



Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 18th November 2013

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

Apologies for absence None

6041/13 **Open Forum** – One resident attended to hear what the Parish Council had to say about the recent planning application at 1, Strathmore Drive and to find out if there was any news as to the result of contamination tests on Strathmore Drive as some of it had been former landfill. The clerk explained that the Planning Application had been discussed the previous month and that Council had objected. Cllr. Ray explained that the results of the tests should be published at the beginning of next year.

The meeting was also attended by John Cawdell and Marcia Head from Wokingham's planning department. John Cawdell explained that he had been employed to improve relations between the towns and parishes and the Wokingham planning department, and so he was visiting all parishes to see what issues affected them. His first point was that Wokingham would like minor planning applications to be issued electronically if at all possible, but Council said it would rather stick with paper as there is no internet access at the Hall. There then followed a discussion as to why Mr Hicks had withdrawn his appeal for Houses on Park Lane, and the answer was Wokingham now has its requisite five year housing supply, and as this site is not included in the MDD DPD, his appeal would have failed. Asked when he is likely to apply again, the answer was if and when Wokingham no longer have a five year housing supply. A further question was whether the Government plans to force developers not to stockpile land - Marcia Head felt that present proposals were likely to be ineffective. Council also felt that the staff turnover was rather high, making it hard for residents when embarking on gaining planning permission, as the planning officers seemed to change rather regularly. It was explained that many of the existing officers had been put to work on the Strategic Development Locations, so seven new staff had been employed in the department. Concern was raised that having so many new officers may result in an inconsistent approach. Marcia Head explained that all decisions have to be signed off by a senior officer which should avoid this happening. Enforcement issues were also mentioned, with a general feeling that the smaller you were, the more likely you were to be treated harshly, and that Wokingham often seemed toothless. Marcia Head explained that 50% of enforcement complaints are not a breach, and of the others, they try to negotiate rather than serve notices on people as this creates a lot more work. In defence of the toothless claim, she mentioned the present issue of Hare Hatch Sheeplands and its alleged enforcement breaches – and that Wokingham will make them remove everything illegal if they win the case. Cllr. Ray suggested that the community have little faith in the department, and John Cawdell felt that things could be improved if Wokingham were to listen to the Parish Councils more as they have the local knowledge. There followed much discussion about the policy on parking spaces outside new houses, and how these were inadequate in a parish like Charvil with much higher than average car

ownership. The situation was often made worse by the continued reduction in public transport provision. Marcia Head suggested that if Charvil had a problem with the present policy, Council should take it up with the Borough Councillor. Related to this is the issue of restrictions being placed on the developer, only to be overturned a few years later, when a householder applies for planning permission to change their house. In answer to this Marcia Head explained that planning applications cannot be stopped to overturn these restrictions, and this quite often happens on appeal. Once the discussion was complete, the Chairman thanked them for coming and they left at 8.30pm.

6042/13 Declaration of Interest – There were no declarations of interest

6043/13 Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st October 2013 –The minutes were approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising from the above Minutes – There were no matters arising that were not on the agenda

6044/13 PLANNING (ref 167)

a) New Applications for Information and Comment:

2199 Proposed erection of 2 new dwellings with access to Gingells Farm Road on land at 36, 38 and 43 Gingells Farm Road – No Parish Council comment

2197 Proposed construction of a new vehicular access onto Pound Lane to allow access onto the site for emergency and green keeping vehicles at Sonning Golf Club – No Parish Council comment

1962 Proposed conversion of previously converted garage to play room back to garage space, conversion of existing garage to additional habitable accommodation at 58, East Park Farm Drive – No Parish Council comment.

b) Planning Applications Approved – The following approvals were noted

1822 Proposed erection of a single storey rear extension to dwelling 123, East Park Farm Drive

1868 Proposed raising of the garage roof to create habitable accommodation at first floor level and rear dormer extension at 4 Righton Close

1874 Proposed erection of one new dwelling with car port on land behind 15B Charvil House Road

c) Planning Application Rejected – The following was noted

1715 Proposed part first floor and part two storey rear extension plus single storey rear extension to 63, Park View Drive North (Amendment to Consent F/2013/1152)

d) Appeal – The following was noted

1715 Proposed part first floor and part two storey rear extension plus single storey rear extension to 63, Park View Drive North (Amendment to Consent F/2013/1152)

e) Appeal Withdrawn – The following was noted

0303 The proposed erection of 25 Dwellings to the West of Park Lane

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

FINANCE

6045/13 Finance Reports – Reports were unanimously approved.

6046/13 Authorisation of Payments – Council unanimously approved all payments including a refund to Suzanne Newman and to Macmillan Nurses.

6047/13 To Approve finance and VAT Training for the clerk – This was unanimously approved.

6048/13 To approve a plumber for the required work at the vegetable plots – Hamblin Watermains were chosen at a cost of £651 plus VAT as they are an approved plumber by Thames Water, which simplifies the process.

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

REPORTS

6049/13 Village Hall Management Committee – The minutes of a meeting on 6th November were noted.

The Village Hall budget was the main agenda item, and it was agreed that it should be given a final check at the January meeting when there will be eight months' worth of figures to go on, rather than six. It was suggested the budget for rates be raised to £1200. There is not Parish Council support budget this year, but the Committee asks if they Parish Council could plan for possible support when drawing up its budget, in case it is needed. It was noted that Tracy Ray was doing an extremely good job at managing the hall.

6050/13 Amenities Committee – The minutes of a meeting on 6th November were noted

Cllrs. Drew and Mundy are due to meet with Tim Searle this week regarding the re-siting of the picnic benches and the possible location for a Parish Council Notice board at East Park Farm.

6051/13 Borough Councillor's Report – The Borough Councillor explained that Allan Tiplady of Wokingham Borough Council would meet with interested councillors before the next Parish Council meeting to discuss matters concerning East Park Far, and the pavilion in particular. The clerk has asked that all those interested should let her know so she knows who to expect. So far Cllrs. Mundy, Black, McCann and Drew have expressed an interest. The Chairman will try to get there work permitting.

6052/13 ENVIRONMENT - Simon Bartlam is due to meet Cllrs McCann and Jeffery next week.

Cllr. McCann attended a seminar on bio-diversity and public health. There is a direct correlation between people's environment and well-being, and so there is to be increased spending on the environment to boost public health.

6053/13 HIGHWAYS - The clerk was asked to find out when Wokingham would reduce the speed limit to 30 MPH all the way down Park Lane to the railway tunnel now that the school was open. She was also asked to see if any visual cues could be added to the road surface at the tunnel to reduce the speed of drivers to something suitable for a junction with such poor visibility.

6054/13 Update on East Park Farm, school and other amenities – The school should be finished by the spring, and the various issues to do with East Park Farm will be discussed with Allan Tiplady on 16th December.

6055/13 Sports Sponsorship Fund – Wokingham have agreed to let us know of any applicants they have for this fund from Charvil, and then it is up to the Parish Council to match fund this if they see fit. It was agreed to include £200 in the budget for this.

6066/13 To approve the free use of the Village Hall for the fete on 15th June – This was approved.

6067/13 Dog Micro-chipping – The fete committee are willing to organise this providing there is a safe place away from child related activities and that the No Dog rule can be lifted for the day. *Clerks' note: A Parks and open spaces representative said it should be fine to waive this for the day.*

6068/13 Feedback from the Borough Conference – Cllr Jeffery criticised the introduction to this as being too vague, and commented that Wokingham were trying to push more spending the way of the parishes as a result of their cost-cutting. She attended a seminar on Health and Wellbeing, which was very interesting, but was dominated by councillors with their personal gripes. The clerk also felt her session on facilities did not stick to the subject either.

6069/13 2014 Meeting dates – The final version was approved, with the next Village Hall meeting being on **Thursday 9th January**.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Any Other Business

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.14pm