



Chairman: Jane Hartley

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Clerk to the Council
Miranda Parker
Charvil Village Hall
The Hawthorns
Charvil, Reading
Berks RG10 9TT

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 24th April 2023 at 8pm in Charvil Village Hall

Present Jane Hartley, Pat Sutlieff, Mike Heath, Matt Walker, Narinder Ryatt, and Isabelle Bray. Borough Councillor Sam Akhtar was also present.

Apologies for Absence Rob Jones

Absent

23/8052 Open Forum

One resident and a Henley Standard journalist attended to listen to the discussion. The media assistant was also present.

23/8053 To co-opt Stephen Lucas to the Council and the signing of the Declaration of office and other associated papers

Stephen Lucas was duly co-opted to the Council and all documents were signed

23/8054 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Ryatt declared that he lived in one of the properties related to the complaint about parking in Park Lane.

Councillor Sutlieff declared that the entertainer for the Coronation Party was her son-in-law.

23/8055 Minutes of the Council Meeting of the 20th March 2023 were approved

Finance

23/8056 To receive and approve the end of year financial reports including final expenditure against budget, bank reconciliation and balance sheet

The Council noted that the final figures were as expected, and the hall and pavilion had both seemed to have recovered largely from the effect of the Pandemic on usage. The pavilion had exceeded expectations. It was resolved to approve the figures which was passed unanimously.

23/8057 Authorisation of Payments

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

£107.32 to Aquacare

£78.72 to the Assistant Clerk

£1379.03 to Berkshire Pension Fund

£26.34 to Bowak Ltd

£810 to Concept 17

£654 to Drain and Able

£1347.60 to Edge IT Systems Ltd

1951

Chairman's Initials.....

Date.....

£131.60 to Everflow
£85.64 to Grundon
£587.20 to Heart Cleaning Ltd
£1985 to Herald Graphics Ltd
£635.15 to the clerk
£36 to Neil Durrant
£25.59 to Opus Energy
£96 to RES Systems Ltd
£372.68 to Smartest Energy
£1500 to Stanhope Wilkinson Associates
£1081.64 to Sunshine Commercial Services
£1075.20 to Tactical Facilities Management Ltd
£48 to Taurus Elite Security
£233.96 to Tivoli Group Ltd
£105.54 to Viking Payments
£3685.87 in Payroll

23/8058 To update on advice on VAT issues regarding the renovation/rebuild of the pavilion

The Clerk reported that the advice received suggested looking at the amount of VAT claimed back on business related activities over the past seven years, and if there is enough leeway, then the Council could put the VAT incurred for the works against this. If not, the choices available to the Council include paying the VAT or to opt to tax but this may not be a great choice if the plan is to redevelop the site in a few years. The clerk will try to work out the amount of business-related tax the Council has claimed back on business activities.

23/8059 To note and approve the asset register at the end of the financial year

It was resolved to approve this which was passed unanimously

23/8060 To note that all bank reconciliations for 2022-23 have been checked as accurate

It was noted that Councillor Bray had checked them all as accurate

23/8061 To note the decision to approve the tree works for the lime on the far side of the pavilion as emergency expenditure by the clerk and Chair of Amenities, and to approve it retrospectively

It was resolved to approve this which was passed retrospectively

23/8062 To approve the expenditure to clean the tennis courts in line with the discussion in March

It was resolved to approve this which was passed retrospectively

23/8063 To note that there is no approved budget for the Coronation Party, to retrospectively approve the planned and existing expenditure on this, and to decide whether this comes from reserves or is diverted from another budget

The lack of a budget for events was discussed, and it was agreed that this would be discussed at the Finance meeting in May, where a recommended budget would be decided upon for the Full Council Meeting in May. It was also decided that this would come from reserves.

As far as the Coronation Party is concerned, the expenditure on the entertainer and mugs was approved retrospectively, and the proposed expenditure on food and decorations was also approved, up to a budget of £1000 for the whole event.

23/8064 Planning, Environment and Highways Committee (PEH)

a) The following planning applications were considered

230893 Application for the erection of a single storey rear extension to lounge with composite cladding and roof lantern at 53 Park View Drive North – no Parish Council Comment

b) To note the following Planning Application approval

230259 Application for the prior approval of the erection of a single storey rear extension, which would extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by 6.00m, for which the maximum height would be 3.00m and the height of the eaves 2.80m at 20, Old Bath Road

c) To note the following Tree Preservation Application decisions

230212 APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO PROTECTED TREE(S) TPO 1136/2006, T1 T1, London Plane – Crown reduction by 4m to approx. 12m in height and 12m in spread at the Texaco garage - split decision

230189 APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO PROTECTED TREE(S) 866/1997, T1 T1, Lime Re-pollard back to previous pollard points at 11, Foxes Walk - approved

b) To note a complaint from a Park Lane resident regarding inconsiderate parking on Park Lane and what action can be taken to support them

The clerk explained that she had already written to the resident explaining that it was unfortunate this was the latest in a series of building works on the lane, but that there were no parking restrictions, so any dangerous parking is a police matter. If the Parish Council were to push for double yellow lines, they would have to prove they have the support of residents before the Borough would even consider it. Councillors expressed sympathy with the situation and considered writing letters to the relevant householders. Councillor Ryatt, who has just started his building works, felt he was being singled out, but the clerk pointed out that the same resident had complained about other works on the Lane previously. He said he is happy to park his cars either at the hall, or on neighbours' drives, but that leaves the builders' vehicles on the Lane, which are the main issue, and that is inevitable with building work. Given that the builders are not acting illegally, and need their vehicles close to the site, the only issue is whether their parking is deemed dangerous, in which case, it is a police matter.

To Note the Speed Data

It was noted that despite being in "Stealth" mode, the average speed was lower than previous averages.

23/8065 Amenities Committee

To decide whether to support the idea of letting the primary school have exclusive use of the MUGA from the end of September to Easter from 9am to 1.30pm each day, subject to a Service Level Agreement

The Council has always taken the view that the MUGA should be open access, but on this occasion, in the winter months, the grassy play areas in the school readily become mud baths, and so the Council is willing to allow the use in term-time when most youngsters are either in school or college, so minimising the effect on other users. The draft agreement needs amending to reflect the fact that the closure is only in term-time weekdays.

To consider the latest developments in the efforts to get a pre-school into the pavilion, and to approve the need for a Service Level Agreement with the group, and to decide whether now is the time to give the existing weekday groups notice

The potential provider and his consultant came out who was very positive about the facility. The consultant thought the play area would be better at the front of the

building, although fire regulations must be adhered to as the front entrance is a fire exit. They would like to use the sports end entrance for the parents to drop off their children, which would mean some pegs and shoe storage outside the hall. It was agreed that there needs to be some level of agreement to manage expectations. The pre-school still needs OFSTED approval before it can open, but one idea they had, was to have a “soft opening” with parents accompanying their children for the first few weeks. It was decided to wait until after the Annual Parish Meeting before giving notice to the current pavilion users, but that the Amenities Manager could start having informal discussions with users about possible slots in the Village Hall.

23/8066 Staffing Committee

To note the Minutes of the Meeting on 27th March

These were noted. The main points were the resignation of the Village Warden; the need for evening training sessions; that there needs to be a clearer understanding of positions on the Council; that there needs to be better communications between councillors themselves, as well as between staff and councillors; and the need to have a five-year plan, to give the Council a framework in which to function consisting of routine maintenance, new objectives, and activities.

23/8067 Report from the Borough Councillor

The Borough Councillor reported that the bin had now been moved from Chiltern Drive to East Park Farm Drive, and signage had been put in near to the cut-through between Pennine Way and East Park Farm Drive. He has been trying to get the 20mph flashing lights repaired outside the school. He has also been supporting the efforts to get the Waingels Road sewer installed this summer – the Department of Education had come back with some more queries to the Borough Council, who are in the process of replying. Hopefully once satisfied, the Dept of Education will give the go ahead. He had run another litter pick and is concerned about local drug taking which seems to be on the rise again.

Items for Consideration

23/8068 To hear an update on the Neighbourhood Plan

Councillor Jones has been working on the first draft, and it is hoped that a meeting will be held on 19th May. The next funding round for Neighbourhood Plan grants is not yet open.

23/8069 To hear updates on the Annual Parish Meeting preparations

This is due to be held on 17th May. The Council will stick to the standard agenda, based on the committees. Councillor Bray will lead on Social Media. There was a suggestion that cards should be available with the Link Tree address etc on them. Oliver Cloke of the Pre-school will follow on from that. Wine and nibbles will be served after this for informal conversations,

23/8070 To note the update on Social Media and to decide upon other possible activities later in the year

The Council were very impressed with the April Fool's Day posts that have had far more traction with the wider public than anything else posted so far. Some events are already pencilled in but without firm dates so far, including the Conservation group meetings, the village Walk and autumn tree planting. Then there is the fete, which the Parish is involved with. Suggestions for new activities included a picnic in the summer holidays, and possibly a harvest festival event. It may be a good idea to look at national events, to see what we can do things around. It was also agreed that the Council would work with the Henley Standard on advertising the progress of the Pavilion works once it had been advertised by us, starting after the Annual Parish Meeting.

23/8071 To note the research into Broadband for the hall and decide whether to progress this now or wait until the pavilion refurbishment is complete
It was decided it would be better to do the pavilion and hall at the same time. The Council thought that it needed more criteria on which to base a decision.

23/8072 To consider the proposed changes to the Annual Meeting form and whether these are likely to help the Council be more pro-active
It was decided to remove the pavilion working group and replace it with a building maintenance lead within the Amenities committee. The Neighbourhood Plan lead should be in there as well.

23/8073 To hear a report from the Borough Parish Liaison Group meeting
Councillor Heath reported that they had presentations on the Net Biodiversity Gain requirement for planning applications now, and there will be training on this which was postponed earlier in the year; from Connecting Communities in Berkshire; and from Andrew Moulton warning of the dangers of pre-determining Council decisions as this makes them unlawful.

23/8074 To note an update on the Waingels Road Sewer
This was covered by the Borough Councillor

23/8075 To consider what needs advertising this month
It was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting, the Coronation Party, the Pavilion, and social events should be advertised.

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

23/8076 To approve the scope of works for the pavilion and to approve the draft tender documents
The clerk was asked to find out about the review process, and some concerns were raised about the fact that everything was based on price, but it was acknowledged that the Council is not obliged to accept the lowest price. The process was approved. *Clerk's note: the architect will come up with recommendations and is willing to join the meeting when the decision is made.*
There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.04pm

Chairman's Signature