

# STADHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting *held on* Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at the Village Hall, St John the Baptist Church

<b>Attendees</b>	Cllr. Stephen Dawson (Chair) (SD), Cllr. Stuart Wells (Vice-Chair) (SW), Cllr. Robert Campbell (RC), Cllr. Neil Fitzgerald (NF), Cllr. Doug Struthers (DS), District Councillor Caroline Newton (CN), Michael Pawley (Clerk) and 7 members of the public.
<b>Apologies</b>	Cllr. Catherine Odell

Ref	Item	Notes
1/21	<b>Introduction</b>	Cllr Dawson welcomed everyone to the APM explaining that the 2020 meeting had not been held, as permitted by emergency legislation due to the pandemic. He noted that this was the first face to face meeting held since March 2020
2/21	<b>To receive the Annual Report of the Parish Council for the years 2019/20 and 2020/21</b>	Cllr Dawson presented the report which is attached at Appendix 1
3/21	<b>To receive a Statement on the Parish Council accounts for the years 2019/20 and 2020/21</b>	The Clerk presented the report which is attached at Appendix 2
4/21	<b>To receive a report from County Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale</b>	It was noted that Lorraine Lindsay-Gale had not been re-elected at the recent local elections and hence was not in attendance at the meeting. SD thanked her on behalf of the Council. SD briefly summarized her report. A copy is attached at Appendix 3
5/21	<b>To receive a report from District Councillor Caroline Newton</b>	Cllr. Caroline Newton (CN) presented her report which is attached at Appendix 4
6/21	<b>To receive a report from Cllr Doug Struthers on the work of PAGE (Parishes Against Gravel Extraction)</b>	Cllr. Doug Struthers presented the report which is attached at Appendix 5
7/21	<b>To receive any reports from village organisations</b>	No reports had been submitted
8/21	<b>To invite the public to raise and discuss any matters of interest</b>	A request was made to reinstate the markings for the Speed Camera – NF responded that this had been raised with OCC but that they had advised this was the responsibility of Thames Valley Police. The Council would follow up on this as part of their initiative on traffic speed
9/21	<b>Close</b>	The Meeting was closed by the Chairman at 7.56pm

## APPENDIX 1

### Annual Parish Report – 10 May 2021

The only way to begin this report is by saying 'what a year 2020 was and 2021 continues to be. Due to the pandemic we were not able to hold the annual parish meeting in 2020 so my report takes element of both 2019 and 2020.

The biggest thing to reflect on is of course the pandemic and the huge effect it has had on us all. We have lost loved ones, people has suffered from this terrible virus, and people have lost their jobs or been unable to work. The effect of being locked down and not being able to meet together and do things has been life changing in so many ways with working from home becoming the norm as well as teachers, parents and young people having to deal with home schooling and the significant financial effects on businesses having to close and of course the impact on everyone's health and wellbeing.

There have been some benefits though such as the abundance of green spaces we have access to and it has been amazing how our community pulled together right from the start. Very early on the PC formed a volunteer network with over 100 people coming forward to volunteer helping with tasks such as getting food supplies or prescriptions. Although the scheme remained underused, part of this is because of the way in which friends and neighbours pulled together showing our strong community.

I offer a heartfelt thank you on behalf of the PC to all those who helped one another and continue to do so and particularly want to thank Edwina Humm and Angela Pawley who helped coordinate everything from the start and who continue to maintain the weekly prescription run to local surgeries. As we emerge from lockdown and with the vaccination programme in full swing, I hope we will have a opportunity at some point to gather and say thank you to everyone. Saying this makes me think of that wonderful village party that was organised in 2019 and I do hope it will happen again at some point.

Along with the pandemic of course came our discovery of zoom and the PC was no different and for the past year until now all meetings have been virtual. I well remember before the legislation was in place having to stand in this church in March 2020 with Michael and speak to an empty room so that we could put in place emergency powers to enable the PC to continue operating effectively and safely.

Reflecting over the past two years I was amazed to see that the PC had reviewed 75 planning applications since the last annual parish meeting, some of these complex and huge such as outlying permission for the development at Chalgrove and the redevelopment of the Newington Nurseries site. We also challenged the SODC Local Plan and requested Chalgrove be removed from the plan due to its unsustainable location and the effect it would have on this area due to the infrastructure required and spoke at the examination in public but sadly to no avail. However, it is very pleasing to see how many of the points we raise in our planning responses are taken on board by the planning officers.

We have also actively engaged in all matters highways and transport, recognizing the problem of motorcycles and traffic and speeding in this area which has been raised many times by many of us. With Fitz joining us a parish councillor and an interest in this subject, we look forward to these issues being monitored later in the year in order to provide the evidence and help inform OCC Highways and ourselves of the specific problems around the parish and what measures we might take.

With our climate change emergency declaration we continue to seek ways make this more than a matter of words with a small group led by Catherine Odell. We now comment on climate change on every planning application, have switched energy suppliers to renewable energy suppliers and have recently planted new trees at Copson Lane which will shortly be joined by bee hives. Parish land continues to be well maintained with allotments reinstated at Copson Lane and let and with the legal dispute regarding Allotment 13 resolved at mediation, this will shortly come back into use.

Thinking about climate change and parish land, we are soon to meet with a nature conservation expert from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment to get further advice and guidance on how we might manage parish land for the benefit of nature and look forward to sharing more on this in due course. On village green matters the PC has also reviewed the bye-laws relating to the village green and revised them to make them more relevant to today's needs and uses and these will be adopted once approval is given but it is a lengthy process. With dealing with numerous unauthorized encampments on the village green in recent years and due to the damage caused and waste left as a result the PC has adopted a policy of using bailiffs in these circumstances. As you will know the PC recently carried out a survey on this subject to help inform their future decision making and approach.

The PC is extremely grateful to Doug and the play area working group who have worked hard to develop plans for a new play area and multi use games area, consulting with the local community and getting quotes for the scheme. Grant funding is now being sought for this and we look forward to reporting on progress further at our next PC meeting. We are also very grateful to SODC Cllr Caroline Newton for funding a new defibrillator and to David McPhillips at the Coach and Horses at Chiselhampton for agreeing to its installation so now both villages have one to hand – lets hope they do not need to be used! We will also see the Chiselhampton bus shelter repaired and repainted later this month.

Over the past two years we were also pleased as a Parish Council to support both the Chalgrove & Watlington First Footsteps Family Hub and Stadhampton Primary School 'wrap around care' which benefits our young people and their parents.

So there you have my highlights and I have to offer my grateful thanks to Stuart, Doug, Bob, Catherine and Fitz for all they do in their roles as parish councillors and of course to Michael who as our clerk couldn't be better organised and carries out the work of the PC so well and so professionally. I must also thank all of you for all that you do to contribute to parish life. We are so lucky of the time people give to help and volunteer and for the many village organisations we have. Although some may have been silenced for a time, we look forward to seeing many more activities resume as and when this is possible. This past year may have been hard and difficult but you make me proud to be part of this community.

# STADHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

## FINANCIAL REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MAY 2021

	2020/21	2019/20
B/fwd	69,215	55,643
Receipts	33,270	51,967
Payments	(48,920)	(38,395)
C/fwd	53,565	69,215
Made up:		
Community Infrastructure Levy	38,588	34,595
Play Area	0	10,000
General Reserve	14,977	24,260

### End of Year Position

At 31/3/21 Stadhampston Parish Council carried forward a balance of £53,564.61 of which £14,976.73 held in General Reserve reflects the strength and financial security of the PC having acted responsibly and appropriately with its finances over many years and the need to reduce General Reserves. A further £38,587.88 represents Community Infrastructure Levy receipts which can only be used for specific purposes related to projects in the parish – part of this reserve is allocated for the Play Area expansion project scheduled for 2021/22 (subject to obtaining further grant funding)

### Revenue Budget

The Parish Council increased the local precept for 2019/20 to £14,478 and then again in 2020/21 to £15,598 with a view to reducing the level of General Reserves in line with guidance from the external auditors.

In 2019/20 expenditure exceeded budget mainly due to expenditure incurred in relation to legal proceedings and the decision to use bailiffs for the eviction of unauthorised encampments from the Village Green; in 2020/21 expenditure on bringing the ongoing legal proceedings to a conclusion through mediation and the increased costs of evictions during the pandemic were the major factors contributing to the overspend

*Michael Pawley*  
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer  
Stadhampston Parish Council  
May 2021

## **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2020 – APRIL 2021 BY COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE**

### **COVID-19**

The past year has seen us working, caring and coping with the impacts of COVID-19 on our lives. County Council staff have continued to work from home wherever possible, and the vast majority of meetings have been held online via TEAMS or Zoom. Throughout this awful time our officers and partner organisations have maintained the public services that we rely on, and in many cases have gone far beyond what was required of them to ensure that all our residents received the care and support they deserve.

### **Libraries**

In my own Directorate, Cultural Services and Education, I was proud to hear of library staff directing traffic queues at waste recycling centres, helping man the phones for the Shielding Operation and driving vital legal documents around the county so that our registrars could register deaths. And now I'm delighted that all but a few of our 44 libraries that are undergoing alterations will be open on 12<sup>th</sup> April.

### **Schools**

I have to pay a very special tribute to our teachers, who have coped with a hugely demanding situation of having to provide as virus free an environment for our children as possible, while dealing with the uncertainty of whether they would be open or have to close. They've been spectacular, and currently attendance levels are in the region of 95%, well above national averages.

In June the County Council stepped in and provided all schools with free PPE equipment worth £2million to help staff and parents feel more confident about levels of protection, and we have led a county-wide service providing free laptops to children who may have found online learning difficult because they hadn't got the equipment they needed. The Council has continued to provide school places and transport throughout lockdown. We were proud to announce that for entry next September over 90% of primary school children were offered their first preference school place and 89% of children making the move into secondary education.

## **BUDGET**

Our response to COVID-19 has been costly, in the region of £60million to date, but the Government has remained true to its word and reimbursed the Council to a significant degree. To ensure our financial situation was secure, in September we announced an Extraordinary Budget, seeking to find an extra £15m of savings. This was achieved, and now the Council is in a firm financial situation. The budget we announced in February was balanced, and contained not only savings, but investments in some services such as our provision for young people.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Between April 2020 and March 2021, Oxfordshire County Council treated just under 1.5 million square metres of highway at more than 220 sites with works valued at over £20m. This included a significant amount of work in Garsington amounting to over £60K on resurfacing and drainage repairs. The Council will be investing £31.3 million in our highway repairs and improvements in the coming year.

### **Clifton Hampden Bypass**

However the big news for this Division's highway network was the announcement of £218million for a new road north from Didcot and a river crossing that will join the A415 near Culham Station. A large roundabout outside the Science Centre will guide traffic around a bypass for Clifton Hampden that will join the A4074 at the Golden Balls roundabout. This area has suffered from traffic congestion for many years and the new scheme is seen as a vital element in improving our local infrastructure. It will be completed by 2024, and work has already begun.

### **New Bus Service - 45**

I have campaigned for a long time to get transport links for Berinsfield. I was delighted that from 1<sup>st</sup> September Thames Travel began running the 45 service between Abingdon, Culham, Berinsfield, the Science Park and Cowley. A school transport service is also provided by the County Council to the three Abingdon secondary schools, Larkmead, Fitzharrises and John Mason. This is not available to the public due to social distancing requirements, but it is hoped to offer these journeys to everyone in the future.

## Minerals & Waste Plan

The County Council's Minerals & Waste Plan has been delayed yet again. This time it was due to Nuneham Courtenay and Sandford-on-Thames residents' successful challenge to the proposal put forward to identify a large area between the two villages as the sole new area to provide gravel from the South of the County up until 2031. They proved that the Council's consultants had got their figures wrong, and that the amount of gravel that could be expected to come out was half of what they had predicted. The Council has had no option but to go back to the beginning of this very lengthy process of identifying suitable sites. The focus could now fall upon the land between Stadhampton, Drayton St Leonard and Berinsfield. There is not likely to be an adopted plan much before 2023.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

In 2019 the Council acknowledged there is a climate emergency. Since then we have been putting this issue at the centre of our activities - every purchase we make, every policy we consider and every strategy we plan. We have pledged to become a carbon neutral authority by 2030. We set ourselves a 6% target and smashed it achieving 8% up to the end of 2020. But we also want to make Oxfordshire a carbon neutral county by 2050 and are working with organisations across Oxfordshire to achieve this. Soon we will see Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and a Zero Emissions Zone for Oxford, plus congestion charging from the end of the year. The switch to electric vehicles will help, and we are planning a county-wide network of charging points. With improved public transport, cycleways and pedestrian routes we hope to encourage people to ditch their petrol and diesel cars.

In spite of all the challenges Oxfordshire County Council has had a positive 2020 – 2021.



## Haseley Brook Ward SODC Annual Report - April 2021

Cllr Caroline Newton

### COVID-19

Work at SODC has been dominated over the last year by the pandemic. Early in the first lockdown, many of the decision-making powers of the council were delegated to the Chief Executive of SODC under emergency rule, and SODC intensified its cooperation with neighbouring local authorities and public services. All official meetings of the council have been taking place virtually, and most officers are still working remotely.

At the start of the pandemic many officers were re-deployed to COVID-19 related roles (eg supporting vulnerable people and coordinating the payment of business grants); and in the early stages of the vaccination programme, they worked closely with the health service to achieve rapid progress here in Oxfordshire.

### Planning

Whilst this year has been anything other than business-as-usual for SODC, officers have tried to ensure the planning service remains on track in the face of a heavy workload.

Local Plans 2035 and 2041: Councillors voted to adopt the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 in December 2020. This is the strategic development plan for the district which determines where housing, business and infrastructure will be focused over the next 15 years, and the development policies that will shape them. The main development sites will be around the city of Oxford, Culham, Berinsfield and Chalgrove Airfield. The plan, which identifies locations for 28,000 homes, including over 4,000 for Oxford City's 'unmet need', was controversial amongst residents and councillors. The council administration's - ultimately unsuccessful - attempts to demonstrate that the numbers were too high absorbed hundreds of hours of senior officer time; and the QC bills alone amounted to almost £250,000.

Work now begins on the next iteration of the development plan - the Local Plan 2041 - which is due to be adopted in 2024. The administrations at SODC and the Vale of the White Horse District Council have agreed to make this a joint local plan. The scale of LP2041 will be driven by the longer-term 'Oxfordshire 2050' strategy being determined by the Oxfordshire Growth Board (a high level body which brings together businesses, local authorities and civic bodies from across the county). 'Oxfordshire 2050', in turn, has to conform to Government's plans for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc - including Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire which is projected to be a zone of high economic growth in the next period. We expect to hear the level of housing numbers in June/July 2021.

Chalgrove Airfield: Like most local residents I have been most concerned about impact of Homes England's proposed development at Chalgrove Airfield. The Civil Aviation Authority, in its response to the outline planning application, has stated that housing development on this site is not compatible with the continued operation of Martin Baker Ltd. It is now for Homes England to respond with a plan that mitigates these concerns.

Harrington: LP2041 is likely to require the district to identify the need for further housing, and that re-opens the possibility of the Harrington development which is being promoted as a site for 6,500 houses. I am working with colleagues in parish councils across this ward to ensure that this site does not go forward into LP2041.

### SODC Corporate Plan



During the year the council adopted its corporate plan which will cover the period up to 2023. It is remarkable for its focus on sustainability, nature recovery and the 'green agenda'. SODC has a target to achieve carbon neutrality in its own operations by 2025, and in the district more broadly by 2030.

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## APPENDIX 5

### PAGE

The decision regarding which gravel extraction locations to pursue in South Oxon has been referred to Northamptonshire for review.

It is expected that this 'back to square one review' will take some time to produce a response, perhaps H2 2021.

In the meantime PAGE have engaged a specialist consultant to prepare for the consultation phase to argue, persuade and influence that Stadhampton/Newington/Berinsfield is not the most suitable location for gravel extraction - consistent with the PAGE position for past 17 years.

PAGE expects to spend up to £12k from funds already raised/committed defending our position in the consultation phase, and will decide on further action once that phase is complete.

PAGE would like all parishes to keep their annual contribution level in budget as it is unlikely we have heard the last of this scheme.

Cllr Doug Struthers

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