



Minutes of Kingsclere Parish Council Ordinary Meeting OM 02/21
Held at 7.30pm on Monday 22nd February 2021
Using Zoom Online Meeting Software

OM 02/21 – Present:

Cllrs: Adams; Bowes; Farey; Mussett; Peach R; Price; Sawyer F; Sawyer J.

BCllr Kinnear. CCllr Thacker. Clerk – Ackrill; Admin Assistant – Read. 8 members of the public.

02/21.1 – Apologies:

Cllr N. Peach. BCllr Rhatigan.

Resolved: Apologies accepted.

02/21.2 – Declarations of Interest:

None.

02/21.3 – Minutes:

3.1 Minutes of Ordinary Meeting 25th January 2021 were accepted and signed.

3.2 Minutes of General Purposes Meeting 8th February 2021 were accepted and signed.

02/21.4 – Matters Arising:

None.

02/21.5 – Chairman's Remarks:

- i) Thanks to all those who are continuing to work and help others during lockdown. Thanks to the volunteers who are helping at the vaccine centres, the volunteers in the village, the staff at Kingsclere Health Centre, our local shop keepers, tradesmen, and delivery drivers.
- ii) Thanks to William Huntingdon who has repaired the Gailey Mill footpath, reported to HCC last summer, and for litter picking on the A339 between Budgens garage and the roundabout. Help with litter picking from residents on Saturdays would be welcome.
- iii) On 4th February JS attended a Borough wide Cross Parish Meeting on climate change. BDBC is reportedly working on locations for electric vehicle charging points which KPC will now discuss at GP to consider what locations in the village would be suitable. Overton Climate Change project is very active, and details are on their website. Overton has achieved 'Plastic free Village' status.
- iv) BDBC is at risk of not meeting its 5-year housing supply. This is a cause for concern as if it is not met, this would have serious implications for the Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan.
- v) On 17th February JS attended the Kingsclere Community Association AGM on behalf of KPC.
- vi) There is lots of legal and costing work to be done before a proposal is brought to KPC to consider and before the toilets could be transferred to KPC management; this seems unlikely to be completed before the 1st April deadline. Cllr Mussett added that, it is his understanding, BDBC recognise it has not supplied a proper proposal for KPC to consider. £5000 is allocated in KPC's budget for running the toilets, which now appears to be insufficient. It is understood BDBC broadly agree with KPC's cost modelling. Until KPC receive a proposal from BDBC, no action on KPC's part can be taken.
- vii) Elections in the borough will be taking place on 6th May. The Returning Officers will be ensuring that voting is as safe as possible, and residents are being encouraged to apply for postal votes. Residents will receive information regarding elections at the beginning of March.
- viii) St Mary's Church wall, which was damaged before Christmas, is due to be repaired soon.
- ix) JS will revise the Project Plan and circulate a draft for Cllrs to update their areas of responsibility. This will aim to give some clarity on the ongoing projects as KPC enters the new financial year.

It was agreed to take item 7 next as members of the public wished to speak.

02/21.7 – 24 Swan Street:

Documents circulated prior to meeting. KPC received communication from BDBC outlining a proposal to seek planning permission to turn 24 Swan Street into residential properties. These properties would comprise one 5 bed property with one 3 bed and one 2 bed properties attached, with an additional two 1 bed flats and two 2 bed maisonettes being built on the site. KPC is not supportive of this proposal for numerous reasons.

KPC feel this proposal does not comply with the Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan (KNP):

Policy K1 – Non-allocated Residential Sites within the Settlement Policy Boundary. This policy states that new developments should "Have a scale and form which would be complementary to surrounding properties and would not result in significant loss of amenity to existing residents." The proposal to construct a new 2 story building at the back of 24 Swan Street will have a major visual impact on the surrounding area, as the building would overlook neighbouring properties and would also be visible from the other side of the stream on Foxs Lane.

Policy K2 – The Provision of Housing to Meet Local Needs. Kingsclere residents have repeatedly voiced their wishes to have smaller more affordable housing built in the village and it is the general feeling among residents and Councillors that Kingsclere does not need additional large luxury homes. The proposal for a 5 bed property and possibly two large 3 bed properties attached goes against what Kingsclere residents are asking for in the KNP.

Policy K17 – Heritage Assets. This policy states “Any designated historic heritage assets in the Parish and their settings, including listed buildings and scheduled monuments both within and outside the Conservation Area, will be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced for their historic significance and their importance to Kingsclere’s local distinctiveness, character and sense of place. New development proposals within the Conservation Area must have regard to the guidance in the Kingsclere Village Design Statement and have been designed to protect and, where possible, enhance features identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal... as making a positive contribution to the area’s character or appearance. This can be demonstrated in a Design and Access Statement, Heritage Statement or in a Visual Impact Statement...” KPC has not received any of these, however it was pointed out that this proposal is not a planning application, and that such statements would be expected at the point where a planning application is submitted, not before.

Regarding car parking, the proposal shows that two car parking spaces would be allocated as public spaces. KPC feel this is inadequate considering the usage the car park gets currently, without the additional vehicles new residential properties would bring. The centre of the village is a conservation area, meaning that adding additional parking is not easy. Parking availability in the centre of the village and along Swan Street is a major ongoing problem and the proposed removal of car parking spaces to provide for new residential properties is of concern. The issue of how the car parking arrangements would be enforced was also raised. It was noted that the planning permission for the former Catholic Church to be used by Kingsclere Performing Arts College (KPAC) Church was granted with the understanding that it would be able to use 11 parking spaces at 24 Swan Street. The traffic generated by both KPAC and JLD School of Dancing would have a major impact on traffic on Swan Street, should it be forced out of 24 Swan Street.

There are existing tenants in the building who have not been consulted on this proposal. KPC is concerned that, if the building is made into residential properties, this would put numerous local businesses under severe financial pressure and at risk of closure. KPC would ask BDBC to consider allowing these businesses the opportunity to buy the units in the building they lease, if ultimately BDBC decide to go ahead with selling 24 Swan Street.

JLD School of Dancing, a well-established Dance School, has been in full time occupation of 24 Swan Street for over 30 years. The proposal documents state that “The dance school have been in fulltime occupation over this period, but they would not be disadvantaged by the change of use as we understand permission has been gained for them to use alternative premises in the local vicinity.” This is not correct and is misleading. KPC believe this is referring to the Kingsclere Performing Arts College, which occupies the old Catholic Church across the Road, which is a separate business. This clearly shows that no attempt has been made on BDBC’s part to establish what the businesses in its premises do.

BDBC’s Local Code of Corporate Governance has seven core principles that BDBC should adhere to. KPC feel BDBC has not adhered to principle two “ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement”, considering tenants were not aware of this proposal until KPC informed them; or principle three “Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits” as this proposal is only based on the economic benefits and does not consider the social or environmental impacts.

Considering the content and the quality of the proposal and the fact it seems to argue against the benefit of developing the site, the seriousness of the proposal was called into question. However, some Cllrs raised the concern that it is possibly a serious outline proposal, even though it is not up to the standard KPC would expect from BDBC. The difference in standards applied to planning proposals on BDBC owned properties compared to recent proposals on private properties, all in the conservation area, was noted. The point that if BDBC were to sell 24 Swan Street with this planning consent in place, how much would BDBC be able to ensure that the new owners follow this proposal. The Chairman stated that if BDBC sold 24 Swan Street, then KPC would expect the funds gained from this to stay in Kingsclere and benefit the community. KPC would also expect proper public car parking arrangements to be made so that residents are not disadvantaged by the removal of these parking spaces.

An alternative solution proposed was for BDBC to complete basic repairs and maintenance on the building, install video conferencing equipment to make office spaces desirable to rent, and have staff on site. This would provide BDBC with income and ensure there are members of staff on site to maintain the building. *The Chairman invited members of the public to speak.*

Members of the public introduced themselves as Principal of JLD School of Dancing (JLD) and Co-owner of Kingsclere Performing Arts College (KPAC), and the other Co-owner of KPAC. They raised and reiterated many of the points already covered and expanded on some, as summarised. They stated the lack of communication from BDBC regarding this proposal is disappointing and has made them feel unheard and irrelevant in the way their situation has been worded in BDBC's proposal. JLD has a lease with BDBC for 24 Swan Street until 2024, and are intrigued to know what impact this proposal would have on their lease, and would also like to know BDBC's motivation for creating this proposal, and the financial situation regarding 24 Swan Street. JLD provides dance schooling for over 200 pupils, many of whom are from Kingsclere as well as other local areas such as Overton and Thatcham, and has been in business in Kingsclere for over 30 years. KPAC was started in 2017 and became partners with Newbury College in 2018 providing the extended diploma course for students aged 16 - 18 years. UCAS point equivalent examinations are also provided. As mentioned previously, the proposal documents state that "The dance school.... would not be disadvantaged by the change of use...". It was stressed that the old Catholic Church (25 Swan Street) was acquired for use as extra space. There is no parking available and both JLD and KPAC occupy both 24 Swan Street and 25 Swan Street full-time. There has never been a plan for JLD to move out of 24 Swan Street and to solely use 25 Swan Street as its base of operations, and 25 Swan Street is not big enough to facilitate either JLD or KPAC on this site alone. 25 Swan Street would not have been acquired without 24 Swan Street also being available for use. Representatives from BDBC would be welcome to visit both sites when restrictions allow, to gain a better understanding of the impact this proposal, and any similar proposals, would have. It was noted that community classes were also offered at 25 Swan Street, prior to Covid-19. A residential property has been built at the back of 25 Swan Street, belonging to one of the Co-owners of KPAC. It was stressed this is not the action of someone who is planning on moving their business outside of Kingsclere. If JLD and KPAC were forced out of 24 Swan Street, there are no other locations in the village that would be able to accommodate these businesses. There may be suitable spaces in Newbury and Basingstoke, however these areas are already serviced by numerous dance schools and performing arts colleges. The likely result of JLD and KPAC being forced out of 24 Swan Street is both businesses closing, as it would not be possible to run either business from 25 Swan Street alone.

It was noted that BDBC has a published Arts and Culture Strategy which it should be adhering to. This proposal could be considered hypocritical of this, in the sense that it would most likely be forcing well established dance and performing arts businesses to close. Kingsclere is in the bottom 5% of indices of deprivation for services in the country, according to BDBC's website. Adding more residential houses in the centre of the village would be counterproductive to increasing improving this.

Another resident introduced themselves and their husband as owners of Eira's Equestrian Extras and Baughurst Blades, respectively. They reported that they had been unofficially informed of this proposal before Christmas from a BDBC officer when they had enquired about the possibility of renting more units at 24 Swan Street. Their request to rent more units was turned down reportedly because 24 Swan Street is a listed building. They have been in business in the village for approximately two years and have a 3 year lease at 24 Swan Street. They reported that they do not live in the village, however 24 Swan Street is the only local space available that is suitable and affordable for their businesses and if forced out, would cause both businesses to close.

It was noted by all tenants that it would have been beneficial to have had the opportunity to work out a way to purchase 24 Swan Street, or units within it, would be an option for their businesses. However, there is insufficient time at this point, with this proposal, for tenants to make plans for this.

BCllr Kinnear assured all in attendance that all the concerns raised will be relayed to BCllr Rhatigan and relevant officers at BDBC. JS to reply to BDBC on behalf of KPC, considering all that has been said.

Action: JS

02/21.6 – Lengthsman Scheme:

It was agreed to join the Lengthsman Scheme for another 12 months.

Resolved: KPC to join Lengthsman Scheme for another 12 months.

02/21.8 – Annual Parish Meeting:

As it stands currently, the legislation that permitted council meetings via online meeting software expires on 7th May, unless the government vote to extend the expiration deadline. KPC has been advised that the Annual Parish Meeting can be held remotely provided it is before 7th May. The Clerk has contacted NALC to enquire if it is a legal requirement for this meeting to be held. If KPC is required to have this meeting the format would need to be decided and agreed. Clerk to continue investigating. Referred to GP for discussion.

Action: Clerk. Mar GP.

02/21.9 – County Councillor:

On 25th February HCC will set its budget and precept. HCC's precept is expected to increase by 4.99%. This does not require a referendum as 3% of the increase is for Adult Social Care which has been endorsed by Central Government and the remaining 1.99% is below the 2% threshold for requiring a referendum.

Regarding the A339 Survey the evidence base is in progress. This was delayed by an unforeseen issue with access to ONS data. HCC has indicated that it will have a project update at the end of this month; at which time Cllr Thacker will have an idea of planned timescales.

Cllr Thacker has received a response to the question on the progress of identifying a new site in north west Hampshire for Household Waste and Recycling. The executive member confirmed that the investigation into the feasibility of the potential HWRC site near Kingsclere is progressing, and he hopes to have a recommendation soon. Funding of Hampshire resident access to West Berkshire's Newtown Road Recycling Centre was a 12 month arrangement that currently runs until the end of July 2021. There is no HCC decision yet on provision after that.

Cllr Thacker will provide some information and guidance on elections. Central Government is not encouraging door to door leafletting. The date of the election is set in primary legislation and will remain on 6th May. Post and proxy voting is being supported and encouraged, with the rules for proxy voting being changed so that individuals affected by Covid-19 in the days before the election can still vote. Secondary legislation has been made, coming into force on 10th March, so that the number of signatures required to nominate candidates is reduced to two. The minister for the cabinet office and schools are discouraging borough councils using schools as polling stations.

A Cllr enquired about the recent HCC works on the Love Lane footpath, and if there were plans for workers to return. The work on the footpath so far has been good and is a welcome improvement however it is felt that it is incomplete. The work to recover the width of the path is helpful, however there has been no preventative measures installed to ensure the banks don't collapse onto the path again and block the drains. It was also noted that the re-tarmacked section by The Lines does not extend the whole length of the path, and that the entire path needs resurfacing works. Cllr Thacker is happy to investigate this, CM to send email to start this process.

Action: CM.

02/21.10 – Borough Councillor:

CK will meet with KR on 23rd Feb regarding 24 Swan Street and the concerns that were raised earlier in the meeting. CK will look into the issue regarding the hedge at Yew Close. BDBC is aware that there is an increase in fly tipping, especially of green waste, and is making efforts to combat this.

Hampshire Fire Station vaccination centre in Basingstoke went live on 1st February, run by the local NHS. BDBC helped with the setting up of the centre.

All food stores, from supermarkets to small convenience stores have been contacted, and most visited, by BDBC's environmental health and licensing teams to ensure they are COVID-safe for shoppers.

The Mayor of Basingstoke and Deane Cllr Diane Taylor and Leader Cllr Ken Rhatigan have led tributes on behalf of the borough to Captain Sir Tom Moore, following the announcement of his death on 2nd February.

The planning duty service is offering telephone appointments to customers three days a week, a change to the current system. Residents can book a slot to speak to BDBC's planning team.

Work is under way to update the council's Community, Leisure and Recreation Needs Assessment. The assessment will form a framework for establishing the borough's future approach to open space, sport and recreation and will also consider how well community buildings are serving community needs. The survey is open until 7th March and can be found on BDBC's website.

Elections will take place on 6th May and will be run in accordance with the electoral commission's guidance. Residents are being encouraged to vote by post or proxy.

At present there are no plans to temporarily reduce the frequency of waste collections or suspend collections of green waste, however this is not ruled out as an option if required. Residents are asked to help keep crews and themselves safe by wiping down bin handles when putting out and bringing in their bins.

The government has changed the law to ensure bailiffs do not enforce evictions until the end of March. The only exceptions to this are where there are cases of anti-social behaviour, illegal occupation, death of a tenant where the property is unoccupied, fraud, perpetrators of domestic abuse in social housing and extreme rent arrears equivalent to six months' rent.

Residents, businesses, organisations, and visitors are encouraged to share their views of the town centre, their shopping habits and what they would like to see to improve the area in future years by taking part in an online survey which is open until 19th March.

BDBC's £495,000 improvement scheme at War Memorial Park is underway. The works are funded from its capital budget and includes a £45,000 grant from British Cycling towards the pump track.

Basingstoke and Deane residents can sign up to the green energy scheme Solar Together Hampshire before 23rd March.

BDBC has joined forces with Sustainable Overton community climate change group to help other parts of the borough take local climate action, including setting up their own renewable energy projects.

BDBC has administered over £60 million of support through grants and business rates relief since March 2020. The funding made available by the government for two schemes has now been fully allocated, so BDBC will be closing the Local Restrictions Support Grant Fund (for open and closed businesses) covering the period between 2nd and 25th December 2020. In addition, due to the amount of funding BDBC has allocated to applicants through the Additional Restrictions Grant scheme, from Monday 15 February any new applications will not be backdated to receive the funding from before this date. Businesses that may be entitled to this funding are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. BDBC is continuing to monitor its business grant schemes alongside the latest government guidance.

A new Love Basingstoke website showcasing the best of Basingstoke and Deane and providing information for residents, visitors and businesses has been launched.

HCC's connect4communities is available to provide a range of support to those in need including food and fuel vouchers, community pantries, grants, slow cookers and holiday activities and meals. To access help, families or individuals should be referred by a community or charitable organisation.

BDBC has been working closely with local artists and organisations on Art in Unusual Times – a virtual programme featuring arts and crafts, dance, theatre, performances, and public art during lockdown. Residents can sign up for free online exercise classes from Basingstoke and Deane Community Leisure Trust to support their physical and mental wellbeing during the current lockdown.

The government has extended its advice for new and existing people classed as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable to shield until 31 March 2021. BDBC has been working with HCC who will be contacting the new people on the list in the borough. Residents advised to shield will be encouraged to register for priority supermarket slots and we will be continuing to promote the support available through the Hampshire Coronavirus Support and Helpline.

Residents will receive a census pack and instructions through the post in early March to take part in the Census 2021 on 21st March. The census, which is run by the Office for National Statistics, is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives us the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. The survey provides information to all kinds of organisations, from councils and charities to healthcare providers, to help them deliver the services we all need, such as transport, education, and healthcare.

The Mayor of Basingstoke and Deane would like to hear from couples across the borough celebrating their golden and diamond wedding anniversaries.

The Prime Minister announced the government's roadmap out of lockdown for England. The plan will be implemented in four steps, with a minimum of five weeks between each step: four weeks for the scientific data to reflect the changes in restrictions and to be analysed; followed by one week's advance notice of the restrictions that will be eased.

The national lockdown guidance on what you can and cannot do has been updated to include the changes ahead from Monday 8 March. Until that point England is still in a national lockdown so people must stay at home, leaving only where permitted by law, and follow the rules.

Following government approval, a six-week testing scheme aimed at those without symptoms of coronavirus who are regularly leaving home to go to work, and who are not covered by an existing workplace testing scheme, will roll out over the next few days. A total of 11 appointment-only community testing sites will become operational this week. The confirmed location for the borough is at the former South Ham Library

02/21.11 – Planning Applications:

11.1. 21/00197/FUL – Land North of Little Knowl Hill and A339 Junction:

KPC previously discussed this planning application at Feb GP (Minutes ref: 02/21.18.7). KR and CK wished to hear what KPC's thoughts were on this application. Both KR and CK consider this application would be overdevelopment of the site. This application is located outside the settlement boundary. It was noted that there is a second planning application submitted by the owner for the same site and neither application refers to the other. Concerns were raised of possible ribbon development along Little Knowl Hill. It was agreed to oppose this application on the same grounds as the previous application for this site.

11.2. 21/00265/HSE – 105 Longcroft Road: No objections.

11.3. 21/00232/FUL – Field Barn Farm, Winchester Road:

This is an application for a temporary mobile home, which was granted a temporary planning application in 2020, now seeking permanent planning permission. In 2020 KPC did not object to the temporary planning application however the Local Planning Authority did. Concerns were raised over the possibility that this could cause possible backdoor development in the future. It was agreed not to object to this application subject to the mobile home being used by agricultural workers only.

11.4. 21/00486/TWRN – 1 Strokings Road: This application is not available for KPC comment and is only available for comment by BCILr ward members.

02/21.12 – Clerk's Report:

None.

02/21.13 – Approval of Income and Expenditure:

The accounts for 18th February 2021 were agreed and signed off.

02/21.14 – Date of next meeting:

Monday 29th March 2021 7:30pm using Zoom Online Meeting Software unless Government restrictions in place for Covid-19 are lifted, in which case normal meeting procedures will resume in the Village Club.

Meeting closed 21:32

Signed:.....Chairman

Date:.....

Signed:.....Clerk

Date:.....

Distribution: Cllrs: S Adams; I Bowes; M Farey; C Mussett; N Peach; R Peach; A Price; F Sawyer and J Sawyer.
Noticeboard; Website: www.kingsclere-pc.org.uk.