

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 26th February 2013

Present Alice Wilkinson (Chairman), Jim Gillett, Paul Mundy, Chris Drew, Lauren McCann, Piran Trezise, James Bell, Jackie Jeffery, Liz Black and Borough Councillor Nick Ray.

Apologies for absence – John Davies

5888/13 **Open Forum** – There was one representative of the Charvil Tennis club and six residents concerned about the proposed school present.

There were a number of concerns raised by the residents, generally regarding the effect of the school on the local amenities. One resident was concerned of the effects of any more tarmac on the floodplain – the tennis club representative hope that the new courts would be eco-friendly to counteract the effect of run-off. Another concern regarding the environment was the loss of the young trees on the site even before planning has been granted. It was understood this has been done to prevent birds nesting on the site, but it was questioned whether the extent of the felling was necessary. Some residents felt that Wokingham had not been totally honest with residents and that the planning process was window dressing – councillors defended Wokingham because, while it was accepted it was most likely the school would get permission, the process does give interested parties a chance to comment, and possibly influence. The parking provision was a major issue especially as the revised plan seemed to reduce the number of spaces available, and some residents felt that parking restrictions needed to be in place from the moment the school opened, rather than be added later when the school had more pupils. There seemed a tension between those promoting sporting amenity and those championing social/environmental amenity, and councillors felt that some people whose interests lose out in this process would feel disempowered, but hard decisions had to be made by Wokingham given the space and time constraints. The tennis club asked the council if they would support the re-orientation of the proposed courts to north-south, as this is much better for tennis. One other issue that was raised was the barrier preventing access to the pavilion and the playing fields. This has not been included in the plans and there is much concern that it will not be retained. One resident provided photographic evidence of how many vehicles use this access when it is open, and said that a small child was nearly knocked over by one of these drivers. Open forum closed at 8.55 and three of the residents left. *Clerks note: The planning officer said that there would still be over 50 formal car parking spaces, and that it will be overspill parking that is lost. The barrier is not a matter for planning, and the clerk will consult with Parks and Open spaces to ensure it is retained.*

5889/13 **Declaration of Interest** – Cllr. Mundy lives close to the proposed school site and his wife is treasurer of the pre-school. Cllr. Trezise's wife works occasionally for the pre-school

5890/13 **Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd January 2013** –The minutes were approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising from the above Minutes –

There were no matters arising which were not on the agenda.

5891/13 PLANNING (ref 158)

a) New Applications for Information and Comment:

- 0016 Proposed erection of a single form entry primary school with associated parking and relocation of two tennis courts at Park Lane Charvil (Revised plan)
After much discussion it was agreed that Council was concerned at the loss of overspill parking from the original plan and would like at least 25 of these to be re-instated; that parking restrictions needed to be put in place sooner rather than later on local roads; that the tennis courts should be on a north-south orientation and that the barrier to the pavilion be maintained. *Clerk's note: the barrier is not a planning issue and has been referred to Parks and Open Spaces, and even without the overspill parking, the school will have more designated parking than any other primary in Wokingham.*
- 0142 Proposed erection of a single storey rear extension to dwelling to form a conservatory at 38, East Park Farm – no Parish Council comment
- 0088 Proposed erection of a single storey rear extension to Pine Cones, Milestone Avenue – no Parish Council comment
- 0258 Proposed erection of a detached double garage at April Cottage, Milestone Avenue – no Parish Council comment

b) Planning Applications Approved – The following planning approvals were noted

- 2391 Proposed erection of a single storey rear extension, part new roof to existing garage at 30 Thornbers Way.
- 2457 Proposed erection of two storey side and single storey rear extension to 59, Old Bath Road
- 0002 Proposed conversion of existing loft space to additional habitable accommodation, to include a rear dormer extension at 10, Charvil House Road.

c) Appeals The following appeal was noted

- 2038 Proposed raising of roof to existing garage block to enlarge first floor area to create habitable usage with dormer windows front and rear at Three Barns, Loddon Drive.

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

FINANCE

5892/13 Finance Reports - Reports were unanimously approved.

5893/13 Authorisation of Payments – Council unanimously approved payments including £250 Home as Office payments to the clerk and assistant clerk

5894/13 To review the five year capital budget - deferred.

5895/13 To consider the review of the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations - deferred.

5896/13 Donations – to consider donation requests from Victim Support, Twyford, Wargrave and District Volunteer Centre and Charvil Pre-school. – Council felt that Victim Support provided no evidence of helping people in Charvil and felt they could not support them on this occasion. There was also no evidence in the letter from Twyford and District Volunteer Centre as to how many Charvil residents they helped, and they had also been asked for a piece about what services are available for Charvil residents in the Village News in return for a free appeal for volunteers, but there had been no response. The clerk was asked to write for more information before deciding on whether to donate or not. It was decided, therefore, to donate £400 to Charvil Pre-school as a truly local charity.

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

REPORTS

5897/13 Village Hall Management Committee – There was no meeting this month.

Council approved a refund cheque of £38.70 for Mrs Morgan. Council approved the fete committee's request for free use of the hall on 16th June and agreed to run the barbecue on that date. The Chairman said that, for various reasons, there would be no 5K this year but hoped to organise this for next year.

5898/13 Amenities Committee – There was no meeting this month

It was felt that no decision could be made as to where to relocate the benches, but the clerk was asked for Wokingham to store them until a mutually acceptable place had been found.

5899/13 Borough Councillor's Report – Cllr. Ray informed Council that the Environment Agency had been in contact and the appeal on the Waingels sewer would be held at the beginning of May. The Environmental Health department at Wokingham are supporting the Parish Council's case in a "light touch" manner. The other matter Cllr Ray brought up was the renewal of the licence for the kebab van. There is a lot of litter around the van's pitch, and Cllr. Ray will give the renewal qualified support providing the rubbish is cleared up and taken away each evening.

5900/13 ENVIRONMENT – Nothing to report

5901/13 HIGHWAYS - A resident has reported to Cllr. Drew that there was a near miss involving her son on the Zebra crossing on the Old Bath Road. She supported the idea of traffic lights instead of the zebra, and Cllr. Drew will take this up with Wokingham.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

5902/13 Update on the Primary School – See open forum and planning

5903/13 Update on Waingels Road Sewer – See Borough Councillor's report.

5904/13 To decide whether Council would like more information about Neighbourhood Planning – Council reconsidered this in the light of the information that the percentage of the Community Infrastructure levy coming to parishes will vary by 10% depending upon whether there is a neighbourhood plan in place. The clerk was asked to invite Emma Critchley of Wokingham Borough Council to a meeting to give more information.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION (Copies available from the Clerk) – Wokingham Borough Council Meetings/Agendas;

Part 2

Salary Review for Clerk and Assistant Clerk

Council discussed the appropriateness of awarding an annual salary increase to its two staff in the light of the current Public Sector pay freeze. Most councillors were in favour of the concept of a raise but were very aware of the current economic climate.

Councillors considered a number of options:

- i) The possibility of a rise in Spine Point from the current SCP22 level of both employees. However, this option was eventually discounted as both employees received such an increase last year.
- ii) The possibility of a simple percentage increase from the current £10.198/hour. This would be possible under the rules but would breach the current Public Sector pay freeze.
- iii) The possibility of awarding a stand alone Bonus, outside the normal pay structure.

Decision

Following the above discussions, councillors voted leave both employees on the same Spine Point and pay level, but to award both employees a single £250 bonus, to be paid in time for Christmas 2013. Councillors wished to record their support for the excellent work being undertaken by both the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk.

Any Other Business

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.10pm