

Wonersh Parish Council

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Minutes of the meeting of Wonersh Parish Council held on Thursday 8 July 2021 at 7.30 pm, at Wonersh Sports Pavilion.

Present: Councillors Mike Band, Chris Crouch, Chris Howard, Ben Knight and Anthony Shutes.

In attendance: Lisa Davison, Jeannette Stevenson, Borough Councillor Michael Goodridge and County Councillor Kevin Deanus and two members of the public.

MINUTES

21/22 069 To consider and approve apologies for absence.

The Council considered and approved apologies from Cllrs Lavender, Scott and Weale

21/22 070 Wonersh Parish Code of Conduct – Declarations of disclosable interests.

There were no disclosable interests declared.

21/22 071 Open meeting for members of the public to raise matters with the Council.

There were two members of the public in attendance, the first with a general interest in the parish council, the second with a primary interest in item 21/22/ 085 and noted a paper submitted to the Clerk, circulated to Councillors on the matter. They were also interested in 082, 083 and 086. The Chair moved item 085 up the agenda, once onto the substantive items.

Cllr Michael Goodridge noted that an enforcement notice had been issued to Barnett Hill Hotel regarding the compound to the rear of the hotel containing construction and waste materials. Plus, Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) had been placed on the oaks at the entrance of the hotel near Blackheath Lane.

Cllrs Goodridge and Deanus each discussed the progress made regarding the merging of the senior management teams at Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils, including concerns over the implications for this upon the level of service, and the lack of business case, including the limited efforts to mitigate identified risks.

Cllr Deanus noted that, following his election to the Surrey County Council role, traffic and transport concerns within the parish have been of particular concern to him and he was making efforts to limit the impact of these insofar as possible. He welcomed the opportunity to speak further with parish councillors and would attend future council meetings.

21/22 072 Briefing by the Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team on issues of local interest and concern.

Councillors welcomed a written report of recent crimes reported and under investigation in the parish, these included burglaries from an unlocked garage, so residents are reminded to secure their outbuildings. [Police advice on securing sheds and garages is available here.](#)

21/22 073 To consider and approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 June 2021.

These were approved and signed by Cllr Howard. The clerk noted that the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting would be considered at the September Council Meeting but were available for Councillors.

21/22 074 To receive progress reports about matters previously considered and approved by the Council.

The Parish Council noted that the EGM of the Arbuthnot Hall was scheduled for the 14 July 2021, with Cllr Rod Weale as the Parish Council representative on the interim committee. Other Councillors may also stand independently of this. Cllr Band noted that parish council involvement at this stage is to ensure that a new committee is formed to take over from the retiring one, any further parish council involvement will be subject to further discussion by Council as an agenda item and, where staff investment is required, is likely to be chargeable.

Cllr Shutes noted that the strategy and council structure, which had been approved by Council and presented at the annual parish meeting, should be included on the website and the update of a communication strategy to include the range of avenues of correspondence was a required addition to the policies under review by the working party associated with the Risk and Audit Committee. It was noted that, as formally agreed by council, the summer newsletter would soon be underway, led by Cllr Lavender and that contributions would be welcomed.

Action: Clerk to include a communication strategy to the list of strategies under consideration by the Risk and Audit Committee.

Councillors and Clerk to contribute the summer newsletter collated by Cllr Lavender.

Cllr Shutes also noted the training availability through Mulberry Associates and Surrey ALC and expressed an interest in benefitting from the £200 to attend all modules. Other Councillors and staff were also interested and subject to budget availability under this allocation it was agreed that this be booked and confirmed at the September meeting.

Action: Clerk to enquire further about the training provision and to book according to budget availability and demand.

The Clerk noted the updates to the licences based on the Waverley Borough Council examples. Councillors noted that there should not be a charge to residents for cutting grass on common land and that residents should be encouraged to adopt, but not restricted to, the mowing schedule adopted by the parish council. There were no comments on the other licences.

Action: Clerk to update the licence in relation to mowing of common land.

The Clerk also shared the updated version of the Emergency Plan, which is to be considered by the Risk and Audit Committee, prior to going to Council in September. The Council thanked those Councillors for their efforts with respect to this

21/22 075 To consider and approve the minutes of the Risk and Audit Committee meeting held on 24 June 2021.

These were considered and approved and duly signed by Cllr Band, noting the later decision to schedule a Risk and Audit Committee Meeting for the 5 August 2021.

21/22 076 To receive the approved minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 3 June 2021.

These were received.

21/22 077 Finance – to consider and approve the following:

(a) the list of receipt vouchers in June 2021;

These were still outstanding, as the bank statement had just been received but good progress was now being made with the switch to online banking, which should resolve this.

(b) the end-May 2021 financial statement;

These were still outstanding. Cllr Band noted that this was of concern and should be reviewed by the Risk and Audit Committee. A meeting was scheduled for 5 August 2021.

Action: Clerk / Assistant to the Clerk to follow up.

(c) payment of up to £500 for the replacement of the bench, donated by the Wonersh Parish Council to Blackheath residents in 2005;

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

(d) payment of up to £3,000 for felling trees in Wonersh;

The council resolved to approve payment of up to £1,335 for these purposes (proposed by Cllr Shutes). They enquired as to whether any chippings could be used for mulch at the allotments.

Action: Clerk to contact contractors.

(e) payment of up to £80 for the return of the deposit for allotment 2a; and

The council resolved to approve this (Proposed by Cllr Shutes), subject to any deductions required to rent out the plot to the next holder. Decisions on this were delegated to the clerk and Cllr Lavender.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Lavender to decide the deposit to be returned to allotment 2a holders.

(f) payment of £110 to Shamley Green Magazine for advertising.

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

21/22 078 Finance – to note receipt of:

(a) £1,500 from the Wonersh Foundation as a contribution towards the Pepperpot feasibility study;

The Council welcomed this update and noted that this should be accounted for under Parish Projects with payments for the feasibility study be accounted for, in full, under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) neighbourhood allocation, rather than Parish Projects, now the amount had been received. It was noted that the road network was coming under increasing pressure given developments in neighbouring parish and that this junction, in particular, was a pinch point contributing to local delays and inefficient use of the road network and furthermore posed a safety risk to pedestrians, including those accessing the local bus service.

The Clerk noted that, in addition to this, there were further receipts on the June 2021 bank statement, including £16,086.79 for the 75% contribution from Waverley Borough Council to

the grounds maintenance of WBC-registered common land and £1,895.91 from HMRC as the VAT return. These will be formally noted on the September agenda.

Action: Assistant to the Clerk to update budget allocations with respect to the feasibility study and to highlight to the specialist book keeper.

21/22 079 Receive the annual Playground Inspection report, and other playground related updates, and approve next steps.

Councillors received these and noted the importance of responding to the items considered a moderate risk, which may influence the long-term viability of a large piece of play equipment in the Wonersh playground, in particular. Smaller, lower risk items could be considered under the routine maintenance contract.

The Council welcomed the input from the CIL officers regarding how neighbourhood and strategic might benefit the local green spaces including the playgrounds. Specifically, the need to illustrate demand driven by growth outside the parish for such improvements. In relation to playgrounds the importance of adding to rather than replacing existing provision to cater for this increased and changing demand, was stressed.

Action: Risk and Audit Committee to consider the reports and make recommendations to Council

Clerk to contact the play equipment providers for quotes on works considered of moderate risk for consideration by council in September.

Cllrs Howard and Lavender to consider the routine maintenance of playground equipment as part of a larger review of routine maintenance by the Commons Working Party.

Playgrounds Committee to consider these in the plans for new playground equipment.

Planning Committee to consider potential playground additions of relevance CIL funding and any necessary preparatory research and planning efforts.

21/22 080 Receive recommendations from the Risk and Audit Committee regarding tree surveys for Gerald's Wood and approve next steps. 21/22 077 (f) To consider and approve payment of up to £2,275.00 for completion of a tree survey in Gerald's Wood.

Cllr Crouch reported back on a site visit between Wonersh Woodland Group and the Waverley Borough Council Tree Officer to which he and the Clerk were in attendance. The rationale for the recommendations for a tree survey to Gerald's Wood was helpful. It was proposed that the area facing the highways would be on a three-year schedule and at the top, a five year one, with more regular walkaround checks. The Council agreed unanimously to these proposals and the move to using Waverley Borough Council for tree surveys welcomed.

Advice also extended to Woodland Management Plans and the potential for assistance available through the Forestry Commission, covered by grants and with the focus upon biodiversity but also with the intention of any works and coppicing to be cost neutral.

Action: Clerk to communicate this to the Waverley Borough Council Tree Officer and request contact details for the Forestry Commission.

21/22 081 Receive recommendations from the Risk and Audit Committee on the positioning of protective measures on common land, such as posts and, if required, bunds.

This was deferred back to the Risk and Audit Committee.

21/22 082 Review the mowing for biodiversity trial and approve next steps.

Councillors from each village noted that the feedback on the mowing for biodiversity trial had been largely positive or constructive, with minor concerns regarding dog faeces and balancing different uses of land – the latter also with reference to Church Green, which is outside the council's mowing schedule.

Requests regarding Wonersh-registered common land include ensuring that paths from the bunds to the playground were mown in accordance with the plans and widening the paths through, where space permitted, to allow for social distancing and noting the grass, as it lengthens, may fall into to the mown paths and roadways. Cllr Shutes noted that the Cricket Club had agreed in principle to mow inside of the bunds and whilst the unmown grass under the tree canopy was working well at present, he sought reassurance regarding the end of season cut.

Requests regarding the Waverley-registered common land which had already been largely responded to were a fire break between a house and the longer grass at Lords Hill Common and the request from the Shamley Green cricket club to mow more responsively, though the maximum number of cuts may need to be reviewed by the Council in early Autumn on that basis. Outstanding requests include not mowing the paths through the longer areas in Shamley Green but maintaining them in Lords Hill and ensuring the cuts of verges in Shamley Green are completed regularly but not along easements in Lords Hill, plus reducing mowing where parking on common land is an issue.

Requests regarding the closed burial ground relate to the more regular mowing of the frontage and paths through the burial ground, as agreed by their sustainability group. The Clerk is awaiting a review of the cost of works completed so far to determine whether this is something the parish council can fund.

The Clerk noted that some verges, thought to be on the Surrey County Council flail, seemed not to be. These were the verges bordering the wooded commons included in the lease, which Waverley Borough Council are to maintain under the Service Level Agreement. Wonersh Parish Council maintain the grassed edges of near the pan handle along the B2128 and also similar in Shamley Green. Cllr Howard noted that an email had been received expressing concern regarding overhanging branches, on this route to school, in Shamley Green, also.

At each location collection of grass was noted as a challenge given available equipment to each contractor and also the associated costs involved. There had to be a level of acceptance of the former at this stage but the latter warrants further investigation. Suggestions from the Wildlife Trust are to “ideally remove all cuttings for alternative use (for example, anaerobic digestion or compost production) or leave to rot down in dedicated and sacrificial areas within the soft estate”.

Action: Clerk to communicate requests regarding the commonland to each contractor and the cricket club, adapting the maps, as appropriate.

The Clerk and the Commons Working Party to explore options and consider the council role in resolving the mowing of verges not included in the flail, plus any related reviews.

The Clerk and the Commons Working Party to review the frequency of mowing within the closed burial ground upon receipt of the details of costs to date.

21/22 083 Receive an update from the Commons Working Party, Wonersh Environmental Advisory Group and Shamley Green Environment Group and other associated working parties and approve next steps, including reviewing risk assessments where appropriate.

Cllr Shutes noted that there was an upcoming Commons Working Party to consider actions from this and the June Council Meeting. Cllr Howard presented an update on behalf of the Shamley Green Environment Group where they were looking for agreement in principle of the wildflower planting in Shamley Green, so that trees, seeds, plugs and bulbs could be purchased in good time. It was noted that the Wonersh Environmental Advisory Group might also be interested in purchasing similar plant and flower types for Wonersh.

Cllr Knight presented an update on behalf of the Wonersh Environmental Advisory Group where suggestions explored, which they are keen to progress, include planting of native hedges, a wildflower area, interpretation boards contributing to educational awareness, and bridges providing access into the panhandle, plus other biodiversity and educational awareness facilities in the wooded areas. It was also noted that some of this had already been considered in the ERDF application under 21/22/087. Cllr Knight noted that native trees and hedges can be sourced free of charge for such projects, should more be required across the parish. Cllr Howard noted the importance of not effectively fencing off or partitioning any area of common land and it was confirmed that this was not the intention, rather to create defined areas.

The Clerk highlighted that for all areas, though particularly those where Waverley Borough Council maintained responsibility, there was the need to inform and request advice from Officers, noting that some actions may increase liability and the requirements for tree surveys and maintenance, for instance.

These were all approved subject to necessary approvals from WBC, the appropriate budgets being approved at a future council meeting, or funds sourced from elsewhere, and volunteers completing the required risk assessments under the leadership of Cllrs Howard and Knight as applicable. It was noted that each environment group had £500 in the budget to invest in the local commons.

Action: Clerk to inform SGEN and WEAG members of the approval in principle subject to meeting the necessary conditions.

WEAG and SGEN to consider whether they would like to benefit from free or order cost plants and vegetation.

Clerk to inform WBC officers of outline plans and request feedback.

21/22 084 Receive updates from Traffic, Transport and Cycling Working Party and the Climate Change Working Party and approve next steps.

The Traffic Transport and Cycling Working Party welcomed the planned meeting with Cllr Deanus in his role as Surrey County Councillor to discuss ongoing traffic concerns and the possibilities to input into solutions, including inputting into any future CIL application.

Cllr Knight noted that he had received Climate Change Working Party input into the draft Terms of Reference, which he will respond to a circulate more widely.

Each will be discussed further at an Autumn Council Meeting.

21/22 085 Consider the delivery, storage and use of wood chippings at the allotments for use as a weed suppressant and approve next steps.

The Council welcomed the report from the allotment holder and was largely in agreement with its content. They approved the use of wood chippings as mulch on the basis of the following:

- Approval by the landowner, noting that the lease agreement makes reference to the Council 'peaceably holding the demised property... without any interruptions by the landlord';
- Exclusion of yew, leylandii and eucalyptus from the wood chippings delivered, with consideration to the potential impact upon wildlife and other animals in neighbouring fields;
- All delivered chippings to be used promptly and stored carefully; and
- Receipt of a U12 waste exemption certification, to be applied for by the Council, to cover the allotment site.

Action: Clerk to confirm the above with the landowner

Clerk to apply for the U12 waste exemption certificate

Clerk to inform the allotment holders once the above is confirmed and include stipulations on the types of wood permitted.

21/22 086 Consider the contract between the parish council and the land owner and implications for management and maintenance of the allotments, and approve next steps.

This was largely deferred until the next meeting for Cllr Lavender's input.

21/22 087 Consider the investment of the £2,750 received from the Welcome Back ERDF funds in greenspaces in the parish and approve next steps.

The Council welcomed this amount for the improvement of greenspaces in the Parish, noting that the following had been applied for, based largely on prices from a single provider, [Earth Anchors](#), at this point.

- Gerald's Wood
 - Wooden signs: £100
 - Information signs: £1,305
 - *Panels:* £240*
 - *Bench:* £210*
- Womersley Common
 - Information sign: £435
- The Platt

- Information sign: £435
- *Picnic benches:* £806*
- Lords Hill Common
 - Picnic bench: £980
 - *Bench:* £408*
- **Total** **£4,919**
- **Total minus *** **£3,255**

Further discussion suggests that the picnic tables on the Platt are not a priority nor the benches in other locations, or panels in Gerald's Wood, which means the value available constitute a shortfall of £505, excluding installation costs but including installation equipment.

Councillors also noted that they may have other priorities for investment in green space improvements and the Clerk agreed to confirm with Waverley Borough Council Officers whether these are possible alternatives to invest in, should these be preferred.

Action: Councillors to review the above and confirm whether these priorities reflect how they would like to see the amounts invested and / or whether they would like to consider other investments as a replacement.

21/22 088 Consider the [Electoral Review of Waverley Borough Council: Warding Arrangements](#) by the Local Government Boundary Commission and approve the Council response, due 19 July 2021.

This, including the response from Waverley Borough Council, was noted with interest and, upon Borough Councillor Advice, the Parish Council awaits further updates before inputting into the process.

21/22 089 Consider the [Review of Parliamentary Constituencies](#) by the Boundary Commission for England and approve the Council response, due 2 August 2021.

The Council took a similar position on this as 21/22 088.

21/22 090 Appoint Penny Hodgson, for a further term, and Cllrs Rod Weale and Anthony Shutes (ex officio), as Trustees to Wonersh United Charities.

The Council noted the positions of Cllrs Shutes and Weale, as discussed at the May 2021 Council meetings and resolved to approve the position of Penny Hodgson as a trustee to Wonersh United Charities (proposed by Cllr Shutes).

21/22 091 Receive a request for the use of Wonersh Common from the Wonersh Fete organisers for a community picnic on Saturday 4 September 2021.

This was received and approved subject to completion of the Risk Assessment.

Action: Clerk to inform the Fete organisers.

21/22 092 Receive further updates on the lease of Shamley Green Community Room from Waverley Borough Council and approve next steps.

The Council noted that an updated version of the covering letter for the lease had been received earlier in the day. As there had not been opportunity for all Councillors to review this it was deferred to the Risk and Audit Committee, with recommendations for Council.

Action: Clerk to include on the Risk and Audit Committee Meeting Agenda.

21/22 093 Receive further updates on the Lease of the Land from Waverley Borough Council and approve next steps.

The Council noted that the ditches in the wooded areas of the lease had recently been cleared by Waverley Borough Council's contractor and that the lease was now, again, being dealt with by DAC Beechcroft, as the WBC Solicitor was not working there at this time.

Councillors viewed that all outstanding issues had been resolved so they were keen for there to be no further delay in finalising and signing the leases on the agreed basis. Cllr Goodridge expressed an interest in being kept up to date with regards to this.

Action: Clerk to follow up and to include on the Risk and Audit Committee Meeting Agenda.

21/22 094 Receive reports by Members and the Clerk.

Cllr Knight updated the Council on communications with Officer at Waverley Borough Council regarding EV charging points and cycle routes.

Cllr Shutes noted that he would be working with the Clerk to update the Risk Management Register to act as a rolling action list for staff.

21/22 095 Members' business and correspondence for noting or including on a future agenda.

In addition to the cycleways under discussion footpaths were mentioned as a topic for future discussion.

21/22 096 Dates of future meetings:

Council: 9 September 2021.

Planning Committee: 15 July, 5 August, 26 August 2021

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