

**Wokingham Without Parish Council
Minutes of the Council Meeting
Held on Monday 7th March 2022**

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

Commencing 7:30pm and concluding at 9:18pm

Present: Councillors J Cannon, R Fenny, L Foxwell, P Jordan (arrived 7:43pm), C Lancaster, N Martin, A Plume and S Turtle. Katy Hughes - Clerk, Sharon Way – Assistant Clerk.
Borough Councillor P Helliars-Symons plus one member of the public.

Apologies: Councillors K Newland, J Rogers and K Whitehead and Borough Councillor A Ross.

21/186 WELCOME

Cllr Plume welcomed everyone to the meeting.

21/187 CO-OPTION OF MR JAMES PERRIN

The co-option of Mr Perrin was deferred. Another member of the public has expressed an interest in becoming a councillor and will attend the April meeting to observe proceedings.

21/188 ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Newland, Rogers and Whitehead and Borough Cllr Ross.

21/189 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

21/190 MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

- a) Cllr Foxwell invited comments on the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 7th February 2022.

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

RESOLVED: Minutes of Monday 7th February were AGREED

- b) Matters arising from the minutes of Monday 7th February.

The Clerk stated that the risk register was being reformatted to include additionally requested information and will be brought to a future meeting. Cllr Fenny referred to traffic modelling for the Nine Mile Ride Extension. The Clerk confirmed that a call-back had been received from Mr Easton and a follow-up call is being arranged.

21/191 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

21/192 BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING

Cllr Helliars-Symons stated that work on Oaklands Lane will start in Spring, creating a no-through road and improving the surface of the middle section. Cllr Cannon stated that the path between Oaklands Lane and Leith Close is extremely overgrown and requested that this is trimmed-back. Cllr Turtle noted that many footpaths in the parish have become overgrown. Cllr Helliars-Symons requested that the Clerk send a list of footpaths requiring attention to WBC and copy her in. Cllr Plume stated that there was a general issue of lack of maintenance in the parish and proposed that the WBC departments should be tasked to visit the parish in order to progress a solution to

the issue. Cllr Helliar-Symons expressed a willingness to attend such a visit with WBC officers. Cllr Helliar-Symons stated that she had not received any correspondence from residents concerning the cutting back of bushes and trees along Oaklands Lane.

Cllr Helliar-Symons stated that WBC are currently working on the development of several strategy documents. This includes a new waste collection strategy, a climate strategy, an anti-poverty strategy and an equality and diversity strategy.

Regarding the platinum Jubilee, Cllr Helliar-Symons confirmed that road closures for a street party are free.

Cllr Helliar-Symons suggested that CIL funds might be spent upgrading the buildings on the Pinewood site and noted that WBC had agreed to extend the sublease to 25 years. A discussion was held regarding subleases and the Clerk stated that the council were awaiting agreement from WBC's solicitor to the 15 subleases and also responses to several questions raised. It was noted that discussions are ongoing with WBC on a weekly basis. The Clerk advised that Gareth Rees of WBC Shared Legal Services was dealing with these matters.

Cllr Helliar-Symons noted that a Ukrainian flag was raised outside the WBC offices on 2nd March and that this expressed the desire of Wokingham residents to stand with the Ukrainian people.

Cllr Cannon noted her participation in the climate talks being organised by WBC, as a resident of Wokingham Without. The Clerk also noted her participation.

21/193 CLERK'S REPORT

Cllr Plume referred members to the Clerk's report circulated as appendix 9 of the agenda.

The Clerk stated that the date for the commencement of resurfacing of the southern-most section of Byway 28 was weather dependent (wetness of the surface).

The Clerk noted that the window replacement of the Memorial Hall had been completed, but the curtains in the Howard Palmer room had not yet been reinstated, as the fittings were in a poor state of repair. Cllr Turtle suggested that the curtains may not need to be replaced. The Clerk agreed to consult the room hirers.

The Clerk reported on damage caused by Storm Eunice. Nine trees have been lost, one fell across the railway, a large tree fell on the adventure playground causing damage to play equipment, a fallen tree has caused damage to the dipping platform. A quote has been received for repair of the play equipment and an insurance claim has been raised which is expected to cover most of the repair costs across the site. The Clerk requested members' consent to approve the repair of the play equipment due to the long lead-in time for this work. The Clerk thanked the grounds team for attending on site at the weekend to assess the damage and for dealing so promptly with the aftermath of storm Eunice.

The boiler in the Memorial Hall has been replaced following a series of issues. This spending was approved under the Clerk and Chairman's authority.

The Clerk reported that the Pinewood Hall survey had found asbestos dust in the loft space, which needs to be dealt with prior to the commencement of any of the refurbishment works. A quote for £4800+VAT had been received for its removal. The Clerk requested members' consent to authorise this work, to enable it to be carried out during the Easter holidays. The Clerk confirmed that the quote was for the whole loft space. All members agreed that the Clerk should

proceed with this work. The Clerk will include this work as an agenda item at the April meeting for formal approval.

The Clerk discussed the power supply to the Pinewood site. The recent survey of electrical systems on the site found that the Pinewood Hall distribution board was non-compliant. This has been replaced and an earth fault has subsequently been detected. The breakers on the board have been changed to prevent trip-outs, but the wiring in the building will need to be reviewed as part of the refurbishment project.

The power supply contract for the Pinewood site expires in August 2022 and prices will increase significantly. The clubs will be alerted to the forthcoming price increases.

The Clerk notified members that the litter pick was likely to be carried out on Sunday 3rd April, with equipment to be collected from the parish office or the café.

Cllr Plume noted the improvement of the fencing around the orchard and that compliments had been received. Cllr Turtle stated that the management plan would be progressed.

Cllr Fenny referred to a section of fencing along Nine Mile Ride near the roundabout. The Clerk stated that this was to provide access for emergency vehicles to the football pitch.

21/194 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE / OTHER MEETINGS

- A. Crowthorne Community Neighbourhood Action Group – 10th February
Cllr Plume noted his disappointment with the running of the group, and that the notes from the meeting are very CPC-centred. Cllr Plume expressed his view that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman should have been selected from different parishes. Cllr Foxwell stated that the group was only willing to discuss security issues. The Clerk is meeting the CPC Clerk on 8th March and will suggest the Chair alternates between parishes.
- B. Platinum Jubilee Working Group – 15th February
Cllr Plume deferred the discussion until the later agenda item.
- C. Pinewood Forum Meeting – 16th February
Cllr Plume referred members to the earlier discussion regarding Pinewood leases. Cllr Fenny noted that WBC were publicising a council-run boxing club in the centre of Wokingham and questioned why the Pinewood boxing club had not been similarly supported. The Clerk advised that the facility in Wokingham town centre was a boxing gym rather than a boxing club. With respect to the local plan comments, Cllr Fenny stated his appreciation for the open and transparent comments from Cllrs Ross and Helliars-Symons, but noted that Cllr Bowring was less transparent with his comments. Cllr Plume noted that Cllr Bowring was under no obligation to publicise his comments.
- D. Building and Facilities Working Group – 3rd March.
Cllr Plume stated that notes of this meeting had recently been circulated to members. Cllr Foxwell noted the completion of asbestos and building surveys and the issues arising. The Clerk noted that an electrician would be visiting site on 9th March to inspect and advise the cost for repair/replacement of the damaged wiring. This will be circulated to members once received.

21/195 POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS FOR REVIEW

- A. To review and approve the council's High Consequence Infectious Disease policy

Cllr Plume referred members to the policy document given in appendix 10A of the agenda and invited questions and comments.

With respect to paragraph 3.1, Cllr Turtle stated that it would be preferable to require a quorum to activate the policy if time permitted. With respect to paragraph 9.1, Cllr Turtle stated that consideration should be given to how to maintain the security of any items removed from the office.

The Clerk proposed the following amendment to 9.1: At the end of paragraph 9.1 add – “The Clerk to maintain a copy of paperwork removed from the office and share a copy of the record with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.”

With respect to paragraph 3.1 the following amendment was proposed: Second bullet point, append the extra sentence - “It is preferable to activate the policy with a quorum of members if this is feasible.”

With respect to paragraph 5.1 the following amendment was proposed: 5th bullet point, amend to “...and / or healthcare settings”.

Following a proposal from Cllr Turtle and seconded by Cllr Foxwell it was:
RESOLVED: The amendments to the HCID policy were AGREED.

Following a proposal from Cllr Turtle and seconded by Cllr Lancaster it was:
RESOLVED: The HCID policy as amended above was AGREED.

- B. To review and approve the council’s Investment Strategy
Cllr Plume referred members to the Investment Strategy document given in appendix 10B of the agenda and invited members to comment.
The Clerk stated that no wording had changed from the main sections of the previous policy, the only change being to Annex A, and noted that the end of year position is hard to predict due to hall hire uncertainties and that any investment recommendations would be made by the Finance Working Group once the end of year position is known. Cllr Fenny noted that significant funds were not accruing interest. The Clerk clarified that it was very difficult for parish councils to access interest-bearing investment opportunities that did not carry the risk of loss of funds. The Clerk also noted the previous decision to keep CIL funding separated from other funds.

Following a proposal from Cllr Lancaster and seconded by Cllr Turtle it was:
RESOLVED: The Investment Strategy 2022-23 was AGREED.

21/196 PLATINUM JUBILEE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Cllr Plume referred members to the decision paper given in appendix 11 of the agenda and invited comments from members.

- A. To approve the purchase of Platinum Jubilee commemorative leather bookmarks to gift to children at primary schools within the parish.
The Clerk clarified that the recommendation was that state primary schools would be supplied with bookmarks and the school inspection reports had been used to estimate numbers of pupils. Following a discussion on whether bookmarks were an appropriate gift it was agreed that the schools would be consulted. It was agreed that the decision would be deferred until the schools had been consulted.

- B. To approve a financial contribution towards a platinum jubilee tea party event to be organised by the Pinewood Bar and Café and to be held in the Pinewood Car park during the Bank Holiday period.

Cllr Jordan explained the plans for a ticketed event to cover the cost of a packed lunch with council providing a contribution towards an entertainer. Cllr Jordan estimated that the event would cater for circa 50 children. Cllr Turtle expressed reservations about the plan and considered that the event should be open to all parishioners or the council should have greater involvement. Cllr Fenny stated that he had understood that this would be a parish event. The Clerk clarified that it was not intended to be run by the parish, but an event run by the café and supported by the parish. Cllr Martin stated that he supported the proposal. Cllrs Cannon and Plume also expressed support for the proposal.

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

RESOLVED: The financial contribution towards a platinum jubilee tea party event to be organised by the Pinewood Bar and Café was AGREED. One member voted against, the resolution was therefore agreed by a majority.

- C. To approve the purchase of prizes to award to those taking part in a free treasure hunt to be held over the half-term holiday around the Pinewood site.

The Clerk outlined the plans for a free 'treasure hunt' event around the Pinewood site and stated that this would not be held over the whole parish in order to avoid a conflict with the Crowthorne Trails event, which will be held over that week. This will be organised by Cllr Jordan and the parish office staff.

Following a proposal from Cllr Plume and seconded by Cllr Lancaster it was:

RESOLVED: The purchase of prizes to award to those taking part in a free treasure hunt was AGREED.

- D. To approve the purchase of materials and prizes for a decorative bunting design competition.

Cllr Cannon discussed the plans for a bunting design competition, including the possibility of organising a 2hr / half day workshop with materials to enable parishioners to create bunting triangles with a Jubilee or Pinewood theme. The Clerk stated that this idea will be promoted to all groups which use the Pinewood site.

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

RESOLVED: The purchase of materials and prizes for a decorative bunting design competition was AGREED.

- E. Following a proposal from Cllr Martin and seconded by Cllr Lancaster it was:

RESOLVED: The virement of funds from the council's general reserves to cover the cost of the above approved activities was AGREED.

21/197 ACCOUNTANCY AND INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES

- A. To approve the appointment of Claire Connell to undertake accountancy support for the council following the completion of the 2021-22 Annual Return.
- B. To approve the appointment of David Weller as Internal Auditor for the council for the 2022-23 financial year.

The Clerk outlined the content of the decision paper given in appendix 12, providing a basis for the proposed appointments.

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

RESOLVED: The appointment of Claire Connell to provide accountancy support and David Weller as Internal Auditor was AGREED.

21/198 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Cllr Plume referred members to the decision paper given in appendix 13. Members discussed possible speakers for the event and Berkshire Lowland Rescue was suggested.

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

RESOLVED: The proposal to change the date of the annual parish meeting from 14th March to 16th May was AGREED.

21/199 CIL PROJECTS UPDATE

The Clerk provided an overview of the updated document circulated separately to members, and noted that the window replacement project, 7A, had now been completed.

21/200 PLANNING

A. To receive and confirm comments from members on current planning applications (circulated 1st March 2022).

The comments were received and confirmed.

B. To note comments submitted and updates received on planning applications previously circulated via email to members on 11th, 18th February and 1st March 2022 (as given in appendix 15B of the agenda).

The comments were noted and no further comments were made.

21/201 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

A. To receive a report on outstanding balances (as given in appendix 16A of the agenda).

The Clerk confirmed that a number of outstanding payments had now been received and a further reminder sent for one remaining outstanding.

B. To approve payments both made and still to be made (as given in appendices 16B(i) and 16B(ii) of the agenda).

C. To receive a detailed income and expenditure report and financial performance against budget report to 31st January 2022 (as given in appendix 16C of the agenda).

The report was received.

D. To receive a report of salary expenditure year to date (as given in appendix 16D of the agenda).

The report was received.

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

RESOLVED: The financial information as described in items A-D above was AGREED

21/202 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

Cllr Plume stated that a constructive lease meeting had been held with the Pinewood clubs and WBC.

21/203 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7.30 PM ON MONDAY 4th APRIL 2022

21/204 PART 1 MEETING CLOSED AT 9:18 PM

Signed:

Date: 4th April 2022