

BLEWBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 10th June 2020 at 7.30 pm. This meeting was held remotely via an e-conference application.

In attendance:- Cllrs C Lakeland (CL/Chair), M Penington (MP), M Blythe (MB), L Inglis (LI), V Humphries (VH), J Gibson (JG), P Kilroe (PK), M Jacobs (MJ). Miss E Cooper (Clerk/EC), District Cllr S Medley (SM)) & County Cllr M Fox-Davies (MF-D)

1. Apologies for absence
None.
2. Declarations of interests relating to this meeting
CL declared an interest on any monetary discussion regarding Sustainable Blewbury.
3. County Councillors report (see Appendix B below)
Cllr MF-D confirmed that CPF grant could be used for tree work (as per village tree survey).
4. District Councillor's report (see Appendix C below)
5. Lengthman's report (see Appendix A below)
DH also reported that TFF was now being used extensively, including evidence of bonfires, resulting in more litter picking & bin emptying. Council agreed that the repair a cemetery gate was high priority, that necessary equipment should be purchased & the gate repaired asap.
6. Open Forum
No members of the public were present.
7. Approval of previous minutes
The minutes of the BPC meeting of 13.05.20 were approved as a true representation of the meeting.
8. Outstanding Actions from previous meetings and any matters arising
Confirm whether actions are cleared, carried forward or cancelled.

No.	Actions from June meeting	When
1.	DH to action repair of cemetery gate.	July meeting
2.	DH to remove barrier tape & closure signs from skate park.	July meeting
3.	CL & JG to distribute draft Green Policy when available.	July meeting
4.	LI to send copy of neighbourhood planning policies to all & to write update for bulletin.	Actioned
5.	Clerk / CL to establish ownership of Curtoys path cob wall.	July meeting
6.	Clerk to respond to D. Bellchamber re bus stop at Sheencroft Cottages. Clerk's note:- Email 17.6.20 update:- Thames Valley Police conducted a survey of the proposed location & their Traffic Management Officer is unable to endorse the proposal for safety reasons. OCC is not obliged to take his advice, you will agree that it would be most unwise to ignore it.	Actioned.
7.	Clerk to inform Whitehorse Horticulture of non-use of pesticides etc in village.	July meeting
8.	CL to arrange purchase of Speedwatch equipment.	July meeting

No.	Actions from May meeting	When
2.	Is permission required to attached TVP sign to village signs from OCC/Highways?	Confirmed by email 6.6.20
3.	MF-D to investigate start of work on BOAT	See 15.2 below.
4.	CL to find out if there is a need for community support funding within the village	Cleared.
5.	HG to find out if the DC had a policy on the use of pesticides	C'fwd
6.	MJ to send details of findings on pesticides to HG	Cleared
7.	LI to send HG details of current planning response form	Cleared
8.	EC to look at cost of No Parking sign & white line painting Aw quote Kingdom Signs – chased 17.6.20	C'fwd
9	LI/CL devise letters to Beeswax & other landowners around Blewbury (see 15.2.2 below)	Cleared

No.	Actions from April meeting	When
6.	CL to consider how funding could be made available to help in the community.	Cleared
No.	Actions from March 2020 meeting	When
4.	VH to look at remedial work required at KAP.	C'fwd until further notice
6.	HG to find out:- 1. Why carbon neutral new housing specs are not being applied now? 2. What are the minimum space standards being applied to new housing? 2. What is the DC doing to improve the running of its offices? 3. What kinds of climate emergency initiatives might receive funding?	By email - outstanding
No.	Actions arising from February 2020 Meeting	When
6.	Clerk to work out Blewshed proportion of electricity usage & inform Blewshed for payment	O/S
13.	CL to explore alternative environmentally friendly electricity suppliers for the Clubhouse/Melland Room and Scout Hut.	O/S

9. Planning & Housing

9.1 Planning committee report

No new planning consultations during the month and two planning decisions received.

9.2 Responses to current consultations

None.

9.3 Planning permissions received during the month

P19/V3002/FUL Amendment no.1, Linnets, South Street

Planning permission 19.5.20

P20/V0937/HH Penridge, Church Road, Blewbury

Planning permission 3.6.20

10. Finance & Administration

10.1 Update on CIL or S106 contributions and approve planned expenditure.

Planned expenditure TBA when appropriate project highlighted. Council was reminded that this expenditure should benefit the village.

10.2 Agree the nature of spend of the Councillor Priority Fund (Email to council 28.4.20 refers)

Council unanimously agreed that this funding should be used for tree work in the village as

highlighted by the recent tree survey.

10.2 Update on financial arrangements

The Clerk confirmed that all direct debit payments are now paid from the council's Lloyds Bank account. Council therefore agreed switch remaining funds to Lloyds Bank & to close the Santander account.

10.3 Update on BPC audit progress

BPC audit papers & all documentation were sent electronically to IAC (internal auditors) on 1.6.20.

10.4 End of month reconciliations for Lloyds/Santander & Barclays banks

Sent in advance of the meeting to the Chair. To be signed at a later date.

10.5 Payments to be made under ancillary powers and within budgeted amounts

Payment details sent in advance of the meeting to signatories & subsequently approved by council. Council unanimously agreed to the inclusion of payment for the tree survey by Complete Tree Services.

PAYEE	Description / Power to spend	Amount
E Cooper / D Hollick	Clerk & Lengthman's salary and expenses for May	£1316.62
NEST	Clerk's pension DD May	£69.43
HMRC	PAYE Clerk & Lengthman payment May	£255.60
Biffa Waste Services Ltd	Waste services DD June	£88.13
BT	Clubhouse line rental DD June	£35.04
Andrews Computing	Replace laptop battery	£64.80
Pear Technology	Cemetery software annual fee	£102.00
SLCC	CiLCA fee	£350.00
VoWHDC	Annual fee for Garden Waste Service 4.5.20-3.5.21 (DD collected on 5.6.20)	£49.00
Complete Tree Services	Village Tree Survey	£822.00
Total		£3,152.73

Major Receipts	Description	Amount
R Barker Funeral Directors	Skiulski burial	£285.00
M Whiting	East memorial	£75.00
Total		£360.00

Barclays Bank Payments	Description	Amount
27.05.20	Ridge and Partners	£1,380.00
29.05.20	MD Group invoice 4	£79,766.26
Total		£81,146.26

11. Village hall refurbishment update

Valuation 4 had been received and invoice 4 paid. Estimated completion is now end of June/beginning of July. Insurance cover has been extended at no additional cost.

12. Recreation Ground / Clubhouse

12.1 Update on the Tickers Folly Field recreation ground and car park

See Lengthman's report below.

12.2 Update on the Clubhouse (inc. cricket pitch, Melland room & car park)

12.2.1 Update on a new clubhouse parking sign

Quotation awaited from Kingdom signs.

12.2.2 Update on Section 146 order served on CIC (non-compliance with terms of lease)

The CIC have received a rate rebate grant of £10,000, enabling remedial work to take place. This will include, but is not limited to:-

- Removal of concrete blocking in external pipe
- Valve replacement on faulty pump
- Deep clean

CL confirmed a planned hand over to the Parish Council around mid-August.

13. Risk Management

13.1 Update on village play spaces (TFF / KAP) relating to risk

13.1.1 Council agreed to re-open the skate park as social distancing could still be observed on this equipment.

-13.1.2 Play areas remain out of use until further notice

13.2 Any other updates on Management of Risk

Following a complete tree survey of the trees under the council's responsibility in the village, council unanimously agreed to 1 & 3-month priorities from the survey to be commissioned.

13.3 Update on Compliance

No update this month.

14. Update on any issues relating to the Environment

14.1 Update on environmentally friendly pesticides etc

The council has agreed not to use any pesticides, fungicides etc in and around the village and would in future rely on manual methods of weed extraction. Clerk to inform Whitehorse Horticulture.

14.2 Update on a Green Spaces Policy for the village

CL & JG are working on a draft & would distribute for comment when ready.

14.3 Update from Sustainable Blewbury meeting

CL issued an update prior to the meeting (email 10.6.20 refers). CL reported that SB were trying to keep the permaculture site going & how to re-start the Saturday morning market.

14.4 Update on the OGB & ONPA

LI reported improving communications with South and Vale District Councils, which includes improving the use of Neighbourhood Planning Policies. LI also stated it was up to the council to make sure policies were used & followed by Planning. LI to copy NP policies to all.

15. Update on any issues relating to Footways, Footpaths, rights of way and open spaces

15.1 Update on Coffin Way / Cycle Path

SM recommended members of the council send cycling route ideas to the County Council for consideration.

15.2 Update on the work required on the Bridus Way footpath

Arthur McEwan-James confirmed in a phone call with the Clerk that this work was commissioned & that he would make it a priority with the contractors.

15.3 Update on any other issues relating to the above

Ownership of the Cob Wall on Curtoys Lane was questioned. If no ownership established, it would be considered a village asset & come under the responsibility of the council.

16. Update on any issues relating to roads, road safety and public transport

16.1 Conditions of local roads and decide on any course of action

No update.

16.2 Update on the Blewbury Speed Watch group

Council unanimously agreed to purchase Speed Watch equipment including signs, speed gun &

ancillary equipment (PPE) as required for set-up & action. Costs c£6-800 to be recovered from grant held by BVS.

16.3 See action point 1 from May meeting above.

Council unanimously agreed to fund the installation of the bus stop at Sheencroft Cottages.

17. Correspondence – To consider items circulated/requiring a reply/consultations

Only as recorded above.

18. To set the date of the next meeting of the PC

Wednesday 8th July 7.30pm via an e-conference system.

The meeting concluded at 9pm.

Appendix A

LENGTHMAN'S REPORT - MAY 2020

May has been a very dry month so the grass has slowed down a bit this last week or so.

All footpaths are in good condition although some resident hedges and shrubs are growing out somewhat.

The recreation ground and TFF are being well used which involves a bit more litter picking than usual but good to see.

There is quite a bit of rabbit digging damage in TFF and the cemetery, which may cause trip hazards.

Buildings and equipment are all good.

David

Appendix B

REPORT TO BLEWBURY PARISH COUNCIL JUNE 2020

FROM CLLR MIKE FOX-DAVIES

Test and Trace

As you will be aware, Test and Trace was launched across England on Thursday (28 May). The service is designed to help identify, contain and control coronavirus, reduce the spread of the virus and save lives. It forms a central part of the Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy, which seeks to return life to as close to normal as possible, for as many people as possible, in a way that is safe and protects the NHS and social care.

There are responsibilities placed upon Public Health Authorities to work with Public Health England and with local District, City and health system partners to investigate and control outbreaks and to support the community to ensure safe and effective self-isolation. OCC are currently in discussions across the Oxfordshire system about

the development of a local outbreak control plan, and we will update you with further details as soon as we can.

Schools

Across Oxfordshire, headteachers are working tirelessly to make the final preparations for welcoming back more children from **Monday 1 June**, following Government guidance. Each school is unique and the risks and challenges will vary – but **safety, hygiene and social distancing are absolute priorities**. Practically this means some schools will be able to welcome more children and more year groups than others - our media release provides more detailed information on safety and hygiene arrangements.

Please be assured all schools are acting in the best interests of their school community. Schools are in close contact with parents and carers and are keeping them informed.

Changes to school bus pick up points

As schools begin to open their doors to more pupils, we have been **risk assessing** the pick up points used by the School Transport network. This is to ensure there is enough space for children to maintain **social distancing guidelines**. The outcome of our risk assessments vary from no action at all, to moving school bus pick up points to an entirely new location with a larger waiting space. The Supported Transport Team is working with schools to ensure the correct message is relayed to parents and carers. If anyone comes to you with concerns, please reassure them we have made these changes for safety reasons in line with **government guidelines on social distancing**.

Update on the registration of births

Birth registrations here in Oxfordshire and elsewhere in England and Wales have been suspended by central Government since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic.

The usual national requirement to register a birth within 42 days does not currently apply. Our registration offices in Oxfordshire are closed to the public and registrars are currently only registering deaths and stillbirths.

We are working with central Government on re-commencing birth registrations, but as yet there is no timescale given for birth registers to be re-opened. Local authorities can make an exception and register a birth in cases of emergency – including repatriation, child protection and adoption cases, and also in very sad cases when a baby dies and the birth needs to be registered before the death.

We appreciate this continued uncertainty is worrying and frustrating for parents. We are continuing to monitor all births in Oxfordshire and are putting plans in place as a matter of urgency to be able to register safely as soon as we are permitted by Government to do so.

Extended hours at recycling centres

Please help spread the word that all seven of Oxfordshire's household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) are now open from **8am to 5pm, seven days a week**. Because of the coronavirus, changes have been made to how each HWRC operates to keep services users and staff safe. Specific rules and restrictions vary by site and everyone is asked to visit our website (www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastereopenquestions) before leaving home to avoid unnecessary frustration and delay.

Making PPE less 'scary' for younger children

One of our Family Support Workers has been making face masks for children (and

their toys) for colleagues to use on visits to help make our PPE equipment less 'scary' for younger children – and what a success they've been! Here's how a colleague in children's social care has put them to good use in her first meeting with two young children, who didn't have English as their first language.

She said: *"I had never met the children before, and had discussed with their parents and the translator prior to the visit how to prepare the children, due to the fact I would be visiting in PPE.*

"My colleague offered to make the masks for the girls, and my teddy also wore one! It was a real icebreaker and immediately put the children at ease. They were happy to approach me while wearing mine, so I could help them put theirs on too.

"Bright coloured masks are a universal language, and so are teddy bears 😊."

Re-start, Re-cover, Re-new

Councils will have a leading role to play in helping restart the local economy while maintaining social distancing, and colleagues across both OCC and CDC are preparing for the next stages of the easing of lockdown restrictions. As reported elsewhere in this update, a key issue for us next week will be welcoming more pupils into our schools.

We are also working hard on a series of temporary changes to roads and transport networks to help residents travel safely and abide by social distancing. Ideas have been canvassed from county councillors and are really appreciative of your input.

We are also working with our District and City partners to ensure a joined up approach to the public realm and to maximise our impact in our communities.

There has been particularly clear support for measures including a wider roll-out of 20 mph speed zones where supported by residents; the introduction of school streets to restrict motor vehicles around schools at certain times of day; improved cycling infrastructure, such as more cycle-only lanes in every town; and additional cycle facilities, such as more secure cycle racks at rural bus stops. You can read more about our work clearing cycleways and footpaths in our media release.

Appendix C

Hello from Hayleigh & Sarah

Coronavirus Update from your Local District Councillors

Monday 8th June 2020

Community support:

Community Hub

Whilst we don't know how long the UK's response to and recovery from COVID-19 will take, we do know it's likely to be some time so the Vale of White Horse District Council is making some changes to its community hub services to make sure the response is sustainable over the coming months* Lines will now be open from Monday to Saturday, 9am to 6pm.

Both the staff and community groups have responded positively to the challenges of this crisis to make sure our vulnerable residents receive the support they need. Amazing work is being done by the volunteer groups in our communities as well as the staff at the Vale who have done what they always do, which is pull together, be solution focussed and support each other.

To contact the Community Support Team:

call: 01235 422 600

email: communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

Remember, for the most up-to-date coronavirus information relating to district council support and any changes to services, please take a look at the dedicated Vale webpage for updates:

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/covid19

Business Support:

Discretionary Grant Scheme

The new discretionary business grant scheme opened for applications on Wednesday 3 June.

There is just under £750,000 to aware to businesses in the Vale. As you can imagine, this may sound like a lot, but will have to be stretched to support quite a number of businesses across the Vale.

The full agreed criteria for businesses in each district can be read at svbs.co.uk/top-up-scheme, which is where businesses owners need to apply. The deadline for applications is midday on Wednesday 17 June. Depending on the number of applications to the scheme we are expecting it to take a week or two after the deadline to carry out the necessary checks and evaluations before making any decisions.

The Vale will write to all the applicants to let them know the outcome of their application - successful or not. Those that are successful will need to confirm their acceptance of the grant before any funding can be released. While applicants are waiting to hear the outcome of their application, we are urging them to look at and consider the alternative support for funding in case their application's not successful – this information is all available at svbs.co.uk/ineligible-for-grants.

Council Matters:

Car Parking

Parking charges have been re-introduced in district council car parks across South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse since Monday 8 June.

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have allowed people to park for free since 26 March to support key workers and those who need to shop for essential food or medical supplies during the Coronavirus pandemic after travel restrictions were put in place.

However with many restrictions now lifted, and following the government's announcement that outdoor markets and car showrooms can re-open on 1 June and non-essential retail on 15 June, the councils will now re-introduce parking fees in order to improve the availability of parking spaces as people start to visit local shops again. This will also help to encourage people to consider using more sustainable travel methods when visiting our town centres.

Car parks will operate as normal, meaning that motorists must display a ticket or have a valid online or text payment confirmation, including during any free hours offered in the charging period. Normal rates will apply. New permits will be issued or re-issued to anyone whose permit would've normally expired since lockdown began.

NHS staff and care workers who display the official HM Government COVID-19 parking pass can continue to park for free. To claim a pass, they need to contact their employer who will issue a permit to park in all council car parks.

Remote committee meetings starting to take place

A number of meetings have now taken place including the Planning Committee, the Oxfordshire Growth Board and the Climate Emergency Advisory committee.

Councillors are using Microsoft Teams to take part in the meetings and members of the public are able to watch

online via a link. For details on how members of the public can submit statements or questions to be considered

by a committee or council meeting please visit whitehorsedc.gov.uk/meetings.

Once councillors and officers have got used to the new process and are confident that meetings can be carried out effectively and within the guidelines, the councils will look to introduce online public participation by live video

Oxfordshire Growth Board

The Growth Board had its first remote meeting on 2nd June, during which Cllr Emily Smith (Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council) was voted as the new Chair in line with the informal agreement to rotate the role. Cllr James Mills, the Leader of West Oxfordshire District Council is the new Vice-Chair.

The Growth Board scrutiny panel also held their meeting, as is usual, the week before.

The Growth Board will be circulating a newsletter in the next couple of weeks, to explain how the current pandemic has affected the board's work, in particular the work on the Growth Deal. In the meantime, you can [watch the recording of the growth board meeting here](#).

Climate committee meeting

The Vale had its first remote Climate Emergency Advisory meeting, which took place on 1st June. You can watch back the live recording [here](#).

Although live public participation is not yet set up, members of the public can submit statements. Abingdon XR submitted their statement urging the District Council to do what was within its power to improve safety and provision for cyclists and asking the Vale to put pressure on the Oxfordshire County Council to begin urgently using their government funding to create local, safe cycle spaces.

To view the agenda for the meeting, and read the report on the work programme progress for the climate agenda, in light of the COVID-19 situation, read [here](#).

Local News

Some sad news

There may be some of you might remember Beth Fleming, who was a Vale councillor for Abingdon between 2007 and 2011 and Chair of the Council from 2010-11. We have received some sad news that Beth has sadly passed away from a Covid-19 related illness.

We're sure you'll join us in sending our condolences to Beth's family and friends at this difficult time.

Updates on county council cycle projects

The county council has announced some urgent improvements they're going to make to Oxfordshire's cycling infrastructure, including the following pledges for our districts.

- New cycle parking in all market towns.
- Installing dashed markings to highlight cycle areas.
- Extra cycle racks at Thornhill park and 'pedal'
- Removing A boards from narrow high streets.
- Refreshing existing cycle lanes (where required).
- Additional grass cutting on cycle routes.

Of particular note for our district is the plans for the [Science Vale Cycle Network](#). You can sign up for monthly updates via [the county council's transport bulletins page](#)

Volunteers' week

1-7th June was National Volunteers' week and this year more than ever before, we have seen the positive impact that volunteers can have on our local communities.

Within days of lockdown starting, charities and voluntary groups in our districts were helping those in need. As it became clear more support was required hundreds of residents set up informal help groups in their local communities to make sure their most vulnerable and isolated neighbours were able to get help. They used the powers of social media to recruit other volunteers and to get the message out to those who needed it. They also used more traditional methods to reach people, such as telephone calls, door-knocking and posting home-made leaflets through their neighbours' doors. There's no doubt these local heroes have saved lives in their communities – they have been the backbone of the country's response to the crisis.

And finally..

An **open letter** from Cllr Sue Cooper, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council, and Cllr Emily Smith, Leader of the Vale of White Horse District Council.

As we come to the end of Volunteering Week, we wanted to express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude, on behalf of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils, to all of the incredible volunteers who have stepped up to the plate over the past couple of months to make an enormous difference to their communities.

It was just over two months ago that the government announced the lockdown to try and control the coronavirus and keep the public safe. The method required to keep us safe also meant a significant number of very vulnerable people were suddenly completely unable to carry out the kind of normal day-to-day task we used to take for granted. This also applied to a whole new group of people who never previously needed any support with their lives.

Within days of the lockdown being announced, a staggering number of people had, without being asked, leapt to their feet to make sure everybody in their local community had what they needed. They set up shopping and food delivery services, they collect prescriptions, they walk dogs, and they are even just there to have a friendly chat with people who feel isolated and lonely.

It's incredibly heart-warming to see the selflessness and care with which these wonderful volunteers go about their work. In local government we talk a lot about community, which is a word that can mean different things to different people, but we believe in the past two months we've seen what that word really means.

Not only did these incredible volunteers step up to the plate at the start of the lockdown when their neighbours – and countless people they'd never met – needed them, but they continue to do so, day in, day out, tirelessly. We're incredibly proud to be able to help link these volunteers together and to provide a service to ensure they are able reach the people who need them.

It's quite difficult to put into words the depth of the gratitude we feel for all the volunteers in our district helping our communities make it through these difficult times, but on behalf of our councils and council staff, we'd like to say an enormous thank you. You are the best.

The importance of that selfless care and solidarity among communities has been thrown into sharp focus with other events in the world at the moment. Like many of you, we share in the sadness, horror and anger at the death of George Floyd in the US, and at the unfolding events that have followed.

On the surface it might not appear to be a local issue, but discrimination exists everywhere and this loss of an innocent life highlights just one of the ways it can manifest itself.

Time and again around the world, innocent people are persecuted, discriminated against and killed purely because of the colour of their skin or where they were born. It's devastating that we're well into the 21st Century and this remains an issue.

We share in the global outrage about this issue and it's wrong to remain silent. At South Oxfordshire and the Vale we are fiercely committed to giving a voice to and representing all who suffer discrimination, persecution, hatred or injustice.

We practice equality, fairness and inclusion, and we believe in everybody – whoever you are, you are most welcome here. Through many of our services we work hard to ensure marginalised and isolated members of communities get all the support they need.

No one need accept injustice, no one is without a voice, but sometimes they need others to help their voice to be heard, and so we stand with all of our residents in saying we are absolutely committed to help create equal society for all.

Stay safe, continue to take care of each other, and please take care of yourselves.

Cllr Sue Cooper, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr Emily Smith, Leader of the Vale of White Horse District Council

Take care, stay safe.

We will endeavour to keep you updated on the council's response to the Coronavirus COVID-19 through future newsletters and our dedicated councillor Facebook Page: [Cllrs Hayleigh Gascoigne & Sarah Medley](#). Please do not hesitate to get in touch with any issues or concerns - our email addresses are hayleigh.gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk and sarah.medley@whitehorsedc.gov.uk.