

**Wokingham Without Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the Council Meeting**  
**Held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020.**

**In the Howard Palmer Room, St Sebastian's Memorial Hall, Nine Mile Ride**

Commencing 7:00 pm and concluding at 9:48 pm

**Present:** Councillors J Cannon, D Dye, R Fenny, L Foxwell, B Gough, C Lancaster, D Latimer, N Martin, K Newland, A Plume, J Rogers, P Stephen and S Turtle. Katy Hughes - Clerk, Sharon Way – Assistant Clerk. J Stoner.

**Apologies:** Borough Councillor's A Ross, P Helliari-Symons and C Bowring.

**19/190 TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM GIGACLEAR**

Christopher Morris, Community Engagement Officer from Gigaclear gave a presentation about their plans to install a new fibre broadband network in the local area. An overview of the benefits of fibre was provided. 330 connections are to be provided to Gardeners Green area. The project is estimated to start April – June 2020.

**19/191 WELCOME**

Cllr Newland welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**19/192 ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Borough Councillors Ross, Helliari-Symons and Bowring.

**19/193 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**19/194 TO APPROVE AND ADOPT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2020.**

Cllr Newland invited comments from the floor. Following a proposal from Cllr Foxwell and seconded by Cllr Turtle it was:

**RESOLVED: Minutes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020 were AGREED and signed.**

**19/195 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF 3<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2020.**

Cllr Fenny raised the issue of the traffic lights at the junction of Nine Mile Ride and Heathlands Road. Cllr Fenny had received an update from WBC officer Malcolm Pinto. The phasing of the traffic lights and the drainage issues close to the junction will be fixed as part of the programme. A start date for the work has been requested but not provided to date.

**19/196 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**19/197 BOROUGH COUNCILLORS BRIEFING**

None.

**19/198 CLERKS REPORT**

1. **Fencing.** Some work is needed to repair or replace the fencing around the adventure playground at Pinewood (photographs of the relevant areas were displayed to members). The Clerk will organise a Public Spaces Working Group meeting to review the options.
2. **Book Festival.** A paper circulated as Appendix 9 of the agenda invites parish councils to consider funding author visits to schools during the Wokingham Children's Book Festival in the autumn. Two local schools have currently expressed an interest. This could

potentially be funded out of the grants budget. Following a general discussion, Cllr Newland noted that if this project was consistent with our vision it was worthwhile pursuing. The Clerk summarised that there was an appetite to do this and potentially an appetite to fund it. The Clerk will progress this in discussions with relevant parties.

3. **Security Provision.** Executive Security has given notice that the security contract will end at Pinewood and the Memorial Hall. A quote has been sourced from Alarm Response which provides similar services to Woodley Town Council and Wokingham Town Council. Following discussion, it was agreed the Clerk should consider an initial 6 month contract with Alarm Response.
4. **Newsletters** were distributed in late February and a copy was included with the Agenda.

The Clerk met with Mel Saville from CPC on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February to discuss issues relating to Old Wokingham Road, e.g. speed, the pedestrian crossing, etc. Cllr Newland noted that Cllr Ross had written an email to BFC regarding the speed issue. The Clerk will circulate this to members.

On 6 February the Clerk issued an instruction for the ecological survey of the pond.

The Clerk met with Martin Turner of Pinewood Football Club on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February regarding the requirement to remove banners currently displayed on the clubhouse. The Clerk requested that he write to the Parish Council with the information he provided at the meeting, regarding the funding the club receives for displaying the banners. Cllr Stephens offered to support the Clerk in communications with the club.

On 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> February the Clerk and Cllr Latimer met with Ricky Josey from the WBC localities team to look at the possibility of providing play equipment at Bigshotte Park. When plans are firmed-up this will be brought to a future meeting.

On 25<sup>th</sup> February the Clerk met with the new WBC localities officer, Kate Warren.

PAT testing was carried out on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February – this is now fully up to date.

The play equipment installation at Pinewood is underway and, weather permitting, should be completed with surfacing by 6<sup>th</sup> March.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at the Memorial Hall on 16<sup>th</sup> March.

The Wokingham District Veteran Trees AGM will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> March. Cllr Martin noted that he had received an email from the group, seeking to establish the implications of the SWDR on local trees. The Clerk requested Cllr Martin forward the email, and this would then be discussed with the WBC planning officer. Cllr Rogers noted that a veteran tree was planned to be retained in the centre of one of the SWDR roundabouts

The WBC Public Rights of Way team are holding a public meeting at Hatch Ride School on 25<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm to discuss Oaklands Lane.

The Big Litter Pick event will be held on 29<sup>th</sup> March.

## **19/199 VERBAL REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL MEETINGS**

The Borough Parish Liaison Forum was held on 10<sup>th</sup> February, attended by Cllr Foxwell. Matters discussed included the Climate Crisis measures. A talk was also given about the fly tipping strategy - a summarised handout will be prepared for the public. WBC localities officers are being very pro-active – going out to all businesses in the area to ensure they have the correct

certificates for commercial waste. A highways information website run by VolkerHighways was also discussed, which is working well.

On 11<sup>th</sup> February a meeting was held between Cllr Ross, Cllr Newland, and WBC to discuss the Pinewood Lease break clause. WWPC argument was well received but WBC did not feel able to change their policy at this time. WBC acknowledged that one of the reasons for the request to remove the break clause was to enable the clubs to raise funds but felt that other means of facilitating this could be possible. They offered to assist clubs in achieving this. Accordingly on 3<sup>rd</sup> March a meeting will be held with the boxing club and senior members of WBC including Beverly Thompson, WBC sports officer, to discuss how the club may be able to unlock Sports England funding with WBC support.

On 11<sup>th</sup> February Cllrs Rogers and Turtle and the Clerk carried out a site visit to Byway 28. The meeting was held with Andrew Fletcher and Conor Clerk of the WBC Public Rights of Way (PROW) team to look at the state of the byway. It will potentially form part of a green way route. The borough has some funding for improvement but it is not clear if this would be sufficient to provide a route suitable for pedestrians. WBC may therefore seek additional funding from WWPC. It was made clear that WWPC would require significant detail regarding plans for the works before any funding could be considered.

Cllrs Latimer and Stephens and the Clerk met to discuss upgrading the parish website (reported later in the meeting – see minute 19/202)

Cllr Stephens and the Clerk held a meeting at Johnson and Johnson regarding benches at Pinewood on 20<sup>th</sup> February. The benches are ready to be delivered and installed during week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> March.

Cllrs Foxwell and Plume met to review the revised SWDR plans (reported later in the meeting – see minute 19/207)

#### **19/200 COUNCIL INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

The Clerk outlined that, following the advice of the council's Internal Auditor, an Investment Strategy document has been prepared (see Appendix 11 of the Agenda).

Following a proposal from Cllr Rogers and seconded by Cllr Foxwell it was:

**RESOLVED: The adoption of the Investment Strategy was AGREED.**

#### **19/201 RISK REGISTER**

A Risk Register for 2020-21 has been prepared (see Appendix 12 of the Agenda), and is put forward for approval. Cllr Newland asked whether it was guiding the issues that needed to be reviewed regularly, sufficiently well. The Clerk noted that the register was adequate, provided it was reviewed regularly and kept up to date. Cllr Rogers asked whether the Investment Strategy will be incorporated, the Clerk confirmed that it would be. Cllr Turtle suggested that the format could be improved and agreed to work with the office to make such improvements.

Following a proposal from Cllr Foxwell and seconded by Cllr Rogers it was:

**RESOLVED: The Risk Register for 2020 /21was AGREED.**

#### **19/202 WEBSITE UPGRADE**

Cllr Stephens presented a review of the work undertaken by the Website Working Group on the project to update the WWPC website, as given in the decision paper, appendix 13 to the agenda. He emphasised that 'do nothing' was not an option as WWPC would then be non-compliant with accessibility requirements which come into force from September 2020. The current website has

limited functionality and is poorly used. There is also limited functionality for the office team to administer new content.

The process for developing a specification, shortlisting, and meeting potential suppliers was described. From this process the preferred supplier was Web Marketing Matters. The website will include live information feeds, e.g. traffic and weather. The site would also facilitate an electronic newsletter.

Cllr Rogers noted that many people look to Facebook and other social media for local information. It would therefore be useful to have a link to social media with the website.

Cllr Turtle asked how easy it would be to update the website. The Clerk noted that it would be a Wordpress website, which is the basis for the current site, so the team have familiarity with the technology. However the new website will have greater flexibility regarding the front page layout. The support package will enable standard of accessibility to be maintained.

Following a proposal from Cllr Turtle and seconded by Cllr Foxwell it was:

**RESOLVED: The recommendations of the decision paper 'Parish Website Upgrade', given in Appendix 13 of the agenda were AGREED.**

### **19/203 POND MAINTENANCE**

Cllr Dye requested that WWPC terminate the ongoing quarterly maintenance contract with Aquamaintain, as in her view the pond ecology was being degraded and needed more specialist involvement. Cllr Dye suggested that a pond company is only used for ad-hoc tasks when there is a specific requirement. Cllr Newland emphasised that if the ongoing contract was terminated then a clear plan for alternative action was required. It was discussed that the next step was to complete the ecological survey which would form the basis for a set of requirements for a pond maintenance contract. This is the subject of ongoing work by the Public Spaces Working Group.

Members voted on Cllr Dye's request to terminate the contract with Aquamaintain. It was:

**RESOLVED: The contract with Aquamaintain should be terminated was AGREED by a majority vote.**

### **19/204 TREE WORKS AT PINWOOD**

The Clerk stated that regrettably the roots of the Cedar tree are now damaging the Pinewood café building, and it therefore needs to be removed. A quotation for this work has been included in Appendix 15 of the agenda. Following discussion it was also recommended that the Clerk organise a survey of other trees in close proximity to buildings.

Following a proposal from Cllr Foxwell and seconded by Cllr Turtle it was:

**RESOLVED: The works to remove the cedar tree were AGREED.**

### **19/205 GRANT REQUEST FROM CITIZENS ADVICE WOKINGHAM**

The Clerk outlined that a grant request had been received from Citizens Advice Bureau Wokingham (CAB) for funding an existing project supporting residents of Wokingham Without.

Cllr Rogers noted a personal interest in CAB Wokingham and was involved in finding a location for them to meet. She reported that the CAB is doing a good job and is working with very vulnerable people in the parish. There is a concern that it may not be possible to retain key staff if funding is not available. A contribution by WWPC toward the funding indicates that WWPC are supportive of this work and wish to see it continue.

Members noted that while they are supportive of this initiative the application was lacking detail.

Following discussion, Cllr Rogers proposed that WWPC should agree to provide funding of £2000. Cllr Newland asked whether this would secure the remaining funding from other sources; Cllr Rogers was unable to comment on whether this would be the case.

With respect to the detail in the grant application it was agreed that the Clerk would provide feedback to CAB Wokingham.

Following a proposal from Cllr Rogers and seconded by Cllr Turtle it was:

**RESOLVED: The proposal to provide grant funding of £2000 to CAB Wokingham was AGREED.**

**19/206 FINANCIAL INFORMATION - papers circulated prior to meeting**

- a) Report on outstanding balances was received and noted.
- b) Cheques for signature and payments both made and still to be made were approved and signed. No queries were raised.
- c) A detailed income and expenditure report and financial performance against budget report was received and noted.
- d) A report of total salary expenditure to date for the year was received and noted.

**19/207 PLANNING/LICENCE APPLICATIONS**

No	Site	Comments
191259	St Sebastian's Playing Field St Sebastian's Close RG40 3.XA	It is unclear from the plans whether these structures are in addition to or replacing the existing structures on site. If they are intended as additional storage units WWPC is of the opinion this would be an overdevelopment of the site. Concern was also raised over the design of the new structures and the visual impact on neighbouring properties.
191840	26 Dove Close Crowthorne RG45 6UR	No comment.
193187	Talavera, The Devils Highway Crowthorne RG45 6BJ	WWPC request should this application be approved that a condition is attached to ensure the outbuilding remains ancillary to the main dwelling. Also WWPC would like to draw attention to the existing covenant within Talavera's title deed, which we understand states that no building other than a fence or wall portico or bay windows shall be erected between the building line and the road nor shall any erection other than greenhouses, summer houses or sheds under 10 feet high be erected within 10 feet of the southern boundary of any plot and the eastern boundary of the eastern plot.
200065	47 Greenwood Road Crowthorne RG45 6NF	Application Withdrawn.
200253	60 Dukes Wood Crowthorne RG45 6NF	No comment.
200286	Birchin Inhams Farm Unit 1, Heathlands Road Wokingham RG40 3AP	WWPC has no objection to this application provided the planning officer assigned is satisfied noise levels will not increase to the detriment of surrounding properties and there is adequate access to the site.
200335	2 Walmer Close Crowthorne RG45 6RF	No comment.

200348	13 Westbury Close Crowthorne RG45 6NL	No comment.
200386	19 Belmont Road Crowthorne RG45 6SA	No comment.
192928	Land south of Wokingham, east of Finchampstead Road, and west of Waterloo Road.	<p>WWPC has significant concerns over the junction of the SWDR that will route vehicles onto Heathlands Road as an access towards southern routes. This rural road will struggle with a significant increase in traffic volumes, and no plans have been made to improve the traffic light junction at the end of Heathlands Road, where it adjoins Nine Mile Ride. We would like to see better provision for pedestrians and cyclists at the Star Lane crossing – particularly given that we anticipate secondary school children living within the South Wokingham SDL will be travelling across the railway to access schools. In order to encourage pupils to travel to school on foot or by cycle, and reduce the impact of school run traffic, this must be given greater consideration.</p> <p>The lights at the junction of the Star Lane crossing must be phased with the railway barrier, to ensure that when the railway crossing is accessible, traffic is able to flow.</p> <p>It is still unclear what the resolution is around the low-level railway bridge near Tesco and Eden Motors at the Western edge. Unless this is resolved, it is likely that larger lorries and vehicles will be routed back through Wokingham town centre, negating the ‘by-pass’ benefits of the SWDR. Over time, this will encourage more traffic to route off the SWDR onto Heathlands Road. Access routes into Ludgrove School and the Gray’s Farm sports hub are not defined on this plan.</p>

**CHAIRMAN’S COMMUNICATIONS**

**19/208** None

**19/209 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION AT FUTURE MEETINGS:**

None

**19/210 MEETING CLOSED AT 9:48 PM**

**Date of next meeting** – Meeting of the Parish Council at 7.30pm in the Howard Palmer Room on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** 11 May 2020