

Wonersh Parish Council

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Minutes of the meeting of Wonersh Parish Council held on Thursday 10 September 2020 at 7.30 pm, online

Present: Councillors Mike Band, Chris Howard, Ben Knight, Stephen Lavender and Rod Weale (Chair).

In attendance: Lisa Davison, Borough Councillor Michael Goodridge.

MINUTES

20/21 128 To consider and approve apologies for absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Crouch, Shutes and Walmsley-Beveridge.

20/21 129 Wonersh Parish Code of Conduct – Declarations of disclosable interests

Cllr Howard declared a disclosable interest in 20/21 135 (d).

20/21 130 Open meeting for members of the public to raise matters with the Council.

There were no members of the public present.

20/21 131 Briefing by the Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team on issues of local interest and concern.

The Council received the report up until August, these are included in Appendix 1. The Police intend to join the next Zoom meeting.

20/21 132 To consider and approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 13 August 2020.

These were approved, Cllr Weale will sign the minutes in due course.

The Clerk noted that minutes should be published in draft form within 30 days to comply with the Transparency Code, which we are not required to comply with but it is good practice. She requested that Councillors let her know whether they had any concerns regarding this.

Action: Councillors to express any concerns regarding publishing of draft minutes.

20/21 133 To receive progress reports about matters previously considered and approved by the Council.

All matters requiring attention are included on the Agenda.

20/21 134 To receive the approved minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings held on 13 August 2020.

These were approved and will be signed by the Chair in due course.

20/21 135 Finance – to consider and approve the following:

- (a) the list of receipt and payment vouchers in August 2020;**

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

- (b) the end-August 2020 financial statement;**

The Council resolved to approve these (proposed by Cllr Band) but noted that in reviewing the balance a lot of approvals had been made, which had yet to be spent. It was suggested that these be considered, alongside the reconciliations when reviewing the available budget.

Action: Clerk to work with Finance Clerk (see j) to set up this to allow a more thorough understanding of the available budget for 2020/21

(c) up to £9,100 for construction of the bunds on Wonersh Common;

The Council resolved to approve up to this (proposed by Cllr Weale) noting that the values would be lower if a different base is selected.

(d) up to £3,000 for minor works to the playground, as recommended by the playground inspections;

The Council resolved to approve this value and delegate the decision regarding the contractor to the Clerk and Cllr Lavender (Proposed by Cllr Lavender).

(e) up £500 per month for completion of routine maintenance in the Parish;

The Council resolved to approve this value and delegate the decision regarding the contractor to the Clerk and the Commons Working Party (Proposed by Cllr Band). The requirement for a three-month probation period was noted.

(f) up to £400 towards the decent maintenance of Wonersh Closed Burial Ground for 2020;

The Council resolved to approve this value and delegate the decision regarding the contractor to the Clerk and the Commons Working Party (proposed by Cllr Band).

(g) up to £6,000 towards the Pepperpot feasibility study;

The Council resolved to approve £2,000 towards the feasibility study (proposed by Cllr Lavender).

(h) up to £300 for the facilitation of a strategy development session;

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

(i) up to £400 for the purchase and installation of a litter bin;

The Council resolved not to approve this, pending review of the overall cost.

(j) up to £200 per month for bookkeeper support to the Clerk;

The Council resolved to approve £200 for up to the next six months, so £1,200. The role will be allocated in this instance as a temporary staff position of Financial Clerk.

Action: Clerk to inform temporary member of staff and to continue seeking for a self-employed book keeper.

(k) to agree a Councillor with responsibility for checking the bank reconciliation.

Cllr Knight offered to take on this role. The Council resolved to approve this (Cllr Weale).

20/21 136 Finance – to note:

- (a) **the receipt of the 100% contribution to commons maintenance of WBC registered common land by WPC, for year 1;**

The Council noted this.

- (b) **the approved pay increase of 2.75%, plus an additional day's holiday for members of staff employed for less than five years, to be backdated until April 2020.**

The Council noted that this was under the amount budgeted for at the suggestions of the Personnel Committee (5%) and in line with the contractual arrangements.

20/21 137 To receive the draft proposed Council Committee, Working Party and Advisory Group Structure and approve next steps.

The Council received this and thank Cllr Shutes for his efforts in identifying roles and responsibilities of the Council, Committees and Working Parties. The Clerk particularly welcomed clarity on who to contact with regards to different concerns. The Council didn't see this as a rigid arrangement as there is a need to be flexible in response to local need but it is an excellent reference point for how things work at present.

20/21 138 To confirm the membership of and to elect new members to the Planning Committee.

It was noted that all except the Borough Councillor stood on the Planning Committee at present, so Cllrs Knight, Scott and Walmsley-Beveridge were duly elected to this committee.

20/21 139 To confirm the membership of and to elect new members to the Risk and Audit Committee.

All Councillors currently on the Committee reported their desire to remain on it. Cllr Knight noted his interest in joining this committee. The Clerk reported that the two absent, new Councillors had yet to confirm their interests.

Action: Clerk and Cllrs Scott and Walmsley-Beveridge, to note whether interest in joining this committee, or not, for inclusion in the next Council Agenda.

20/21 140 To consider updating the standing orders to allow committee members to deputised for by non-committee members, with consideration for absence and remaining quorate.

The Council resolved to approve the update to the standing orders to agree that Councillors not on a Committee can stand in for Committee members in their absence.

Action: Clerk to update Standing Orders to this effect.

20/21 141 To confirm the membership of and to elect new members to the Personnel Committee.

All Councillors currently on the Committee reported their desire to remain on it. The Clerk reported that the two absent, new Councillors had yet to confirm their interests.

Action: Clerk and Cllrs Scott and Walmsley-Beveridge, to note whether interest in joining this committee, or not, for inclusion in the next Council Agenda.

20/21 142 To note any changes to Working Party membership, in particular the recently elected Councillors.

All Councillors currently on the Working Parties reported their desire to remain on them. New Councillors were playing active roles on a number of working parties, which were of interest to them.

20/21 143 To delegate the update and review of Council Policies to the Risk and Audit Committee.

The Council resolved to approve this and delegate the update and review of Council Policies to the Risk and Audit Committee (proposed by Cllr Band).

20/21 144 To approve the formation of a Policies Working Party reporting, in the first instance, to the Risk and Audit Committee.

The Council resolved to approve this and Cllrs Band and Crouch will support the Clerk in the update and review of the Council's policies. Noting that the intention was not to restrict the flexibility of what the Council can do, within the existing legislative framework, but to assist in the day to day operation of the Council. The Clerk welcomed the support in this manner.

Action: The Clerk and Cllrs Crouch and Band to work together to update the relevant policies.

20/21 145 To discuss the development of a Council Strategy, the training requirements to achieve this and proposed links with the 2021/22 budget.

Arranging training where all Councillors could participate was viewed as a priority for strategy development and, though this should be considered separately from the budget, there is an intrinsic link.

Action: Clerk to arrange training through SSALC Ltd.

20/21 146 To review the role of the neighbourhood and strategic Community Infrastructure Levy and how this links with Council priorities and approve next steps.

The Council welcomed the training from a Waverley Borough Council's CIL Officer and decided that they would like to submit two applications, one for the Shamley Green VAS and one for the Pepperpot Junction Feasibility Study. This also led to discussion as to whether to develop and Neighbourhood Plan and the depended largely on the amounts that may be received on this basis.

Action: Clerk to review available and projected planning associated monies which are available to the Parish Council, either directly or by applying to Waverley Borough Council.

Clerk to work with Cllrs Band and Crouch and other stakeholders to develop and submit two CIL bid.

20/21 147 To receive an update on the proposed feasibility study for the Pepperpot and approve next steps.

The Council noted support for developing the Pepperpot Junction and valued the place-making and safety benefits proposals offered. However, concern was expressed regarding whether

funds would be available for the next step, completing the works. Funding of this type was already limited prior to Covid and now would be stretched further. There was a view that this was non-urgent and upon review of the existing budget would assist in clarity as to whether contributing to this project was practicable. In addition, awaiting receipt of the CIL monies and confirmation that this project would be considered appropriate, and whether other projects were more practicable, before considering committing the full amount requested. Councillors spoke of positive meeting with Surrey County Council a Councillor and Officer, which highlighted highway authority support was present, which the Council welcomed. At this point, the Council agreed to commit £2,000 to the feasibility study and therefore to agree that the Clerk in conjunction with Councillors Crouch and Scott may appoint either one of the traffic engineers outlined in the report presented to Council in July or Surrey County Council to undertake Phase 1 of the feasibility study.

Action: Clerk to confirm with Waverley Borough Councillor, regarding receipt of the CIL funds and also the extent to which project approval is required.

Clerk and Cllrs Crouch and Scott to proceed with actions towards the feasibility study, up to and including commissioning phase 1.

20/21 148 To receive an update on the investigation into the feasibility of agreeing a footpath between Wonersh and Shamley Green.

The Council noted the challenges in enabling a more direct footpath between Wonersh and Shamley Green as noted at previous attempts. The Council thanked Cllr Walmsley-Beveridge for investigating further and updating the Council. They noted that, should the Seminary land ever be redeveloped, reviewing land use and improving access between the villages would then be possible.

19/20 149 To consider the leases and Service Level Agreements between Wonersh Parish Council and Waverley Borough Council and approve next steps.

The Clerk noted that the Council's solicitors were now advising the Council to sign the leases and that agreement with Service Level Agreements were an important part of this. Cllr Band noted that the leases and heads of terms were still not in agreement with each other and that there needed to be greater understanding of the Service Level Agreements and what was to be included and excluded within each of the transferred areas of land in Lords Hill, Shamley Green and Wonersh, as there seemed to be some inconsistencies and understanding the reasons for these were essential. The Clerk noted that one approach would be to map the specific areas that the Parish Council were willing to take responsibility for and which they were not and for the Service Level Agreements to be considerate of these.

Actions: Clerk to work with Cllr Band and other members of the working party to understand the changes to the leases required, if any, before the Council will consider agreeing to the leases.

Clerk to arrange a meeting with Waverley Borough Council Officer to clarify the Service Level Agreement.

19/20 150 To receive an update on the approach to tendering for works and consider whether differentiation is required based on the value of the works and size of contractor.

The Clerk noted that Cllr Band and Shutes had brought together an approach used by other local Parish Councils and, informed by practice by the Borough Council and Local Government Association to tendering and contracting for works in the Parish. This has requirements regarding health and safety considerations and risk assessments for the works. It was noted that in some instance the Parish Council will be requiring more than the Healthy and Safety Executive, which states that only organisations with more than five members of staff require a *written* Health and Safety policy. A preference for a local contractor was noted but the requirement to get best value is within the Council's approved policies.

19/20 151 To note the decision of the council regarding the bunds on Wonersh Common and the suggestions for the other areas of common land in the Parish.

The Council decided to proceed with the bunds during the closed session of the August Council, with the intention to use an amount from Council unallocated reserves to progress this. This was approved by Council with consideration of a risk assessment, completed by Waverley Borough Council, identifying the Wonersh Sports Ground and Common as vulnerable to incursion. The Council received quotes from three possible providers and selected the one they considered best value.

The Council, in making this decision, noted that other areas of the Parish also had vulnerabilities and that they would: (a) work with Waverley Borough Council on any areas owned by them, which the Parish Council was considering leasing; and (b) would plan and budget for works on Wonersh Parish Council registered common land in the 2021/22 budget, having completed a risk assessment for this meeting. Specific actions are:

ACTION: Clerk to ask Waverley Borough Council if the ditches could be cleared and bunds created around the Commons in Shamley Green, before they are handed over to Parish Council

ACTION: Cllr Howard to encourage the Cricket Club to request that Thames Water put a lock on the water supply on the cricket common

19/20 152 To receive recommendations on the positioning of wooden posts on common land in Wonersh and approve next steps.

These were received and the Council resolved to approve this regarding the Triangle near Wonersh Common (proposed by Cllr Lavender and noted that the budget had already been approved). Regarding the Platt, this was considered and deferred until 2021/22, where there would be consideration for bunds rather than wooden posts.

Action: Clerk to inform contractor regarding wooden post on triangle near Wonersh Common.

19/20 153 To receive recommendations on the hedge and ditch work on common land in Wonersh and Shamley Green and approve next steps.

It was noted by the Council that these works were historically linked to the contract with Clive Greenland when on Wonersh Parish Council land and, where the land was to be leased from Waverley Borough Council, this should go to tender.

It was noted by the Commons Working Party that the ditch on Waverley Borough Council in Wonersh towards Blackheath Lane had not been cleared of brambles in some time and this was a concern in advance of the signing of the leases.

Action: Clerk to confirm price of works for on Wonersh Parish Council land for inclusion on October Council agenda

Clerk to work with Waverley Borough Council to confirm the ditches which Wonersh Parish Council are to be taking responsibility for

Clerk to request Waverley Borough Council cut back and clear ditch towards Blackheath Lane in November, remove debris, plus clear and rod through culverts

Clerk to work with Commons Working Party to develop tender for ditches.

20/21 154 To consider the request for a litter bin near the Lawnsmead entrance to Wonersh Common and approve next steps.

This was considered positively but deferred awaiting confirmation of the impact upon costs of emptying the bin.

Action: Clerk to enquire of costs from Biffa, WBC's contractor, regarding bin emptying.

20/21 155 To receive any further updates from the Commons Working Party and related advisory groups and approve next steps.

A report on the Commons in Wonersh was provided by Cllr Shutes and Cllr Howard for Shamley Green, including Lords Hill, these areas were reviewed in conjunction with other ward Councillors involved in the Commons Working Party. Items not identified and discussed above were:

Actions for Wonersh, which the Council resolved to approved (proposed by Cllr Knight) are:

Actions: Clerk to ask the general maintenance contractor, when appointed, to cut back saplings identified by Commons Working Party, and advise resident of status

Clerk to ask the Gas Company to plant a screen of eight blackthorn hedging plants (zig zag planting) this autumn, and advise resident who originally raised this

Clerk to include on October Agenda hawthorn hedging plants, to be plants by WEAG volunteers.

Actions for Shamley Green, which the Council resolved to approved (proposed by Cllr Howard are:

Actions: Shamley Green Environment Group to develop plan of work and costing for Wildlife Pond.

Commons Working Party to incorporate work on the pond into their Management Plan.

Council to consider the inclusion of trees around the wildlife pond to be included in the tree survey.

Clerk to query with contractor if we should be mowing the area of the long common under the contract-review.

Clerk and Cllr Howard to liaise to ascertain ownership of the Lime tree and to confirm that it does not present an undue risk.

Actions for Lords Hill Common, which the Council resolved to approved (proposed by Cllr Howard) are:

Clerk to ask Waverley Borough Council to maintain the ditches along the road and behind the playground.

Clerk to review contract to see if Lords Hill common could be reduced to one autumn cut each year

Clerk to review with contractor the cutting of area by Dawsons Cottages – Lords Hill.

20/21 156 To receive the risk assessments associated with the reopening of the Shamley Green community room on Garden Close, and note further updates, and approve next steps.

The Council received this and thanked the Clerk for all the work that had been done on this in conjunction with Waverley Borough Council and the art teacher, who was now successfully providing classes, in accordance with Government legislation and guidance. The Clerk noted that they were receiving and responding to Government Guidance updates as they were received.

20/21 157 To receive an update on the decent maintenance of the Wonersh Closed Burial Ground and approve next steps.

The Clerk noted that Oakleaf are not presently in a position to do this because of Furlough and the health and wellbeing of volunteers. We are seeking a contractor to fulfil this until the end of this year. The Clerk will follow up in February to see if Oakleaf are able to fulfil the role as the Council is in support of the role the charity holds in supporting mental health and wellbeing.

Actions: Clerk to work with Commons Working Party to allocate contract for this year.

Clerk to confirm whether Oakleaf can continue from March next year.

20/21 158 To note that a former Clerk has offered to take on the book keeper role until a permanent replacement is found and approve next steps.

This was welcomed by the Council and a monthly amount approved for the next six months, or until a bookkeeper can be found, whichever comes first.

20/21 159 To receive the request that an area on Lords Hill is mown less frequently and approve next steps.

The request was received and the Council resolved to approve this (proposed by Cllr Howard).

20/21 160 To receive the request to for a cake stall in support of MacMillan Cancer on Wonersh Common and approve next steps.

The Council welcomed this proposal and resolved to approve the request, subject to a basic risk assessment in view of the current guidance regarding Covid-19.

Action: Clerk to request a risk assessment for this activity.

20/21 161 To receive reports by Members and the Clerk.

20/21 162 Members' business and correspondence for noting or including on a future agenda.

It was noted that someone had placed dog muck on the baby swings at the Wonersh Playground. The Council requested a Wonersh Councillor to inspect and if cleaning is required then for the Clerk to arrange.

It was noted that the bin near the shop and on Sweetwater lane were not being emptied at regular enough intervals. It was also noted that Waverley Borough Council had previously agreed that a litter bin be placed on Nursery Hill. The Council noted that the Clerk would inform Waverley of the form and enquire further about the latter.

Concerns were expressed by residents that a planning application was not being adhered to in the Parish. It was recommended that residents raise this directly with Waverley Borough Council as the planning authority, including Borough Councillor Chris Howard in the correspondence.

20/21 163 Dates of future meetings:

Council: 8 October 2020

Planning Committee: 24 September 2020