

**Minutes of a virtual meeting of Fringford Parish Council,
held on Monday 15th February 2021 at 7.45pm.**

Present: Councillors John Fargin, Adrian Thwaites, John Reader, David McCullagh, Les Harris, Jan Maciejewski and Hayley Ryder.

Also present: Cllr Ian Corkin (OCC and CDC)
Cllr Barry Wood (CDC)
R. Damerell (Clerk)

95. Requests for Dispensations and Declarations of Interest

There were no requests for dispensations or declarations of interest.

96. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 18th January 2021.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

Questions / Comments from the Public

97. Finance

- a. To receive the monthly financial report – which is attached to these Minutes.
- b. To consider invoices for payment itemised on the payment schedule: -(are these going to be inserted in the schedule below?)

Cheque no:	Payee and reason	Budget	Minute Ref	Amount
400494	B Damerell	Clerk Salary		£360
400495	Cllr McCullagh	Flowers for retiring clerk		£30
400496	Tree Solutions	Village Hall Hedge trimming – Autumn 2019		£300

98. County Councillor's report

Cllr Wood updated that Budget planning started in September is now culminating on 22 February 2021 when it will be approved. The Budget is built on the Council's Business Plan. Council Tax will go up £5.00 per year for a band D household, slightly more for above band D and less for lower than Band D. There has been some angst about the increase due to CDC not increasing Council Tax for the last decade. It has been increased due a strategic medium-term plan and linked to the review of business rates. CDC retains a small element of surplus business rates which it can carry over to the following year. The target amount is due to be reset in Financial Year 2022/23.

CDC are making a number of savings within the Council. The Council is looking at reassessing as to whether CDC is working in the most efficient way. CDC is still unsure of the true impact of Covid, for example the loss of income in car park revenue and it is still waiting to see whether this will recover after the end of the pandemic. CDC is currently assessing the likelihood of the formation of a Unitary Council. This is currently not at the forefront of matters though very likely to happen in the future.

Q. Cllr Harris asked if there are a number of properties left vacant on the high street, will this impact on the revenue CDC will receive in surplus business rates.

A. Cllr Wood, answered that this may have an impact, however, with the direction high street shops were taking, this was likely to happen anyway but the advent of Covid has accelerated this, and therefore this may have a more pronounced impact in terms of the valuation of properties. This in turn would affect business rates and is something that is likely to be seen over the coming months.

Q. What is the view of ensuring the retail units stay as retail rather than being converted into flats?

A. Much of this depends on what use the landlord of the units apply for. There would also have to be valid reasons to deny these applications.

Q. Is there any up-to-date data on Covid in Cherwell?

A. Cllr Wood suggested sending the data following the meeting. During the Christmas period, the cases in Cherwell rose significantly, specifically in Banbury as the second most populated settlement in Oxon. Cases have now dropped significantly, and this is thought due to be due to the lockdown. The impact of the vaccinations should start to show in the next two to three weeks. There is a time lag between upward infection and hospitalisation and hospitalisation and deaths. Deaths have started to slow in Oxon. There is though, a large number who are having to remain in hospital and while not fatally ill, significantly ill enough not to be discharged.

Parish Matters – to discuss where necessary

Village Groups:

a. Covid-19

Cllr McCullagh asked if it would be possible for children to use the play area. It was agreed to wait to hear the update from the Government before making a decision to open the play area. Signs will also need to be put up again, including one on the Parish Noticeboard,

b. Village Hall

The Village Hall is still closed, with the exception of the pre-school. The Village Hall Committee is meeting the week after the Government's update announcement to discuss the easing of the lockdown and the impact on the Hall.

c. Village Groups

Census. Articles have been placed in the Voice and Shellswell News that the Census is being carried out on Sunday, March 21st 2021 and more information is available online.

d. Village Green / The Wall

Cllr McCullagh and Cllr Maciejewski updated the quote for the Parking Bays along the Village Green, of £62,000 which is £13,000 less than the previous quote. This includes approximately £7,000 for rainwater soakaways. HS2 also has a grant called the HS2 Road Safety Fund, which is being rolled out to Council's and this is a project which could benefit. Cllr McCullagh has emailed Cllr Ian Corkin with regards to the Grant. The Parish Council agreed to apply to the HS2 Road Safety Grant for the lay-bys and if successful, then to apply to HS2 regular grant for the Wall project.

e. Butcher's Arms Car Park Development

CDC stated they were coming out to do a site visit to assess the situation. The Clerk has chased the outcome of the visit with no reply as yet but will continue to chase. The Chair and the clerk to draft another letter to attempt to try and clarify the situation from the Cherwell District Council Planning.

Ultra-Fast FTTP Development)

Cllr McCullagh has been chasing the progress of this with the BT engagement officers but currently struggling to get the finite information from Openreach. The delay is also due to Openreach not yet getting a final agreement from the Department of Culture Media and Sport. The Council is currently trying to establish as to whether the signatures need to be in by the end of March 2021 or if the whole situation has to be resolved by this date. The letters to the Parish have been prepared and are ready to be sent when this information has been received. Cllr Reader stated that the process of pledging was a straightforward. It was subsequently established that with the agreed overage with Openreach there would be no attempt to recover the cost of pledges that were not subsequently taken up. The Chair explained that the cost of a standard service might be up to £10/ month more, however this is caveated with the fact that individual households have differing broadband deals. If there is no further information by Friday 19th February 2021 then the amended letter would be sent out.

f. Succession Planning – It was resolved to approach members of the public to see if they would be interested in joining the Parish Council. The Chair reaffirmed it is important that any vacancy is advertised to the village as a whole.

g. Emergency Plan – The Chair suggested moving the item over to the next agenda.

99. Planning Applications/Decisions

- **21/00344/F, The Old Rectory, Rectory Lane, Fringford OX27 8DX. Pool house for use with an outdoor swimming pool** - Subject to consultation with neighbours, the Parish Council has no objection to the application.
- **21/00383/AGN, Land at Hall Farm Part of A4221, Bicester Road, Fringford. Erection of a building to provide dry shelter for animals and dry storage for animal feed** - Subject to consultation with neighbours, the Parish Council has no objection to the application.
- **21/00358/TPO, Laurels Farmhouse, The Green, Fringford, Bicester OX27 8DY, T1 (Yew) - reduce height of canopy, reduce branches overhanging all property boundaries, remove large deadwood, remove waste - subject to TPO 38/2017** - Subject to consultation with neighbours, the Parish Council has no objection to the application.

- **21/00085/F, The Malt House, Main Street, Fringford, Bicester. OX27 8EB, Single storey timber orangery** - Subject to consultation with neighbours, the Parish Council has no objection to the application.

100. Correspondence Received – to note Correspondence received not otherwise on the agenda

101. Items for information.

None

102. Agenda Items –

Emergency Planning

Other agenda items for the next meeting should be submitted as soon as possible.

103. Date of next meeting

15th March 2021.

104. The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Fringford Parish Council

Monthly Financial Report

Parish Council Meeting 15 February 2021

Payments processed since last meeting £690.00

18-Feb-21	R Damerell - Clerk Salary	400494	£360.00
18-Feb-21	Clr McCullagh - Flowers for retiring clerk	400495	£30.00
18-Feb-21	Tree Solutions - Village Hall Hedge Cutting Autumn 2019	400496	£300.00

Receipts processed since previous report £0.00

Bank Reconciliation

Statement dated 18 February 2021

Savings Account	£16,227.96
Current account	£26,155.01

Items not yet cleared:

Receipts None

Payments

Net Total £42,382.97