

**Wokingham Without Parish Council
Minutes of the Council Meeting
Held on Monday 4th October 2021**

In the St Sebastian's Memorial Hall, Nine Mile Ride

Commencing 7:30pm and concluding at 9:55pm

Present: Councillors J Cannon, R Fenny, L Foxwell, P Jordan, N Martin, K Newland, A Plume, and S Turtle. Katy Hughes - Clerk, Sharon Way – Assistant Clerk. Borough Councillor C Bowring plus 3 members of the public.

Apologies: Councillors D Dye and J Rogers and Borough Cllrs. P Helliars-Symons and A Ross.

21/87 WELCOME

Cllr Plume welcomed everyone to the meeting.

21/88 ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dye and Rogers and Borough Councillors Helliars-Symons and Ross.

21/89 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Plume declared an interest in planning applications for 37 Wiltshire Avenue and 34 Wiltshire Avenue. Cllr Plume also requested a dispensation from members to answer any questions or comments. No objections were raised.

21/90 MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

- a) Cllr Plume invited comments on the minutes of the meetings held on Monday 6th September 2021. No comments were made.

Following a proposal from Cllr Cannon and seconded by Cllr Martin it was:

RESOLVED: Minutes of Monday 6th September were AGREED

- b) Matters arising from the minutes of Monday 6th September.

The Clerk reported that Cala Homes have responded regarding the Pond Z area at the Buckler's Park development – the work is expected to be completed Jan/ Feb 2022. Cala Homes advised that no water had been sent off site as there had been very little rainfall. Following the recent rainfall, the stream has been flowing and the pond is full.

21/91 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Due to the previous declaration of interest, for the public questions Cllr Plume deferred to Cllr Foxwell.

A member of the public made a statement regarding planning application 212668 for 34 Wiltshire Avenue, stating that due to the extent of the work required the quickest, cheapest, approach is to demolish the current property and rebuild, and this would also provide minimal disruption to neighbours. A discussion followed on changes that had been made to the plans in order to address the comments on the previous proposal.

Regarding planning application 213107 for 37 Wiltshire Avenue a member of the public stated that they were at the meeting to observe and answer any questions regarding the application.

A member of the public living in a neighbouring property to 37 Wiltshire Avenue read a statement relating to the planning application. Concerns were expressed regarding overlooking and loss of privacy, loss of light and overshadowing and the design appearance and materials.

It was agreed that section 10 of the agenda, Planning, should be brought forward.

The changes made in revised planning application 212668 (34 Wiltshire Avenue) were discussed. It was noted that comments made regarding the balcony and the angled window had been addressed and members were satisfied that the concerns raised had been addressed. It was agreed that a comment would be submitted to this effect.

Planning application 213107 (37 Wiltshire Avenue) was discussed. Following a question regarding the extent of potential loss of light to the neighbouring property, the applicant stated that a light loss calculation had not been carried out. Members noted that the Borough Design Guide should be consulted with respect to compliance with loss of light requirements and the proposal should be reviewed to ensure it is not overbearing. The Clerk read out comments submitted by one member prior to the meeting. Following discussion it was agreed that the Assistant Clerk would collate and summarise these issues raised and distribute to members for review prior to submission.

The Assistant Clerk invited comments on planning applications 212817 (11 St Sebastian's Court) and 213133 (39 Butler Road). No comments were made.

Cllr Plume noted the Norwood / Ravenswood Zoom consultation was available to be viewed and the deadline for comments to be submitted to the Clerk is 7th October.

21/92 BOROUGH COUNCILLORS BRIEFING

Cllr Bowring noted the Ravenswood consultation. The Clerk stated that member's comments would be collated and submitted by 12th October.

A discussion was held on the issues with the traffic light junction between Heathlands Road and Nine Mile Ride. Cllr Bowring stated that this junction would receive a 'smart' traffic light upgrade and indicated that this should be done during the next financial year. Cllr Plume requested that the work be expedited to be carried out during the planned closure of Nine Mile Ride for the sewer upgrade. Cllr Bowring agreed to raise this suggestion with WBC officers.

Members emphasised the need for co-ordinated action during the closure of Nine Mile Ride, to carry out works such as sign cleaning and hedge cutting. Cllr Plume proposed that Cllrs Fenny and Bowring organise a meeting with a WBC highways officer to discuss co-ordination of the necessary works.

Cllr Fenny raised the issue of planning enforcements and noted that one item had been on the enforcement list for 4 years and another since 2018. Cllr Bowring stated that Cllr Ross was looking into the latter case. Cllr Fenny went on to list several further cases, and queried why these had not been addressed.

21/93 CLERKS REPORT

The Clerk has commissioned fencing replacement work to be carried out at the pedestrian entrance along Nine Mile Ride, to replace a stretch of fencing approximately 40m long and to re-site a pedestrian gate and vehicle gate. The pedestrian gate does not currently close. The re-siting of the gate post will allow a catch to be fitted so that the gate can be secured in a closed position.

The Clerk referred to the decision paper included as appendix 7B of the agenda, seeking to give the Clerk the authority to agree a discretionary rate for ad-hoc community led activities, for example neighbourhood watch groups.

Following a proposal from Cllr Fenny and seconded by Cllr Cannon it was:

RESOLVED: Delegation of authority to the Clerk to agree a discretionary hall hire ad-hoc rate for community-led activities was AGREED.

The Clerk stated that works on the allotment fencing have been completed – a new noticeboard is in the office awaiting collection, along with some signs that will go on the fence to recognise the collaborative project and where the funding has come from.

The Clerk stated that the planning application for the orchard fencing is due to be determined soon. The auditor has confirmed that it is acceptable to commission the works from the same company that carried out the allotment fencing as an extension to this project.

The Clerk stated that the final external piece of playground repair from Sovereign has been completed. The Clerk reported that an independent playground inspector who carries out inspections of local parishes has been commissioned to carry out an interim inspection of the Pinewood playgrounds. This will identify any issues that require action. The first inspection report is expected later this month.

The Clerk confirmed that the shipping containers were delivered to site today. Unfortunately, due to heavy rain on Saturday and overnight, the ground was too soft to position them behind the judo club. They are currently in the car park and the Clerk will arrange for them to be moved as soon as possible.

The Clerk is still awaiting further information on material costs and estimated time to complete the Byway 28 works from Volker Highways.

The Clerk confirmed that the insurance renewal has been agreed by the finance working group.

The new motorcycle / gym club gate has been ordered and the Clerk will circulate an expected installation date once it is known.

The Clerk reported an update on one member and it was agreed that the Clerk would organise a card to be sent on behalf of WWPC.

21/94 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE / OTHER MEETINGS

- A. Crowthorne Community Neighbourhood Action Group (CCNAG) – 16th September
Cllr Plume referred members to the notes of the meeting appended to the agenda and asked members for their comments or questions. The Clerk reported on a recent press release from WBC that indicated management of antisocial behaviour is being brought back in-house and away from the current Public Protection Partnership agreement. The Clerk has asked Borough Councillor Bill Soane to attend a future CCNAG meeting and speak about this. Cllr Plume stated that the council was praised recently by residents for the supportive work carried out in relation to issues at Bigshotte Park.
- B. CIL prioritisation workshop – 20th September
Discussion was deferred to item 9 of the agenda.
- C. Circle Hill and Walters Recreational Ground Trust Annual Meeting – 23 September

The Clerk gave a verbal report. The trust is experiencing more tree work than recent years and are therefore likely to be requesting a higher contribution to running costs. The Clerk reported that there had been an incident on one of the paths on Walters Recreational Ground where a walker was injured.

D. Parish and ward member meeting – 23 September

Cllr Plume referred members to the notes of the meeting and invited any questions or comments.

A discussion followed regarding the Pinewood lease. Cllr Plume stated that it had been made clear to WBC that WWPC are ready to sign the lease and a meeting to discuss the matter with WBC is anticipated.

Members noted that certainty of the lease renewal would make decisions on investing CIL into the site more straightforward.

E. Presentation from Norwood on the Ravenswood consultation – 29 September

Cllr Plume noted that a link to the presentation had been sent to all members and that a response to the consultation was required by 12th October. The Clerk requested comments to be submitted by Thursday. Cllr Plume encouraged members to watch the presentation and submit comments to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

F. Broadmoor stakeholder meeting – 30 September

Cllr Turtle stated that the meeting provided an update on the land sale of the old hospital site. A pre-evaluation exercise is being carried out which is expected to take 6 months. The documentation is a pre-requisite to obtaining approval from NHS England for Broadmoor to sell the land.

21/95 CIL PROJECTS UPDATE

Cllr Plume discussed the results of the CIL workshop presented in the Excel table included as appendix 9 of the agenda. The Clerk discussed the colour coding of the projects – orange meaning underway, yellow meaning approved but not started, and blue meaning under consideration and not yet approved. The Clerk provided an overview of the notes of the workshop, included as appendix 9(i) of the agenda. In particular, the Clerk stated that CIL projects had been prioritised in terms of those to be progressed as soon as possible, those to be progressed over the next 6 months, those pending other outcomes, and those already initiated. Cllr Plume stated that approval was being sought for the prioritisation as given in this paper.

Cllr Turtle requested more information regarding Project 2: Pinewood car park improvements - additional CCTV. The Clerk provided clarification. Following discussion, it was agreed that the prioritisation paper provided an initial plan which could be amended if/when new suggestions were made. It was agreed that 'expected spend' would be changed to 'outline budget'. Cllr Newland stated that the paper provided prioritisation for the limited resources of the office staff. A discussion followed regarding the timeframe for spending CIL and the interpretation of funds 'committed'.

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

RESOLVED: The CIL prioritisation paper included as appendix 9(i) of the agenda was AGREED.

Several CIL-funded projects identified for prioritisation were discussed:

- i. Pinewood carpark line markings – project 3 - see decision paper appendix 9a of the agenda.

Cllr Jordan provided an overview of the decision paper.

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

RESOLVED: The Pinewood car park lining works as proposed in appendix 9a of the agenda was AGREED.

Cllr Jordan also raised other ideas for improvements to the car park. Cllr Plume suggested that Cllr Jordan talk to the groundsmen who also had ideas for car park improvements.

- ii. Replacement fencing at the Nine Mile Ride pedestrian entrance - project 16 (authorised under delegated spending authority, Finance Regs ref 4.1)
The Clerk clarified that this item was to approve the spending from CIL.

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

RESOLVED: Funding of the replacement fencing from CIL was AGREED.

- iii. Additional CCTV cameras for Pinewood – project 2 – to approve delegated authority to the Clerk and Chairman if the quote is within the existing spending levels authorised at the April 2021 council meeting.
The Clerk stated that the budget for CCTV improvement at Pinewood approved in April 2021 was £7,000. The funds remaining in this budget, following the installation of the main set of cameras, was £1,697. The Clerk requested approval to go ahead with the provision of two additional CCTV cameras if the cost is within the remaining budget. Following discussion, it was agreed to extend the budget to £2,000.

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

RESOLVED: A budget of £2,000 from CIL for the provision of two additional camera was AGREED.

- iv. Replacement bins for Circle Hill and Walters Recreation Ground – project 46
The Clerk discussed the issues at Circle Hill and Walters Rec where bagged household waste is being placed in the litter bins. The Trust is looking to replace the existing traditional bins with closed bins with a flap to reduce this, and the incidents of wildlife accessing food waste discarded in the bins.

A discussion followed regarding the appropriateness of continuing requests for funding from the Circle Hill Trust. Cllr Newland stated that there were four WWPC trustees, whose role was to report back to council. The Clerk stated that the other three trustees were the Clerk, Cllr Cannon and Cllr Dye. Due to various circumstances, there has not been significant attendance at Circle Hill Trust meetings by WWPC councillors. Cllr Newland stated that if the Trust now needs to spend more money it is likely to be due to a change in circumstances rather than poor budget management. Cllr Turtle stated that a decision had been made earlier in the year to provide no additional funding to the amount agreed at that time. Cllr Cannon stated that at the meeting she had attended a very serious approach was taken to making decisions. The Clerk stated that funding for Circle Hill and Walters Recreation Ground was through a charitable trust agreement where both parishes jointly cover the costs of both sites. Cllr Newland outlined the process for the proposal and agreement of an annual budget.

The Clerk stated that this proposal is for a separate spend for a one-off amenity purchase which qualifies for the use of CIL funding.

Cllr Fenny questioned whether replacing the open bins with closed lid bins would resolve the problem of discarded household waste. The Clerk stated that discussion with the CPC Clerk over this matter had indicated that similar changes made elsewhere had led to reduced abuse of the bins in this manner.

Following a proposal from Cllr Newland and seconded by Cllr Martin it was:

RESOLVED: A budget of £1,650 from CIL for half the cost of new bin provision for Circle Hill and Walter Recreational Ground was AGREED, with one abstention.

Following discussion over the budget for management of the Circle Hill and Walters Recreation Ground, it was agreed that the Trust Chairman, Mr Phil Metcalf, be invited to speak to members to provide information and answer any questions about the request for increasing the annual budget.

21/96 PLANNING

Cllr Fenny requested an update on the Pineridge holiday let application. The Assistant Clerk agreed to review any developments on this application and update Cllr Fenny accordingly.

21/97 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- A. To receive a report on outstanding balances (as given in appendix 11A of the agenda).
The Clerk confirmed that one payment listed on the report as outstanding has now been received by cheque.
- B. To approve payments both made and still to be made (as given in appendices 11B(i) and 11B(ii) of the agenda).
The Clerk stated there were no issues of note.
- C. To receive a detailed income and expenditure report and financial performance against budget report to 31st August 2021 (as given in appendix 11C of the agenda).
The Clerk noted the spend on a delivery of tractor fuel.
- D. To receive a report of salary expenditure year to date (as given in appendix 11D of the agenda).
Report was received.
- E. To note the completion of the quarterly checks by Cllrs Martin and Rogers on 17.9.2021, with no irregularities to report.
Checks were noted.
- F. To receive and approve an updated list of approved contractors (as given in appendix 11F of the agenda).
The Clerk referred members to the updated list of approved contractors. Following a question from Cllr Fenny, the Clerk clarified that the council's Financial Regulations permitted higher levels of spending with contractors that have previously evidenced good value and quality of work.
- G. To receive and note completion of the external audit (AGAR) for 2020-21.
The Clerk stated that the external audit report included an exception item relating to the requirement to obtain additional sign-off of BACS payments in excess of £5,000. The Clerk noted that the issue had been raised by the Internal Auditor and steps were immediately taken to prevent recurrence of this issue going forward. Cllr Foxwell clarified that all the expenditure that these payments related to had received council approval.

Following a proposal from Cllr Martin and seconded by Cllr Foxwell it was:
RESOLVED: The financial information as described in items A-G above was AGREED

TREE WORKS AT PINWOOD

Cllr Plume stated that tree works involving the crown lift of one oak and the removal for six other trees had been identified, requiring a spend of £1,500. The Clerk described the issues associated with the proximity of the oak trees to the boxing club.

Following a proposal from Cllr Turtle and seconded by Cllr Newland it was:
RESOLVED: The tree works as quoted in appendix 12 of the agenda was AGREED

21/98 CHAIRMAN’S COMMUNICATIONS

Cllr Plume discussed the petition for the provision of a safe crossing of Old Wokingham Road in the vicinity of Ellis Road. Cllr Plume asked whether members would be willing to endorse the petition so that it would be advertised on the WWPC website. Cllr Plume discussed the reasons why a pedestrian crossing is needed at this location.

Following a proposal from Cllr Martin and seconded by Cllr Fenny it was:
RESOLVED: WWPC endorsement of the petition for the provision of a safe crossing of Old Wokingham Road in the vicinity of Ellis Road was AGREED

Cllr Fenny requested an update on progress with the Byway 28 project. The Clerk stated that the previously received quote lacked detail clarification on the works had been requested. Volker Highways had subsequently provided a day rate, but no indication of the duration of the works or material costs. The Clerk was therefore unable to authorise the start of the project due to the lack of a reliable budget figure. The Clerk has raised the issue with Andrew Fletcher.

21/99 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7.30 PM ON MONDAY 1st NOVEMBER 2021

21/100 MEETING CLOSED AT 9:55 PM

Signed:

Date: 1st November 2021