

Minutes

of a meeting of the

General Licensing Committee



held on Friday, 4 December 2020 at
2.00 pm in A virtual meeting

Open to the public, including the press

Present in the meeting room:

Councillors: Peter Dragonetti (Chair), Kellie Hinton, and Leigh Rawlins
Officers: Paul Bateman (Democratic Services Officer), Lee Brown (IT Applications Manager), Sarah Commins (Litigation and Planning Lawyer), and Sally-Anne Worsley (Data Monitoring Manager)

6 Election of Chair

A motion, moved and seconded, to elect Councillor Peter Dragonetti as Chair of the panel was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: that Councillor Peter Dragonetti be appointed Chair of the panel.

7 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence was received from Councillor Lorraine Hillier who was substituted for Councillor Leigh Rawlins.

8 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

9 Urgent business and Chair's announcements

There was no urgent business. The chair outlined the procedure to be followed in a virtual meeting. He also advised the meeting of how the officers' report would be introduced and the point at which the objector could speak and make a statement.

10 Public participation

There was one public speaker, Mr. MB, at the meeting (named in the report) who had originally complained to officers regarding the street naming proposal.

11 Street Name Change, Didcot

The IT Applications Manager presented the report by the Head of Corporate Services to the Panel. The report and appendices had been shared with the panel and complainant in paper and electronic form.

The purpose of the report was to consider the relevant representations received in respect of a proposal to change the street name and number of 4 properties in Larch Drive to Birch Close, Didcot.

The panel noted the technical problem which had arisen, requiring a street name change; the district council was responsible for creating the first 2 lines of all addresses and Royal Mail were responsible for adding the locality, post town and post code. Each street could have one or many post codes associated with it. A post code could only apply to one street. Post codes were used in satellite navigation devices, which guided drivers to their destination following a route that took account of, inter alia, one way streets, laden vehicle weights and non-passable obstructions, such as bus gates.

The proposal recommended to the panel was to change the addresses of the 4 remaining properties addressed into Larch Drive, on the north side of the bus gate, to Birch Close. The proposal sought to rectify direct vehicle access to the 4 addresses, for the convenience of the households and safety of households south of the bus gate, whose drives had been blocked by delivery vehicles whilst deliveries were completed on foot to addresses on the north side of the bus gate.

Having reviewed all the evidence provided to the panel and taking into account the duties of the street naming and numbering authority under Section 13 of the Oxfordshire Act 1985 and the General Licensing Committee procedure rules (3) of the Constitution of South Oxfordshire District Council, officers considered that the panel should be requested to consider the road naming and number change.

Historically, the problem had arisen when two separate housing developments were completed. In the report they were referred to as phase SN03A and the Bloor Homes site. Both postal address schemes were agreed by the respective developers, with no mention of a proposed bus gate that would terminate the traffic flow from both directions.

The panel noted that in January 2020 the council's street naming and numbering service learned of a concrete boulder (placed in the position of the proposed bus gate) that was blocking off vehicular access to the last 9 properties in Larch Drive. A complaint had been received regarding abandoned delivery vehicles obstructing a driveway, whilst the drivers completed their journey on foot. It was immediately apparent that the established vehicular routing for the post code associated with the whole of Larch Drive was via Park Road, which now excluded the last 9 properties. The addresses of the 9 properties would need a new post code, or a different street name and post code where the post code was associated with routing via Diamond Drive.

Investigations into the bus gate proposal had led to the understanding that there was going to be a bus gate in the position of the boulder. There was no suggestion that a subsequent county council - led consultation might influence its repositioning. On this

basis a letter was written to the 9 affected properties with the three possible options for resolving the addressing issues at that time

The three options were:

1. seek a change of post code from Royal Mail for the last 9 properties,
2. rename that section of Larch Drive as Diamond Drive,
3. Rename that section of Larch Drive as a new street name.

5 out of the 9 affected properties were occupied at this time and the occupiers of those properties chose option 3, to rename the affected section of Larch Drive as Birch Close. However, before a street or part of a street could be formerly renamed, the council was required to carry out a consultation as required under Section 13(2) of the Oxfordshire Act 1985. This was duly carried out and Mr MB, who had since taken up occupation at XX Larch Drive, objected to the change.

It was decided by officers to request a panel of the general licensing committee to consider the matter. It was noted that Mr MB had ascertained from Oxfordshire County Council that the outcome of a public consultation on the bus gate could cause its current proposed location to change. The delay meant all the affected Larch Drive properties were left in a state of some uncertainty. It was therefore suggested by the street naming and numbering's service manager to proceed with renaming only the section of street serving Nos. 46 to 54 Larch Drive. Those households had already agreed to the renaming, most were in occupation, and would not be affected should the proposed location of the bus gate change.

Once the bus gate position had been confirmed in its original position, the remaining 4 property households in Larch Drive were again consulted as required under Section 13(2) of the Oxfordshire Act 1985. Three of the households agreed and Mr MB again objected.

Statement by member of the public

Mr. MB made a statement to the panel, alleging that consultees had been misled and that residents were inconvenienced by the positioning of the boulder and subsequent bus gate when it would be eventually installed. He considered that the proposed name changes were illogical and did not conform with the actual communities on the existing roads.

Decision of the Panel

The panel considered that as all residents affected, except Mr MB, had agreed to the name change proposal, it was reasonable to proceed with the change, including the post code alteration. They requested the IT Applications Manager and the street naming and numbering's Team Leader to proceed with the change of the street name and house numbers of 4 properties in Larch Drive to Birch Close, Didcot. This would include an appropriate post code change.

The meeting closed at 3.15 pm
