

## Minutes of the Fyfield and Tubney Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 11<sup>h</sup> March 2020.

### 1. Present:

Mr Julian Mellor – Chair.  
Mrs Penny Budgen  
Mr Jonathan Greaves.  
Mr Alan Woodward.  
Dr Stephen Fraser – Clerk

Twelve members of the general public.

### 2. Apologies.

Apologies had been received from Mrs Jean Burley, Mr John Watts, Mr Jerry Avery – Vale of White Horse DC and Mrs Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor -Oxfordshire County Council.

### 3. Minutes of the last meeting.

These were signed as a true record by the chair.

### 4. Matters arising.

Mr Woodward reported that according to OCC the drain outside Tubney Church did not reach the standard required for remedial action and had closed his report. He had taken photographs of the recent flooding and would reopen the report.

#### **In the absence of Mrs Fitzgerald-O'Connor, there was no report on the potential speed control measures possible for Abingdon Road, Tubney.**

The council noted that following their and residents objections, the Tubney Quarry site had been designated as not suitable for inclusion in the OCC Waste and Minerals Plan.

Mr Avery reported by email that the Vale was still waiting for Lioncourt to submit amended plans / information. Stuart Walker (Major Applications Team Leader – VofWH DC) is due to meet the Lioncourt representatives on 27<sup>th</sup> March to discuss matters and to agree the timetable for receiving amendments which will then go out to public consultation. It was anticipated that the consultation will take place after Easter.

There was concern that the delay was because the traffic survey had yet to be completed. It was feared that the coronavirus had had a substantial effect on traffic and that a survey during this time would be misleading at best. **Mr Mellor to contact Stuart Walker to ascertain the timetable for the survey and communicate our fears that it could be compromised by the virus outbreak.**

### 5. A420 Road Issues.

Mr Mellor summarised the recent meeting with David Johnston MP, which was attended by representatives of 12 parishes along the A420. The meeting had been constructive and there was general agreement that the road should revert to a 'Local Road' with through traffic being discouraged. A copy of the meeting notes is appended to these minutes.

In the absence of Mrs Fitzgerald-O'Connor, there was no report on the OCC attitude to traffic light controlled crossings but it was believed that OCC were resistant to the installation of traffic lights. It was noted that a precedent had been set with the proposed lights at Great Coxwell. Mr Baker warned that traffic lights would also need to have street lighting installed which would imply an urbanisation of the village.

Mrs Budgen reported on her recent meetings with Sean Rooney from OCC. He had committed to the installation of a central refuge on the A420 at the south end of the westward bus lay-by. In addition OCC would seek permissive use of the concrete track linking with the Old Oxford Road from Kingston together with constructing shallow steps from the track to the bus stop. The two current crossing places nearer Kingston would be closed. OCC hoped that the council would encourage people to accept the changed access. The refuge would be unlit as there was no immediate access to power. Such a simple refuge was better than nothing but still could not be regarded as safe without some means of stopping traffic.

The refuge would be built in this calendar year but next financial year.

Mr Cobb expressed concern that the access across the A420 at the Abingdon Road, Tubney bus stop remained open. Whilst the route through the underpass was the safe way to reach Fyfield from this stop, flooding frequently made this impassable. The drain at the underpass linked into Piling Brook which, when in flood, lead to the flooding. **The Clerk to contact the Environment Agency to see if remedial work could be done to avoid flooding.**

During the meeting with David Johnston, Yvonne Constance had requested that councils support her initiative on the A420 as part of the consultation on LPT5. However, the OCC website was unclear as to what was wanted and how this should be submitted. **The Clerk to seek clarification from Mrs Fitzgerald-O'Connor who, from the web, appeared to be the contact.** A copy of Mrs Constance's briefing note is appended to these minutes. One addition would be the need to install traffic lights at each bus crossing.

## **6. 'Rat Running' and Speed Control in Netherton Lane.**

Mr Greaves reported that the Netherton residents had started to add stones to the grass verges in an attempt to prevent vehicles breaking them down, especially when trying to force a passage past the school bus. To date this appeared to be successful and they would continue along the lane.

It was suggested that verge side white lines might help.

The Clerk reported that an official speed watch would be relatively expensive and also had many operational constraints which would make it difficult to implement.

## **7. Oxford – Cambridge Expressway.**

The news today reported that the government had paused the Expressway with a view to evaluating road access within the Oxford – Cambridge arc.

## **8. St. John's Close – Burglaries and Drugs.**

Unfortunately Mr Francis, who had requested this item, was not present. Mrs Budgen reported that there had been some burglaries in the close with access from the field at the west end of the old main road. In addition it appeared that there was some drug dealing taking place from cars parked at the far end of the road.

It was suggested that if the road was gated, only Ben Lay needed access beyond and that this would be an effective way of closing the current paths to the west of the bus stop. **Mrs Budgen to see if this could be the means of blocking those paths when the refuge was constructed.**

## **9. Planning.**

An update to:

- P19/V2873/FUL Old Farmhouse, Fyfield

had been received but this was 'for information only' and did not require circulation.

The council had been asked to comment on the ‘Draft Proposal of Community Involvement’ in the planning process. It was pointed out that the document was a list of what they should do but did not indicate how planning comments could lead to a change in the actual plans. This was an obviously apparent from the submissions of the council and FLAG to the recent planning inspection of the Vale LPP2, where submissions quoted planning policy in great depth but were then ignored. Mr Baker and Mr Bradley would draft a response to the request for comment.

## **10. A420 Underpass Track**

The Clerk reported that his submission work for this to be adopted as a bridleway was ongoing.

## **11. Finance.**

The Clerk reported the current financial position as follows:

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| • Balance brought forward.                            | £924.21 |
| • Russ Gooding – Bracing and Trimming the Cherry Tree | £345.00 |
| • Balance carried forward.                            | £579.21 |

Invitations of membership had been received from Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OVCA), Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (OALC) and Community First Oxfordshire. After some discussion it was felt that there was little to be gained from membership and the invitations were declined.

A request for grant support had also been received from Home Start Southern Oxfordshire. It was felt that a grant was not appropriate at this time.

## **12. Virtual Village Noticeboard**

Mrs Budgen drew attention to a virtual noticeboard hosted on the web by Bubbenhall village. She felt that this might be another way of publicising the existence of the parish council. The clerk felt that this duplicated functionality available elsewhere and after discussion, it was decided not to pursue the matter.

## **13. Village Spring Clean**

It was noted that to organise an official event using equipment from Biffa would involve considerable organisation. It was decided that since people were in the habit of picking up pieces of rubbish when spotted and that Biffa would promptly deal with fly tipping, there was no need to arrange a formal event.

## **14. AOB.**

The Clerk indicated that the Fyfield notice board was in his garage under repair. Mr Woodward offered to do the same with the Tubney board.

There being no further business, the chairman closed the meeting at 9:08pm.

Next Meeting Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020, being the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

## Meeting with David Johnston MP 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Julian Mellor gave a brief resume of discussions to date.

He summarised the major issues with the A420 as follows:

- Unsafe conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, bus users and drivers.
- Excessive volumes of traffic on a road that was at or above capacity.
- Excessive speed in some locations and dangerous activity in others caused by frustration.
- Excessive road noise affecting adjacent properties.

Previous discussions with Ed Vaizey had resulted in most parishes along the A420 drawing up the above list of issues.

David Johnston stated that he had received no handover papers from Ed Vaizey but was familiar with the issues for the road.

Yvonne Constance stated that she had produced a Briefing Paper for submission to OCC as part of the LPT5 consultation. She asked that this be circulated to the parishes and requested their support on the proposals detailed therein.

During general discussion, it was noted that the Police needed to reconsider diversion routes following accidents/road closures. These frequently resulted in HGVs being put onto inadequate roads through the Vale villages.

It was agreed that the A420 was a 'Local Road' and action should be taken to reduce or eliminate through traffic.

It was obvious to the meeting that there was an issue with funding for any safety improvements which OCC and central government needed to address,

The following actions were taken:

1. David Johnston would table an Adjournment Debate which would enable him to speak on the issues of the A420 and require a minister to respond. He was asked to inform the group of the date/time of such a debate.
2. Stephen Fraser to circulate Yvonne Constance's Briefing Note to parishes asking for their support and comments.
3. David Johnston to include the A420 in his regular submission to the Oxford Mail/Times.
4. Parishes to respond to OCC LPT5 consultation emphasising need to improve safety for all users.
5. David Johnston to speak to Anthony Barber, Police and Crime Commissioner, emphasising the need to reconsider diversion routes following accidents.

Stephen Fraser  
Clerk, Fyfield and Tubney PC

**NOTES on A420 for Oxfordshire County Council's LTP5****MARCH 2019****A420 requires the same attention and funding as A40**

It carries more traffic than A40, has more accidents but still serves as a local road, which requires protection (preservation?) against HGVs and commercial traffic, esp. through- traffic using A420 as a strategic route

A420 was confirmed a MAJOR LOCAL ROAD in 1990s (and funding to dual the road was withdrawn). It has now become a major commercial corridor functioning as a strategic route between Swindon and Oxford with 'just in time' deliveries for BMW and Honda motor works, and servicing Symmetry Park, the new 1million sq.ft distribution centre permitted by SBC on A420 near Swindon Police Station. In addition through- traffic from M4 short cuts to A34 and M40 (going north, or east on A43) which overwhelms its local function.

A420 was not built to carry this heavy traffic, nor this volume of traffic.

As a local road :

- \* it cuts through the centre of villages like Tubney and Fyfield, where residents are now unable to cross the road during peak periods and long hours everyday
- \* it carries an important bus route (Stagecoach S6) with stops at every village junction to pick-up and set down passengers, holding up through -traffic and leaving passengers stranded with no safe crossing, as at Littleworth, Little Coxwell, Longcot (King's Lane junction)Tubney, Fyfield and other bus stops;
- \* constant fast heavy traffic prevents safe crossing for pedestrians incl. school children, up and down the A420 : residents in Fyfield, Tubney, Littleworth and elsewhere are known to catch the bus to nearest pedestrian island at Buckland to cross and catch the next bus back to their destination. No residents should have to live this way!

**Proposals for A420 in LTP5 (and more urgently if funds are available)**

A420 must cease to operate as a strategic route.

1. A420 must be re-established as a local (trunk) road restricting through traffic, esp. HGVs to M4 (Jctn 13) and A34
2. Residents must be able to use this road as a local road :we cannot accept it be included in the EEH arc (the OX/Cam corridor) as a strategic road. Its prime purpose is to serve as a LOCAL ROAD. There is no other!
3. A420 (re-established as a local road) must support development of a

frequent efficient BUS SERVICE to carry residents from 13,000 plus new homes approved between Swindon (8,000 on the eastern apron) and Vale of White Horse (4-5,000 at Shrivenham/ Faringdon/ Kingston Bagpuize / Cumnor).

3. BUS STOPS : Proper safe provision at bus stops is an urgent need. Too many stops are single posts in the verge with no safe standing back from the traffic. The Longcot stop is unsafe and unusable.

4. BUS TRAVEL : To encourage/assist bus travel, A420 should provide a number of small P&Rs connected to the bus service. P&Rs at Watchfield; at Faringdon?; at Buckland? at Kingston Bagpuize? would encourage village residents to connect with the bus service to Oxford/Swindon. These would deliver proper connectivity with the bus and make a more effective contribution to traffic congestion than one large P&R at Cumnor at the far end of a congested drive along A420.

5. BUS PRIORITY : Policy should require that buses have priority at all pinch points on A420. A rapid bus lane would be justified on A420 as on A40.

6. PEDESTRIAN ISLANDS/CROSSINGS : To serve properly as a local road, funding must be found urgently to provide pedestrian islands or traffic light crossings at Longcot; at Little Coxwell; at Littleworth; at Fyfield and at Tubney . Traffic light crossings would slow traffic and break it up - an advantage for local users - but may not be advisable : pedestrian islands must then be a priority and as soon as possible. Residents are demanding to use this road as a local road.

7. DIVERSIONS : when accidents or major flooding occur and A420 has to be closed (more frequent now) traffic is diverted through small villages adjacent to the A420. These villages can no longer cope with the HGVs, which are too long and too large to get round corners, and even to pass each other on the narrow roads (e.g. B4508).

OCC must establish new protocols with SBC and TVP and Wilts Police to divert NB traffic off A420 in SWINDON (at White Hart roundabout?) and SB traffic onto A417, and not through the villages of Watchfield, Longcot, Fernham, or Great Coxwell or the villages west of A420. In 2008 when the protocol was last set, A420 was not the commercial corridor it is now.

Cllr Yvonne Constance (Shrivenham; Cabinet Member for Transport)

Cllr.Judith Heathcoat (Faringdon ; Deputy Leader to the Council)

Cllr.Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor (Kingston Bagpuize/Longworth)