

Minutes

Meeting of Ambrosden Parish Council

Held online – 7:30pm

Thursday 16th April 2020

Present: Mark Longworth – Chair, Gemma Jennings – Clerk, Maureen Cossens, Dawn Seaward, Phil Blazdell, Tom Duff, Chris West, Vicky Rose, Councillor Sames (for item 489-495)

Serial No **Issue**

489-20-21 **Welcome**

490-20-21 **Apologies**

No apologies were received

491-20-21 **Register of Interests**

No declarations of interest for items on the agenda were received

491-20-21 **Gifts & Hospitality**

No statements of gift or hospitality were received

492-20-21 **Minutes of previous meeting & matters arising**

It was noted that the minutes of the previous meeting were not yet available and would be circulated with updated matter arising as soon as possible.

493-20-21 **Public Speaking**

Nothing raised

494-20-21 **Councillor Reports**

Councillor Sames presented a verbal report, highlighting the following key points:

- Covid-19: the rise in numbers of new cases in the district appeared to be flattening, although not yet falling. It was highlighted that District Councillors had at their disposal a £5,000 priority fund for assisting local support efforts through the pandemic, and also that bin collections would remain as normal. It was noted that there was likely to be delays in some areas of council and district work, potentially impacting the opening date of the new Graven Hill School
- A highways proposal to install traffic lights on the Ploughley Road- A41 junction was outlined, noting this would mean no right turn from Ploughley Road onto the A41 and no left turn from the A41 onto Ploughley Road, impacting only a very small proportion (around 1%) of traffic. The Council stressed the need for joined up thinking on any highways developments on the A41, particularly any roundabout installed at Graven Hill and underlined the need for transparency around these plans.
- The Council questioned whether there had been any further updates from the Highways department on the proposed traffic calming scheme within the village. **Councillor Sames to review**
- Councillors noted a number of concerns received from local parents regarding the lack of access to free school transport, affecting children due to start at secondary schools in Bicester other than Whitelands Academy. It was noted that Whitelands had been designated the closest school to the

village but this did not reflect geographic reality and had a particularly disadvantageous effect on those families with elder siblings already enrolled at other schools. The Council also raised concerns regarding practicality of school children having to walk to Whitelands Academy from Ambrosden, given the lack of any footpath on the A41 between the Rodney Hill and Tesco roundabouts, which would therefore require children to walk via the town centre. Councillor Sames noted that there was an issue within the council policy here and that this required review.

Councillor Sames to progress.

- The Council questioned whether there had been any further updates on the Gladman judicial review. **Councillor Sames noted that there had not yet been anything formal and that he would follow up on this point.**

495-20-21 Planning

New Applications:

Application reference: 20/00871/F

Location: OS Parcel 3300 North of Railway Line Adjoining Palmer Avenue Lower Arncott

Proposal: Erection of a free-range egg production unit, gatehouse and agricultural workers dwelling including all associated work

The Council ratified the following comment:

Request planning conditions on

- a. Construction Management Plan and Traffic Plans ensuring all traffic is routed down Palmers Avenue and not via Ploughley Road.
- b. Condition on lighting and that none to be visible from the north, east or west
- c. Litter change should be done internally and not externally, and trailers should not be able to vent smells
- d. Limit number of chickens to the numbers stated in planning conditions

Decisions:

Application reference: 20/00189/F

Location: The Old Stables

Approved

Awaiting decisions:

Application number: 19/01191/OUT

Proposal: Alexandra House of Joy

Location: Care home near Rodney House roundabout

Application number: 20/00285/F

Land between Ambrosden, Merton and Arncott

Large Solar Farm to be accessed off Ploughley Road at Brook Farm.

Comment ratified:

- Concern about visual impact on public footpath – landscaping condition requiring planting while leaving a sensible width for the footway
- Concern about visual impact when viewed from Merton Road, Ambrosden. Trees and tall hedges should be provided as part of a planning condition.
- Construction method statement condition. Construction vehicles must be routed via Palmers Avenue and not through Ambrosden. They should not use routes through Merton Road, Blackthorn or Ploughley Roads in Ambrosden.
- Construction Management Plan required to ensure Bridleway remains open during construction.
- Limit on construction hours, and no generators to remain running outside of working hours.
- Support OCC comments and suggestions dated 6/3/2020

Application number: 20/00530/F and 20/00599/SO

Symmetry Park (screening request only)

Logistics floor space and associate infrastructure and access road of Morrell Way

Comment ratified:

Ambrosden Parish Council objects to this application on this site on the grounds of prematurity. The applicant makes the argument that this site outside the boundaries of Bicester 12 is acceptable, as it is now predicted that Bicester 12 will now provide less employment use than is specified in the local plan. We note that no development has commenced at the larger site area of Bicester 12, and also note that no permissions have yet been granted on Bicester 2 for B1-8 and that Bicester 11 is only partially developed. The applicant has failed to justify why development outside allocated sites should be allowed, when there has so far been insufficient demand to develop the remainder of Bicester 2, 11 or 12.

Additionally, we note that Bicester 4 and 10 which are also B use sites have seen no form of development commence and it would be appropriate to consider a change to B8 use on these allocated sites before extending the development sprawl into the open countryside.

Should the council be minded to approve this scheme, we would request the following conditions and legal agreements

- S106 application tying the proposed development to DPD as a user
- No development should commence until the bus stops installed on the A41 as part of a planning requirement in relation to the original permission at Symmetry Park, are brought into operation, with buses stopping at these locations. Bus shelters should be installed, and the developer should pay a financial contribution to ensure the provision of bus services stop here on evenings and weekends.
- A financial contribution should be made to amend the junction of the A41 and Ploughley Road, which it is found will shortly be at capacity
- A construction management plan is required, which should include removal of construction debris and mud from the A41, and road drains should be cleaned to remove debris from drains and road gulleys left from previous phases of development.
- No development should commence until the cycleway created within the site is opened for use.

Application number: 20/00706/F

6 Home Farm Close

No Comment

Application number: 20/00547/F

OS Parcel 7480, adjoining railway line and parish boundary Merton- creation of new agricultural access

Comment ratified: Works may impact on Great Crested Newts – Ecological survey required for this engineering operation

496-20-21 Village Hall Update

It was noted that due to the Covid-19 pandemic the Hall was currently closed, and that when it was possible to reopen the Hall would require a clean and an AGM. It was noted that it would also be useful for the Village Hall Committee to start advertising for new committee members.

Councillors questioned how the Village Hall was managing its water supply: whether this had been shut off and if it was regularly flushed and tested. The Village Hall representative advised that this was unclear but unlikely. The Council stressed the need for such important safety measures to be in place, as well as clear procedures around insurance, management and finances

It was noted that there was some specialist support available for the Village Hall to support with such issues.

**Clerk to put Village Hall Committee representative in contact with Community First Village Hall specialist.
Mrs Seaward to support with issue around water safety: Village Hall Committee representative to provide a key for Hall access.**

497-20-21 Allotments Update

The council reviewed and approved the following:

- a. Creation of a user committee as first point of reference with no budgetary powers, which will act as the body which will co-ordinate with the Parish Clerk and Parish Council, Committee Constitution and Terms of Reference.
- b. Annual rents set at: £50-60 p/a for large plots, £40 p/a for medium plots and £20 p/a for small plots
- c. Tenant contracts
- d. Handbook and privacy notice
- e. Establishment of sinking fund of £500
- f. The Council reviewed the maintenance plan, noting points for monitoring. **Clerk to request quote on weeding the paths and liaise on any request for authorisation on windbreaks.**
- g. The council received a quotation for the fixing and upgrading of all allotment taps, given the ongoing issues with leaks on several taps on the site. The Council approved the work as per the quotation, subject to a review of authorisation and value for money processes in the financial regulations to ensure procedural propriety. **Clerk to action and investigate location of stop tap for whole allotment site.**

498-20-21 Annual Parish Meeting

The Council reviewed the guidance around the holding of the Annual Parish and Annual Council meetings, noting that latest guidance was that there was no requirement for a parish council to hold its annual meeting although it may do so (virtually) if it so chooses. It was noted that a Chair would stay in post until they resign or a meeting can be held, although there were still some questions about whether this could be done remotely in line with regulations. The Council agreed to continue to monitor guidance as it was issued and to reach a decision on the basis of this as soon as possible.

499-20-21 Location of Cllr Sames funded bench

The Council reviewed the options and approved a proposal to site the bench on community land on the Springfield estate with a council plaque. **Clerk to contact Bloor for advice on installation.**

500-20-21 Armed Forces Covenant

The Council reviewed and approved signing of the covenant. The Council stressed the importance of maintaining good relations and communication with local armed forces, **Clerk to review best lines of communication.**

501-20-21 Finance

- a. Reconciled Accounts: reviewed and agreed.
- b. Approved payments:
2 x employees' wages £286.32, £698.28 (including overtime), £119.70 (Clerk February wages £18 HWA, £91.24 expenses
Dog Bins Emptying Oct-Mar £658.94
- c. The Council agreed Clerk to progress implementation of online banking with Barclays. **Clerk to request mandate and report back at May meeting.**
- d. Staff pension request was received and the different options for pension schemes were discussed. Usability and interface with existing payroll system queried: **Clerk to discuss further with payroll provider and return to council for further review**
- e. It was agreed that the traffic calming scheme was the priority of funding applications to Cllr Sames fund
- f. It was agreed that no gate was currently required on the Blackthorn road, particularly given lack of impact on vehicle speed. Item to be discharged from works in progress list.
- g. £100 funding request from Cleanslate reviewed and agreed.
- h. £250 donation request from Bicester Athletics Club reviewed and agreed.

- j. SLCC membership discussed and it was noted that no decision or payment was required until July, Clerk to add to July agenda
- k. Clerk expenses request for Local Council Clerk Guide (£21), antivirus software (£34.99) and laptop warranty (£88.32) reviewed and approved. The Council also noted that the need for effective back-ups of the Council laptop. Including use of Cloud software: **Clerk to action.**

502-20-21 Policies and Governance

The Council reviewed and approved the following policies

- a. Donations policy
- b. Risk Assessment
- c. Insurance pre-renewal: to be amended in line with updated assets list. **Clerk to action.**
- d. GDPR policy and privacy notice
- e. Councillor email addresses: not discussed, to be added to next agenda
- f. Freedom of Information Scheme. **Clerk to ensure Council registered with Freedom of Information Office.**

503-20-21 Correspondence / News

Nothing raised

504-20-21 Matters carried forward for Next Agenda

Minutes of March meeting

Councillor email addresses

Governance and policies

Any agenda items for May meeting to be sent to Clerk by 11th May

505-20-21 Next Meeting

7.00 pm Thursday 21st May- Full Council and Annual Meetings (tbc, depending on guidance)
Online via Zoom. Meeting ID 778-9267-4783

The meeting ended at 21:30

Signed:

Chair of Ambrosden Parish Council