



Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 15th December 2014

Present Chris Drew (Chairman), Liz Black, Paul Mundy, Jim Gillett, Lauren McCann and Jackie Jeffery

Apologies for absence John Davies, James Bell and John Hobson and Borough Councillor Nick Ray

6308/14 Open Forum – John Hicks attended to explain his re-application for 25 dwellings on the field west of Park Lane. Also in attendance were seven members of the public and one member of the press. Mr Hicks explained that he had been advised to re-apply because there were not enough houses being supplied in Wokingham Borough, because Govt policy had changed regarding building outside settlement boundaries and because current policy is now in favour of smaller builders. He then ran through the history of the site, and tried to put forward the case that this development was infill. This argument was questioned by one resident who believed the field was important as part of the separation of Charvil from Woodley. Another resident believed that this application, if successful, would lead to further applications to develop the rest of the field, a position confirmed as correct by Mr Hicks. Once the Open Forum finished all stayed for the planning discussion regarding this site.

6309/14 Declarations of Interest – There were no declarations of interest.

6310/14 Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th November 2014 –The minutes were approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

6311/14 Matters Arising from the above Minutes – There were no matters arising that were not on the agenda

6312/14 PLANNING (ref 180)

a) New Applications for Information and Comment:

2503 Proposed erection of 25 detached dwellings on land west of Park Lane, Charvil – There followed a lengthy discussion led by Cllr Jeffery as Chair of Planning. She ran through some of the main supporting documents for the application, picking holes in many of them, while Cllr Mundy pointed out issues with traffic from the school, current developments in Woodley etc. Council asked the clerk to comment as follows:

Charvil Parish Council would like to object to this planning application as follows:

1. When Wokingham Borough Council published its list of sites to be included in the Managing Development Delivery Development Plan Document (MDD DPD), this site was excluded because it was only adjoining one boundary and, due to the character of the site, would be contrary to CP3 general principles for development. Over the years there have been a number of applications and efforts to include this site in development plans, but it has been consistently been refused by both the Borough Council and Planning Inspectors because of its importance in providing a settlement gap between Charvil (a semi-rural village) and Woodley (a relatively large, urban area). Wokingham has recommended that the settlement boundaries remain unchanged for Charvil and both CP9 (stating that Charvil is a limited development location) and CP17 (stating that

sites in limited development locations should have a maximum of 25 dwellings) of the core strategy infer that any suitable sites must be inside the settlement boundary. This site is not and has consistently been designated as countryside and should continue to be seen as such. This position was re-affirmed by the MDD's Inspector's Report that stated that any development of this site would breach a well defined landscape boundary forming the development limit.

2. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) of September 2014 states that Wokingham Borough has a five year housing supply as of October 2014, and forecasts that this will still be the case in April 2015, when this document is due to be updated, plus a 20% buffer in case of some developments not coming on-stream fast enough. Given this position, there seems to be no justifiable reason to even consider development sites outside the scope of the MDD DPD and the Core Strategy, as this site clearly is.

3. Council recognises that there may be moments in time that the five year land supply slips under this minimum, but would urge the borough not to allow this development in this situation because the alternative policy in this circumstance is a presumption in favour of SUSTAINABLE development, and this site does not fulfil the recommended criteria for sustainable development. It is over 800 metres from all key services except a secondary school (outside catchment) and a primary school built to serve the existing population of Charvil (58 of the sixty places are full and projections are that the school will be at capacity for the foreseeable future). The bus service is limited, in that it does not function in the evenings and weekends, while the closest station is over 1500m away. Given the poor public transport links and the very limited number of safe cycle routes in the area, most journeys will be made by car, particularly as there are no core employment areas within 800 metres, and few within 1500m. None of this is sustainable. In addition, there would be substantial disturbance to wildlife, and the loss of a visually important green space.

4. The roads around the site are designed for the semi-rural nature of Charvil, and a predicted extra 50 cars (a conservative estimate) on these roads each day will add to pollution, noise and disturbance on already over-crowded roads. The developments currently under construction in Woodley are certain to bring even more vehicles onto Waingels Road and Park Lane as they access either the A4 or Twyford Station. The school has a policy to encourage as many families as possible to walk or cycle, but it is still estimated that there will be up to 75 extra vehicles accessing Park Lane at peak times (again a conservative estimate). This development would exacerbate these traffic issues unnecessarily.

5. The plans for this development are clearly out of date, as they do not include the new school and the new access arrangements to the adjoining car park. This not only has serious implications for the evidence provided in the transport assessment, but also, by failing to take into account the new driveways, provides inaccurate information when considering safety issues in relation to the new school. The photographs used in the transport assessment are out of date, in that they do not include the changes made to the junction of The Hawthorns and Park Lane, so that families can cross more safely on their way to school. Given these inaccuracies, it does not give Council confidence that the rest of the survey is not going to include further inaccuracies.

After this item, Mr. Hicks, the residents and the representative of the press all left at 8.35.

2649 Proposed conversion of existing garage to additional habitable accommodation to include insertion of window in lieu of garage door at 21, Thornbers Way – no Parish Council comment

b) Planning Applications Approved – The following approvals were noted

1774 Proposed erection of garden gazebo at 11, Foxes Walk

CLP/2014/2912 Erection of a single storey rear extension at 11, Strathmore Drive

HH/2014/2249 Single Storey rear extension at 10, Charvil House Road

2302 Proposed erection of a single storey rear extension to 41, Cheviot Drive

1959 Proposed erection of first floor extension over existing garage at 25, Gingells Farm Road

c) **Feedback from Planning meeting on 26th November 2014** – Cllr Jeffery explained that planners have to be in favour of sustainable development, and so must have very good reasons not to allow planning permission. The second part of the meeting concerned Enforcement, which they were trying to improve. Wokingham were looking for ideas on how to educate the public so there are fewer complaints that are not really enforcement issues, as each one has to be checked out, thereby costing time and money. One idea was to issue an article that parishes can put on their websites or in newsletters.

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

FINANCE

6313/14 Finance Reports – It was resolved that the Reports be approved which they were unanimously.

6314/14 Authorisation of Payments – It was resolved that the Council should approve all outstanding payments, including £515.75 to NIC Services Group Ltd, which was done unanimously

6315/14 Whether to approve match funding of the Wokingham Sports Sponsorship Fund for a young cyclist in the village of £250 – Wokingham have provided the necessary information about the cyclist's achievements so far and his needs, and as a result Council resolved to match fund, which they did unanimously.

6316/14 To consider the grant applications from keep Mobile (S137), Twyford and District Volunteer Centre (S137), Charvil Pre-School and Charvil Art Club – After some discussion it was resolved that Charvil Art Club should not receive a grant this year, but that Keep Mobile should have £300 provided they put an article in the newsletter about how they help local people, Twyford and District Volunteer Centre should receive £300 and Charvil Pre-School should receive £500. This was unanimously agreed.

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

REPORTS

6317/14 Village Hall Management Committee – The notes of the meeting on 1st December were noted.

It was agreed that the Village Hall and Amenities meetings on 5th Jan should be cancelled.

6318/14 Amenities Committee – The notes of a meeting on 1st December were noted.

The date for the annual litter pick was considered. It was decided to go for the 21st March at 10 am, and Council agreed to provide refreshments. *Clerk's note: because of the hall being booked, and to avoid Saturday morning sporting activities, the clerk eventually changed the date to 29th March at 2PM.*

Council decided to defer the discussion on the Amenities' Terms of Reference until next month. In the meantime Cllr. Gillett was going to take a look at the draft that had been circulated.

6319/14 ENVIRONMENT – An update on the nature trail in the country park was deferred as Cllr

McCann had not heard from Simon Bartlam. The clerk had a meeting with some flooding consultants who had been employed by Wokingham, to find out where there had been flooding in Charvil and its economic social impact. The aim is to try to develop flood measures that will be more robust in the future. The clerk also attended a meeting about the flooding in the whole Loddon district, to get an idea of how actions in one area could impact further upstream/downstream.

The following TPOs were noted

TPO/266/1984 Consent for Pruning at 6, Foxes Walk, Charvil

TPO/266/1984 Consent to fell and replace trees at 8, Foxes Walk

- 6320/14 **To consider any progress on the East Park Farm discussions** – Cllrs Mundy, Hobson, Drew and the clerk met last week. Due diligence work needs to be done, so there is nothing to report yet, as Council needs more information.
- 6321/14 **To approve the final version of the meeting dates for 2015** – these were unanimously approved.
- 6322/14 **To agree a date for the budget meeting** – it was agreed this would take place on 5th Jan.
- 6323/14 **Completion of Working with your Council course by clerk** – this was noted.

Part 2

To agree the pay rates for the clerk and assistant clerk in the light of the recent agreement with central government – It was agreed that from January the assistant clerk would be moved to Scale point 24 and the clerk to scale point 25.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.25pm

Chairman's Signature