

**Wokingham Without Parish Council
Minutes of the Council Meeting
Held on Monday 1st August 2022**

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

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

- Present:** Councillors R Fenny, L Foxwell, P Jordan, C Lancaster, N Martin and S Turtle. Borough Councillors C Bowring, D Davies and P Helliars-Symons. Katy Hughes - Clerk, Sharon Way – Deputy Clerk.
- Apologies:** Councillors J Cannon, J Millett, K Newland, A Plume (*Cllr Plume was unable to attend in person*) and J Rogers
- Note:** *Cllr A Plume joined via Zoom*

22/60 WELCOME

Cllr Foxwell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

22/61 ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Cannon, Millett, Newland, Plume (*Cllr Plume was unable to attend in person*) and Rogers. Cllr Turtle offered apologies for absence for the September meeting.

22/62 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

22/63 MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

- a) Cllr Foxwell invited comments on the minutes of the Part 1 meeting held on Monday 4th July 2022.

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

RESOLVED: Minutes of Part 1 meeting, Monday 4th July were AGREED

- b) Cllr Foxwell invited comments on the minutes of the Part 2 meeting held on Monday 4th July 2022.

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

RESOLVED: Minutes of Part 2 meeting, Monday 4th June were AGREED

- c) Matters arising from the minutes of 4th July.
The Clerk provided a verbal update on Greenwood Road shops. Tesco have notified Cllr Plume that they would only maintain the shrubbery in front of their shop. Cllr Plume has not yet received a response from a local firm regarding the possibility of sponsoring the shrubbery maintenance. The shop tenants and residents have requested a meeting with the council to discuss the issue more generally. Cllr Turtle stated that the planting belonged to the council. A discussion ensued regarding insurance cover and risks associated with overgrown foliage, and whether the grounds team should cut this back. Cllr Fenny updated members on the history of the maintenance of the planting in this area. The safety of the steps in this area was also discussed. The Clerk referred to the potential legal implications and risks associated with maintaining this area. The Clerk agreed to contact the council's insurer to

establish risk / liability in the event that the area is maintained by the council. The Clerk agreed to follow up the tenant / resident meeting with Cllr Plume. The Clerk also agreed to contact WBC to establish what action they would usually take in similar circumstances.

22/64 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

22/65 BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING

B/Cllr Helliard-Symons referred to WBC funds made available in March for people who are struggling financially, and money for food vouchers for children on free school meals. These schemes are up and running and those seeking assistance can do so via Citizens Advice or One Front Door.

B/Cllr Helliard-Symons stated that the new Wokingham leisure centre was opened the previous week. The work was started during the first lock-down. The library will remain in Denmark street until the end of the summer holiday, after which it will move to the new leisure centre. There is currently no decision with respect to the future use of the library building.

With respect to Grays Farm, B/Cllr Helliard-Symons stated that a master planner and quantity surveyor had been appointed and site investigations are nearing completion. Further appointments are expected in the next 2-3 months. Members confirmed their interest in being involved in the development of the site, and B/Cllr Helliard-Symons encouraged the council to contact Steve Moore, Head of WBC Leisure. B/Cllr Davies offered to provide an introduction to Mr Moore, with a view to organising a meeting with the council.

B/Cllr Helliard-Symons stated that Liberal Democrats now occupied the executive posts on WBC and had been non-committal when questioned regarding the potential for housing development on the Pinewood site.

The Clerk stated that the council was on the process of arranging a meeting with the new leader of WBC. B/Cllr Davies discussed his concerns with respect to development in the parish and encouraged members to ask about the land supply.

B/Cllr Bowring stated that Chris Easton has replaced Andy Glencross as Assistant Director of highways. Cllr Fenny discussed the construction waste / materials that had been left in the vicinity of Ravenswood / Heathlake Road. The Clerk stated that a WBC officer had instructed the contractor to remove this material.

B/Cllr Bowring discussed the issue of WBC carrying out repairs along Nine Mile Ride, and the need to meet with Mr Easton to understand how this will be planned logically going forward.

B/Cllr Davies stated that the new leisure centre requires pre-booking.

22/66 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk referred members to the report circulated as appendix 7 of the agenda.

The Clerk presented a series of PowerPoint slides of the designs for Pinewood Hall, phase 1 and 2, and a series of photographs illustrating the work that has been carried out to date. The colour of paint was discussed. It was agreed that the pillars would be painted the same colour as the walls and the ceiling strips should be painted white. The Clerk stated that the hall works were

scheduled to be completed by 31st August and the phase 2 works will be completed by early November.

With respect to the damaged trees at Circle Hill, Cllr Turtle stated that there was no evidence that this was caused by vandalism, and that in her experience, this was more likely to be due to deer activity.

The Clerk clarified that planning enforcement training would take place on Tuesday 2nd August at 2pm.

The Clerk stated that a WBC Remuneration Panel Questionnaire had been received, relating to the remuneration of members for costs incurred as a result of undertaking councillor duties, such as printing or potentially child-care. The Clerk recommended that the council respond that this remuneration will be considered further once more detailed proposals have been provided; this was agreed by members. The Remuneration Panel is expected to report in the autumn. The Clerk stated that funding for this remuneration would be from precept. The Clerk agreed to report back to members in due course.

22/67 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE / OTHER MEETINGS

Cllr Martin reported on a recent meeting with Andy Glencross, former Assistant Director of Highways at WBC to discuss vehicle speed limits on Honey Hill. Cllr Martin stated that he considered WBC's acceptance of the current 60mph speed limit to be irresponsible and he said the police themselves agreed that the current signage is not responsible, but that no progress had been made in discussions with WBC. Cllr Martin stated three ways of moving this forward. Firstly, the matter could be taken up with Steve Moore, Head of Highways at WBC and Chris Easton Andy Glencross's successor. Secondly, a complaint could be raised with the local government ombudsman. Finally the press could be involved.

The Clerk stated that a local road in Shinfield had had its speed limit reduced from 60mph to 30mph and suggested that an FOI request is made to WBC to find out how and why this happened, and potentially the same steps could be applied to Honey Hill. Cllr Turtle suggested that the Borough Councillors may be able to assist with determining how this happened, without needing to raise an FOI.

22/68 PINWOOD HALL PROJECT UPDATE

- A. To receive a verbal update on the Pinewood Hall refurbishment project
The Clerk referred to the earlier slide presentation.
- B. To consider a variation to the delegated decision approval given at the June and July council meetings, to provide greater flexibility in relation to member availability.
The Clerk discussed several issues relating to the availability of members to respond to time sensitive emails with respect to the works. In order to keep the project on track, the Clerk is requesting that members agree to extend the previously agreed transfer of delegated responsibility, which applied in Cllr Plume's absence, to also apply in the absence of Cllr Whitehead so that no specific member is required, but that all members of the Buildings and Facilities Working Group can respond to queries and requests for decisions relating to the works.

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

RESOLVED: The delegation of the approval of works is amended such that in the event of Cllr Whitehead's and/or Cllr Plume's absence their delegated responsibility is transferred to any one of the Working Group Councillors - Cllrs Cannon, Foxwell, Jordan or Turtle, was AGREED

22/69 TREE WORKS

Cllr Foxwell referred members to the three quotations that had been circulated for these works. The Clerk outlined the reasons why these works are required, related to the recent Pinewood tree survey.

The Clerk recommended that the council proceed with the quotation from Paramount Tree Care, which is the lowest quotation, subject to receiving satisfactory references.

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

RESOLVED: That the tree work is contracted to Paramount Tree Care, subject to receiving satisfactory references was AGREED

22/70 PLANNING

- A. To receive and confirm comments from members on current planning applications. Comments were received and confirmed.
- B. To note comments submitted and updates received on planning applications previously circulated via email to members on the dates specified above (as given in appendix 11B of the agenda).
The comments were noted, and no further comments were made.

22/71 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- A. To receive a report on outstanding balances (as given in appendix 12A of the agenda).
The report was received.
- B. To approve payments both made and still to be made (as given in appendices 12B(i) and 12B(ii) of the agenda).
- C. To receive a detailed income and expenditure report and financial performance against budget report to 30th June (as given in appendix 12C of the agenda).
The report was received.
- D. To receive a report of salary expenditure year to date (as given in appendix 12D of the agenda).
The report was received.

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

RESOLVED: Items A-D, above, were AGREED

- E. To approve a virement of funds from general reserves to the council's training budget (as given in appendix 12E of the agenda).
The Clerk discussed that since the council is up for election in May 2023 in order to retain the general power of competence either the Clerk or a member of staff must be CiLCA qualified. The Deputy Clerk has agreed to undertake CiLCA training, but there are currently insufficient funds in the training budget. Virement of funds is therefore required from general reserves.

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

RESOLVED: A virement of funds from general reserves to the council's training budget, as given in appendix 12E of the agenda, was AGREED

22/72 STAFFING COMMITTEE

Cllr Foxwell stated that the staffing committee required at least one further member. Cllr Fenny agreed to join the staffing committee until the new Clerk has been recruited.

22/73 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

With respect to Greenwood Road shops, Cllr Plume agreed that the area should be kept tidy and requested patience from members while the process to meet with the tenants is undertaken.

Cllr Plume stated that Pinewood leases are close to being signed, pending action from the solicitors.

Cllr Plume stated that the Pinewood Hall works are looking good and thanked all those involved to date.

22/74 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7.30 PM ON MONDAY 5th SEPTEMBER 2022

22/75 MEETING CLOSED AT 9:18 PM

Signed:

Date: 5th September 2022