



Minutes of Kingsclere Parish Council Ordinary Meeting OM 03/22  
Held at 7.30pm on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022 in the Village Club

**OM 03/22 – Present:**

Cllrs: Adams; Bowes; Conquest; Farey; Mussett; Peach N; Peach R; Sawyer. CCllr Thacker. BCllr Rhatigan.  
Clerk – Ackrill; Assistant Clerk – Read. Press: Newbury Weekly News; 4 members of the public.

**Not Present:**

None.

**03/22.1 – Apologies:**

Cllr Jones. CCllr Thacker. BCllr Frost, Poland.

**03/22.2 – Declarations of Interest:**

None.

**Questions from the Public:**

**Standing orders were suspended at 19:34:**

A resident reported that a pile of brushwood in the allotments that has been there since before covid keeps being added to and needs dealing with. They also noted that the damaged Crown Green noticeboard has also been added to the pile.

**Back to standing orders 19:35.**

**03/22.3 – Minutes:**

3.1 Minutes of Ordinary Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 were accepted and signed.

3.2 Minutes of General Purposes Meeting 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022 were accepted and signed.

**03/22.4 – Chairman’s Remarks:**

- i) Kingsclere Parish Council was saddened to find damage to the Churchyard caused by a vehicle. No permission was given by St Mary’s Church or KPC for access. The person responsible was discovered and asked to repair the damage. This has now been done.
- ii) The third Jubilee celebration liaison meeting will be held on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March, 7:30pm at the Fieldgate Centre. All are welcome to attend, to be involved in the planning or to just find out what is planned. JS has enquired about a road closure for the parade and has verbal confirmation that this will be approved, as long as the bus company has no objections.
- iii) A charity gala evening is being held at The Anvil on 6<sup>th</sup> April to raise money for 24 Swan Street. Performers will include those from the Kingsclere Performing Arts College, JLD Dance School, and other professional performers with connections to Kingsclere.
- iv) The Chairman has been contacted by a new resident of Newbury Road regarding speeding traffic. JS was sympathetic to the resident and directed them to CCllr Thacker and HCC. JS explained that KPC has installed all the traffic calming measures that a Parish Council is permitted to install.
- v) The Chairman wrote to Reverend Ben Read on behalf of KPC, wishing him well as he moves away from Kingsclere. A delightful response was received, where Ben was very complimentary of the work KPC undertakes.
- vi) The Kingsclere Great British Spring Clean will be held on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April 10am – 1pm with a gazebo station in St Mary’s Churchyard to collect litter picking equipment from. Refreshments are also available this year thanks to St Mary’s Church coffee morning. Cllrs are asked to email JS with their availability for helping at the event.
- vii) Thanks to Cllr R Peach for clearing and fixing things around the village, filling in the rabbit holes on the Recreation Ground, and removing the Crown Green noticeboard which will be broken down and used at firewood for the Jubilee celebration beacon.
- viii) Thanks to Diana for organising the rope fencing to section off the Wildflower area in St Mary’s Churchyard to protect it and keep people from trampling it.

**Action:** vi – all Cllrs.

**03/22.5 – Start Time of KPC Meetings:**

A Cllr proposed that the start time of Kingsclere Parish Council meetings could be moved forward by half an hour to 7pm, considering most Councillors are retired, or work from home. After a short discussion the consensus was that while this may be the case for some Councillors, it was not the case for all, and KPC should also consider the public who may wish to attend who may not work from home.

**Resolved:** Unanimously agreed to not change the start time of KPC meetings.

**03/22.6 – Non-Compliant Graves at Echinswell Road Cemetery:**

The Chairman introduced this item and explained that this is one of the most sensitive issues that KPC has had to bring to a public meeting. At the Echinswell Road Cemetery there are a large number of graves, including ashes plots, that do not comply with the Rules and Regulations. This includes items such as

memorial and ashes stones that are non-compliant that have been installed without KPC's permission, ornaments and plastic flowers on graves, kerbs and fences around graves, and anything on ashes plots that are not flush with the ground. The ashes area is very overcrowded with pots, vases, and crosses all above ground level, and it difficult to tell which grave different items belong to. There are numerous graves with kerbs or fences and ornaments. Issues with non-compliant graves have been noted for a long time, however in the last couple of years the issues have increased and KPC is now at the point where action needs to be taken as it is impacting the maintenance, care, and overall presentation of the Cemetery. KPC need to consider the practical side of managing a Cemetery, such as the mowing and maintenance, and the excess decorations and non-compliant memorials makes this more difficult and costly to residents. It was noted that last year, the Cemetery attracted criticism from residents for things such as items damaged or missing from graves, the Cemetery not being adequately maintained, and issues with benches. It was suggested that KPC write to grave owners in increments, either in burial year or rows / groups, instead of the whole Cemetery at once, to lessen the workload for office staff and to hopefully encourage whole sections of the Cemetery to become compliant at one time. It was noted the Parish Council cannot keep an up-to-date list of grave owners, as people move or pass away and KPC do not know and aren't informed. It was suggested to put up signage in the Cemetery advising residents that addressing the non-compliance of graves is something that KPC is actively looking to do, and to encourage grave owners to take initiative and act before they are written to. It was suggested to tackle and address the main issues together, such as fences and kerbs, and ornaments on graves, and explain why these are causing such problems for the maintenance and care of the Cemetery. If the issues with non-compliant graves persist it was suggested that particular problem areas of the Cemetery could become too costly to maintain as the cost to the Parish Council and to residents for mowing and strimming would be too high and would not be sustainable. It was agreed that this is not something KPC would wish to see happen, however may have to be considered an option in the future. It was agreed that KPC do not consider it an unreasonable request for grave owners to comply with the Rules and Regulations, as they signed an agreement that they would comply. It was agreed to put up signage to make visitors to the Cemetery aware that addressing non-compliant graves is something KPC is now actively doing, and to ask grave owners to ensure that their graves are compliant with the Rules and Regulations. It was also agreed to write to grave owners in groups over the next couple of years, and that the most efficient way of doing this was to be decided by office staff. CM will provide wording for the letters and signs.

**Action:** CM, Clerk, Assistant Clerk.

#### **03/22.7 – Proposal to Re-route Footpath between Ecchinswell Road and Sydmonton Road:**

KPC is being asked for its view on this proposal, as a resident is applying to HCC to re-route a footpath on their land. This proposal was discussed at GP on 14<sup>th</sup> March (minutes ref: GP 03/22.9) where KPC had no comment. Comments from the Parish Paths were received into the office after GP, these comments were not supportive of the proposed changes. The reasons given by the resident for this re-routing proposal is that it would reduce the amount people having to walk on both Ecchinswell and Sydmonton Road, would be a nicer view for walkers, and would move the public away from barns that they own which have been subject to vandalism. Concerns over the removal of rights of way, and that the proposed route would cut a significant length of a popular circular walking route out, were raised. Following discussion, the Chairman asked for a proposer and seconder for KPC to support this proposal, to which there was none. The Chairman then asked for a proposer and seconder for KPC to not support this proposal to which there was, and it was unanimously agreed that KPC does not support this proposal.

**Resolved:** Unanimously agreed that KPC does not support the proposal to re-route a footpath between Ecchinswell and Sydmonton Road.

#### **03/22.8 – Proposal to Remove Footpath in a Field by Rectory Lane that Adjoins A339:**

KPC is being asked for its view on this proposal, as a resident is applying to HCC to remove a footpath across a field on their land. This proposal was discussed at GP on 14<sup>th</sup> March (minutes ref: GP 03/22.9) where KPC had no comment. Comments from the Parish Paths were received into the office after GP, these comments were not supportive of the proposed changes. There was concern over the safety of this footpath, as it opens straight onto the A339 which is the reason the resident proposes that it is removed. It was noted that a connecting path on the opposite side of the road could have been available in the past, as per OS maps, but at present there is no right of way available. It was also noted that KPC should not look to support removing rights of way. Following discussion, it was proposed and seconded that KPC support this proposal with a total of two votes; and it was proposed and seconded that KPC do not support this proposal with a total of three votes. Two Cllrs abstained from voting. As the majority vote was for KPC not supporting this proposal, this will be the position that KPC take.

**Resolved:** Agreed that KPC do not support the proposal to remove a footpath by Rectory Lane.

#### **03/22.9 – Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan Review:**

The first meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Group (NPG) was held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022. [Minutes of the NPG meeting are attached in Appendix 1.](#) Three original members of the NPG have chosen not to volunteer again, but three new residents have come forward. The procedure for review of Neighbourhood Plans is that if there are only minor changes proposed, they can be reviewed and approved by the Local Planning Authority. If changes are more substantial, KPC would need to go through the procedure laid out in the

Regulations, which could lead to another referendum. The NPG will start by reviewing the environmental policies in the Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan (KNP). The changes to the housing allocation cannot be worked on yet, as final figures are not yet known and BDBC is currently appealing to Central Government regarding its standard methodology for its housing target for BDBC. KR reported that BDBC is further away from meeting its 5-year land supply as the target number has been increased by Central Government. 175 additional houses, as well as the 50 houses already allocated to Kingsclere, is the indicative figure that has been given. These 225 houses would be an increase of 20% to the number of houses already in the parish. KPC has been approached by Thakeham who wish to build on Yew Tree Farm. There are concerns about building in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), KPC is going to meet with them. SA has been in contact with Barton Willmore regarding the Coppice and Strokins Road sites identified for housing in the KNP. It is reported the landowners for these sites are in detailed discussions with developers. KPC has been contacted by Whitchurch Town Council regarding the housing allocation for rural areas. Whitchurch Town Council is not pleased with its allocation and would be interested to organise with other local parish councils regarding this. The NPG is meeting again on 16<sup>th</sup> May.

**03/22.10 – County Councillor:**

No report.

**03/22.11 – Borough Councillor:**

KR referenced the March GP minutes and stressed that KPC is able to apply for a grant from BDBC's Jubilee grant funds, as KPC did not think that it qualifies. KR will attend the Kingsclere Spring Clean on 9<sup>th</sup> April. KR has asked for two bins to be placed at the entrance to Wayfarers Walk, as he noted there is a lot of bags of dog poo being hung in trees rather than placed in bins. KR also noted that dogs are being let off the lead on the gallops and asked residents to please comply with the rules. KR has read the drainage reports for the works at the Fieldgate Centre, and is pleased BDBC is sorting out the issues with the recycling area. KR stated that waste problems and fly tipping wasn't being reported, which is why the statistics from BDBC's waste team didn't indicate that it was a problem area. BCllr elections are being held in May, Kingsclere will be voting for one BCllr. KR has two more years as BCllr. CM mentioned to KR that KPC has received documentation from BDBC's property services regarding the transferring of the Toilet Block in The Square. CM explained that it seems to be BDBC's opinion that KPC will be sending these documents to its solicitors and will get things sorted, when the reality is that KPC is not in any position to take on the Toilet Block, and it is not known if this is something that could be accommodated by KPC. KR acknowledged that the Toilet Block issue would need to wait for at least a year to be addressed. IB enquired if BDBC will be making up the shortfall for the drainage works at the Fieldgate Centre. KR indicated that CIL money could be used, IB to send KR the relevant documentation. SA asked if there was any update on the status of the planning application for the Care Home proposed in Fawconer Road, KR said there was no update, and that the Planning Officers are aware that he would want to know the decision. KR stated that a Care Home in Kingsclere is not in the Local Plan or Kingsclere's Neighbourhood Plan (KNP), so in policy terms it is not needed, and that it would be breaching the decision of the people if the KNP is undermined or overruled. NP asked about the status of the transference of land from BDBC to KPC, KR indicated BDBC's Property Department is undermanned and to keep enquiring about to them about this.

**03/22.12 – Health and Safety:**

It was noted that the office doesn't currently comply with health and safety regulations. There is money in the budget for improvements, and it should be a priority of KPC to ensure these issues are addressed.

**03/21.13 – Action List:**

The Clerk has updated the Action List since last GP. NP reported that some of her actions regarding the Holding Field have been completed, she will update the Action List as such.

**03/22.14 – Planning Applications:**

**14.1. 22/00728/HSE – Priors Mill, North Street:**

No Objection.

**14.2. 22/00733/FUL – Oak Cottage, Newbury Road:**

After discussion it was agreed that KPC cannot support this application at present as there is insufficient information. There were concerns over the proposed access, no ecological or tree reports or surveys included in the application, and possible impact on a listed building.

**03/22.15 – Clerk's Report:**

The CPRE AGM is being held on zoom on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2022 at 10am.

A new combination padlock and emergency contact sign has arrived for the Recreation Ground vehicle entrance and will be installed soon.

The repair for the SID on Basingstoke Road will happen on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

The water is now on at the Cemetery and will be turned on at the Allotments soon.

**15.1. Grant Request for £100 from Victim Support:**

A grant request for £100 from Victim Support for general operational costs was received and circulated prior to the meeting. There were no questions or comments. It was unanimously agreed to approve the grant request of £100.

**Resolved:** £100 grant for Victim Support unanimously approved.

**15.2. Grant Request for £100 from 3<sup>rd</sup> Kingsclere Brownies:**

A grant request for £100 from 3<sup>rd</sup> Kingsclere Brownies to enable the unit to addend a large-scale Girlguiding event was received and circulated prior to the meeting. There were no questions or comments. It was unanimously agreed to approve the grant request of £100.

**Resolved:** £100 grant for 3<sup>rd</sup> Kingsclere Brownies unanimously approved.

**03/22.16 – Approval of Income and Expenditure:**

The accounts for 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022 to 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022 were agreed and signed off.

**03/22.17 – Matters for Future Consideration:**

None.

**03/22.18 – Date of Next Meeting:**

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022 7:30pm in the Village Club.

**03/22.19 – Exempt Business:**

**19.1. Office Staff Salaries:**

Confidential report circulated prior to meeting. The NJC Pay Scales for 2021 – 2022 were agreed and published in February 2022. KPC is contractually obliged to pay office staff on their agreed pay scales.

**Resolved:** New office staff pay scales unanimously approved effective immediately.

**19.2. Office Staff Salaries Backpay:**

Confidential report circulated prior to meeting. The NJC Pay Scales for 2021 – 2022 were agreed and published at the end of February 2022. The pay scales would have been in effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 if they had been agreed prior to the start of the 2021-2022 financial year. Office staff are entitled to back pay to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 for the difference between the previous 2020 – 2021 Pay Scales and the 2021-2022 Pay Scales.

**Resolved:** Backpay for office staff to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 unanimously approved.

**19.3. Litter Warden Salary:**

Confidential report circulated prior to meeting. The living wage will increase on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. KPC has a contractual obligation to pay the Litter Warden the living wage. It was noted that perhaps KPC should look into paying the Litter Warden the real living wage. This would require KPC budgeting the additional cost, as BDBC provide KPC with a grant that covers the Litter Warden’s salary at the living wage.

**Resolved:** Unanimously approved to increase the Litter Warden’s salary to the living wage from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022.

Meeting closed 21:29

Signed:.....Chairman Date:.....

Signed:.....Clerk Date:.....

**Distribution: Cllrs:** S Adams; I Bowes; D Conquest; M Farey; S Jones; C Mussett; N Peach; R Peach; and J Sawyer.

Website: [www.kingsclere-pc.org.uk](http://www.kingsclere-pc.org.uk).

**Appendix 1 – Minutes from Neighbourhood Planning Group Meeting**

Meeting in the Holding Room, Village Club

7.30pm Monday 21st March 2022

1. Apologies and introductions
  - a. Apologies from Mick Farey
  - b. Attendees: Cllr. Sue Adams, Chair of NP Group, Kevin Higgins, Debra Power, Cllr. John Sawyer, Chair of Parish Council, Cllr. Nicki Peach, Mark Hirst, Dan Jackson
2. Progress of NP to date
  - a. Plan made in April 2019
  - b. All planning applications reviewed by Parish Council and NP policies are applied in all cases. B&DBC complete an annual review of all NPs
  - c. Notable success in refusing planning permission for a container park at Cottismore Garden Centre, appeal was lost on access, landscape and character of local area
  - d. Contentious sites for development – Coppice Road, Fawconer Road, and Strokins Road
  - e. Outline planning permission for 13 houses was granted in Jan 2021 for Fawconer Road. Site sold by David Wilson Homes, to a new developer who have put forward a care home planning application. This is awaiting decision by B&DBC. Kingsclere Parish Council has opposed as is in opposition to the NP. Borough Cllr. Stuart Frost confirmed that the planning cttee is behind schedule, and it will be reviewed in due course. In terms of house count, the care home application counts towards the target, but it doesn’t meet the needs of the community, i.e., affordable homes.

- f. Email from Barton Wilmore who are the agent for both Coppice Road and Strokins Road sites, and we expect to hear from them regarding Coppice Road soon.
3. Procedure for the review of NPs
    - a. Non-material changes to plan can be made and submitted to B&DBC for approval
    - b. Material changes to the plan will need to go through the statutory process from initial consultation to submission to the independent examiner.
    - c. Grant funding and technical support funding is currently available from Locality. List of available funding required.
  4. Local Plan review, impact on Kingsclere's NP and current threats
    - a. Paragraph in NP regarding committing to a mid-term review following the B&DBC Local Plan review, which is now underway
    - b. Central govt have given B&DBC an extra allocation of housing
    - c. B&DBC produced a rural spatial review strategy allocating an additional 175 houses to Kingsclere (in addition to the existing 50 houses), with a methodology based on 2011 census data
    - d. Email received from Whitchurch Town Council, who have suggested a new methodology based on more recent data, but this has been rejected by B&DBC
    - e. BCILr. Stuart Frost confirmed that B&DBC are challenging central Government on the number allocated to B&DBC (17,000 houses by 2039)
    - f. Central government are expected to issue a white paper setting out new criteria
    - g. Whitchurch have contacted all parish and town councils in the borough to create a concerted response
    - h. Methodology was discussed at B&DBC meeting in January, not attended by Kingsclere Parish Council, but minutes were only published this week. There was a strong borough-wide negative view of the proposed policy
    - i. Local Plan due for consultation in Spring 2022
    - j. B&DBC have failed to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply. Without this, speculative developers are submitting planning applications on sites previously rejected in NPs. The only way to prevent acceptance of these applications is to prove they are unsustainable. Kingsclere have received a few applications referencing the lack of a 5-year land supply. 220 houses at Porch Farm, and an unnamed number of houses at Yew Tree Farm (applications not yet in). The PC will meet with the developers of the YTF site next month but will oppose on the principle as it is not in the NP
  5. Review of current NP policies (page 28 of current NP below).
    - a. New development – pending allocation from B&DBC. Housing for older people policy should be revisited following the proposed private care home at Fawconer Road.
    - b. Good quality design policy could be updated to include electric car charging ports and energy efficiency
    - c. Landscape character and trees – considered OK at this time
    - d. Community infrastructure – needs review
    - e. Environment & ecology - needs review to make more robust
    - f. Traffic and parking – needs review
    - g. Sport and green spaces – needs review
    - h. Heritage – considered OK at this time
    - i. Site allocations and settlement policy boundary – needs review
  6. Initial discussion of an action plan
    - a. Policy reviews to be discussed at future meetings – environmental policies first – Nicki
    - b. Investigate funding available from Locality
    - c. Ask AECOM team to advise on the methodology proposed by B&DBC for new housing allocation – John to send details to Debra and Mark
    - d. Data review for policies which are likely to have a material change
    - e. Update on progress via Parish Council website and FB page and the Tower – Sue
  7. Funding
    - a. Funding might be available from Locality
  8. AOB
    - a. Employment land requirements should be reviewed
  9. Date of next meeting
    - a. 16th May 2022 7.30pm