately forward this response. **(Clerk to action)**

**Matters for future consideration** Various signage matters

**Next meeting: April 26<sup>th</sup> 2022\*\***

## **SODC ward councillor's report Eye & Dunsden – 15th March 2022**

### Covid-19

Following the national pattern, Covid cases have fallen back. At 06/03/2022, Oxford City was at a weekly rate of 490 per 100k population (it peaked at 1,504 on 6th Jan.). By comparison, Cherwell DC was 506 (peak was 18,826 on 3rd Jan.), West Oxon DC at 543 (peak was 1,565 on 3rd Jan.), SODC at 540 (peak was 1,522 on 3rd Jan.) and Vale of WH DC at 519 (peak was 1,565 on 3rd Jan.). Reading BC (to 6th March 2022) was at 434 (having peaked at 1,780 on 4th Jan). These levels are still higher than they were in November; by way of comparison at 4th November SODC was at 363 – now at 6th March at 540 weekly per 100k of population! That said, they are falling and incidences are mostly mild for those with boosted vaccinations and those with antibodies. There are suggestions from WHO that the BA.2 variant of Omicron is some 30% more contagious than the main Omicron variant and is becoming more prevalent. More recently there have been suggestions of a “Deltacron” variant comprising elements of Delta and Omicron in France and the USA; however little is yet known about it. At national level there has been some suggestions of a modest uptick in cases after the ending of restrictions. Boosters and vaccinations continue. Whatever the rules may be, the advice must still be to proceed with caution and to protect the more vulnerable.

### Car Parks

From 4th April SODC car parks will be chargeable from 8am – 6pm Monday-Saturday (10am – 5pm on Sunday) and car parking fees will increase to keep the overall car parking account at SODC in balance. (It has previously been in deficit and that deficit was forecast to grow without a correction.) Parking for up to one hour will remain free – thus continuing to support quick shopping trips and retailers.

### Ukraine

SODC has expressed support for Ukraine and is preparing to support Government provision for refugees from

that conflict. If residents would like to contribute to relief it is recommended that donations are made to the Disasters Emergency Committee online. The link is:-  
[https://www.dec.org.uk/?gclid=CjoKCQjwz7uRBhDRARIsAFqjulkN5K11ryFs9xQQoLwvss231BEfXsmrv2t32MdCrEB83ZpefccWiYMaAjQAEALw\\_wcB](https://www.dec.org.uk/?gclid=CjoKCQjwz7uRBhDRARIsAFqjulkN5K11ryFs9xQQoLwvss231BEfXsmrv2t32MdCrEB83ZpefccWiYMaAjQAEALw_wcB) The Government (DLUHC) has suggested a scheme to contribute £350 per month to those who can accommodate refugees, but details are awaited. Anyone who wishes to make a housing offer can contact the councils' (joint) housing team using the email: [housing@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:housing@southandvale.gov.uk).

#### Energy rebate

Council tax payers in bands A-D will receive a £150 energy rebate payment - funded by Government. For Direct Debit payers this will be paid to the relevant bank account. However for those paying by cheque or other means (less than 20% in SODC) there will need to be quite a lot of admin to determine how to pay the £150 concerned! Unfortunately the mechanics of the scheme have proven difficult after the initial idea and more guidance is being sought! The scheme indicates that the £150 should be paid out and not simply deducted from Council Tax bills. Bill notifications will carry reference to the £150 rebate - as a note.

(There is also a discretionary rebate scheme for those in difficulty who have an E-H council tax band. Details are being gathered from Government. Finally energy providers will knock £200 off bills in 2022-23 and then add back £40 per annum for the succeeding 5 years. This scheme was designed in the hope that fuel prices would fall in the years ahead. However the Ukraine conflict now poses new challenges.)

#### Leigh Rawlins

#### District Councillor

## **REPORT TO EYE & DUNSDEN PARISH COUNCIL MAR 2022 FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW**

### **GENERAL OCC REPORT**

### **BUDGET MEETING OVERSHADOWED BY FARMERS' PROTEST**



At the County Council budget-setting meeting on February 8<sup>th</sup> the left-wing administration forced through a whopping 5% Council Tax increase, despite the Conservative Independent Alliance showing how the increase could be limited to 3.5%. However, the meeting at County Hall was overshadowed by a farmers' protest outside. As previously reported,



the administration is trying to impose a vegan diet at all council-catered events. Richard Binning, a beef farmer from Steventon, said: "The message they are sending out is really dangerous - they are suggesting it's ok to eat avocados from Brazil, instead of our wholesome British beef." The farmers' protest received national press coverage. The motion to impose the vegan diet has to be ratified by the OCC Cabinet at its meeting on March 15<sup>th</sup>. Conservatives will be addressing Cabinet and urging them to seek change through education, persuasion and choice, not diktat.

### **BAD WEATHER IS THE PERFECT STORM FOR ROGUE TRADERS IN OXFORDSHIRE**

Residents are being warned to be wary of cold callers or leaflets offering to do work on roofs after the recent storms. OCC's trading standards team believes it is a perfect opportunity for rogue traders to take advantage of residents who have a leaking roof or broken tile. Any Oxfordshire resident who has concerns about cold calling or potential scams can contact the Citizens Advice National Consumer Service on **0800 144 8848** or by visiting its website [citizensadvice.org.uk](https://citizensadvice.org.uk).

### **CONTROVERSIAL PROPOSALS FOR RESTRICTIONS ON CARS IN OXFORD**

OCC and Oxford City Council last month revealed highly controversial joint proposals to cut car use in the city with the introduction of a city-wide workplace parking levy, traffic filters and a wider Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ) to cover the entire city centre. The chairman of Oxford High Street Association condemned the proposals and said: "I am totally depressed by what these two councils are doing to our city." More details on the ZEZ below.

### **BRITAIN'S FIRST ZERO EMISSION ZONE (ZEZ) BEGINS IN OXFORD**

Britain's first ZEZ started on 28 February. Launching as a pilot, the streets included in the ZEZ are: New Road, Bonn Square, Queen Street; Cornmarket Street, New Inn Hall Street, Shoe Lane, Market Street, Ship Street and St Michael's Street. The ZEZ pilot is a precursor to the introduction of a larger ZEZ covering most of Oxford city centre next year (2023), subject to further public consultation. The ZEZ pilot will operate from 7am - 7pm, all year around. All petrol and diesel vehicles, including hybrids, will incur a daily charge unless eligible for a discount or exemption. However, zero emission vehicles, such as electric cars, can enter the pilot area free of charge. The charge will vary from £2 to £10 per day depending on the emission levels of the vehicle. Automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras have been installed to enforce the zone. The scheme has been criticised as being a tax-raising measure and not a true ZEZ, as all vehicles are allowed into the zone as long as they pay the tax.

### **BID SUBMITTED TO DELIVER 159 ELECTRIC BUSES FOR THE OXFORD AREA**

A new fleet of state-of-the-art electric buses could be coming to Oxford and its surrounding areas after a bid for government funding was submitted. OCC last month applied for £32.8 million from the Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme. Along with £6m from the council and £43.7m from bus companies Go Ahead and Stagecoach, the scheme could deliver 159 electric buses and the infrastructure to charge them in a package worth £82.5m. If successful, the electric buses would operate in an area stretching from Kidlington in the north to Sandford in the south, and from Cumnor in the west to Wheatley in the east. There are no proposals to support the south of the county.

### **PARTNERSHIP WITH CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Efforts to unpick the agreement between OCC and Cherwell District Council continues. A joint officer working group has been established to review the extent and cost of the current arrangements. The group reports to the member-led Joint Shared Services and Personnel Committee, and is made up of the two chief executives, monitoring officers and s151 officers. Once the group has completed its initial review, it will then prepare a transition plan. The Conservative Opposition continues to press for transparency in relation to the costs when they have been identified and quantified.

### **CONSULTATIONS**

OCC is currently conducting a wide range of consultations at the moment. Residents can make their views known by responding. Current consultations include: Local Transport and Connectivity Plan; Location of cameras to enforce traffic regulations; Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND); and Library and heritage services. An interesting recent example is the proposal to make permanent the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in parts of Oxford. The consultation showed that 74% of respondents objected to the measure or had concerns, with just 26% in support. This has resulted in the administration putting the brakes on the scheme at the last moment, which was due to be approved last month. It will be reconsidered by Cabinet later in the year. <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk>

## **SPECIFIC OCC REPORT FOR EYE & DUNSDEN**

### **MOTORBIKE RACING ON A4155 & A4130**

Both Bix & Assendon PC and Eye & Dunsden PC have previously complained about motorbikes racing on the A4130 and continuing on to the A4155. The problem is particularly acute on Sunday mornings. I have always advised that this is a matter for the police, not OCC. However, Eye & Dunsden PC has been told by the police that speed data would be helpful when addressing the issue. In response to this, I have arranged for a speed survey, which is currently underway. I am funding this from my Councillor Priority Fund. I will forward the results to both PCs in due course.

## **GENERAL SODC REPORT**

### **COUNCIL MEETING FORMAT**

The administration has recently issued a notice stating: "Formal council meetings will continue as they have been until further notice." I have had many complaints from residents (in relation to hybrid planning meetings in particular) that they feel this is anti-democratic as the requirement for members of the public to equip themselves with laptops and headsets then travel to Didcot to sit in rows looking at screens is a huge disincentive to attend. Conservatives are pressing for a return to normal – SODC Legal has confirmed there is no reason why this could not happen.

### **COUNCILLOR GRANT SCHEME**

Cllr Rawlins and I have completed distributing our grants across the five parishes in our Ward.

## **SPECIFIC SODC REPORT FOR EYE & DUNSDEN**

### **P20/S3501/FUL-3: CHANGE OF USE OF LAKE FOR RECREATION/SPORTS PURPOSES**

I have chased officers for an update and received the following reply:

*I have now visited the site, met with the leaseholder and reviewed the unauthorised development. A new planning agent has recently been appointed who has indicated that a new planning application (with the necessary technical reports) will be submitted to the council before Easter. At the time of my visit (12 January 2022) the activity taking place on site was considered to be minimal with only a small number of participants engaging in open water swimming activities and some of the structures erected last Spring/Summer were noted to have been dismantled/removed. The agent has provided an assurance that with the exception of open water swimming and paddle boarding all other activities on the site have been suspended. Further information has been requested from the agent to more accurately identify the level of activity this will generate on the site. With regard to the unauthorised advertising on the junction, this is considered to be erected on highway land, Oxfordshire County Council have been informed and are investigating this matter.*