

**Wokingham Without Parish Council
Minutes of the Council Meeting
Held on Monday 3rd July 2023**

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

Commencing 7:30pm and concluding at 9:48pm

Present: Councillors R Fenny, L Foxwell, C Lancaster, N Martin, J Millett, J Rogers, S Turtle and K Whitehead. Debbie Gooch – Clerk and Sharon Way – Deputy Clerk.

Apologies: Councillors P Jordan, J Montgomery (also B/Cllr) and A Plume. Borough Councillors D Davies and P Helliard-Symons.

23/38 WELCOME

Cllr Foxwell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

23/39 ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Jordan, Montgomery (also B/Cllr) and Plume, and B/Cllrs Davies and Helliard-Symons.

23/40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

23/41 MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

- A. Cllr Foxwell invited comments on the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 5th June 2023.

Cllr Turtle requested minor changes to paragraphs 1, 5 and 6 of minute 23/31. The changes were agreed.

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

RESOLVED: Minutes of the meeting, Monday 5th June, including the minor amendments discussed above, were AGREED.

- B. Matters arising from the minutes of 5th June.

Cllr Martin stated that he had met with B/Cllr Stephen Conway to discuss the speed limit on Honey Hill. B/Cllr Conway had requested copies of all correspondence and would discuss the matter with Paul Fishwick.

Cllr Fenny noted that Cllr Montgomery had been planning to meet with Paul Fishwick regarding the traffic lights at the Heathlands Road / Nine Mile Ride. Cllr Fenny stated that he was seeking clarification from Cllr Montgomery on when this meeting would take place.

23/42 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Clerk stated that a member of the public had written to the council asking whether the parish council might have a location suitable for beehives. Members discussed whether Honey Meadow would be a suitable location and noted that the hives may have to be relocated when work starts here. It was **agreed** that the Clerk would invite the member of the public to speak at a future meeting.

23/43 PLANNING

Members discussed changes to the handling of planning at council meetings. It was **agreed** that to improve public transparency, each planning application would be listed in the agenda and discussed individually at the meeting. Additionally, it was **agreed** that the planning agenda item would follow public questions. Members discussed the need for larger applications to be given particular consideration. Members discussed the use of email for planning discussions. It was **agreed** that the Deputy Clerk would continue to send members weekly planning emails, and agreed comments would be submitted following the council meeting. Depending on the deadline for submission of comments to WBC an extension may need to be requested.

A. To review and comment on recent planning applications (as given in appendix 6a of the agenda)

i. No. 231144, Pine Copse

Cllr Fenny discussed the history of planning applications on this site. Cllr Fenny also noted that the WBC draft local plan has designated Nine Mile Ride as a 'green route', but that historically the local plan had not been taken into consideration by planning inspectors because it was only in draft form. Cllr Fenny stated that the need for progress with the local plan and improving the enforcement of planning decisions were matters to be raised with the Borough Councillors.

Following discussion, members **agreed** to submit the following comment - *WWPC does not object to the application providing any approval includes the condition that the kennels shall only be used for purposes ancillary to the enjoyment of the dwelling house.*

ii. No. 231220, 19 Dashers Close

Following discussion, members **agreed** to submit the following comment - *WWPC object to the application on the basis that it extends operation of the business into unsociable hours in a residential area.*

iii. No. 231380, 33 Larkwood Drive.

Following discussion, members **agreed** to submit the following comment - *No objection.*

B. To note planning decisions received.
Noted.

23/44 BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING

No Borough Councillors were in attendance.

Members discussed the WBC announcement that the SEND school would not be sited on Grays Farm as it was the planned site for a 'sports hub'. Members **agreed** that the Borough Councillors should be asked for more information about the WBC plans, particularly now that confirmation of its use has been released into the public domain.

23/45 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk referred members to the report included as appendix 8 of the agenda.

The Clerk stated that Herrington Carmichael had offered to meet tenants at the parish office to discuss any outstanding queries. Members **agreed** that the Clerk should write to Herrington

Carmichael stating that this was not appropriate and that the issues should have been resolved much earlier. The Clerk noted that many clubs were ready to sign their leases.

The Clerk discussed the addition of the asset register to the Rialtas accounting system. This was **agreed** by members.

The Clerk discussed the need for pond maintenance. Members discussed whether a pond maintenance schedule had been created. It was **agreed** that the Clerk would determine the work that had previously been carried out and submit a proposal for the next meeting.

With respect to the Memorial Hall, the Clerk stated that the contractor approved by the insurance company would be replacing the whole floor during the week commencing 31st July. If further issues with the underlying structure are revealed during this work, then additional time and cost may be incurred. Cllr Whitehead stated that if the joists had had previous anti-rot treatment applied, then it may still be under warranty. Cllr Whitehead **agreed** to write to the Clerk with his advice on the matter.

Members **agreed** that first aid training should be provided to staff. The Clerk **agreed** to establish potential dates and levels of interest in training and send a note to members.

The Clerk stated that Richard Gater's computer is old and needs replacing. The Clerk **agreed** to send the proposed specification to Cllr Millet for review and advice.

The Clerk discussed improvements to the WWPC website to publicise activities available to the public at Pinewood and St Sebastian's Memorial Hall. This was supported by members, and it was noted that the Communications Working Group should also be involved.

Regarding website security, the Clerk stated that the website had recently been subject to DDOS attacks. The website provider has recommended certain actions to mitigate the risk of further attacks. Cllr Millett **agreed** to discuss the issues and appropriate measures with the Clerk.

The Clerk stated that the Flying Start nursery has been running the air conditioning while the doors are open to the garden. The Clerk stated that electricity meter readings will be monitored, compared with previous readings and, if necessary, the nursery will be billed for any additional costs.

A RoSPA inspection has been carried out. The Clerk **agreed** to bring the full report to the next meeting.

23/46 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE / OTHER MEETINGS

A. Parish / Ward liaison meeting – 13th June 2023.

Cllr Foxwell stated that there were no new matters raised at the meeting. The Clerk **agreed** to circulate notes of the meeting to members.

B. Finance WG meeting to discuss lease invoices – 22nd June 2023.

The Clerk stated that an invoice had been received from Blandy & Blandy. Council approval was required to pay this invoice as it took the total spend to greater than the previously agreed limit. Members **agreed** that this invoice should be paid.

The Clerk discussed the estimated cost of invoices still to be received by Blandy & Blandy and Herrington Carmichael and stated that the total predicted spend was approximately £10,000 more than the budget that had been agreed by council to be transferred from

the car park earmarked reserves. The Clerk **agreed** to circulate a spreadsheet to members providing the current financial position and estimates of invoices still to be received.

Members discussed whether clubs should pay for any further changes to sub-leases. Members also discussed terms of engagement and compliance with law society regulations. Cllr Rogers stated that the terms of engagement received from Herrington Carmichael should be reviewed.

Cllr Martin requested the Clerk prepare a definitive list of the clubs that are ready to sign.

23/47 ORCHARD MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Cllr Turtle stated that management plan has been well received by the group and that comments from the group are currently being reviewed. Cllr Turtle stated that the working party were unable to access the orchard due to the lock being changed for the football awards event, and requested to be informed whenever the lock/code is changed.

Cllr Turtle stated that it would be beneficial for the goal posts to be removed when the pitches are not being used by the club, and that it was essential that the nets were used during club activities. Cllr Millet **agreed** to discuss this with the Clerk and raise the matter with Martin Turner.

23/48 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AMENDMENT

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

RESOLVED: That for Financial Regulation 11.1 b the contractual limit will be raised from £25,000 to £30,000 in accordance with The Public Contracts (Amendment) Regulations 2022 was AGREED.

23/49 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- A. To receive a report on outstanding balances (as given in appendix 12A of the agenda).
The report was received.
- B. To note payments both made and payments due (as given in appendices 12B(i) and 12B(ii) of the agenda).
The Clerk noted that the site security contractor had increased costs by 13% without informing the council in advance and this cost increase had therefore not been included in the budget. The Clerk would seek comparative quotations. With respect to cleaning, the previous cleaner has been replaced and positive reports have been received regarding the standard of cleaning at both sites. The Clerk is awaiting credit notes for the cleaning that was not carried out in May. The Clerk is reviewing the Veolia waste contract due to the poor quality of the current service.

Following a discussion about litter, the Clerk **agreed** to requested that WBC provide their waste bin emptying rota.

- C. To receive a detailed income and expenditure report and financial performance against budget report to 31st May (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.

- E. To note completion of the quarterly check carried out by Cllr Martin on 1st June 2023. Cllr Foxwell thanked Cllr Martin for carrying out the check.

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

RESOLVED: Items A-E, above, were AGREED.

23/50 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

Cllr Foxwell and the Clerk reported that the Allotments had been broken into and damage had been caused to storage boxes, sheds and vegetable patches. Members discussed the possibility of installing a CCTV camera and/or signage as a deterrent.

The Clerk stated that the stop and search event held at Pinewood on Thursday 15th June had been successful.

23/51 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7.30 PM ON MONDAY 7th August 2023

23/52 MEETING CLOSED AT 9:48 PM

Signed:

Date: 7th August 2023