

EYE & DUNSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Eye & Dunsden Parish held on Tuesday 17th May 2022 at 7.45 pm at Dunsden Village Hall

Present: Cllr Richard Berkley, Cllr Ian Pringle, Cllr Naomi Baylis, Cllr David Bartholomew (OCC) and Leigh Rawlins (SODC) No members of the public

01/22 Apologies for absence Cllr D Woodward, Cllr Clive Leeke

02/22 Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish of Eye & Dunsden April 2021 These were read and Naomi Baylis proposed acceptance as a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by Ian Pringle. All agreed.

03/22 There were no Matters Arising

04/22 Community Orchard Item deferred in the absence of the Chairman

05/22 Dunsden Owen Association Item deferred in the absence of the Chairman

06/22 Village Hall Naomi Baylis as temporary manager reported that the hall was very popular and busy. A part time cleaner had been appointed. The cottage was rented. Thanks were expressed to the Trustees. The Clerk reported that the sweet chestnut trees were on order and would be delivered in the autumn ready for planting.

07/22 Chairman's report Item deferred in the absence of the Chairman

08/22 Charity Reports The Clerk tabled a report from the Poors Land Charity

09/22 Financial Report The Clerk tabled the Financial Report 2021-22

10/22 Neighbourhood Plan Item deferred in the absence of the Chairman

11/22 Public Forum There were no members of the public in attendance

Minutes of the Eye & Dunsden Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 17th May 2022 after the Annual Parish Meeting.

Present: Cllr Richard Berkley, Cllr Ian Pringle, Cllr Naomi Baylis, Cllr David Bartholomew (OCC) and Leigh Rawlins (SODC) 2 members of the public

01/22 Apologies for absence Cllr D Woodward, Cllr Clive Leeke

02/22 Declarations of interest None

03/22 Election of Chairman & Vice Chairman and Declarations of Office Ian Pringle proposed that David Woodward was re-elected as Chairman. This was seconded by Naomi Baylis. Naomi Baylis proposed Richard Berkley acted as Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Ian Pringle. All agreed. David Woodward and Richard Berkley were duly elected. All agreed.

04/22 Minutes of the last meetings

- a) The minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting of the Parish Council were tabled as they had been ratified in June 2021. The minutes of the APM of April 2021 were read and Naomi proposed acceptance as a true record of that Skype meeting. Ian Pringle seconded. All agreed.
- b) Ian Pringle proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday April 26th 2022 be adopted. This was seconded by Naomi Baylis.

05/22 Matters arising from the minutes

069/22 The clerk has not yet heard about a date for a meeting with Grabloader. The Vice Chairman will contact Chris Dance re this **(Richard Berkley to action)**

060/22 Beechwood Trees looked at the leaning tree on Dunsden Green and reported that although it was in no immediate danger of falling it was suggested that the PC take photos and monitor any movement. If it were to fall in a storm the tree surgeon felt that it would fall towards the orchard so there would be no danger to people or property. **(Ian Pringle to action photos)**

048.05/22 The Clerk is struggling to get more quotations to repair the notice board.

066.04/22 Light in phone box. The Clerk is waiting for the company to give a date and time to meet the electrician

06/22 County Councillor's report Cllr Bartholomew's report will be attached to the minutes.

07/22 District Councillor's report Cllr Rawlins' report will be attached to these minutes.

08/22 Public Question Time

08.01/22 The two members of the public wished to discuss the planning item.

08.02/22 An email from Nick Marks who is conducting a review of the minerals working expressed a need for coloured plans in order to complete the work required for the Neighbourhood Plan.

09/22 Financial Situation

09.01/22 The financial situation had been previously circulated.

09.02/22 The May accounts were presented for payment. Payments to the value of £2,036.19 were agreed. Richard Berkley proposed the accounts be paid. This was seconded by Naomi Baylis. All agreed. **(Clerk to action)**

09.03/22 Audit papers have received approval from the internal auditor. The audit paperwork will be signed next month. **(Clerk to action)**

010/22 Planning Matters The owner of Lydden attended the meeting with the architect to discuss the planning application. He explained that notice had been taken of the comments after the refusal of the first application and that the new application had only received positive comments.

New Applications

P22/S1031/FUL Demolition of the existing bungalow and the construction of a four bedroom dwelling. Lydden Sonning Eye RG4 6TN This was discussed and it was decided to recommend refusal of this application. All agreed. **(Clerk to action)**

Applications Granted None

011/22 Allotments The Clerk reported that there was one spare allotment at Playhatch.

012/22 Highways, Footpaths and Open Spaces Village hall field; environmental management report: these items were deferred as David Woodward was not present.

013/22 Minerals/Playhatch pit liaison group Item deferred.

014/22 Website Naomi has contacted Henley Town Council to enquire about website compliance.

015/22 Matters for future consideration audit; website

The meeting closed at 9.35pm

Date of next meeting: Tuesday June 21st 2022

REPORT TO EYE & DUNSDEN PARISH COUNCIL MAY 2022 FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW

GENERAL OCC REPORT

CONDITION OF ROADS AND PAVEMENTS SHOULD BE THE TOP PRIORITY

An Ipsos survey ahead of the local elections found that 50% of people believe the condition of roads and pavements should be the top priority for councils. Regrettably, these matters do not feature in OCC's nine top priorities.

THE VEGANISM DEBATE ROLLS ON



The controversy about the administration's decision to offer only vegan meals at Full Council meetings continues. The first such meal on 5th April attracted local and national media attention, prompting critics to ask how it could be more climate-friendly to serve imported fruit and vegetables such as kiwi and mango, rather than locally produced meat and dairy products. Far too much time is being spent on this ideological distraction when the council faces significant challenges in areas more pertinent to its core functions.

TRANSGENDER RIGHTS MOTION

A LibDem councillor successfully moved a motion at the April meeting of Full Council dealing with a number of

transgender issues and stating that one gender inclusive bathroom should be installed in every public building owned or operated by the Council. The Conservative Opposition abstained on the basis that: the topic was far too complex and sensitive for a short council debate; the motion didn't provide significant safeguards for women; and that the costs of the building works were unspecified and could run into six figures.

POLICE CRITICISE 20MPH SPEED LIMIT PROPOSALS

As previously reported, the administration is spending £8m on the cosmetic exercise of switching signs from 30mph to 20mph on 85% of the county's roads with a 30mph limit. The 20mph limit is in effect voluntary as it will not be enforced by the police. The measure has continued to attract police criticism and a spokesman said: *"There is a proven link between road environment and character and the speed of drivers. If it is not accepted as realistic it will quickly be abused and be the source of constant demands for police action. The police stance still reflects that 20mph limits and zones should be self-enforcing."* Press report [here](#).

SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

Accommodation

The majority of the accommodation visits across the county have now either been carried out or booked in. The number of properties being rejected for overcrowding or poor housing conditions remains very low in every district. There are a small number of partially approved properties that are waiting for improvements. The number of properties where guests have arrived before the accommodation visit takes place is also very low. OCC will continue to book in visits for new host properties that enter the system over the next few weeks.

Community support

OCC has been working with Asylum Welcome to ensure that both hosts and Ukrainians have access to a network of support – and that it is as safe and effective as possible. Asylum Welcome is keeping a track of all offers of community support across the county. To make best use of this significant response, together, OCC is proposing to expand the community liaison officer resource available in each district and the city to coordinate, advise and refer guests to the support that is available to them, including across housing, education and health.

Schools

School places are being found for Ukrainian children. Applications for school places from guests are being considered alongside all other applications but we are working hard to ensure that places are offered as close as possible to where guests are living.

Health

The government has recently published some [guidance](#) to help primary health care professionals assess and address the health needs of Ukrainian guests.

Help with queries can be found here:

- **Website:** www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ukraine
- **Oxfordshire Ukraine helpline:** +44 1865 966444 / 01865 966 444 (opening hours: 8.45am - 5pm, Monday to Friday. Closed weekends and bank holidays).
- **Email:** ukraineresponse@oxfordshire.gov.uk

OCC COMMITS TO ENABLING MORE TREES TO BE PLANTED

A change in approach will help increase the number of trees in Oxfordshire after a new policy with cross-party support was approved. The policy will put the emphasis on a 'presumption in favour of trees'. Bill Cotton, Oxfordshire County Council's Director of Environment & Place, said: "This is a bold and ambitious long-term policy to increase investment in trees across the county. Trees are valuable assets for so many reasons and we aim to give them more prominence when looking at areas including planning, transport, connectivity and health.

"We want to move away from simply maintaining and managing the trees on our land to actively encouraging and enabling more trees to be planted in both rural and urban settings. This can help tackle climate change and increase resilience to it, as well as improving people's quality of life – both now and in the future." One requirement of the policy is to plant two new trees for every tree that has to be removed from county council land. It also promises to explore new tree planting opportunities and extra investment to carry it out, stricter guidelines for those wanting to remove existing trees and implement proactive care to prolong the lives of established trees.

SPECIFIC OCC REPORT FOR EYE & DUNSDEN

MOTORBIKE RACING ON A4155 & A4130

As previously reported, I arranged for a speed survey, funded from my Councillor Priority Fund; the results have been sent to both Bix & Assendon and Eye & Dunsden PCs.

GENERAL SODC REPORT

COUNCIL MEETING FORMAT

As previously reported, the administration issued a notice stating: "Formal council meetings will continue as they have been until further notice." I have had many complaints about hybrid meetings where councillors, or members of the public, have to equip themselves with laptops and headsets then travel to Didcot to sit in rows talking into screens. Conservatives have been pressing for physical meetings return to normal and this is now likely to happen when SODC temporarily relocates to Abingdon.

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT STATEMENT

The Conservative Opposition is pressing for changes to this controversial new policy, especially the triage system and the block on enforcement updates to parish councils and residents.

SPECIFIC SODC REPORT FOR EYE & DUNSDEN

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

The enforcement case officer has changed. Julie Perrin has been replaced by Robert Cramp. In late April Robert advised me he was going to visit the site early May to familiarise himself with the situation, and that a fresh application addressing the previous objections was expected shortly. I have pressed for an update.

SODC ward councillor's report Eye & Dunsden – 17th May 2022

Covid-19 The reliability of data on Covid cases is now much reduced following the end of test and trace. However national figures suggest sharp falls in cases and this appears to be supported by hospital data and makes sense for this time of year. At 8th May cases in SODC were reported as being down to a weekly rate per 100k of population of 115 (it peaked at 1,504 on 6th Jan) although it may be that reporting is incomplete. Indeed Reading BC have ceased reporting their figures because of fears about accuracy. It seems reasonable to assume that levels will remain low as we go into summer.

Elections in Oxfordshire 5th May There were no elections in South Oxfordshire. In Vale of White Horse DC there was a by-election for Matt Barber's old seat (He was the former leader of VoWH until 2019). (He stood down on becoming Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley Police). His seat was won by the LibDems by a very clear margin (878 to 519) by Sally Povolotsky, who is also a county councillor. Vale of White Horse is dominated by the LibDems. In Oxford City 24 out of 48 seats were up for election and the closing position for the council became :- Labour 32 (-2), LibDem 9 (no change), Green 6 (+3) and Ind 1 (-1) – so despite some losses Labour remain dominant there. In Cherwell DC 16 out of 48 seats were up for election and the closing position became Con 25 (-5), Lab 10 (+1), LibDem 7 (+4), Green 2 (+1) and Ind 4 (no change) – so the Conservatives, just, retain control. In West Oxfordshire DC, 16 out of the 49 seats were up for election and the closing position became Con 20 (-7), Lab 9 (+1), LibDem 15 (+5), Green 2 (+1) and Ind 3 (no change). The Conservatives thus lost control and the council is to be led by Andy Graham (LibDem who defeated Ian Hudspeth in the Woodstock & Bladon seat at the County elections last year) in a partnership with the Greens and Labour. In April 2019 Oxford City was held by Labour in a sea of Conservative blue – including at the County Council. The position is now very different and when it comes to key issues of spatial planning and the level of desirable population and housing growth for our future. Moreover the renewed recognition of the need to rebalance the UK economy and to "level up" at national level starts to create scope for a changed direction of travel.

Ukraine The local councils of Oxfordshire continue to work together to support Ukrainian refugees. As at 3rd May, 377 visas had been issued to Ukrainians fleeing the Russian invasion - who had sponsors in the South Oxfordshire area via the Homes for Ukraine scheme. More will no doubt follow. SODC will register hosts who can receive refugees and also vet the properties to ensure that they meet reasonable standards. There will also be a need to do DBS (enhanced level) safeguarding checks on hosts and those living there. SODC already have some 200 refugees. 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 The Government (DLUHC) has suggested a scheme to contribute £350 per month to those who can accommodate refugees. Also where a householder is in receipt of a single-occupier

discount this will not be lost if they become a host for Ukrainian refugees. Anyone who wishes to make a housing offer can contact the councils' (joint) housing team using the email: housing@southandvale.gov.uk.

AONB extension On 20th April local parishes from Harpsden along to Kidmore End met to start to prepare a case to Natural England for an extension of the Chilterns AONB. Subject to parish confirmations, work will be prepared to integrate existing landscape studies, address any gaps and to prepare a robust case to Natural England as to why the nominated areas of extension are appropriate and fulfill the relevant criteria. A further meeting is to be held – probably in June – and Mapledurham parish will be invited to join in.

No Mow May SODC is supporting biodiversity by avoiding mowing in May wherever possible and encouraging others to enable wildflowers etc to bloom and support insects/wildlife.

Joint Local Plan SODC is underway with consultation and work on a new Joint Local Plan with Vale of White Horse DC. The councils are trialling an innovative new digital approach to this consultation. This enables users to explore more interactive online content and hopefully will find the approach to be quicker and more appropriate. The aim is to gain more responses for ordinary residents – as well as parishes and others. The consultation is open from Thursday 12 May until 11.59pm on Thursday 23 June 2022. This is the link : <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/local-plan-and-planning-policies/local-plan-2041/>

Queen's Speech, Levelling Up and Planning Reforms Changes to planning are expected, but as yet detail is emerging slowly. There is renewed support for a plan-led system and suggestions that the presumption in the NPPF should be amended to lean against sites which are contrary to the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan – even where there may not be a 5 year Housing Land Supply; this could potentially restrain speculative developers and rogue inspectors? Contrary to the suggestions made by Robert Jenrick there is clear support for local democracy and the role of councillors and Planning Authorities. It seems that the standard Method will be retained in some form – particularly for plan-making. The Duty-to-cooperate is to be revised and there will be more emphasis on regeneration. There is however a suggestion of requiring an “infrastructure levy” (locally set) to cover almost all infrastructure and affordable housing thus sharply limiting the scope for s106 obligations in future. I have a lot of fears about this suggestion. It could lead to the levy being unviable in some areas but not collecting enough elsewhere. Larger strategic greenfield sites offer a lot of land profit but also require a mass of infrastructure – roads and schools etc from first base; s106 is a much more effective tool in such cases. I also fear social housing being separated from market housing and the past evidence on that is far from encouraging. The devil will always be in the detail. We are also promised more detail on how regional policy and levelling up is to be made to work in practice.

SODC meetings system SODC are vacating their very expensive (temporary post January 2015 fire at Crowmarsh) offices in Milton Park – using an opportunity in the lease to break the let. On a temporary basis a very small essential part of the office will relocate to Abbey House in Abingdon. Abbey House is an old and rather run-down office which has been occupied by Oxfordshire County Council but which they have long been scheduled to leave as not fitting their needs. As yet they remain there. In the context of the above and a future move to permanent offices expected to be in Didcot Gateway, near the station, officers are considering the best meeting system. The space at Abbey House will not support full meetings of council – so those will need to happen in hired locations. This implies that equipment might need to be mobile. The intent is to get back to more face-to-face meetings, but ideally with some capacity for virtual attendance – which has great benefits.

Energy rebate The energy rebate of £150 for Bands A-D properties is being actioned. It is much simpler to do so for direct debit payers where the Council Tax account and Bank account have the same name. For residents who pay by other means much more administration is required to enable payment to the correct person.

Caversham Lakes Robert Cramp the enforcement officer has visited the site and met with the owner and his planning agent. He raised with them concerns about live music, fireworks, etc and their effects on biodiversity and amenity that were not addressed in their previous application. A new application has been made which, it is claimed by the owner address the previous objections and at the meeting they promised to also address the extra points raised by Robert Cramp. I am advised that, under national rules, there are limitations to do enforcement whilst the current application is under consideration – because the applicant would simply appeal the enforcement and rely on his information submitted with his application! I think that we can conclude that the national system is set for developers and not for the proper rule of law! It is madness.

Leigh Rawlins

District Councillor