



MINUTES
of the
SUNNINGWELL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
held on
Thursday 24 March 2022
In Sunningwell Village Hall

Present:

Councillors

Colin Weyer (Chairman), Paul Wooldridge, Paul Darby, and James Greenman.
Mike Wykes attended by Zoom due to illness.

In attendance:

District Councillor Emily Smith.
Three parishioners
Brian Rixon – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

18/22

Questions and comments from visiting councillors and members of the public

Bayworth Residents Association commented on the need for a bus service, and driveway mirrors in Boars Hill at the top of Brumcombe Lane. They also re-iterated their concerns from last year about field spraying near Brumcombe Lane. Belen Wilcox, who happened to be at the council meeting, said that last year's situation was caused by a GPS error and had been apologised for and remedied for future years.

BRA offered some explanation on their proposal for a Queen's Jubilee event on the village green, and in the village hall, on Sunday 5th June. The council said it felt positive about providing some financial support, but the present grant application lacked the required breakdown of costs and the latest set of accounts. BRA said it will present full information in about two weeks. BRA confirmed no profit would be made from putting on the Jubilee event, which will be open to all parishioners including Boars Hill and Long Furlong Road. It will be a 100% BRA function and not organised or financed in conjunction with a third party.

District Councillor Emily Smith explained the Climate Action Fund which is available until 25 April.

The Boundary consultation will go out in the coming week and will culminate in a May meeting with a decision being made in June or July in readiness for the 2023 elections.

The District and County Councils have prepared a support package for Ukrainian refugees coming to the UK. It will cover matters such as safeguarding checks and health care.

Cllr Paul Wooldridge requested an update on the timing of the Vale's plans to form a planning group, to include Parish Councils, which would enable closer consultation with, and greater influence for, parish councils on planning issues and planning applications.

County Councillor Bob Johnston sent his apologies for the meeting and enclosed a report that said, in summary:

1. There is a briefing on the latest situation in respect of Lodge Hill on Thursday morning, and he will report anything of interest to the Parish as a matter of urgency.
2. The County Council voted to end its partnership with Cherwell District Council. An immediate effect was that the joint CEO reverted to Cherwell, leaving the County without a CEO. It is expected that the search for a new CEO will take some 6 to 9 months.
3. The Council Tax was raised by 4.99% at the February meeting of the County Council. Most of this (3%) was to shore up struggling Adult and Child Social Services.

19/22	Apologies for absence County Councillor Bob Johnston and District Councillor Debby Hallett. Absent: Parish Councillor Oliver Isaacs.
20/22	Declarations of members' interests in respect of any item. None.
21/22	To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council held on 27 January 2022. The minutes were approved and signed.
22/22	Planning applications V0440/HH 15 Long Furlong Road Extension The council had no comments to make. V0573/HH 25 Sunningwell Extensions The council had no comments to make. V2508/HH 26 Long Furlong Road This application has yet to be decided but the parish council discussed its concerns with Cllr Emily Smith.
23/22	Campaign for Protection of Rural England, and Oxford Green Belt Network Cllr Paul Wooldridge agreed to oversee the council's membership of CPRE, and Cllr Mike Wykes offered to oversee the Oxford Green Belt Network. The clerk will write to these organisations to change the email addresses for newsletters and other correspondence. <div style="text-align: right;">Action Clerk</div>
24/22	Annual Parish Meeting The council agreed to try to arrange a presentation at the Annual Parish Meeting by the Vale team working on the Lodge Hill A34 interchange. <div style="text-align: right;">Action Cllr Colin Weyer</div> The Annual Parish Meeting is a relatively informal event where the parish council reports to its electorate on what has been accomplished in the preceding year. It is also an opportunity to hear reports from the County and District Councillors, community groups and any organisation that the parish council has funded during the year. The meeting will be followed, after a brief break, by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council which is a formal council meeting at which the Chairman and Vice Chairman are elected for the ensuing year.
25/22	Burial spaces in St Leonard's churchyard The issue of burial plots and the reducing availability of graveyard space at St. Leonard's has been raised by a local resident. This is currently a matter for the Church and the PCC to determine, and for the Oxford Diocese should the need for additional land be required. It was suggested that the person enquiring should contact either the Vicar or the finance officer of St. Leonard's to take the matter further.
26/22	Bayworth Triangle benches Cllr Paul Darby is seeking a community grant for steel benches to be installed on Bayworth Triangle to commemorate the 15 parishioners' lives lost in the first world war and the 6 in the second world war. <div style="text-align: right;">Action Cllr Paul Darby</div>

27/22 Commemorative benches on the village green

The council had a further detailed discussion about commemorative benches being placed on Sunningwell Parish Village Green. It was proposed, and passed by a vote of four to one, that any bench should be of linear design and be able to seat a maximum of 4 people. The council apologised if previous discussions had been somewhat misleading. Action Clerk
At a previous meeting the council has agreed to refurbish the exiting five benches that have aged.

28/22 Insurance

Cllr James Greenman is contacting brokers to seek competitive quotes for the Parish Council now that the current policy is nearing the end of a five-year fixed price agreement. The clerk was asked to send the current policy, and the list of current assets, to James. Action Clerk

29/22 Financial Report

The following payments were authorised:

Clerk	Salary, Office Expenditure. Microsoft 365 subscription	617.10
HMRC	PAYE	142.20
Sage Payroll	November	8.40
Chiswell Contractors	Village hall disabled pathway. Pond de-silting	5,686.80
Oxford Green Belt Network	Annual subscription	15.00
Elan City Ltd	Four radar speed signs	9,950.04

The Chairman made a detailed statement to set the record straight following circulation in the parish of statements regarding parish finances.

It has been alleged that the recent very substantial vote of residents in the western part of Boars Hill in favour of joining Sunningwell Parish “*would mean even more parish funds being directed away from Sunningwell & Bayworth*”. These allegations were shown to be almost the opposite of the truth.

In summary: spending in Bayworth and Sunningwell over the last five years has totalled over £121,000 or about 85% of the total. Given that Boars Hill voters almost certainly contribute more than 40% of the parish precept income, it can be seen that Bayworth and Sunningwell, far from losing out to Boars Hill, rather benefit greatly. The substantial vote of confidence given to Sunningwell parish by those Boars Hill residents presently in Wootton parish could only be of benefit to Sunningwell Parish.

Finally, judicious management of parish finances by the unpaid volunteer parish councillors had enabled the council to REDUCE the parish council tax for the new financial year 2022/23 by no less than 25%.

The full statement can be found on the council’s notice boards and the website, at sunningwell-pc.gov.uk.

30/22 Budget for the year commencing 1 April 2022

The budget was discussed and agreed at a total of £28,856. It will be published on the Council’s website. Action Clerk

31/22 Firework display

The council has arranged the Jubilee Celebration firework display for Sunday 5th June at 9 p.m. to co-ordinate with a proposed evening event organised by the Bayworth Residents’ Association.

32/22 NALC

The NALC were asking for Parish Council views on what it could do further for local councils. Sunningwell PC responded with concerns on the effectiveness of Parish Council views on planning issues. Also, whether further support could be available when a Council is faced with vexatious comments. Action Clerk

33/22 The next Parish Council Meetings will be on Thursday 28 April 2022 in Sunningwell Village Hall

The Chairman closed the March meeting at 10:20 p.m.