



## Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2015

**Present** Chris Drew (Chairman), James Bell, Jackie Jeffery, Lauren McCann, Paul Mundy, Jim Gillett, Fiona Mowlem, John Davies, John Hobson, Liz Black and Borough Councillor Nick Ray (who arrived at 8.40).

**6439/15** **Open Forum** – Simon Bartlam of Wokingham Borough Council's countryside service attended, as did four residents. Two residents were from Waingels Road, who wanted to know the latest progress on the proposed sewer. Cllr Gillett reported that Thames Water had identified a second possible site on the corner of Waingels Road and Beggars Hill Road, but had yet to approach the owner of the land as regards a possible purchase. There was concern that this option may be too expensive, and would delay the sewer by some considerable time. It is widely recognised that the most economic site is on land that is presently leased to Waingels College, and Cllr Gillett explained the history behind why an alternative site had to be sought. It was agreed that a further approach to the college would be made, as Council feels that there may be some misunderstanding as to the environmental issues. The residents were keen to get involved with moving the situation forward but at this stage, Council agreed to approach the governors again to reach an amicable solution. Two other residents, the Chair and Treasurer of the pre-school attended, to explain the latest situation with the pre-school. At the AGM, the previous committee had recommended closure as the financial situation was so bad, but the new committee are not willing to accept this, despite a financial hole of £6,000. If this can be filled through fund-raising, the operating loss would be £1,500. The latest OFSTED report was encouraging, so things are moving in the right direction, but a lot of work needed to be done to secure the pre-school's survival. They explained their reasons for approaching the Parish Council – on one level they would like a grant, but also, as Jubilee Hall is becoming increasingly uneconomic to operate in, they would like the Parish Council to consider allowing the pre-school to move to the pavilion. The Chair explained that Council has policies which only allows for two rounds of applications, and the next is in December, and Cllr. Hobson said that he would be willing to talk with the pre-school in regard to the pavilion. Council were happy to give the Pre-school two free lets of the Village Hall to help with their fund-raising efforts. The Chair thanked them for coming and all the residents left at 8.45pm. Simon Bartlam then explained the proposed scheme to clear the waterway from the Old River to the east of Charvil Meadows, up to the concrete bridge that lies half way through the meadows. While this will do nothing to alleviate flooding, it would greatly benefit wildlife. Simon explained that it would cost £8,000 to clear the waterway, of trees and sediment, which could be used to fill in the spot where it pools in the middle of one of the fields. The Environment Agency have promised their support, but Simon is unsure whether this is purely moral, or whether it will amount to some financial assistance. The problem is, is there is a maintenance budget of £45,000 for all Wokingham's areas run by the Countryside service, and it is hard to justify spending such a large proportion on one small stretch in Charvil, so the proposal is for the Parish to help fund this project by providing about half of the necessary money. The hope is to do this work in the autumn. Simon was also asked about the reports of Giant hogweed, and he explained that this is

removed where it is seen, like other invasive species. His opinion was also sought on how secure Charvil was in relation to traveller incursions, and he felt the security was adequate. The Chair thanked him for coming and he left at 9.05 PM.

**6440/15 Declarations of Interest** – There were no declarations of interest.

**6441/15 Minutes of the Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015** - The minutes were approved by Council.

**6442/15 Matters Arising from the above Minutes** – There were no matters arising

**6443/15 PLANNING** (ref 187)

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

1254 Application for a two storey rear extension at Craigalea, Lands End Lane – no Parish Council comment

1325 Application for a proposed conversion of existing garage to additional habitable accommodation and associated alterations to front and rear fenestration at 14, Old Bath Road – no Parish Council comment

150127 Application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension at 11, Kingsley Close – no Parish Council comment

**b) Planning Applications Approved** – the following approvals were noted

0681 Proposed erection of new play equipment and insertion of rooflights at The Wee Waif

0960 Proposed erection of a single storey side extension at 15, Strathmore Drive

CLE/2015/1005 Application for a certificate of lawful use for a wooden stage on land adjoining Chilterns, Thames Drive

**c) Planning Applications Refused** – the following refusal was noted

0930 Proposed erection of a front dormer extension at 92, Milestone Avenue

**d) Appeal dismissed** – the following was noted

2679 Erection of a 4 bedroom detached house on land adjoining 1, Milestone Crescent

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

## **FINANCE**

**6444/15 Finance Reports** – It was resolved that the Reports be approved which they were unanimously.

**6445/15 Authorisation of Payments** – It was resolved that the Council should approve all outstanding payments which was done unanimously

**6446/15 To consider grant requests from Citizen's Advice Bureau, the Berkshire Blind Society and Homestart Wokingham** – It was resolved that Homestart Wokingham should receive £200, The Citizens Advice Bureau £367 and The Berkshire Blind Society £150, which was agreed unanimously. It was also resolved to make an exception to the policy on considering grants twice a year, and the clerk was asked to contact Charvil Pre-school to submit an application by the end of August for consideration at the September meeting.

**6447/15 To Note the receipt of a compensation payment from Barclays bank** – A payment of £75 had been received in respect of poor service by the bank

**6448/15 To approve a final payment of £50 to complet the Nature Trail booklet** – it was resolved to approve this, which was agreed unanimously

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

## **REPORTS**

**6449/15 Village Hall Management Committee** – The minutes of the meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> July were noted

It was resolved to approve a refund payment of £130 to Mrs Curtin for security that Council was unable to arrange, which was agreed unanimously. The final approval of the Conditions of Hire was deferred until September.

**6450/15 Amenities Committee** – The minutes of the meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> July were noted.

Further to the discussion in Open Forum (see above), the clerk was asked to request the minutes of the governors' meetings at Waingels College for this Spring, as it was felt that there is a profound misunderstanding on the part of the governors as to what is being asked of them.

It was resolved to reduce the price of the vegetable plots to £30 per year, and £15 for a second one, from 2016.

A decision on the draft licence for the cricket square was deferred.

**6451/15 Borough Councillor's Report** – Cllr. Ray reported that he had been contacted by a resident whose house sale had fallen through because of possible contaminated land to the rear of his house. Wokingham needs to be persuaded to conduct a survey similar to the one done recently in Strathmore Drive, but residents would have to be aware that they may be liable for clean-up costs if any significant contamination were found.

**6452/15 Highways** – Cllr. Mowlem reported that the 30MPH signs on the Old Bath Road had been cleaned and the bushes cut back a bit, so they are more visible. Council had also been told that repeaters were not allowed because there are already streetlights that should send the message to drivers that it is a 30MPH zone. Council agreed to get involved with the Community Speedwatch programme, and it was noted that there needs to be at least six volunteers.

**6453/15 Environment** - Council considered the request from Simon Bartlam to help pay for the clearance of the waterway in the meadows (see above). It was resolved to offer up to £3,000, but Council urged Simon to try to get money out of the Environment Agency as well.

*At this point it was approaching 10pm and the Chair resolved to set aside the Standing orders so all items on the agenda could be considered. This was not accepted, so most of the following items were deferred to September.*

**6454/15 To consider whether the August meeting should be just for planning and cheque signing** – It was agreed that this meeting would be pared down to these two items.

**6455/15 To consider the draft policies on e-mails and social media** - This was deferred to September, but Council agreed to allow Cllr. Hobson to launch twitter and Facebook

**6456/15 To consider whether to include the Newsletter on the website** – This was deferred to the September meeting

**6457/15 To consider how to progress of the promotion of No Cold Calling zones** – The chairman is going to include this topic in the newsletter. Once this has been issued, the subject will be reviewed in the light of any responses received.

**6458/15 Thank you letters from the Fete Committee and Beavers** – These were noted.

**6459/15 To consider whether Council should purchase a defibrillator and if so, where to locate it** – This was deferred to September.

**6460/15 To consider the threat from travellers and what steps to take, if any, to reduce this** – This was deferred to September.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.05pm**

**Chairman's Signature .....**