

**Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee
held at 14:00 on Tuesday 12th April 2022 at 36 Salisbury Crescent, Oxford**

- 1. Present:** Shamus Donald (SD, Chair), Cllr Laurence Fouweather [LF], Sir David Madden [DM], David Nimmo Smith [DNS], Christopher Pownall [CP], Henk van Es [HvE], Bob Colenutt [BC]

Apologies: Deborah Bryceson [DB], Natasha Robinson [NR], Geoffrey Randall [GR], Cllrs Katherine Miles, Andrew Gant, Tom Landell Mills and John Howson

The meeting opened at 14:00: SD welcomed everyone and was pleased to be able to meet in person again. HvE was thanked for making available his home for the meeting.

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest:

The potential applicability of “Purdah” to the meeting was discussed, in view of the upcoming local elections. Cllr Fouweather explained that he had sought advice from officials and was attending in accordance with that advice. It was agreed that he should attend until the discussion of CIL applications and political neutrality.

HvE reminded the meeting that he is the father of Bart van Es, a local resident who is a Labour Party candidate for the Cutteslowe & Sunnymead ward and who has also submitted two CIL applications. It was agreed that it would be inappropriate to ask HvE to leave the meeting (it taking place in his living room) but that he would not participate in the discussion on CIL 2022 or on political neutrality.

- 3. Minutes of the previous steering group held February 08th were reviewed and no amendments were made.**

Update on Action Log: deferred to next meeting

4. Personnel issues

SD announced that he would stand down as Chairman at the AGM in November. DNS has agreed to stand for election to replace SD.

SD said that DB wished to step down as Chair of the Transport WG, and therefore a vacancy will exist for this role. DB would stay on the SC. It was agreed that SD would approach Neil MacLennan, Brenda Boardman and Juliet Field about joining the SC.

5. Communication

NR’s paper on updating the website was noted. All agreed to consider and collate material for the website.

SD agreed to prepare a newsletter. It was agreed that SD / NR should speak to Sam re refreshing the NF’s Twitter feed and consider making use of Facebook.

6. Alexandra Park

HvE reported that there has been a Council visit and the police have been engaged to review security and anti-social behaviour concerns, in order to manage local community concerns. A local resident has agreed to join the Working Group. Work has re-started.

7. Diamond Place

BC reported that a public meeting was held on 22 March when the community was updated on Diamond Place. A series of meetings have now been set up with the stakeholders. However the independent facilitator remained to be appointed.

BC noted that the leases of the GP practices from St John's College expire in 2027. There has not been any sight yet of the Carter Jonas report.

A meeting has been arranged on 28 April with Summer Fields school.

BC agreed to provide notes of the DP meetings for the newsletter.

8. Planning

BC reported that submissions had been made by the PWG to Cherwell DC on the proposals for c.1800 new homes on land between Kidlington and north Oxford (PRs 6a, 6b and 7).

SD reported that Oxford CC has agreed to recognise the Forum as a statutory consultee for the purpose of planning applications in our area. A meeting is to be scheduled by BC with the Council officers to discuss the practicalities and seek wider engagement, particularly in pre-application discussions.

9. Transport

SD noted that comments prepared by the TWG had been submitted to Oxford County Council's consultation on transportation.

There was some discussion on the Woodstock Road Corridor. LF commented that it may be delayed due to re-allocation of funding.

10. Finance

HvE reported that there is £1722 in the bank account. We have received a generous donation of £100 from Mrs J.King. Card readers have been purchased. It was agreed that the newsletter would appeal for funds from the community.

11. Other topics

HvE reported on the ONPA meeting. Reference was made to the notes he had previously circulated.

LF advised that the Co-op supermarket on Banbury Road will close in the Autumn. It was noted that Lloyds Bank, the Greengrocer and Unique Creations had all closed or were due to close. Increasing rents appear to be a common factor. It was agreed to keep the state of the retail and commercial market under review as significant re-development is expected in the coming years, including of Suffolk and Prama Houses

LF left the meeting at 3.20pm.

12. Political neutrality

There was a general discussion of matters recently raised with the SC, in particular concerning the intersection between the work of the Forum and political activities of persons seeking election or re-election in the upcoming local elections. It was recognised that it is essential that the Forum remain and be seen to remain neutral in all party-political matters. It was agreed that the Forum could not and would not seek to maintain any sort of 'review' process relating to the electoral communications of local candidates.

13. CIL 2021:

It was agreed to take CIL 2021 off the agenda. Alexandra Park expenditure to be dealt with under the APWG report.

14. CIL 2022:

There was discussion of the status of current applications, particularly those where no decision has yet been made. DNS and CP reported on their site visit to Sunnymead Park and subsequent correspondence with the Friends of Sunnymead Park.

There was a discussion as to the level of scrutiny appropriate to applications. DM commented that it was important to understand get the balance right between our role and that of Council officials in making appropriate checks. CP commented that as volunteers we were not indemnified by the Council / insurance and SC members may wish to consider that when giving advice to applicants on their projects.

It was agreed that a healthy level of scrutiny was appropriate, but regard should be had to the relative knowledge and expertise of the particular applicants, and any advice offered by SC members framed as being suggestions rather than as conditions to an approval. The following decisions were made:

Park Benches/Picnic table: It was agreed that on balance the application as made should be supported. Comments via email from NR and DB were considered. Friends to be encouraged to consider potential for wider improvement schemes for subsequent years and any potential for re-use of old benches/materials.

Football Goals: Concern was expressed as to the need, given other football facilities nearby, and the impact upon the park of the goals, i.e. it becoming a *de facto* football pitch without evidence of wider community support. Application was declined for this year's funding round.

Hard court lighting: It was agreed that further evidence of community support was required, in particular the views of the Friends of Sunnymead Park and the Cutteslowe Community Centre, who it is understood pay the electricity bill. SD to write to applicant, Bart Van Es. CP / DNS to prepare a draft letter.

Cutteslowe Community Centre kitchen: Approved as per paper circulated by GR / NR

Cutteslowe School Playground: Approved as per paper circulated by DB / BC.

Date of next meeting:

10th May @ 2pm

AGM: Thursday 10th November at 7:30pm at Cherwell School

The meeting ended at 16.05.

Signed: _____ [Shamus Donald, Chair]

Date: _____