

Wonersh Parish Council

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Minutes of the meeting of Wonersh Parish Council held on Thursday 11 January 2024 at 7.30pm, at the Wonersh Sports Pavilion.

Present: Cllrs Chris Howard, Ben Knight, Anthony Shutes (Chair) and Kevin Sloan,

In attendance: Lisa Davison, County Councillor Kevin Deanus, Borough Councillors Jane Austin and Michael Goodridge.

23/24 206 To consider and approve apologies for absence.

The Council received and approved apologies for absence for Cllrs Mike Band, Stephen Lavender, Rob Merriman and George Sobek.

23/24 207 Wonersh Parish Code of Conduct – Declarations of disclosable interests.

Cllr Howard noted a non-pecuniary interest in item 23/24 217, in relation to her role on the Arbuthnot Hall Committee.

23/24 208 Open meeting for members of the public to raise matters with the Council.

Cllr Deanus noted that the Surrey County Council comments on the seminary development had now been submitted to Waverley and these were largely supportive of the requests made by Wonersh Parish Council.

In response to queries from Cllr Shutes it was confirmed that the permissive footpath is expected to be granted in perpetuity. Specifically: *“The works shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved scheme and thereafter permanently retained [and maintained has since been adding at the Parish Council’s request] for its designated purpose.”*

He updated the Parish Council as to the progress of [The New Draft Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy and 20 mph Speed Limit Policy through Surrey County Council Cabinet](#) and the follow up public consultation which will commence this month with responses due in mid-March. He noted that the earlier review of national speed limit on rural roads to the east of Surrey had now extended into the County Council area and he was meeting with officers to better understand the road under review here and to ensure it is inclusive. It was noted by Cllr Shutes that these updates dovetail with the request from Waverley Borough Council considered under 23/24 229, considered below. Cllr Deanus requested to be included in this communication.

Action: Clerk to include County Cllr Deanus in the response to the Waverley Borough Council Officer

Cllr Shutes raised an earlier query on the cost of extending the footway from Wonersh to Gerald’s Wood to improve the connectivity and safety for pedestrians between Wonersh and Bramley, as well as to this community facility. This was being considered as a strategic CIL application by the Parish Council.

Action: Clerk to follow up on this earlier query with Cllr Deanus.

Cllr Deanus noted that amounts of funding might be available for the investment in small and medium costs projects in the parish which were aligned with the County Council’s vision and associated objectives. Cllr Howard raised the current funding effort at Lords Hill Playground,

where fundraising was underway for amounts between £1.5k and £14k. It was suggested that an application in the region of £10,000 would be appropriate.

Cllr Shutes noted that they had previously received an amount from Surrey to match fund an invertebrate survey on common land in the parish and a follow up was being proposed to assess the effectiveness of changes in mowing and related practices to increase biodiversity. It was noted that there might be an amount available for this.

Action: Clerk to request paperwork from Cllr Deanus and work with appropriate working parties and advisory groups to submit funding requests.

Cllr Howard raised the progress being made with consideration for the redevelopment of the Arbuthnot Hall, with an application expected to be submitted by the end of this financial year. It was noted that the Committee were actively exploring the availability of support through Your Fund Surrey and enquired as to Councillor support for reinvigorating this valuable community facility.

Cllr Austin highlighted that [Waverley Borough Council's Planning Committee will shortly consider the Seminary redevelopment, most likely in February or March](#), now a response had been received from Surrey County Council Officers as to the transport impact and required considerations on a range of modes. It was noted that the plans did not include affordable housing and that the viability study backed up the developer's statement that this is not financially viable, having too great an impact upon profit margins, particularly given the investment in local infrastructure connecting and making safer the links between the site and the local villages, increasing the popularity of this as a place to purchase a property. The uniqueness of the site was noted, and this leads to uncertainties as to how much properties will eventually sell for and there may be potential for Waverley to clawback contributions for affordable housing from the developer on this basis.

Cllr Austin followed up with the WBC Planning Officer at the Parish Council's request to better understand the viability for land to be retained by Waverley Borough Council for the future development of affordable housing in the parish at a future date by a suitable developer. This was determined to be problematic given the challenges in making an application to the same authority for development in an Area of Outstanding National Beauty, even though there are caveats in place which make exceptions for affordable and social housing. There was discussion as to whether the same challenge would exist should the parish council secure the land with a view to exploring future uses. It seems that some of the barriers could be removed using this approach, though resources and expertise would be required should the Council decide that that this is something they would like to progress.

Action: Cllr Shutes, Howard and the Clerk to explore the potential for this.

Clerk to include on a future Council Meeting agenda for further discussion.

Cllr Austin raised the Parish Council request for WA/2023/05213 to be considered by the WBC Planning Committee as Officers were arguing for this to be considered under delegated authority, based on current triggers for this to be considered by Committee as a default. The Parish Council held their view and shared concerns regarding a degradation of democracy should this not be considered by Borough Councillors.

Cllr Austin raised the present consultation on the future design of Cranleigh Leisure Centre and requested that the opportunity to input into this be highlighted. She also noted that the

Thames Water related work were ongoing in Bramley and that the works near the roundabout may also result in traffic congestion in Wonerish Parish too.

Action: Clerk to highlight public consultation on Cranleigh Leisure Centre.

The Borough Councillors noted that a new Chief Executive Officer had been appointed to cover both Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils.

Cllr Howard raised the resident concerns as to localised flooding in Lords Hill and Cllr Deanus noted that this had been reported to the Surrey County Council flooding team, however this may not be a priority given other incidences in the County.

Cllr Howard also noted that residents wanted to plant a tree to commemorate a neighbour's birthday. Their preferred spot was on the estates area on Hullmead in Shamley Green, so the Clerk would be following up with the Housing Department and were keen for Borough Councillors to support this process to.

Action: Clerk to request permission from Waverley Borough Council Estates.

23/24 209 To consider and approve the minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meetings held on 23 November and 14 December 2023.

The Council considered and resolved to approve the minutes from these additional Council Meetings. They were duly signed by Cllr Shutes. The Clerk noted that the minutes from the November meeting were already approved.

23/24 210 To receive progress reports about matters previously considered and approved by Council.

Cllr Shutes raised the update from the Farnborough Noise Group and it was agreed that Cllr Shutes and the Clerk would follow up in line with the response already agreed by Council and the Planning Committee. A specific action related this is to highlight the implications for the AONB to the Surrey County Council AONB officer.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Shutes to follow up, including alerting the Surrey County AONB Officer to proceedings.

23/24 211 To consider and approve the minutes of the Risk and Audit Committee Meeting held on 14 December 2023.

The Council considered and resolved to approves theses minutes. They were duly signed by Cllr Shutes.

23/24 212 To receive the approved minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings held on 2 November, 23 November and 14 December 2023.

These were noted.

23/24 213 Finance – to consider and approve the following:

- (a) The list of payment and receipt vouchers in November and December 2023.
- (b) The end-October and end-November 2023 financial statement.
- (c) Payment to Land registry of £6.00 – purchase title deeds

- (d) **Payment to W.L. West & Sons of £150.05 – materials to repair playground and bus shelters**
- (e) **Payment to Mark Welby Consulting Arborists of £1,500 – tree condition assessment**
- (f) **Payment to NJM Ltd of £10.40 – plastic files**
- (g) **Payment to Website Builder of £317.40 - Website domain names and business plan**
- (h) **Payment to Norton Life Lock of £41.66 - 10 GB back up for 1 year**
- (i) **Payment to Imprint Colour of £100 - 100 paper copies of newsletter for village shops.**

The Council resolved to approve the above items.

23/24 214 Finance – to note receipt of:

- (a) **Allotment rent**
- (b) **£128 – Wonersh Cricket club for 50% mowing costs in September**
- (c) **£2,541.66 – Final donations for purchase of Barnett Hill Fields**

These were noted.

23/24 215 To note the update the NALC model contract and approve next steps.

The Council welcomed these and will seek to adopt for the employment of future officers. The decision as to whether to update the existing officer's contracts to reflect any changes was delegated to the Personnel Committee.

Action: Clerk to include this on the next Personnel Committee meeting agenda.

23/24 216 To confirm the budget and precept for 2024/25 and approve next steps.

The Council welcomed the suggestions from the Risk and Audit Committee and agreed to a budget of £138,231.00 and a precept request of £126,226.00.

Correction to the minutes: a budget of £131,078 was approved.

Action: Clerk to confirm these figures with Waverley Borough Council as the precepting authority.

23/24 217 To receive recommendations from the Risk and Audit Committee as to the drawdown of the PWLB loan for the Arbuthnot Hall and approve next steps, including any conditions associated with the contribution.

The Council welcomed the suggestion of the Risk and Audit Committee as to the conditions under which the PWLB contribution would be made available for the redevelopment of the Arbuthnot Hall. The Council confirmed that they would be seeking assurances on consultation, planning approval and sufficient funding in place for the whole renovation project for the contribution to be made.

The Parish Council requested that the Clerk confirm the extent to which the drawdown of this portion of the loan can be extended beyond August 2024 to provide opportunity for these project requirements to be secured. The Council will consider the response from the Department of Levelling up Housing and Communities to this request in determining the timing of the drawdown. The Council maintained that should the full redevelopment not proceed, then

the option exists to help the refurbishment of the current building, provided it is seen as a capital project.

Action: Clerk to update the Arbuthnot Hall Committee

Action: Clerk to request extension from DLUHC so loan proportions can be drawn down beyond August 2024.

Clerk to include on future Council Meeting agenda to confirm the next steps.

The Clerk raised that there would be a vacancy representing the Parish Council on the Arbuthnot Hall Committee in due course and requested Councillors to bear this in mind.

23/24 218 To receive recommendations from the Risk and Audit Committee as to the response to Interim Internal Audit and approve next steps. 23/24 213 To consider and approve (j) payment to Mulberry & Co of £192.25 – internal interim audit

The Council thanked officers for their efforts and confirmed the Risk and Audit Committee response. The Council resolved approve payment to the auditors.

23/24 219 To receive recommendations from the Risk and Audit Committee as to hire rates for the Shamley Green Community Room for 2023/24 and the wider strategy and approve next steps. 23/24 213 To consider and approve (k) payment to Waverley Borough Council of £495.25 – business rates for community room (to be reimbursed); (l) payment to EDF Energy of £236.87 – Community room Electricity and Gas; (m) the addition of EDF energy to the schedule of due payments for the monthly payment of £119.

The Council resolved to approve the financial expenditure. The Council considered and resolved to approve the recommendations from the Risk and Audit Committee which is as followed:

The Committee recommended to Council that the hire rate be increased by £5 for each user group for 2024/25, for review in a year, and that the amount paid to regularise payments between users be increased at a rate of £10 per annum until market rate is reached.

Action: Clerk to update information on website and advise hirers.

The Council considered further the residents who could form a working party / advisory group to inform the day-to-day management of the hall and it was also noted that a link Councillor would be required. The requirement to better understand the income and expenditure was viewed as an important element of this and would inform the longer-term planning for the use of the facility.

Action: Councillors to reflect upon this role and the development of an advisory group for the Community Room.

Assistant to the Clerk to provide a financial summary for the community room.

23/24 220 To receive recommendations from the Risk and Audit Committee as to the closed burial ground wall and approve next steps. 3/24 213 To consider and approve (n) payment to Hockley and Dawson of £400 - Structural engineering services

Cllr Shutes updated Council as to current plans heritage fencing and the challenges with buttresses to offer an effective long term and affordable solution. The invoice from Hockley and Dawson for their advice was noted as exceeding the approved amount. The Council approved payment of this subject to a written report confirming the advice shared.

Action: Clerk to follow up with Hockley and Dawson.

23/24 221 To receive recommendations from the Risk and Audit Committee as to the Tree Hazard Assessment and approve next steps. 3/24 213 To consider and approve (n) payment to an arboriculturist of up £600 - tomography at ground level of oak.

The Council welcomed and approved this Tree Hazard Assessment. The Council resolved to approve the costs associated with the additional survey work recommended in the Tree Hazard Assessment. It was noted that Clerk has requested a quote from the Council's regular tree surgeon given the limited scope of recommendations. Should the quote exceed the amount permitted within the Council's policies the Clerk will request two further quotes for Council consideration.

The Council requested that all trees identified by the survey, outside the Council's registered land be highlighted to the neighbouring properties.

Action: Clerk to respond to received quotes in line with the Council policies.

Clerk to advise tree surveyor of the approved follow up works.

Clerk to advise neighbouring landowners with trees identified in the Tree Hazard Assessment.

23/24 222 To receive any other recommendations from the Risk and Audit Committee and approve next steps.

The Clerk noted the response from Zurich Insurance to increase the cover to include the new items of play equipment. This would be free of charge until renewal in June 2024 and would then increase by £120. The Council resolved to approve this increase.

Action: Clerk to advise the insurance company

23/24 223 To receive updates on the lease of the land with Waverley Borough Council and approve next steps.

The Clerk noted that they were still awaiting completed versions of each lease for review. The additional charges on each lease were also noted and the Council approved this in principle, with a view to formally approving the amount at the February Council Meeting.

Action: Clerk to advise the solicitors.

23/24 224 To receive an update on Barnett Hill Fields and approve next steps. 23/24 213 To consider and approve (o) payment of £381 to Jacobs for Skip Hire for the removal of redundant tree protectors (sponsored by the Womersh Foundation from community donations).

The Council resolved to approve the amount for the skip hire and welcomed the support from the local community to improve their local environment.

Cllr Shutes provided a general update and shared the wonderful news that generous local benefactors and regular volunteers, the Healys had welcomed the offer to have the woods named after them. The Council approved the naming of Healy's Wood and highlighted a desire to hold a village picnic as part of the naming ceremony.

Cllr Shutes updated the Council as to the meeting with the resident regarding the encroachment onto Barnett Hill fields prior to the purchase by the Parish Council, and something that the Council were not alerted to until after the purchase completed. As a follow up to the meeting the proposal to Council was to accept that the woodland now formed part of the neighbouring property, with the liability remaining there's and the triangle, which is a potential access point available to the resident under a non-transferrable licence. This would be at a peppercorn rent and reviewed annually, or over longer period if viable. The Council considered this a sensible way to progress.

Action: Cllr Shutes and Clerk to propose licence and consider whether further advice is required.

Council and Barnett Field Group Working Party to arrange a celebratory event, including naming ceremony for Healy's Wood.

23/24 225 To receive updates on the proposed sale / purchase of Gerald's Wood and approve next steps including in relation to Wonersh Woodland Group.

Cllr Shutes updated the Council and noted a meeting was scheduled with Surrey County Council Officers, where the main point for further discussion is whether the lower path can be adopted as a Public Right of Way or whether a permissive path would be acceptable to the Council as an alternative, given that the land owner has more discretion in whether they allow access to a permissive path in the longer term. The lower route is viewed as strategically important, increasing access to Shalford via Gosden Common away from a busy road junction. The outcome from the meeting between the Surrey County Council Officers and Clerk and Cllr Shutes would determine the next steps.

Action: Clerk to include on next Council Meeting agenda.

Correction / addition to minutes: Cllr Shutes provided historical context as to the Governance of Gerald's Wood and the existence of Wonersh Woodland Group. It was noted that, as Council priorities have changed and as the role of Wonersh Environmental Advisory Group and WWG have meshed and there was now unnecessary duplication. Now the council approved Risk Assessments for volunteers cover activities in Gerald's Wood and this is anticipated to be the case for any responsibilities retained by the Parish Council, in relation to Public Rights of Way. Furthermore, works will also be completed by competent service providers in response to, e.g. Tree Hazard Assessments, should this be required, and further training be sought for volunteers to build capacity within the community. On this basis the Council resolved to confirm their support for the Wonersh Woodland Group Limited Company to be dissolved.

Action: Clerk to advise Wonersh Woodland Group

23/24 226 To receive updates on grass mowing in the Parish and approve next steps.

The Clerk noted the request for updates to the mowing in Shamley Green from the Shamley Green Environment Group to allow rotation of the areas left unmown and from a resident to improve sightlines when accessing an easement. The Council approved these changes.

The considered and approved maintaining the following contractors to cover the following areas, Clive Greenland Wonersh Parish Council-registered common land, AEM Contractors for WBC-registered common land and Guildford Borough Council for the Wonersh Cricket Club outfield, where the Cricket Club make a 50% contribution to the latter, so that mowing can occur at the required frequency for sports users. Except for Guildford Borough Council, who will be increasing costs by 5% from April 2024, other contractors are not increasing prices.

Action: Clerk to advise contractors.

The grass cutting contractor for the Close Burial Ground gave notice on 2023 and the Clerk has been exploring alternative provision and has put together a tender for circulation and wider advertisement, then consideration at the February Council meeting. Cllr Shutes noted that an alternative might be for the church warden to take on the mowing, at least while the wildflower area and other practices to encourage sustainability were established. Council approved this approach in principle subject to churchwarden being receptive. A small contribution considerate of this could be made to the church. If this was agreeable, then the Council could consider this further at the February Council Meeting. If this was not an option, the tender document could be circulated at the earliest opportunity.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Shutes to follow up with the church warden.

Clerk to advertise opportunity more widely if the church is not receptive.

Clerk to include on the February Council Meeting to progress and for Council to agree any required terms and conditions.

23/24 227 To receive recommendations and updates from the Commons Working Party – with input from the Wonersh Environmental Advisory Group and Shamley Green Environment Group – and approve next steps. 23/24 213 To consider and approve (p) payment of up to £200 for aluminium tree tags for WEAG

Cllr Shutes updated the Council as to the planning WEAG working party volunteer days at Barnett Hill fields and Gerald's Wood. Cllr Howard updated the Council as to the recent SGEg-related works to the pond and the coordination between maintenance contractors. The planned action to install gates / fences each side of the Brickies Pond to limit access and improve safety was noted and the £750 for these purposes approved in principle. A contribution from Shamley Green Environment Group with the remainder from the Parish Council commons maintenance budgets. Regarding the routine maintenance contractor priorities, it was noted that their time management and prioritisation of tasks was in line with the Council's approved strategy for prioritising biodiversity and it was confirmed that priorities now were cutting back brambles and clearing ditches as the nesting season was expected to be early.

The hedge planting activities in the Parish was also noted and local groups encouraged to participate. The trees planted on the verges in Wonersh via the Surrey County Council scheme were celebrated and a desire to highlight this opportunity near appropriate verges highlighted.

Action: Clerk to confirm schedule of works with contractors, including approval of gates.

Clerk and Councillors to continue to work with other organisations and raise awareness of other opportunities to increase biodiversity in the parish.

23/24 228 To receive an update on the Playgrounds rejuvenation and approve next steps. 23/24 213 To consider and approve (q) payment of up to £3,541.20 to Rhino Play for the installation of the Eibe stand up seesaw.

The Council received an update for the Wonersh Playgrounds Working Party and noted the recommendation to approve the costs associated with the Eibe seesaw. There is a request that further information is provided on the use of the seesaw from Rhino Play.

Regarding Lords Hill Playground rejuvenation, the funding opportunities from Surrey County Council as detailed in 23/24 208 were noted.

**Action: Clerk to advise Rhino play and Assistant to the Clerk to process payment
Cllr Howard to work with Lords Hill Playgrounds Rejuvenation Working Party on funding opportunities.**

23/24 229 To receive the enquiry from Waverley Borough Council regarding the use and demand of 20mph zones and signage in the Parish and approve next steps.

Cllr Shutes raised the communication on 20mph zones in the Parish from the WBC Officer. He noted the response relating to Wonersh, which was approved by Council. The Council discussed where in Shamley Green would most benefit from such attention. The main road between the Church and School would encompass many of the key destinations in the Parish. Further discussion regarding where would be appropriate was delegated to the Clerk in consultation with Cllr Gibbs and the Blackheath Village Society. County Cllr Deanus raised the review of national speed limit

Action: Clerk to consult with Cllr Gibbs and the Blackheath Village Society

The Council also discussed the potential loan of planter / cycle stands for outside village amenities. The Council reflected further on the design and decided it was not appropriate near either of the village stores in terms of appearance and maintenance requirement. A more permanent and straightforward option was preferred, perhaps as part of the redevelopment of the Pepperpot. An alternative would be to explore demand, for instance at the doctors' surgery in Wonersh.

Action: Clerk to respond to Waverley Borough Council Officer regarding the 20mph zone and the cycle parking loan.

Traffic, Parking and Cycling Working Party to consider demand for, design of and preferred positioning of cycle parking.

23/24 230 To receive the update from Waverley Borough Council regarding emptying Parish bins by Biffa and approve next steps. 23/24 213 To consider and

approve (r) payment to Waverley Borough Council / Biffa of £3,120 for the 2024/25 financial year - Empty six parish bins on a weekly basis

The Council discussed in detail the options available for reducing the cost of bin emptying to the Parish Council. A decision was delegated until a later date pending wider public consultation.

Action: Clerk to include on the next Council Meeting agenda.

Clerk to highlight discussion of this to members of the public.

23/24 231 To consider the offer to replace the [Crataegus persimilis](#)'Prunifolia' on Wonersh Common and other tree requests and approve next steps.

The Council approved this and noted the request for the tree along Hullmead, as considered in 23/24 208.

Action: Clerk to inform requestee.

23/24 232 To consider the celebratory social event organised by Wonersh Cricket Club and approve next steps.

Cllr Shutes noted the Wonersh Cricket Clubs intention to hold a celebratory event for Honorary Groundskeeper, Martin Maybrey on 5th May 2024. Councillors were keen to participate and would also like to recognise his local contribution to the community at the Annual Assembly.

Action: Cllr Shutes to communicate with the Cricket Club and keep the Council informed.

Clerk and Councillors to include this in the Annual Assembly agenda, which will be held at Blackheath this year.

23/24 233 To receive any signed off risk assessments for voluntary works and note expected forthcoming ones for Council consideration.

There were no further risk assessments received or expected as current activities have already been considered and approved.

23/24 234 To receive the summary of suggested actions responding to the weekly playground inspection reports and approve next steps.

The Clerk noted that this was being effectively managed by officers and the routine maintenance contractor.

23/24 235 Members' business and correspondence for noting or including on a future agenda.

Cllr Shutes noted that the present Wonersh Parish Council Strategy was planned for the term 2021-23. Given the positive progress and some actions are underway, he proposed that this be extended to 2024 and viewed then.

Action: Clerk to include on the February Council Meeting Agenda.

The date and format of the Annual Assembly was considered, and 16th May 2024 proposed as a suitable date.

Action: Clerk to enquire as to the availability of Blackheath Village Hall

Clerk to include on the February Council Meeting Agenda.

Cllr Shutes raised the proposal of Cllr Lavender that the Parish Council make a 50% contribution to a Christmas tree at Wonerh Sport Pavilion. The Council welcomed this idea and suggested that similar contributions be made to the village organisations providing Christmas trees in Blackheath and Shamley Green.

23/24 236 Dates of future meetings:

Full Council Meeting:	8 February 2024
Planning Committee:	25 January 2024
Risk and Audit Committee:	7 March 2024
Personnel Committee:	Proposed 28 March 2024

These were confirmed except for the proposed Personnel Committee date.

Action: Clerk to follow up with Personnel Committee Chair and members regarding a suitable date.