



---

---

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

**Present** Alice Wilkinson, (Chairman), Jim Gillett, Shirley Newman, Chris Drew, Nick Ray, John Illenden, John Davies, Liz Black, and District Councillor Emma Hobbs.

**Apologies for absence** - Michael Forrer and Jackie Jeffery,

**4790/09 Open Forum** - There were no residents present.

**4791/09 Discussion on Sandford Farm Site** - The Chair welcomed Brian Balchin to the meeting to help with consideration of the environmental engineering issues raised by the proposed developments. Consideration started with an explanation of the flooding issues where Brian explained the difference between the Historical Floodplain and Functional Floodplain and why the Functional Floodplain was preferred by the planners. Following consideration of this issue discussion turned to the treatment of the landfill. Brian explained his concerns about the feasibility and the lack of supporting evidence for the proposal to excavate, sort and wash the landfill. He considered it important to question:-

- 1 Whether any of the Authorities had produced an independent expert analysis of the developers report.
- 2 Have all the photographs which would have been taken of the test holes been produced and have these been subject to independent expert analysis.
- 3 Has this cleansing process been carried out at other sites if so where, and what was the type of waste and what was the nature of the surrounding land.
- 4 Reference is made to field trials, A full report on these trials should also be subject to independent analysis.
- 5 Disturbance of the tip and the washing of the waste could cause contamination to waterways and the aquifers which pass through the neighbouring parishes of Charvil, Hurst and Twyford.

The conclusion was that a full independent review of the proposed treatment should be commissioned. It would be irresponsible and highly dangerous for this application to be approved without being absolutely certain that this apparently unproved process is completely safe and that there is absolutely no risk to neighbouring parishes. Relying solely upon a report commissioned by the developer is not acceptable bearing in mind the potentially serious risks.

The Chair thanked Brian for attending and for his very useful advice.

**4792/09 Declaration Of Interest** - None

**4793/09 Minutes of the meeting held on 24th February 2009** –The minutes were approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

**4794/09 Urgent Matters Arising from the above Minutes** - None

**There were no other matters arising, which were not on the agenda.**

**4795/09 PLANNING**

**a) Applications for Information and Comment:**

0338 Replacement pitched roof to summer house at 13 Charvil House Road. -  
No Parish Council Comment

0052 Rev/retro for Detached House, already built at 25 Park View Drive.

0053 Rev/retro for Detached House, already built at 27 Park View Drive.

The following comment was made in respect of both applications:

*This is yet another attempt to circumvent the previous approval which had specifically insisted on the design for this house and the additional houses in order to comply with the requirements of the Local Plan / planning regulations.*

*Council is concerned that this Retrospective application does not meet the requirements of the Local Plan and is in violation of the earlier appeal approval for the site and should be **refused**. The changes to the rear of the building as demanded by the Inspector should be enforced.*

**b) Appeal The following appealed application was noted:-**

2667 Appeal to correct error in appeal refusal letter to demolish existing and erect 2 detached dwellings at 2 Strathmore Drive –. Wokingham Borough Council has since approved application and the appeal has been withdrawn.

O/1282 492 Dwellings plus village centre buildings Sandford Farm. - Following consideration of the application and with the help of Brian Balchin the Clerk was asked to write as follows:-

*This Council made detailed comment to the Local Planning Authority in response to the original application. A copy of that report, which was written in July 2008, is attached for your convenience. We now make the following additional comment in the light of more recent advice and information, which this Council has received.*

**Treatment of the Landfill.**

*This Council has concerns about the feasibility of, and particularly the lack of any evidence to support, the proposal to excavate, sort and wash the landfill. Disturbance of the tip and the washing of the waste could very easily cause significant contamination to the local waterways and aquifers which pass through the neighbouring parishes of Charvil, Hurst and Twyford.*

*It is therefore considered important to address the following questions.*

- 1. Why have none of the concerned Authorities produced any independent expert analysis of, or indeed any comment on, the developer's plans for the cleansing process?*
- 2. Have the photographs (which would have been taken of the test holes) been produced, and have these been subject to any independent expert analysis? If not, then they should be.*
- 3. Landfill across this site is very variable; however, the testing for the soil-washing was undertaken on only one sample. We question whether such a limited sampling can confirm that the proposed screening and washing is indeed feasible for the site as a whole. We therefore suggest that this issue be referred to an independent expert, and that a realistic pilot study be required as part of the evaluation process before any approval is considered.*
- 4. How will the water arising from the de-watering of the ground/landfill, as well as the water which is to be used for the 'washing' process, be treated before it is discharged back into the waterways/groundwater?*
- 5. Has this cleansing process been carried out at any other major sites, and if so where, what was the type of waste and what was the nature of the surrounding land? If there are other similar major sites, why have reports on these sites not been produced for independent review?*
- 6. Reference is made to field trials. A full report on these trials should also be subject to independent review.*

*This Council believes that the possibility of contamination of waterways over a wide area has to be a major concern. It would be dangerous and highly irresponsible for this application to be approved without being absolutely certain that this apparently unproved process is completely safe and that there is no risk to the surrounding area. Relying solely upon a report commissioned by the developer cannot by any measure be considered as 'independent due diligence' and is therefore not acceptable, bearing in mind the serious potential risks. It is essential therefore that a fully independent review of what appears to be an experimental treatment, should be commissioned before any form of approval is given.*

### **Traffic Issues**

*Concern has been expressed at the extra vehicles generated by 500 dwellings plus a retirement home and village centre buildings. These vehicles will mainly exit towards Bader Way and the already peak time congested Winnersh Triangle interchange. A development of this magnitude can only add to these problems and we see no plans to address this issue.*

### **SUMMARY**

*It is still the view of this Council that this proposed development is dangerous and damaging for all the reasons given in our original report. There is now also the above question on the reliability (or certainly the objective independence) of the applicant's expert opinion on the cleansing process.*

*This Council still believes that, despite previous approvals (made at a time when there was less concern with contamination and flooding), this site should be removed from the 'Land for house building' list and retained as public open space. Nevertheless, if consideration for development is still to be made then, at the very least, answers to the above questions must be sought, and satisfactory answers received in full, before any approvals are debated.*

c) **Approved** The following approved application was noted:-

1728 Demolish garage & erect 1 3-bedroom Bungalow at 15 Charvil House Road.

d) **Refused** - The following refused application was noted:-

0062 Two storey link extension between garage & house & part convert garage 40 East Park Farm Drive.

e) **Planning Seminar** - Four places have been reserved. Alice Wilkinson, Chris Drew, Liz Black, and Jackie Jeffery will attend.

**There being no further planning business the Planning Meeting was closed.**

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**4796/09** **Finance Reports** –The Chair of Finance reviewed the monthly financial reports which were noted.

**4797/09** **Authorisation of Payments** – Cheques as detailed were approved and signed. Authorisation of payments included a donation of £280 to Charvil Cricket Club.

**4798/09** **Donations** – Council unanimously agreed a donation of £150 to Berkshire Blind Society.

**4799/09** **Donations** – Council noted thank you letters from Twyford, Wargrave and District volunteer Centre and from Charvil Pre School.

**4800/09** **National Salary Awards** – Council noted the recent 3% pay award.

**4801/09** **Multi -Sport Area** – No further response from Nick Christo. The Clerk was asked to request an updated response before the next meeting.

**4802/09** **Charities** – Councillor Wilkinson confirmed that she had reviewed the Accounts of the Sonning Welfare & Education Trust and could not identify any anomalies.

There being no further Finance business the Finance Meeting was closed.

## **REPORTS**

**4803/09 Village Hall Management Committee** – Notes of a meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2009 were noted.

- i) Village Hall Insurance. – It was noted that the Village Hall Insurance would need to be renewed a short time after the next meeting. It was unanimously agreed that subject to an acceptable offer to stay with the existing insurer. Competitive quotations would be sought next year.
- ii) Village Hall advice service. - The Clerk explained that we were already members of CCB which had previously provided a Village Hall Advice Service as part of that membership. The Village Hall Advice Service was now to be replaced by a Community Building Advice Service, membership of which requires an additional subscription of £150. Following discussion Council unanimously agreed to subscribe to the new service.

**4804/09 Amenities Committee** - Notes of a meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2009 were noted

Replacement play equipment - Councillor Black reported that the replacement play equipment for St Patrick's had been installed by Playground Facilities, and was being used. A question was asked relating to the ground clearance of the roundabout. It was agreed to have this checked and to hold the cheque until it had been confirmed that the clearance met the requirements of the specification.

**4805/09 Borough Councillor's Report** - Councillor Hobbs reported that:

Railtrack have cleared an area within the fence to ensure that vehicles do not park on the footpath. Wokingham Borough Council have agreed to clear all the waterways around Charvil. The Borough Council is considering a trial of part time street lighting.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

**4806/09 Country Park Management and Fishing Rights** –Councillor Jeffery offered to contact Nick Christo and suggest dates for an early meeting. Councillor Jeffrey having sent her apologies, this item was therefore deferred.

**4807/09 Landfill in The Hawthorns** – The Clerk reported that he had received a complaint that letters to Nick Christo were not being responded to.

**4808/09 Tree Planting in Charvil** - Councillor Illenden informed Council that he had ordered the 2 replacement trees for the Village Hall grounds. The planting of trees on Wenlock Edge was deferred.

**4809/09 Emergency Flood Plan for Charvil** - The Chair offered to obtain a sample copy from another Council. Councillors were asked to search for the CD which was circulated in the items for information envelope.

## **HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

**4810/09 Railtrack obstruction of Waingels Road** – Still awaiting a response from Wokingham Borough Council. It was noted that ground work was still taking place on railway property inside the fence, but that little work was taking place to improve the access. In particular the footpath needs to be restored with a surface which will be proof against heavy vehicles crossing. The Clerk was asked to contact Gareth Wiseman again.

**4811/09 Gritting of The Hawthorns** - A formal letter has been sent to Julia Treadwell requesting that The Hawthorns be added to the secondary gritting list for next year as is East Park Farm Road.

**4812/09 Part-night Lighting Trial** - Following discussion the Clerk was asked to write as follows:-

*Council has considered the Borough Council proposal to carry out experiments at various places around the Borough to evaluate the effects and advantages of Part-night Lighting.*

*Councillors expressed concern about the risks in terms of crime and accidents, and the confusing information in respect of financial benefits.*

*Council would therefore like an assurance that the project will be continually and carefully monitored and that any resident's concerns will be expeditiously addressed.*

*Council would also like an assurance that the experiment will not be extended Borough wide without a further full consultation, for which reliable information on the financial viability should be provided.*

**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**4813/09 Mains Drainage** - The Clerk reported that the application form have been received by Thames Water, but we are still awaiting a time scale for processing the applications.

**4814/09 Dates for future Meetings** - Revised schedule circulated

**4815/09 Keep Mobile AGM – 25 April** - No one available to attend

**4816/09 Minerals & Waste Core Strategy** - Noted

**4817/09 Street name for rear of 2-4 Old Bath Road** - Two names were suggested Lime Close or Lime Tree Close

**4818/09 Campaign Against Waste Meeting 30 March** - Noted

**4819/09 Licensing Committee 25 March** - Nothing Charvil specific. Circulated with Items for Information.

**4820/09 Borough and Parish Conference** - No Items suggested for the agenda.

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION** (Documents to be circulated after the meeting) Wokingham Borough Council Meetings Agendas & Minutes, Staff Bulletin, Corporate News, Clerks & Councils Direct, Local Council Review. BALC reports, Open Spaces, Standards Board newsletter, Age Concern Newsletter.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.00pm**

.....Signature  
Chairman of the Council

Signed on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2009