
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning, Environment and Highways Committee
held on 6th September 2021 in Charvil Village Hall**

Present Mike Heath, Pat Sutcliffe, and Jim Gillett

Apologies

Absent Narinder Ryatt and Claire Andersen

21/193 **OPEN FORUM** - There were no residents present.

21/194 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE CLERK** -There were no interests declared

21/195 **The Minutes of the Meeting on 5th July 2021** were approved, as were the Planning parts of the **Finance and Planning Minutes** from 9th August 2021

21/196 **Highways**

The clerk apologised for the lack of speed data as the batteries in the machine were flat and would report later. *Clerk's Note: the data from Park Lane was shared, showing that 85% of drivers are under the speed limit, but a few drive up to 50 mph, at all times of the day and night.*

The Speedwatch programme was discussed – there is a new contact at Thames Valley Police, and it was suggested that Council contact the Village Society and put something on Friends of Charvil, to try to get more volunteers.

The Local Cycling and Walking infrastructure Plan responses were discussed, and the Clerk was asked to respond as follows:

Question Number 1

“Do the network plans include cycling and walking routes you would expect to see?”

We would have expected to see more cycling routes in the north of the Borough and more public rights of way that allow people to be away from the main roads in the north.

Question 2

“Where do you feel an important connection route is missing and why?”

There is a strong demand for an off-road cycle/walking route to Twyford Station from Charvil. There is probably space next to the railway line for such a path. This would reduce the number of car journeys to the station, and relieve parking pressure there. There is also a demand for a cycle/pedestrian path next to the railway line from Twyford Station to Henley, via the Piggott School. This would allow for a safe cycle route to the Piggott School, and a safe cycle route to Henley, where many local residents work or go for leisure.

The proposed greenway along the Loddon needs to do as it says on the tin – go along the Loddon – the crossing of the Old Bath Road looks hazardous, and having it go along the A4 and up the A321 to Wargrave smacks of serious lack of ambition.

Question 3

“Routes have been classified as primary, secondary or tertiary based on their respective hierarchy within an overall active travel network for the Borough. Do you agree or disagree with the classification of any route shown? If so, why?”

We do disagree with the rather random classification of Cycle Route 4. This is a national cycle route, and the stretch through Sonning, Charvil and Wargrave also serves as a Safe Route to School, and yet it seems to fall into all three categories on various places along this stretch. Surely it should be a Primary route all the way along, and as such, maintained to a high standard, and plans put in place to segregate it from the main road?

Other general comments would be that we are not convinced that the suggestions as laid out will improve active travel in Charvil unless safer routes are developed for links to Woodley, Sonning, Wargrave and Twyford – there is possibly a tendency not to appreciate how nervous many occasional cyclists are, so suggesting routes like Waingels Road are a plausible cycle route to Woodley, or that cycle route 4 where it runs along the A4 is seen as viable for many are plain unrealistic.

Equally, many people regard the existing pavement network as too narrow (between Charvil and Twyford on the Old Bath Road for example) or see shared use paths as dangerous.

The Committee then discussed the Survey on local bus routes, and the clerk was asked to complete this in line with the discussion. The main thrust of the answers were that the bus service needed to be more frequent, cheaper, run in the evenings and weekends, and for information on the services to be more accessible.

21/197

Environment

To hear an update on the Community Orchard project and any feedback from the Village Party

The clerk has at least six non-councillors to sponsor the first batch of trees. There were some offers of support received at the fete, and several people have offered to help with the planting and the looking after of the trees as they grow. It was agreed to take a recommendation to the Full Council meeting to order the first six trees.

To hear an update on the Platinum Tree Project

There were various ideas as to where to plant trees – one idea was at St Patrick’s Recreation Ground, to replace the fallen trees on Charvil House Road and to add an extra one near the Village Hall. It was decided that it was not a good idea to plant trees to the south of the football pitches, near the stream as they would interfere with the pitches as they grow. The clerk was to meet with Cllr. Heath to look at suitable locations at St Patrick’s and the Committee agreed to recommend applying for trees from the Wildlife Trust to Full Council.

To hear any response from the Local Police on issues that were brought up over the Summer

There have been reports of anti-social motorbike noise late at night. The PCSOs have been around the area around 8pm-9pm but have seen nothing, although it is possible the problem is later in the evening. There were reports of speeding drivers in The Hawthorns – the police could find no evidence of this when attending the area. The police intend to run some speeding enforcement sessions on the Old Bath Road during the autumn. The police are attending Anti-social behaviour hotspots at St Patrick’s Recreation Ground, East Park Farm, and the area near the kebab van.

How to log evidence about alcohol related anti-social behaviour from garage sales

It was suggested that residents look out for increased alcohol related litter in the area, and to ask Charvil Matters and the Village Warden to see if there is an increase of alcohol related litter during their litter picks.

21/198 Planning

a) The following Applications were discussed (257)

212128 Application for the proposed conversion of existing dwelling to 4no. self-contained flats, associated parking, and amenity space, plus changes to fenestration. (Retrospective) at 36 Park View Drive South – no Parish Council comment

212720 Outline application (all matters reserved except access to the site) for the development of up to 200 dwellings and associated infrastructure, open space, biodiversity enhancements, landscaping, and green infrastructure, following demolition of existing agricultural buildings at Bridge Farm, Twyford (Means of access into the site from New Bath Road to be considered.) – The Clerk was asked to comment as follows:

Charvil Parish Council has several concerns about this application.

1. *Under the current land allocation, this site is outside of the development area for Twyford. While we acknowledge that this site was included in the first draft of the Local Plan update, it is only when this has been adopted that the area changes to being within the development area. To allow this development at this stage would set a dangerous precedent for all other sites included in the first draft and would not allow for the holistic approach that the Local Plan is designed to bring, including infrastructure considerations – clearly of major concern to many residents in both Charvil and Twyford. It would also challenge the legitimacy of the process, with no option for the independent inspector to have the final say.*

2. *Charvil is a low-lying parish, with large areas flooding on increasingly frequent occasions. Fortunately, so far, the water meadows have largely managed to prevent homes being flooded (with a few unfortunate exceptions). While the site in question is not in the flood plain, it does serve to reduce the risks of flooding in both the lowest lying parts of Twyford, and in Charvil. This development may well be the tipping point, despite the flood mitigation measures suggested, and this risk is too great for Charvil householders. Even the developer's own flooding assessment admits that flooding on the site itself could happen if the culvert where the River Loddon runs under the A4 becomes blocked, and that it should be checked weekly for such blockages. The chances of weekly checks being made, each week, every week, in perpetuity, is vanishingly small, and hence a flood at some point would be almost inevitable. Moreover, this is the conclusion for a development of 150 homes; the effects of an extra 50 are not discussed.*

3. *Traffic is the third concern. The A4 is already extremely slow moving on a school day morning and afternoon; frequent accidents bring the whole area, including the centres of Twyford and Charvil, to a standstill. A further major junction so close to the existing Wargrave Road roundabout will increase the likelihood of accidents and delays on a road already close to capacity at peak times. The developer tacitly admits this is likely to be a problem as they are offering extensive funds to try to make their plans acceptable.*

212818 Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey porch, erection of two storey front and rear extensions and a part single part two storey side extension following demolition of existing side sun lounge, demolition of existing front sun lounge, remodelling of the roof and removal of the chimneys to facilitate a loft conversion to create additional habitable accommodation with 2 no. pitched roof dormers to the rear elevation and 2 no. roof lights, plus changes to fenestration at Upton Cottage, Milestone Avenue – no Parish Council comment

b) Planning Applications Approved - The following approvals were noted:

212096 Application for the proposed erection of single storey rear extension, the insertion of 1 no. rooflight, plus changes to fenestration at 119 Old Bath Road

- 211308 Householder application for the proposed conversion of garage to create additional habitable accommodation, plus removal of garage door and replacement with windows and doors to match the existing home at 25, Newbury Close
- 212204 Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed installation of 16No solar PV panels on the rear roof of house at 28 Thornbers Way
- 212224 Application for advertisement consent for the retention of 1no illuminated logo panel and 1no illuminated surround sign around the cash dispenser at 36 Park View Drive South. Retrospective.
- 212117 Application for the proposed erection of first floor side extension, partial conversion of existing garage to create habitable space, facilitated by changes to fenestration at 6 Kilowna Close
- c) **Planning Applications refused** – The following refusal was noted:
- 212029 Full application for the proposed erection of 1no. 3 bed detached dwelling with associated parking and amenity space on land adjoining 1a, Milestone Crescent
- d) **TPO works application**
- 212807 APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO PROTECTED TREE(S) TPO 266/1984, G6 T1, Beech – Cut back branches overhanging the boundary of no. 20 The Hawthorns by 3 metres at 1, Foxes Walk
- e) **Appeal Dismissed**
- 203586 11, Old Bath Road, Charvil

The meeting closed at 9.30pm