



Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 18th January 2021 Via Zoom

Present Jim Gillett, Paul Mundy, Pat Sutlieff, Claire Andersen, Mike Heath, Hilary Jones, Narinder Ryatt, Roanna Collis, Jane Hartley, and Neil Jackson

Apologies for Absence

Absent

7558/21 Open Forum – No residents present but a resident had been in touch with the clerk regarding the number of professional dog walkers using the field, making parents of young children feeling unsafe. This, along with Covid breaches on the field, and general increasingly high usage by people from outside the village, was of great concern to the Council. It was resolved that the car park would be closed providing this would not cause problems for the school. *Clerk's note: The school will open the gates when needed in the morning and afternoon, and at all other times, the gates will be closed. The assistant clerk will inform residents via Facebook and signage.*

7559/21 Declarations of Interest – There were no declarations of interest

7560/21 Minutes of the Council Meeting of the 14th December held via Zoom – the minutes were approved by Council.

FINANCE

7561/21 Finance Reports – It was resolved to approve these which was done unanimously.

7562/21 Authorisation of Payments – It was resolved to approve the following payments, including the S137 payments agreed in December, which was done unanimously:
£61.43 to Grundon Waste Management Ltd
£161.48 to Assistant Clerk
£37.34 to British Gas Services Ltd
£160 to Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Fund (S137)
£878.87 to Berkshire Pension Fund
£80.80 to Everflow
£129.06 to Heart Facilities Ltd
£1287 to Herald Graphics
£934.57 to HMRC
£300 to Homestart Wokingham (S137)
£218.35 to Dual Energy (Smartest Energy)
£33.80 to SSE
£95.39 to Clerk
£1230.52 to Sunshine Commercial Services Ltd
£107.14 to Tivoli Group Ltd
£607.62 to RES Systems Ltd
£78 to SLCC
£400 to The Link Visiting Scheme (S137)
£300 to Twyford, Wargrave and District Volunteer Centre (S137)
£206.09 to Viking

£2613.77 in Payroll

7563/21 To note the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee on 11th January 2021 – These were noted.

7564/21 To approve the draft budget as recommended by the Finance Committee – The level of expenditure was approved but after much discussion, it was resolved to spend less from reserves than the Finance Committee recommended (£8,200 rather than £17,598).

7565/21 To approve the precept as recommended by the Finance Committee – Because of the reduced support from reserves than the Finance Committee recommended, instead of the 14.49% increase in precept as recommended, it was resolved to approve a 32.51% increase to £48.09 per Band D property.

7566/21 To approve the re-appointment of Claire Connell as Internal auditor -It was resolved to approve this which was passed unanimously.

7567/21 Planning, Environment and Highways Committee – There was no meeting this month

To consider Planning Application No. 203456 - Full planning application for the proposed construction of a 3G synthetic pitch funded through the FA framework consisting of sports fencing, LED floodlights, storage container, spectator area and pedestrian access at Waingels College – the Clerk was asked to object as follows:

1. *We note in the Design and Access Statement that planning permission was granted for a similar proposal in 2018 (application 173584) but the school has not gone ahead with this after listening to local concerns about noise and light pollution. This proposal was some 90 metres away from the nearest homes. This plan is only 66 metres away from the nearest houses, at the more rural end of the school. The change in location may have less to do with concerns about residents and more about how it suits the school better. We would appreciate it if the concerns of ALL residents were taken into account.*

2. *The residents in Waingels Road are concerned about noise late into the evening six days a week – to mitigate the noise we appreciate there will be a 2-metre bund with trees planted, and while this will reduce the visual impact, it will not be high enough to reduce noise. If the plan is to be approved, could the hours of use be limited to 8 am - 9pm Mon-Fri, and 8am-6pm on both Saturday and Sunday?*

3. *Residents in Waingels Road have informed us that they are not allowed much external lighting because of the proximity of bats and roosting birds. This is because as one goes down Waingels Road toward Charvil, there is more woodland, and the school abuts a patch of ancient woodland at the Charvil end. So, it seems odd that floodlights will be allowed so close to what appears to be regarded as an area of importance to the local habitat.*

4. *Council has concerns that while there is good cycle provision from the Woodley direction, there is none from the Charvil direction, and we feel that improvements to the cycling provision from Charvil should be a condition of this plan being approved.*

5. *Although the original application makes no mention of it, there is now a proposed emergency access onto Waingels Road. Council has concerns about the safety of another access point from a pedestrian point of view – could the emergency access not be through the school as at Piggott?*

6. *Waingels Road has a traffic constriction on it to discourage use of the road as a rat run, as it is recognised that is not suitable for large amounts of traffic. The pitch at Piggott certainly generates a great deal of extra traffic, as does Goals at Bulmershe, and we would assume a similar scenario on Waingels Road. It is already unsafe for vulnerable road users at night, and this will only become worse. The assumption in the Design and Access statement is that users will only come from Woodley, but nothing is that straightforward. If the plan is to be approved, could the speed limit be reduced to 30mph for the whole of Waingels Road?*

7. *Charvil Parish Council has no issue with the provision of extra facilities, and appreciate that as an academy, Waingels needs to maximise income, but we are*

concerned that this is coming at an unacceptable cost to the existing community as this plan stands.

- 7568/21 Amenities Committee** – There was no meeting this month
The Council were happy with a request from tennis coach, Ed Francis, to put up a banner at the tennis court providing they have sight of it beforehand. *Clerk's note: they were happy with the banner providing he remove the Charvil PC logo.*
- 7569/21 Report from the Borough Councillor** – There was no report from the Borough Councillor
- Items for Consideration**
- 7570/21 To hear an update on the Neighbourhood Plan and approve the purchase of banners** – Cllr. Heath has further developed the Activities Plan to mirror the Neighbourhood Plan structure. The clerk is to apply for a Locality Grant to fund the cost of a website and publicity. It was resolved to approve the cost of six large banners for £300 to advertise the Plan. The questionnaire is in the process of being developed. James McCabe of WBC is to meet with the Neighbourhood Planning group to discuss progress and answer any questions they might have.
- 7571/21 To discuss the proposed May elections and plans for the Annual Parish Meeting** – As things stand, the elections are due to take place in May. At the moment, the Annual Parish Meeting will have to take place in person, but there may be an extension of the rules allowing for virtual meetings – in which case, Council felt it would be a good idea to investigate the possibility of having a virtual Annual Parish Meeting. Cllr. Hartley is happy to attend the election training.
- 7572/21 To consider the Public Consultation for a new Joint Health and Well-Being Strategy for Reading, West Berks and Wokingham** – Councillors had great difficulty completing the questionnaire but the clerk has been asked to submit a response
- 7573/21 To consider whether anyone is interested in any of the training opportunities that have been circulated** – Cllr Hartley to attend Planning training and Trustee Training
- 7574/21 To Approve the purchase of the latest edition of Local Council Administration for £149** – It was resolved to approve this purchase
- 7575/21 To note the Local Lockdown measures and how they concern the Council** – Essential activities can happen, so there are one or two bookings up to the end of the financial year.
- 7576/21 To discuss and approve the Charvil Pavilion business case document - Cllr Heath to introduce and put arguments for and against each option and then each Cllr to give their views** – Cllr Heath introduced this and explained that this is purely about the Business Plan. While some figures need amending because of the approved budget, it remains the case that both options are feasible. Option 2 is more extensive and would need long term tenants, so we need to decide what Charvil want – he ran through the for and against arguments. One is ambitious but risky and the other is more conservative and is within Council's current financial means
Cllr Andersen thought that finances are a concern and that there is a risk, but generally likes the idea of Option 2. Cllr Heath suggested that Council could contact pre-school providers and café managers to test viability.
Cllr. Sutlieff is also concerned by the finances but believes extending the Village Hall is paying a lot of money to stand still. She mentioned the approach by a nature loving pre-school, and although they have found somewhere else, they may still be interested in the future, and the birthrate has increased in the Lockdown.
Cllr Collis is also concerned by the finances as well, but believes the hall option is not viable, so prefers option 2 if tenants can be found.
Cllr. Ryatt is concerned that Covid and Brexit has pushed up construction costs considerably, and these may rise further. One option would be a modular construction, and so something could be built that could easily be extended when the need and available finances allow. Cllr Sutlieff thought this approach may be feasible.

Cllr Jackson could also see the merit in this approach – he believes there is no merit in the hall option, but he too is concerned with the financial risk and the fact that option 2 would mean the Parish Council is happy to accept more houses in the village.

Cllr. Ryatt suggested that if Council were to go down the Option 7 route, then the pavilion would be replaced by a smaller building, but this could be extended in time, and Cllr. Collis agreed that this could be a workable plan.

Cllr. Jones was impressed by the business plan and while agreed that Option 2 was risky, she felt that the café at least, would be popular. In addition, if the Council could get grants then the risk to the Council could be reduced. She also asked whether we could find out how much CIL we could be getting. *Clerk's note: the CIL rate for residential properties is £365 per square metre, and the parish receives 15% of this, rising to 25% if a Neighbourhood Plan is in place.*

Cllr. Mundy thought that the reasons the present building is not working need to be analysed – is it because of its current location, what it offers, its condition, or a combination of factors. The future affordability of a replacement building is a concern as is the reliance on increased housing in the village, but he was impressed with the plan.

Cllr. Heath's main concern is whether the present Council is capable of managing the finances of such a large project

Cllr. Hartley would like the opportunity to develop an eco-friendly building but is also concerned about the finances – she likes the idea of a new-build and the idea of a modular building but wondered whether there was a need for an expensive kitchen as cafés can be successful without this.

Cllr. Gillett does not like the idea of extending the hall but is also concerned about the finances for option 2.

There was then a discussion about whether it would appeal to all age groups, and if the elderly were attracted, would this increase traffic. Traffic was a concern for several councillors, and Cllr Mundy said that some consideration needed to be taken of the need for more staff time than currently envisaged.

Cllr. Heath summed up the discussion, saying that while everyone was more enthusiastic about the more ambitious plan, there were concerns about the financial risks. The next steps were to talk to WBC; to contact potential tenant types; to investigate grant opportunities and to look at how costs may be reduced.

Cllr Heath was thanked for his hard work

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.07pm

Chairman's Signature