

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 21st March 2022 at 8pm in Charvil Village Hall

Present Jane Hartley, Pat Sutlieff, Mike Heath, Narinder Ryatt, Matt Walker, and Neil Jackson. Borough Councillor Sam Akhtar also attended, and Rob Jones was present for co-option

Apologies for Absence Hilary Jones

Absent

22/7814 Open Forum

Four residents attended, two regarding Planning Application Number 220654, one to be considered for co-option, and the other to observe.

The resident standing for co-option introduced himself and gave a brief overview of his working background. He explained that his main areas of interest are to improve facilities for children and improve Community cohesion. He explained that he is part of the Neighbourhood Plan group and felt this can go some way in improving both facilities and the sense of community. His main skills are governance, compliance, and policy work. The Chair thanked him, and he stayed for the rest of the public part of the meeting.

The two residents concerned about the Planning Application gave a brief history of the issues regarding the single storey rear extension; that most of the construction had happened without planning permission, and that retrospective permission had been granted, but that the plans approved did not match the reality of what had been constructed up to this point. One of the residents had pointed this out to the Planning Officers, but the building continued, hence the second enforcement case to be opened on this extension. He stated that the rules are that an applicant can only have one chance at retrospective permission, and that this application to vary the original plan was in breach of this. Both residents agreed that even these proposed variations do not match what has been constructed and feel that the Planning Department are acting very much in the interests of the developer, and they feel that they are viewed as a nuisance by the Planning officers. They believe residents are losing faith in the system. The Chair expressed the Parish Council's sympathy with the residents' plight, as did Borough Councillor Sam Akhtar, who will try to list this application so that all parties can have their say. *Clerk's note: the rule about having one go at retrospective applications is just guidance.*

22/7815 To co-opt Rob Jones to the Council upon signing the acceptance of office

Rob Jones signed the Acceptance of the Code of Conduct and the Acceptance of Office and was duly co-opted.

22/7816 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Ryatt stated that he was the applicant for the two planning applications concerning Uplands, and lives next door to Iffliegh, which also has a planning application to be considered.

Councillor Jackson declared that he was one of the residents who would be receiving the letter to be discussed regarding East Park Farm.

22/7817 Minutes of the Council Meeting of the 14th of February were approved

Finance

22/7818 Finance Reports

It was resolved to recommend approval of the reports which was done unanimously.

22/7819 Authorisation of Payments

It was resolved to recommend approval of the payments of invoices, which was carried unanimously.

£61.94 to Aquacare
£108.45 to the Assistant Clerk
£540 to Arborfield Tree Care
£1451.96 to Berkshire Pension Fund
£38.41 to the Village Warden
£38.33 to British Gas Services Ltd
£820.80 to Edge IT Systems Ltd
£56.45 to Everflow
£110.50 to Grundon
£268.60 to Herald Graphics
£92.54 to the Clerk
£422.54 to MKR Electrical Services Ltd
£10 to the Caretaker
£45 to the Open Spaces Society
£357.54 to Smartest Energy
£28.75 to Scottish & Southern Energy
£1031.11 to Sunshine Commercial Services
£110.35 to Tivoli Group Ltd
£1500 to Twyford District Youth and Community Centre
£3805.15 in Payroll

22/7820 To note the much-delayed pay agreement with central government to increase local government pay rates by 1.75% and that this will need to be implemented this month, backdated to April 2021 - This was noted.

22/7821 To note the increased costs from the grounds' maintenance company – This was noted, and it was decided that Council should review whether to re-tender for this contract for 2023-24 in November or December of this year.

22/7822 To approve the cost of further tidying of the bushes on the border between the houses and park at East Park Farm – it was resolved to approve this which was passed unanimously.

22/7823 Planning, Environment and Highways Committee (PEH)

The following planning applications were considered

220533 Application for the proposed erection of a garden room with decking at 20 Canberra Lake Way – no Parish Council comment

22029 Application for the proposed erection of a two-storey front extension, insertion of 1 no. dormer and 2 no. rooflights to facilitate conversion of the loft to habitable

- accommodation following demolition of rear chimney at Uplands, Park Lane – no Parish Council comment
- 220268 Application for the proposed erection of a first-floor side extension, garage conversion and insertion of 1 no. dormer and 2no. rooflights to facilitate conversion of the loft to habitable accommodation following demolition of rear chimney at Uplands, Park Lane – no Parish Council comment
- 220654 Application to vary condition 2 of application 212989 for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension with 1 no. roof light following demolition of existing conservatory and existing rear extension (part retrospective). Condition 2 refers to the approved plans and the variation is to allow an increase in the height of the roof (Retrospective) at 14, Chiltern Drive – The clerk was asked to comment as follows:
- Charvil Parish Council have serious concerns about this application, the latest in a long line of applications at this site.*
- The original application, 212989 had largely been built when the part-retrospective application was submitted in September 2021, and it is our belief that the plans submitted at this time were inaccurate in relation to what had already been erected by this time.*
- Given this situation, and the fact that the law allows just one attempt to gain permission for unauthorised development, the Parish Council believes that this application to vary condition 2 should be refused, as approval sets a dangerous precedent in encouraging other unauthorised developments.*
- 220673 Householder application for the proposed erection of a part single, part two storey front extension with part pitched roof and part flat roof. Single storey front extension to porch with canopy. Changes to the main roof from hip to gable to include 2No rooflights, rear dormer and removal of rear chimney stack to create habitable space. Single storey rear extension with changes to fenestration at Iffleigh, Park Lane – The clerk was asked to comment as follows:
- Charvil Parish Council is pleased that the idea of a two-storey rear extension has been changed to a single storey extension, but still has concerns about the proposed extensions at the front of the house, which are out of keeping with the existing street scene.*
- 220431 Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for the use of land to store commercial materials on the land to the rear of 70 Old Bath Road – The clerk commented as follows:
- This application is attempting to prove that the site has been used as a storage yard by Mr. Jimmy Frankham for at least ten years and should therefore be granted a Certificate of existing lawful development as a storage yard.*
- Charvil Parish Council has concerns that the evidence provided is not entirely accurate.*
1. *The evidence provided by the applicant states that there was a Section 215 enforcement notice was issued on 14th October 2011. The Borough Councillor, in her report in the Charvil Village News Winter edition, which would have been written at the end of November 2011, suggests that the land had not been sold at that point, as she was in discussions with the previous owner – so the earliest it is likely to have become a roofing yard would have been early 2012.*
 2. *There was an enforcement action brought against the landowner in January 2019 due to this illegal use, and the state of the site. The attached e-mail from the then enforcement officer indicates there was voluntary compliance, and the site was cleared. They were told at this point that the clearance must be permanent or*

- further action would be considered. Given this was the case, there could not have been continual use of the site as stated in the application.*
3. *Over the next two years, however, the site returned to use, and in January 2021, case no. RFS/2021/086081 was opened. While it took a further eight months for a formal notice to be served, the case had been opened well under 10 years of the start date of the illegal use.*
 4. *The applicant states that he used it to store materials for his business, and occasionally had skips. Eyewitnesses report that at least three different roofing companies have been accessing the site in recent years – Ruscombe Roofing, Berkshire Roofing and Twyford Roofing. This suggests that there is more of a commercial element than just storing materials for his business.*
 5. *The application is for the land to the rear of 70 Old Bath Road, but the applicant also owns the land to the rear of No. 72. This land was used as a private garden when the applicant lived at No.72, and along with some building materials, there is also an old trampoline, and possibly other toys. The Council is concerned that if the Borough does find in favour of the applicant, they will expand onto the area where there is no permission being sought. This situation needs to be regularised.*

The following Planning approvals were noted

- 214109 Application for the proposed erection of an infill front extension following demolition of existing front porch and replacement columns at 14, Chiltern Drive
- 220182 Householder application for the proposed garage conversion to create habitable accommodation, changes to fenestration, plus the insertion of 2no. roof lights at 25 Park View Drive South
- 220246 Householder application for the proposed single storey rear extension with 3No rooflights and garage conversion along with single storey front extension with 2No at Pebble Cottage, Milestone Avenue

The Following Tree Preservation Order Consent was noted

- 220508 Regulation 14(2) notification for works to protected tree(s) TPO-1383 -2011-T2. T2, Maple - Fell and replace (dead/dangerous) at 15c Charvil House Road

To note an update on the Platinum Trees and to decide whether to leave the number at 50, or to bring the number to 70, one for each year of the Queen's Reign

The trees from the Woodland Trust have been planted, some as part of the hedge at St Patrick's Recreation Ground and others where some trees had been felled near Simmons' Field. It was agreed that it would be fitting to plant another 20, probably to fill in more gaps in hedging on Parish Council managed lands, and more can be ordered from 4th April for planting this autumn.

The issue of a plaque for the Jubilee plantings was discussed, and it was agreed that Councillor Heath would investigate this. One idea was to put the plaque on a plinth near to the elm at East Park Farm, or to put the plaque onto the new pavilion, or the hall, as well as advertise the virtual plaques.

To approve a draft Tree and hedge Policy and to approve the letter to be delivered to all residents who back onto the Parish Council-controlled part of East Park Farm

Subject to some minor amendments, the policy was approved. It was agreed that the letter should concentrate on tree and vegetation issues, and that the Chair would amend it, and that once agreed by e-mail, it would be hand-delivered by two Councillors – the Chair and possibly Mike Heath, depending upon the timing.

22/7824 Amenities Committee

To approve the modified wording of the Tennis Pass agreement

This was approved subject to one minor amendment.

To note the offer of a bench from the Polehampton Trust and to consider placing it at St Patrick's Recreation Ground

The Council were very appreciative of this offer and believe St Patrick's Recreation Ground to be an appropriate location. It was also noted that they will be in touch with Simon Bartlam of the Countryside service regarding the planting of some trees in Charvil.

To note the destruction of the Parish Council Notice Board by Scottish and Southern Electricity, and the steps being taken to rectify this

This was done so that the power could be restored to several households, and Scottish and Southern Electricity have agreed to repair the footpath restriction, and to install the new board that the Council have on order when it arrives, and that this should be done in the next two weeks.

To decide on which date the Council will move to summer opening times for the East Park Farm car park

It was decided that the gates would be open until 8pm from Sunday 27th March as that fits in with the beginning of British Summer Time.

To hear an idea about providing a jogging track at East Park Farm

The idea from Councillor Sutlieff was to provide a paved route using the existing paths round the school, tennis courts and car park. To create a loop, this would mean surfacing the stretch of grass between the school and the service road and providing a proper pedestrian route round the barrier on the service road but could be done and would be cheaper than installing a path right round the playing field. It was suggested Council approach Wokingham Borough Council to see how much it would cost to create a proper path between the school entrance and the service road, and if deemed feasible, Council would consult with residents on this idea.

22/7825 Report from the Borough Councillor

Borough Councillor Akhtar ran through issues he has been dealing with on behalf of residents, including more bins in the Country Park; getting wheelchair access through areas where there was none; pushing for Charvil in Bloom; chasing John Halsall on the East Park Farm Lease; trying to get the hedge on Milestone Avenue repaired; and getting the hedgehog signs put up around the village. The Chair raised concerns about the way the wheelchair access had been achieved, and it was agreed that the accesses would be monitored in case of bike accidents.

Items for Consideration

22/7826 To hear an update on the Neighbourhood Plan Progress

The analysis of the surveys is going well, with the last 20% still to be done. The next meeting on 1st April will formulate the working groups based on the five themes identified, with an aim to launching them after Easter. *Clerk's note: because of Covid, the meeting on 1st April was cancelled, with the next meeting scheduled for the 22nd of April.*

22/7827 To consider progress with the Platinum Jubilee Plans

Councillor Walker will provide further details of the Treasure Hunt for the next meeting.

22/7828 To consider what issues may need publicising this month

The issues that need publicising include reporting on the Neighbourhood Plan, the appointment of an architect for the feasibility study and initial plans for the pavilion, the idea of a focus group on the pavilion project consisting of interested residents and users, the idea of increasing the Queen's Green Canopy in Charvil to 70 trees, the publication of the Tree and Hedge Policy, not to chop trees in public

areas, looking into a jogging track, the litter pick and the change in time for the gate closure.

22/7829 To decide who will promote the Annual Litter Pick

Various Councillors and one very kind member of the public volunteered to deliver the litter pick leaflets around the village.

22/7830 To hear an update from the Wokingham United Charities

The Chair announced that she was becoming a Trustee, and that three Charvil residents had benefitted from their support in the last year. She explained the type of work they do, and that funding is available to individuals who need financial help.

22/7831 To note an invitation from the Northern Parishes Communication Group for a Charvil representative to attend a and to select a representative

Councillor Rob Jones agreed to attend.

22/7832 To note that there will be a Staffing Committee meeting on 28th March, postponed from 28th February

This was noted.

22/7833 To consider whether there are any items for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Council noted that there are several areas for improvement, but that on this occasion, they would like to put the planning process forward, as there appear to be inconsistencies in approach at times.

The residents attending left at this point.

By virtue of the confidential nature of the business to be contracted the press and public were excluded from the remainder of the meeting under Section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

22/7834 To hear an update on the pavilion plan

While there is little progress with the lease, three companies submitted tenders for Stages one and two, feasibility and planning.

22/7835 To examine and discuss the architect proposals, and to approve one of them

After some discussion about the costs of each proposal (they were broadly similar), experience in dealing with our sector and the relevant parts of their portfolios, it was resolved to appoint SWA Associates, which was passed unanimously.

22/7836 To approve the co-option of the prospective candidate

It was resolved to co-opt him, which was passed unanimously

Councillor Jackson resigned from the Council at this point.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10pm

Chairman's Signature