

**Wokingham Without Parish Council
Minutes of the Council Meeting
Held on Monday 4th September 2023**

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

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

Present: Councillors R Fenny, L Foxwell, P Jordan, C Lancaster, N Martin, J Millett (*left 20:35 hrs*), J Montgomery (also B/Cllr), A Plume, J Rogers, S Turtle and K Whitehead. Debbie Gooch – Clerk and Sharon Way – Deputy Clerk. Borough Councillor David Davies.

Apologies: Borough Councillor P Helliard-Symons.

23/70 WELCOME

Cllr Foxwell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

23/71 ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Borough Councillor Helliard-Symons.

23/72 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared at the time, however following a discussion under the Borough Councillor's Briefing regarding issues at St. Sebastian's Church, Cllr Rogers declared an interest due to her communications with Rev Simpson-Gray.

23/73 MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

- A. Cllr Foxwell invited comments on the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 7th August 2023.

The Clerk advised members of a minor update to the minutes.

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

RESOLVED: Minutes of the meeting, Monday 7th August were AGREED with two abstentions.

- B. Matters arising from the minutes of 7th August.

Minute ref: 23/59: Cllr Plume asked Cllr Montgomery to update members on the meeting attended by B/Cllrs Helliard-Symons and Montgomery, Lindsay Ferris (Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan), and WBC officer Judy Kelly, held on 9th August, regarding the South Wokingham Extension in the draft local plan. Cllr Montgomery stated that no decision has been made and discussions are ongoing. Cllr Montgomery further stated that Cllr Ferris stressed the difficulty in removing sites from the local plan.

Following further discussion on what was included in the 2010 Local Plan and the 2019 draft Local Plan consultation Cllr Montgomery **agreed** to obtain a statement from Lindsay Ferris to clarify.

Minute ref: 23/59: Cllr Plume asked Cllr Montgomery if a date had been set for his meeting with Paul Fishwick to investigate the issues raised at the Heathlands Road / Nine Mile Ride junction. Cllr Montgomery stated that a date had not yet been set but hoped the meeting would be held before the end of September.

Minute ref: 23/59: Cllr Plume stated that the noise assessment had been submitted by the Men's Shed organisation and it is awaiting WBC's decision. Cllr Plume requested an update from the B/Cllrs on the current situation. B/Cllrs Montgomery and Davies **agreed** to follow this up with WBC.

23/74 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

Following a request, it was agreed to move the Borough Councillor's Briefing to precede Planning. This was agreed, however for the purpose of the Minutes the agenda order has been followed.

23/75 PLANNING

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

- i. No. 231761, Kimberdale, Heathlands Road RG45 3AS
*Members objected to this application on the grounds of scale and form and noted that it contravened WBC's countryside policy. Following discussion, it was **agreed** that members formatted comments will be sent to the Deputy Clerk for collation and circulation before submission.*
- ii. No 231897, Holme Grange School, Heathlands Road RG40 3AL
No objection.
- iii. No. 231755, 10 Purcell Road, RG45 6QN
No objection.
- iv. No. 231618, Land Rear of 9 New Acres, Nine Mile Ride RG40 3LZ
*Members objected to this application on a number of grounds including managing traffic demand and drainage. Following discussion, it was **agreed** that members formatted comments will be sent to the Deputy Clerk for collation and circulation before submission.*

B. To note planning decisions received.
Noted.

23/76 BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING

B/Cllr Davies reported that he has received confirmation from Chris Easton that work along Nine Mile Ride to repair the damage to the new surface due to a burst water main is scheduled for September.

B/Cllr Davies updated members on a small number of incidents relating to poor quality pavements in the parish. WBC officers have responded, and the issues are being resolved. B/Cllr Davies is encouraging anyone who comes across pavements that are uneven or obstructed by overgrown vegetation to report them to the borough councillors or WBC.

B/Cllr Davies stated that reports of overflowing bins at Heathlake have been raised with WBC, and a request has been made for a larger bin to be provided at the site.

B/Cllr Montgomery reported that a VMS (Virtual Messaging Signal) was installed on 16th August on New Wokingham Road. B/Cllr Millett asked whether the police would take action if the VMS

proved that the speed limit was not being adhered to. B/Cllr Montgomery advised that the VMS does not store data and that it is just used as a deterrent/reminder to drivers.

B/Cllr Davies stated that Andy Croy runs the speed watch groups in Wokingham and has advised that speed guns can be loaned for residents to use. Cllr Plume suggested that Andy Croy may be able to assist Cllr Martin to set up a Honey Hill speed limit community group. Cllr Martin discussed his recent communications with WBC which had concluded with Mr Conway asserting that a reduction in the speed limit along Honey Hill is unnecessary as the constraints of the road slow the traffic. Cllr Martin has agreed to meet with Chris Easton, WBC Director of Highways, to discuss the technical arguments, accompanied if possible by a member of the neighbourhood policing team.

Cllr Rogers suggested that the Honey Hill speed limit issue should be brought up at the next CCNAG meeting (11th September).

Cllr Fenny referred to comments regarding WBC funding levels at the Borough Parish Liaison meeting held in July which had been prompted by a report by the Institute of Fiscal Studies published in the local press. A conversation on how Wokingham Borough Council is funded ensued. B/Cllr Davies stated that WBC may soon be issuing a statement to address the funding contradictions.

Cllr Fenny discussed the issue of street cleaning in the vicinity of the traffic lights and pedestrian crossing at Heathlands Road junction. Cllr Fenny expressed his frustration at the poor system employed by WBC to ensure this work is carried out to a planned schedule. Following discussion, Cllr Montgomery **agreed** to follow the matter up with WBC.

B/Cllr Davies left the meeting (20:07 hrs).

Cllr Montgomery stated that, following discussion with Reverend Simpson-Gray, WBC have agreed to fix the pothole along the entrance road to St Sebastian's church, and that the other issues are being taken up with the diocese. Cllr Rogers declared an interest in the matter due to her communications with Reverend Simpson-Gray.

Cllr Rogers asked for an update on the Old Sawmill Lane challenges. B/Cllr Montgomery suggested that B/Cllr Davies would be the best point of contact on this matter.

Cllr Millett left the meeting (20:35 hrs)

23/77 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk stated that there are some numbering errors in a few of the leases which Blandy & Blandy are in the process of fixing. The Clerk stated that this is Blandy & Blandy's mistake and there should not be a charge for the correction work.

The Clerk asked members for their thoughts on permitting councillors to join council meetings remotely if they are unable to attend in person. Councillors would not be able to vote if they joined remotely but could participate in the discussions. Cllr Plume suggested that this could encourage community engagement. Cllr Rogers suggested that a hall with the facility to live stream could potentially boost hall hire revenue. Following further discussion it was **agreed** that the Clerk would discuss options with WWPC's IT provider and report back.

The Clerk advised members that WBC has proposed that the Circle Hill and Walters Rec are designated as a local green space. The Clerk noted that this would provide the sites with

additional protection and that the proposal is scheduled to be discussed at the next meeting of the trustees. Cllr Plume asked whether part of the site sitting in Bracknell Forest would cause any issues. The Clerk stated that she would know more following the meeting. Cllr Foxwell stated that the trustees support the proposal.

The Clerk stated that a letter congratulating Mr Angus Ross on his appointment as an Honorary Alderman of the borough of Wokingham had been sent and that Mr Ross had replied. The Clerk referred members to appendix 8A of the agenda.

The Clerk stated that Richard Bissett will be meeting with all the Wokingham Clerks to discuss the proposed changes to the borough's street cleaning. The Clerk asked members if there was anything specific that they wanted highlighted at this meeting. Cllr Rogers stated that any changes must be monitored. Cllr Plume expressed concern that responsibility for borough services may be transferred to the parishes with associated transfer of costs. There was a short discussion on precepts and funding.

The Clerk stated that CROW is proposing a community project partnership with Tesco to increase the biodiverse green spaces across Crowthorne which would include installing planters and educational resource packs for schools. The Clerk stated that Crowthorne Parish Council have advised CROW of potential problems with installing planters and hanging baskets along the high street.

The Clerk stated that the new outdoor taps at St. Sebastian's Memorial Hall have been installed.

The Clerk stated that the life saver buoy beside the pond had been vandalised, and the post knocked over. The Clerk will order a suitable replacement.

Cllr Turtle stated that the latch on the kissing gate is missing and needs to be replaced.

The Clerk discussed two recent water leaks on site, one by the allotments and one in the adventure playground, which have both been repaired.

The Clerk advised members that a quote for the required pond works has been received and referred members to appendix 8B of the agenda. Cllr Plume stated that this type of item should go through a working group. Members discussed the quotation. Cllr Rogers suggest that Cala Homes should be notified and asked to contribute.

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

RESOLVED: To proceed with the pond works and maintenance visits as proposed in appendix 8B was agreed.

Following a short discussion it was **agreed** that the Clerk will send the invoices and a covering letter to CALA Homes asking for their contribution in connection to the silt build up in Dickies pond.

The Clerk referred to the WBC bin and street cleaning consultation. A discussion on the consultation ensued. Cllr Fenny updated members on the Waste Action Group meeting. The consensus was that there are enough bins in the parish however a check needs to be made to ensure that they are correctly located.

23/78 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE / OTHER MEETINGS

- A. Meeting with BFC Ward Councillor Guy Gillbe – 23rd August 2023
Cllr Foxwell reported that Cllr Gillbe is keen to get the surrounding parish and town councils working together with a focus on transport. Cllr Foxwell stated that at present there are no specific plans up for discussion as this was a preliminary meeting to gauge which councils would be happy to work together. The Clerk stated that communications between BFC and Wokingham over road closures could be improved, especially when it comes to closing the Pinewood section of the Old Wokingham Road.
- B. Broadmoor Meeting (via Teams) – 25th August 2023
Cllr Turtle reported that the entrance to Broadmoor is now on Joshua Jebb Way via Foresters Way and that the old entrance via Kentigern Drive is now closed for vehicles. It will however remain accessible to pedestrians and cyclists. Cllr Turtle mentioned that marketing aimed at selling or finding a use for the old listed building will be published in the State Gazette on 16th September.

23/79 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- A. To receive a report on outstanding balances (as given in appendix 10A of the agenda).
The report was received.
- B. To note payments both made and payments due (as given in appendices 10B(i) and 10B(ii) of the agenda).
Noted.
- C. To receive a detailed income and expenditure report and financial performance against budget report to 31st July (as given in appendix 10C of the agenda).
The report was received.
- D. To receive a report of salary expenditure year to date (as given in appendix 10D 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 note completion of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for financial year 2022-23 (as given in appendix 10E of the agenda).
Noted. Cllr Foxwell thank the office staff and the internal auditor Claire Connell.

23/80 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

Cllr Foxwell will attend the next NAG meeting on 11th September.

23/81 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7.30 PM ON MONDAY 2nd October 2023

23/82 MEETING CLOSED AT 9:30 PM

Signed:

Date: 2nd October 2023