

Wonersh Parish Council

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Minutes of the meeting of Wonersh Parish Council held on Thursday 11 March 2021 at 7.30 pm, online

Present: Councillors Mike Band Chris Crouch, Chris Howard, Ben Knight, Stephen Lavender, Malcolm Scott, Anthony Shutes, and Rod Weale (Chair).

In attendance: Lisa Davison, Borough Councillor Michael Goodridge and two members of the public

MINUTES

20/21 279 To consider and approve apologies for absence.

There were no apologies for absence.

20/21 280 Wonersh Parish Code of Conduct – Declarations of disclosable interests

There were no declarations of disclosable interests.

20/21 281 Open meeting for members of the public to raise matters with the Council.

Borough Cllr Michael Goodridge highlighted the concerns regarding the lapse in the legislation allowing for Council decisions to be made online, rather than at a meeting in a physical address. Of particular concern were individuals who had not been immunised, which were quite often staff rather than elected members. The Clerk noted that this is something which also had an impact at parish-level and that the April agenda would include delegated responsibilities to the Clerk for Council discussion and that she would like to see the May meeting being brought forward to before the expiry date of the 7th May 2021.

Cllr Goodridge also noted that Planning Application WA/2020/0322 for Barnett Hill Hotel would shortly need to be called to Committee, if it is to be considered by elected members. Parish Councillors responded that they had yet to receive an appropriate response as to the appearance of the extension from public right of way, so could not respond accurately. It was agreed that, since this was not forthcoming Cllr Goodridge would call this to Committee.

One member of the public highlighted that they may have display boards available for Wonersh Parish Council use, should these be required. It was noted that they could be useful for local fetes, either for the parish council, or for the environmental advisory groups or Wonersh Connections.

Action: Cllr Weale to arrange for the collection and storage of display boards.

20/21 282 Briefing by the Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team on issues of local interest and concern.

There was no report from the Police but councillors noted that the Borough Commander and local Officer had accepted an invite to the April Council Meeting.

Action: Cllr Lavender to draft and circulate for comment a brief on items to be discussed by the Police.

20/21 283 To consider and approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 February 2021.

The Clerk noted that she had received some requests for edits for clarification, which she had completed. It had also been suggested that the clerk required a councillor to support efforts to bring together local parish councils to explore responses to speeding vehicles. Cllr Weale agreed to support the clerk in this. Subject to these minor edits the minutes were approved and will be signed in due course.

20/21 284 To receive progress reports about matters previously considered and approved by the Council.

Council received updates on the Peppercot, VAS and playground inspections, the latter will be explored further at a future meeting.

20/21 285 To receive the approved minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings held on 28 January and 18 February 2021.

These were received.

20/21 286 Finance – to consider and approve the following:

- (a) the list of receipt and payment vouchers in February 2021;**

The Council resolved to approve these (proposed by Cllr Band).

- (b) the end-January 2021 financial statement;**

The Clerk requested that these be deferred, pending updates to some items.

- (c) the payment of £400 in rent for the allotment field for the 2021/22 financial year;**

The Council resolved to approve this (proposed by Cllr Lavender).

- (d) the payment of up to £4,000 for the installation of the VAS in Shamley Green; and**

The Council resolved to approve this (proposed by Cllr Band).

It was noted that reserves were to be reviewed at the next Risk and Audit Committee, and the source of funds could be explored in more detail then, including requests for contributions from other local sources, if required.

Councillors enquired as to whether a VAS which nudged compliance would be possible and powering other VAS in the parish from mains sources might be possible.

**Action: Clerk to inform Surrey County Council that installation costs had been approved and
(e) a draft grant funding policy for Wonersh Parish Council.**

Councillors welcomed this and thanked Cllr Lavender for his efforts, the principles regarding eligible applications were agreed. In practice, it was agreed that, no specific dates or values would be included, so it would not require regular updates.

Action: The Council delegated finalising this policy to the Clerk and Cllr Lavender.

Clerk to include final version on the website.

- (f) payment of up to £200 for a new post and replacement posts in Shamley Green.**

The Council resolved to approve this (proposed by Cllr Howard).

20/21 287 To consider further the lease of the community room from Waverley Borough Council and approve next steps.

The Clerk noted that Officers in the Housing and Legal teams at Waverley Borough Council were exploring further the restrictions placed on hire and an update was due shortly. At present there were no further decisions to be made.

Cllr Weale highlighted the timing of the lights in the community room, currently during the hours of darkness, and that the Council may want to reconsider this. The Clerk noted that a change to the schedule might have a health and safety impact locally and that Waverley Borough Council were seeking to replace the lights, powered from the community room, with solar powered alternatives. Whilst that does not mean the Council cannot have a view on this, it may influence how a decision is taken. Borough and Parish Councillor Howard noted that Shamley Green is within the Surrey Hill Area of Outstanding National Beauty, where there was a commitment to the dark skies to reduce energy and protect ecology, which is also an influencing factor.

Action: Clerk to adjust the timing of the lights to hours of darkness and review progress in advance of the Autumn.

20/21 288 To consider further the lease of the land from Waverley Borough Council and approve next steps.

The Council welcomed the response of Waverley Borough Council to queries on the leases and confirmation of the Service Level Agreements and accompanying maps. The outstanding actions and agreements regarding, e.g., the booking processes and responsible parties, should there be an incursion, plus concerns raised by a Surrey County Council regarding the drains on grassed common land in Shamley Green, required further attention and agreement prior to the leases being signed.

Action: Clerk to provide copies of booking procedures and follow up regarding outstanding information and assurances from Waverley Borough Council.

20/21 289 To consider the work placement and contracts procedures on common land, including leased land and approve next steps.

Cllrs Shutes, Knight and Band presented a risk-assessments designed, with input from our insurance company, for Duke of Edinburgh volunteer litter pickers, with the view that it would be applied to this and similar activity across the parish. One item requiring further consideration was the age at which volunteers could act independently of an adult leader / parent or guardian. It was agreed that the paperwork would read 'Unless otherwise agreed, children under 16 years old must be accompanied by a responsible adult and supervised at all times,' and the Council would reserve the right to request further related information with consideration of this. The Council resolved to approve this proforma for these purposes (proposed by Cllr Howard). It was agreed that this would be approved for the aforementioned volunteers and the regular volunteer litter pickers on Wonersh Parish Council-registered common land. Approval by Council is required for requests for individuals and groups and extending this system further.

Action: Clerk to circulate to DofE volunteers and leader of litter-picking on WPC-registered common land.

In reviewing the lease of the Waverley Borough Council land, restrictions upon who could complete works on this were restricted. In view of this Cllrs Band tabled a policy designed to consider this and support appropriate input by environmental and environmental advisory groups. The Council resolved to approve this (proposed by Cllr Shutes) and suggested that a similar approach could be adapted for volunteers across leased and owned common land, subject to small adaptations.

Action: Cllr Band to review the policy based on Council feedback.

Clerk to circulate to the environmental groups for wider circulation amongst volunteers.

20/21 290 To consider the mowing schedules, as discussed with contractors, and approve next steps.

The council welcomed the efforts of WEAG and SGEG, who inputted into the local designs which were discussed further between the Commons Working Party, Clerk and contractors, who provided valuable advice.

It was agreed that these practices would be confirmed with contractors, houses bordering the common would receive an informative letter and asked to provide feedback and act responsively in any areas of common land they mow. Information would be shared through the website and Facebook Page and discussed further at the annual assembly, scheduled for the 22nd April 2021.

Action: Clerk to inform contractors of approved update to mowing schedules on local grassed common land.

Clerk to include details online and through Facebook and the mailing list.

Clerk, with the support of the Commons Working Party to deliver letters to households bordering the common.

Additionally, Cllrs Shutes and Knight had met with the sustainability team from Wonersh Church regarding the closed burial ground. They are also looking to how they can adopt more sustainable

mowing practices and have agreed to follow a similar approach of mowing less frequently with paths and edges mowed more frequently.

Action: Clerk to inform contractors of the approved update to mowing schedules in the closed burial ground.

Cllr Shutes enquired further over possible changes to practice in Church Green. Cllr Crouch responded that it would shortly be the meeting for trustees and he would raise it there.

Action: Cllr Crouch to raise the mowing practices at Church Green with Trustees.

20/21 291 To receive reports from the Commons Working Party and Environmental Advisory Groups and approve next steps.

Cllr Shutes updated the Councillors as to recent activity by way of a report and with respect to:

- The drainage ditches, where a Surrey County Council Officer had provided advice on (a) the ditches along Lawnsmead, Wonersh, and (b) the ditch towards Shamley Green Village Stores, where SCC agreed to jet the culvert under the highway to confirm it was operational; and
- The invertebrate survey, where a £750 contribution had been received from Surrey County Council, the remainder coming from the ring-fenced pot through the Wonersh Foundation.

Cllr Band noted that, regarding the former, a resident had reported that gully drains appeared blocked and this was potentially exacerbating the problem near Shamley Green Village Stores.

The Clerk highlighted the quote for a post for alongside an easement on Wonersh Parish Council-registered common land in Shamley Green and the Council resolved to approve this (proposed by Cllr Howard).

Cllr Howard also raised other posts requiring attention in the vicinity of this and that drivers were, at present wearing away parts of the common in areas where posts had not been installed. It was confirmed that the former was on WBC-registered common land and the latter on WPC-registered common land. The Council agreed that the loose posts on WBC-registered common land could be reinstalled by their contractor and that the Council would delegate to the Clerk and the Commons Working Party a review of (a) where posts might be installed on WPC-registered common land; and (b) where posts might need replacement on WBC-registered common land, for discussion prior to signing leases.

Action: Clerk to follow up on the recommendations by the SCC Officer and (a) request quotes as per the recommendations, and (b) to confirm the culvert was clear under the highway and highlight the blocked gulleys in Church Hill with Surrey County Council Officers, and discuss further with Waverley Borough Council Officers, regarding the failed culvert on common land, in advance of signing the leases.

Clerk to issue the contract for the invertebrate survey.

Clerk to arrange for the installation of a post near the easement on WPC-registered common land in Shamley Green

Clerk to work with the Commons Working Party to ascertain post requirements on WPC and WBC-registered common land.

20/21 292 To receive the request for allotments in the parish and review possible land availability.

The Council welcomed the request for additional allotments in the Parish and discussed possibilities for this and also community gardens and orchards. It was agreed that a request for land to encompass these options should be included in the Spring Newsletter and highlighted at the annual assembly.

Action: Council to review available land for allotments and / or community purposes.

20/21 293 To receive and approve the 2020/21 register of allotment holders.

The Council resolved to approve this (proposed by Cllr Lavender).

20/21 294 To receive recommendations and approve permitted spends on materials by the routine maintenance contractors and approve next steps.

Recommendations on a per month basis, were:

- Up to £25 expenditure without permissions
- Up to £75 expenditure with agreement of the Clerk or Commons Working Party Lead; and
- Up to £250 expenditure with agreement of the Clerk and Commons Working Party Lead.

The Council resolved to approve this (proposed by Cllr Shutes).

Action: Clerk to inform the contractors and monitor invoices accordingly

20/21 295 To consider the arrangements for the Annual Assembly, scheduled for 22 April 2021 and approve next steps.

The Council confirmed these details and that the assembly will be via Zoom. Councillors discussed further Council progress and implications for the Chair's introduction and other items for discussion by Councillors. Invites will be sent to Wonersh United Charities, the Wonersh Foundation and Wonersh Woodland Group to present as part of the meeting. The annual assembly will be publicised via the usual channels, including the website, noticeboards, Facebook, parish magazines, the mailing list and the list of regular attendees.

Action: Councillors to discuss and agree content of presentations

Clerk to invite presenters.

Clerk to publicise via the usual channels and share joining instructions upon request.

Cllrs Howard and Shutes to submit articles to the parish magazines.

20/21 296 To receive an update on the recruitment of a book-keeper / assistant to the Clerk and interviewing process and approve next steps.

The Clerk updated the Council as to the progress made with the recruitment for a book-keeper / assistant and requested that the decision, following interview, should be delegated to the Clerk and the Personnel Committee.

Action: Clerk and the Personnel Committee to interview candidates and make a decision as to the most suitable candidate.

20/21 297 To consider co-option of a councillor for the Shamley Green ward and approve next steps.

Cllr Weale noted that the resignation of Cllr Walmsley-Beveridge meant that the Council now had a vacancy in Shamley Green and Waverley Borough Council had confirmed that we could co-opt to a casual vacancy at the earliest opportunity. The Clerk noted the NALC guidance on this and the Wonersh Parish Council Policy and proposed that, with the Chair, a timeline for co-option is agreed. It was agreed by Council that this should be within the new council year, particularly given changing requirements regarding meeting. The annual assembly was noted as an opportunity to highlight this.

Action: Clerk to agree with the Council and timeline for the co-option of a parish councillor for Shamley Green Ward.

Clerk and Council to advertise accordingly.

20/21 298 To receive the Council Strategy, as updated, and approve next steps

Cllr Shutes reported that there had been extensive discussion on this and, following a productive meeting, the final strategy was presented for Council approval. The Council resolved to formally adopt the strategy (Proposed by Cllr Howard).

20/21 299 To consider the Council's response, if any, to Public Space Protection Order in respect of Anti-Social Behaviour, for response by 2 April 2021.

The Council noted that the area under consideration was Godalming and Farncombe, which seemed sensible. They had no further comments.

20/21 300 To receive reports by Members and the Clerk.

There were no further reports.

20/21 301 Members' business and correspondence for noting or including on a future agenda.

The Council noted the request from Longacre school regarding banners to celebrate the school's 75th anniversary. The Council requested further details on the timings and size of the banner before being able to take a decision on this.

Action: Clerk to request further information from Longacre School as to the proposed plans.

The Council noted that the licence for Wonersh Sports Pavilion was transferring to Wonersh Cricket Club.

Cllr Howard updated the Council as to concerns regarding the ditch near Hullmead and subsequent flooding.

Requests for the next Council Meeting included:

- Request for a replacement to / repair of the bench gifted to Blackheath Village Society by Wonersh Parish Council in 1995, the centenary of the Council.
- Review and adoption of the Emergency Plans and the unauthorised encampments policy
- A schedule of delegation for the Clerk and proposals regarding forthcoming meetings.
- Spring Newsletter
- Internal / external audit and other AGAR-related matters
- Code of conduct and other recommendations from the Risk and Audit Committee.

20/21 302 Dates of future meetings:

Council: 8 April 2021

Planning Committee: 1 April 2021

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