

The Parish Council of St. Helen Without

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 8th March 2021 at 7.30 p.m. by Video Call

Present: Cllrs. M. Page (in the Chair), C. Parkin, V. Talbot, L. Church, R. Bahu, D. Churchouse

In attendance: Cllrs. C. Webber, R. Webber, Mr David O'Hara, Anna Clarke (Clerk).

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr H. Ayub

2. Declarations of Personal or Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None

3. Matters raised by members of the public

None in attendance

4. Attending Councillors and MOD

Cllr Richard Webber – the schools are back but it will be a few weeks before any effects on infection rates can be noted. The ongoing message from the Director of Public Health is to be careful and even if you have been vaccinated, you may still be able to pass the virus on, so continue to be vigilant and stick to the rules. The curve appears to be levelling off in this area, however it is not in the areas around Oxford, so continued vigilance is needed.

Road Repairs – generally, the roads in the County are in a terrible state of repair. County were going to borrow money 18 months ago to accelerate the road repair programme but with Covid, that was put on hold. The programme is waiting to go, when it is possible to resume. Lodge Hill is still progressing and should begin within 6 months. There is a consultation from 8th to 29th March for Lodge Hill. Cllr C Webber has put in comments about lack of cycling facilities, however, the response was that Lodge Hill was primarily for cars not cyclists.

Due to the upcoming May elections, Purdah will begin on 29th March.

Cllr Catherine Webber – Water Resources South East (WRSE) Consultation. Thames Water favours a 4 square mile reservoir, however, there is no real evidence of need and it would be to supply London, not Oxfordshire.

Climate Emergency – there are some good things taking place but the Administration is pushing for more.

The Officers Council Building - 4 options are currently being costed up.

The merger of SODC and the Vale's local plans is currently at the decision making process. There will be a briefing soon.

The Garden Communities Manager, Marybeth Harasz, will be presenting to the PC, once Purdah is over.

MoD

Residents are encouraged not to walk or cycle along the runway. It is out of bounds for good reason and there is a risk of getting hurt. Cllr Bahu will put a notice on SHWPC website to "keep off runway".

RB

The Covid Mobile Testing Unit will be operating through most of March. Dates are included below (item 11).

The Air & County Show will take place on 11th September 2021 on Abingdon Airfield.

5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th January 2021

The following corrections to be noted:

4) It was omitted that Cllr C Webber will arrange a CIL presentation for the PC.

10) Jan Banfield, not Bancroft, is being approached to advise on the implementation of the Plan.

12b) Grants Friends of Shippon will be £250 + £250, not £500 + £250 as stated.

The amendments having been made, the minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.

6. Neighbourhood Plan

John Ashton has agreed to help out as an advisor and Jan Banfield has also been approached.

7. Matters arising from the Minutes

The National Association of Local Councils have issued some recommendations as to how lower tier Councils should prepare themselves to as to how best they can conduct business when the temporary legislation allowing remote, rather than face to face meetings lapses on 7th May 2021. They have been lobbying the government to extend the temporary legislation at least until the government's road map

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actually permits meetings of the necessary size and format necessary to meet the statutory requirements governing Council meetings and public access. They have, to date, received no response. There is a concern that the political pressure to allow local government elections to go ahead could result in the PC being required to obey the requirement to hold face to face meetings open to the public in defiance of the lockdown requirements. The NALC however have suggested that PC's need to consider the safest, legal, way to conduct our business over the next few months to protect Councillors and others. The following measures were unanimously agreed:

- The measures that were put in place to allow the Clerk to continue to pay recurring bills and the Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk to approve payment of other items following email consultation with Councillors remain in force until it is possible to reconvene physical meetings.
- The PC will ensure, as far as is possible, that all current business requiring urgent decision be dealt with at, SHW PC's 19th April meeting, which will be held via Zoom.
- The APM will be held on 3rd May, via Zoom (but a shorter meeting dealing with just the APM agenda).
- The remaining statutory meetings will begin again in September, giving sufficient time for lockdown regulations to have, hopefully, eased sufficiently to allow face to face meetings.

Cllr Page noted that Lee Church has made the decision to leave the Parish Council, however, would still offer an advisory role to the PC. Cllr Page thanked Mr Church on behalf of the PC for his significant contribution to the PC an all the hard work he has carried out.

8. Finance and Administrative Matters

a) Accounts for payment

Payee	Purpose	Total	VAT
Parish Clerk	Salary February	£519.80	
Parish Clerk	Expenses February	£44	
Mick Herring	Notice Board Repairs/Rec Ground Entrance trip hazards	£195	
Richard Bahu	Weed control fabric	£35	
Oxfordshire County Council	SID sign (contribution)	£1100	
Oxfordshire County Council	Installation SID Poles	£2405.20	£400.87
*OALC	Annual subs	£384.93	£64.15

Nb. After the agenda was posted, the following payments were added:

*These invoices were received after the Agenda was published.

b) Grants

None

9. Matters raised by members of the Council

None

10). Sandleigh Road Recreation Ground

The Inspection roster for 2021 is below: Any requests for amendments should be sent to the Clerk.

2021			
April	Cllr David Churchouse	May	Cllr David Churchouse
June	Cllr Hamasq Ayub	July	Cllr Caroline Parkin
August	Cllr Mike Page	September	Cllr Vicki Talbot
October	Cllr Richard Bahu	November	Cllr David Churchouse

11). Correspondence

Cllr Page went through the correspondence and it was resolved that it be noted.

Oxfordshire County Council

Winter Support Grants available to help people hit financially by pandemic - Oxfordshire County Council, in partnership with the county's district councils and Citizens Advice services, is offering support to vulnerable residents through a Winter Support Grant. Oxfordshire was awarded £400,000 by the government in December to fund the cost of food, electricity, heating and other essential items, and the financial help is available for households to claim by 31 March, 2021. Households with children can claim up to £350, while those without children can receive up to £175. The support teams provide the funding through supermarket vouchers, cover costs for pre-payment meters, or make sure that a heating

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or water bill is paid. If a resident has received a food voucher from a previous scheme, they may also be eligible to have one from the Winter Support Grant. **How to apply** - If you live in the **Vale of White Horse District Council** area, visit whitehorsedc.gov.uk/winter-grant
Supporting Communities through Covid-19 – funding available

In recognising the vital contribution that community and voluntary groups continue to make in the efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19, **Supporting Communities Through COVID-19** is open to funding applications from small informal groups as well as established organisations. Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA) and Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) are managing this grant scheme on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council.

You can apply for a maximum of £10,000 for community action projects and a maximum of £50,000 for collaborative, broad reach projects. Grant applications must be received by 10am, Friday 12 March 2021. Please return completed applications by email to communications@ocva.org.uk

OALC

January update

Vale Communications

Business grants update

The government has confirmed details of the next payment period for the *Local restrictions support grant (closed) addendum*, which provides ongoing funding for rate-paying businesses that have been forced to close due to the national lockdown.

The second payment cycle covers 16 February to 31 March 2021:

- businesses with a property of rateable value £15,000 or less, may be eligible for £2,096
- businesses with a property of rateable value over £15,000 but less than £51,000, may be eligible for £3,143
- those with a property of rateable value £51,000 or above, may be eligible for £4,714.

So far, we have paid out more than £2.6million from the first payment cycle of this grant, covering 5 January to 15 February, supporting more than 1,000 businesses across South and Vale. All eligible businesses should have received an email confirming their payment arrangements for this period.

We will now begin the process of preparing the new grants in advance of payment, subject to us receiving final clarification, including grant funding, from the government. We expect to be able to email eligible businesses confirming the payment process and their grant allocation week commencing 8 March if not before. Businesses in receipt of this grant do not need to take any action, they will continue to receive the money automatically without having to apply again. For more details about the grants available to businesses visit svbs.co.uk.

Anyone for (Table) Tennis?

Would your community benefit from new table tennis equipment? If you already have table tennis clubs or sessions in your communities or you can demonstrate a need for it, then Table Tennis England will match any funding you put up to purchase tables and equipment. If you'd like to know more or to submit an application, please get in touch with our Leisure Development Officer by emailing Cath.Dale@southandvale.gov.uk or calling 07801 203551.

Mobile Testing Units for those with symptoms

To test people with symptoms, the Mobile Testing Units continue to rotate around various locations in the county.

An update from our Community hub

Community hub support

In the coming days, the hub will be contacting those who have recently been added to the shielding list to let them know about the support available to them. A total of 2,688 new shielded residents have been added to our lists in the past week in South Oxfordshire, and 2,539 in the Vale. Naturally, contacting these residents is likely to mean an increase in the number of requests for help we receive.

If you missed the news last week, the government is adding more people to the shielding list as a result of new risk models showing that a combination of health and personal factors, including age, ethnicity and BMI could mean someone is at a higher risk from Covid-19.

The Community Hub handled 25 referrals last week, a slight increase on previous weeks, possibly down to the expansion of the shielding list. Queries were again mostly from residents self-isolating due to Tack and Trace or a positive Covid diagnosis as well as further finance related enquiries.

Flood warnings

With sustained heavy rainfall, we have very high river levels across the district and there are currently a number of flood warnings in place. The Oxfordshire County Council – Flood Toolkit (oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com), helps explain what to do to protect your home. Residents can also keep an eye on the latest warnings via the Environment Agency's website and Oxfordshire County Council's website for road closures.

£240,000 for newt conservation - Developments in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts have generated £240,000 over three years to help create new great crested newt habitats. The great crested newts are a European protected species, and so far, 13 developments

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(five in South and eight in Vale) have been authorised by our councils, which has resulted in 23 high quality ponds and 116 hectares of terrestrial habitat.

Government consultation - The government is seeking people's views on [draft revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework and views on the draft National Model Design Code. National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code: consultation proposals - GOV.UK](#) (www.gov.uk). Please submit your comments directly using the above link by 27 March. The consultation will run for six weeks from 10 February and the deadline for completing the survey is **midnight on Wednesday 24 March 2021**.

Community Engagement will identify how to prioritise leisure funding into Wantage, Grove and Faringdon - Community groups and sporting organisations in Wantage, Grove and Faringdon will help to identify how millions of pounds of funding raised from housing developers will be spent in their local areas. The council has appointed an independent consultant, Strategic Leisure Ltd, to engage with a variety of stakeholders over the coming weeks.

Funding approved for new Shrivenham sports pavilion - A brand-new sports pavilion will be built in Shrivenham, using funds raised by the Vale of White Horse District Council from local housing developments.

COVID-19 rates across Oxfordshire

The picture is like previous weeks in Oxfordshire – cases in the county are still dropping, but rates in our bordering neighbours remain high. Whilst the number of patients in intensive care units are falling, pressure on the NHS remains high as patients transfer out of intensive care and continue to be treated. Covid-19 cases in the 60+ age group in particular are coming down. The latest weekly Covid-19 rate for South Oxfordshire is 61.2 cases per 100,000 population, and 59.6 in the Vale. The message that we need to keep sticking to the rules to protect ourselves and our neighbours and the vulnerable will remain in place for many months to come, along with remembering 'hands, face, space'. We're working closely with our Public Health colleagues to continue to monitor variants and cases, but current indications are that surge testing will not be required imminently in our districts.

Vaccinations in Oxfordshire latest

Capacity is increasing at the community vaccination centre at the Kassam Stadium in Oxford. Getting vaccinated is crucial in the country's strategy against the virus and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust would like support in encouraging everyone who has been contacted to arrange their vaccination to do so without delay. With numbers still high, the vaccine alone cannot control the virus, and so even with increasing numbers being vaccinated, we still need to push the message that everyone needs to continue observing the lockdown rules, and following the government's Hands, Face, Space message.

Symptom-free testing centre latest

We are working with partners in Oxfordshire to deliver a new symptom-free testing system, which has begun by testing employees from Thames Valley Police and Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue. Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 have no symptoms but can still pass it on and so regular testing of key workers will help us to stop the spread of the virus. We can now confirm that one of the three sites providing this service is at The Beacon in Wantage. A positive result will trigger the legal duty to self-isolate and to follow the national guidance. A self-isolation information pack has been prepared by the county council to help provide individuals with advice and sources of support. <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/coronavirus/SelfIsolationPack.pdf>

Financial assistance for residents in the Vale

Demand for financial assistance has been high in the Vale, and the advice centres have been working incredibly hard to support residents. At present, the advice centres expect to have allocated all their remaining funds over the next couple of weeks, and we will keep you updated on this. Over the Easter holidays, Oxfordshire County Council will continue to support children with food vouchers or equivalent support via schools.

Covid council tax support - Extended support for those struggling to pay their council tax could benefit more than 3,000 households - Vale of White Horse District Council (whitehorsedc.gov.uk) to help working age people who are struggling to pay their council tax as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The move could benefit more than 3,000 households across the two districts.

Information being given to market traders on what are 'essential goods' - Our Food Safety Team and Covid Compliance Marshals are giving street and market traders across both districts clear advice on what goods are classed "essential" and are therefore permitted to be sold during lockdown.

A reminder on children's playgrounds and outdoor gyms

Playgrounds can stay open, subject to risk assessments, but outdoor gyms must close.

Have your say on taxi safety - We'd like to hear your view on some potential changes to the joint taxi licensing policy for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. We are responsible for licensing private hire (minicab) vehicles, drivers, and operators and hackney carriage (taxi) vehicles and drivers. We want to know what people think of a new draft taxi licensing policy which sets out how we propose

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to regulate taxis and private hire vehicles. Please give us your views, and encourage others join in. **To find out more, and to have your say please visit whitehorsedc.gov.uk/taxipolicyconsultation**

Vale Council announces new owner for Old Abbey House -Old Abbey House in Abingdon is set to get a new lease of life as a 20-bedroom boutique hotel, after Vale of White Horse District Council agreed to sell it to Oxfordshire building company Ede Holdings Ltd.

Two district councils join Oxfordshire Greentech to help local businesses tackle the climate emergency - As part of their commitments to help the districts become carbon neutral, Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils have struck up a brand-new partnership to help local businesses reduce their carbon footprint. The councils' South and Vale Business Support team will be partnering with the countywide network organisation to host events to show businesses how they can recycle more and reduce waste, how to incorporate sustainable procurement in their processes and to build in sustainability training.

Electoral Register

Other

Kompan Playgrounds

Toolstation

Noticeboards Online

Morti Sport & Play

Futurform – PPE products

Earth Anchors

Externiture

Wicksteed Playgrounds

Covid Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) at Dalton Barracks, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX13 6JB

March

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 29th, 30th, 31st.

Bookings for this testing site will be managed in line with current DHSC guidance. This is designed to support your community through access to the continued expansion of the coronavirus testing programme.

12).Cllrs reports and items for future agendas

13).Date of next meeting

It was confirmed that the next meeting will be held at 7.30p.m. on Monday 19th April 2021 by Video Call. Access details can be provided closer to the meeting by the Clerk via email: clerkshwpc@gmail.com or Tel: 01865 321555.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8.30 p.m

Signed.....Date.....

Minutes & Agendas can be found on our website at: <https://sthelenwithout-pc.co.uk/>