



Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Wonersh Parish Council held on Thursday 19 May 2023 at 7.30pm, at the Wonersh Sports Pavilion.

Present: Cllrs Mike Band, Max Gibbs, Chris Howard, Ben Knight, Stephen Lavender and Anthony Shutes (Chair).

In attendance: Lisa Davison, Borough Councillor Jane Austin and two members of the public.

23/24 001 To elect the Chair of the Council.

Cllr Chris Howard proposed Anthony Shutes be elected as the Chair for Wonersh Parish Council (This was seconded by Cllr Band) Cllr Anthony Shutes duly signed the Acceptance of Office.

23/24 002 To elect the Vice Chair of the Council.

Cllr Anthony Shutes proposed Chris Howard be elected as the Vice Chair for Wonersh Parish Council (This was seconded by Cllr Band) Cllr Anthony Shutes duly signed the declaration of acceptance of Office for this Council year.

23/24 003 To consider the proposed updates the Council's co-option policy and approve next steps.

The Council considered and approved the proposed updates to the Co-option Policy.

Action: Clerk to include this on the Council website.

23/24 004 To co-opt Councillor(s) to Wonersh Parish Council.

Cllr Ben Knight was co-opted to the Wonersh Ward of Wonersh Parish Council.

23/24 005 To consider and approve apologies for absence.

There were no apologies received.

23/24 006 Wonersh Parish Code of Conduct – Declarations of disclosable interests.

There were no declarations of disclosable interests.

23/24 007 Open meeting for members of the public to raise matters with the Council.

There were three members of the public present with a general interest in proceedings, including the new elected Borough Councillor, Jane Austin.

Cllr Shutes noted that opening and closing of the meeting to allow County and Borough Councillors to participate could be disruptive to a meeting and more fluid participation could be widely beneficial to local residents. The Clerk enquired whether the Council would like to alter the Standing Orders, which followed the model documents recommended by the National Association of Local Councils, to reflect this, and it was agreed that they did not at this point.

It was noted that the Standing Orders provided robust guidance for Council and ensured they were following best practice, and in some cases legislation. However, it was agreed that the Council would trial Borough and County Councillors being able to indicate to the Chair when they might be an effective position to contribute to discussion, to the benefit of the resident.

23/24 009 To consider and approve the minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 29 March 2023 and the Council meeting held on 13 April 2023

The minutes of the Council Meeting were approved without change and were duly signed by Cllr Shutes.

The Council noted the minor changes to the minutes of the ECM to consider the requirements of the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing for PWLB loan applications. These were noted by the Council and approved, noting that the additions would not be published until completion of the sale of the land with reference to [section 1 \(2\) of The Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#). Cllr Shutes duly signed these minutes.

Action: Clerk to include public versions on Council website.

23/24 010 To receive progress reports about matters previously considered and approved by the Council.

Cllr Lavender provided an update on the donations to the Wonersh Playgrounds rejuvenation. A local resident has offered to fund the remaining playgrounds costs, in memory of their partner. A celebratory event is planned for September, to bring the community together and celebrate local generosity. This will permit all works to be completed and further fundraising is planned to consider other expected works. One consideration on this was consultation on the table tennis and whether they should be maintained, alternatives for this part of the playgrounds were considered. It was noted that the tennis tables were installed less than ten years ago in response to local fundraising.

Cllr Shutes updated the Council on the potential for Gerald's Wood to be purchased, to include a permissive right of way, extending beyond the existing pathway, towards Chinthurst Lane, thus forming part of a larger walk, rather than a specific destination. Cllr Shutes noted the planned consultation to consider the community's appetite for this and requirements of any sale being that the land be maintained in the spirit at which it was donated to the Parish Council and community, with consideration for the Woodland Management Plan. Cllr Lavender requested a public meeting as part of the consultation. Cllr Shutes noted a planned meeting with Surrey County Council Countryside Access Officer regarding better understanding as to the requirements of this prior to commencing the consultation.

Action: Clerk to include this on a future Council Meeting agenda.

Cllr Shutes provided a broad overview as to the progress of the development of the seminary and the expected community benefits, particularly around sustainable, safe transport and access. A generous package was being proposed under Section 1.06. Concerns remained regarding the access in the direction Shamley Green and safety engineering along this stretch of road considerable of this would be welcome as part of the planning process.

Cllr Shutes provided an update as to the land purchase and requested that the results of these be widely publicised, through the website and other communication channels.

23/24 011 To consider and approve the minutes of the Risk and Audit Committee held on 27 April 2023.

The Council considered and approved these.

Action: Clerk to include on Council website.

23/24 012 To consider and approve the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 18 May 2023, or defer to the Committee constituted below.

These were deferred to Planning Committee's next meeting.

23/24 013 To appoint Members of the Council's Planning Committee and to delegate responsibility to the Committee for: (a) consideration of planning-related matters; (b) making decisions on behalf of the Council about local planning applications; and (c) making recommendations for decision by the Council about planning related issues.

All Councillors were appointed to the Planning Committee and the Council resolved to approve the delegation of responsibility.

23/24 014 To appoint Members of the Council's Risk and Audit Committee and to delegate responsibility to the Committee for: (a) consideration of risk and audit-related matters of the Council; and (b) making recommendations for decision by the Council about risk and audit related issues, including policy review.

Councillors Band, Howard, Knight and Shutes were appointed to the Risk and Audit Committee and the Council resolved to approve the delegation of responsibility. It was noted for items where recommendations were being made to Council following consideration by this Committee, such as for the budget and precept and policies with portfolio leads outside the Committee, then members were welcome to come and participate fully in discussion.

23/24 015 To appoint Members of the Council's Personnel Committee and to delegate responsibility to the Committee for: (a) consideration of personnel matters; (b) making decisions where specifically required to do so in accordance with the provisions of the Personnel & Employment Handbook of the Council; and (c) making recommendations for decision by the Council about other personnel issues.

The Council appointed Cllrs Gibbs, Howard and Lavender to the Personnel Committee and resolved to approve the delegation of responsibility.

23/24 016 To appoint Members of the Council's working parties and portfolio leads:
(a) Commons Working Party;

Cllr Shutes and Cllr Howard were appointed as local leads with all councillors involved. Tree management was incorporated into this Working Party. Resident members are welcome on this Working Party.

(b) Commons Land Asset Transfer;

Cllrs Band, Howard and Shutes were appointed to this working party which would close once the land asset leases were signed.

(c) Shamley Green Community Room;

Cllrs Band and Howard were appointed to the Shamley Green Community Room working party and would remain so after the leases were signed. Resident members are welcome on this Working Party.

(d) Emergency Planning;

Cllr Gibbs, Howard and Shutes were appointed to the Emergency Planning working party, ensuring each village was represented.

(e) Website / PR / Newsletter / Communications;

Cllrs Knight and Lavender were appointed as leads, Cllr Knight focusing on the update to the Website once capacity allowed and Cllr Lavender on other matters.

(f) Traffic, Parking and Cycling Working Party;

Cllrs Howard and Lavender were appointed as local leads, with all councillors involved. Resident members are welcome on this Working Party.

(g) Climate Change Working Party;

Cllr Knight to lead, with all councillors involved. Resident members are welcome on this Working Party. Cllr Knight is considering the format of this to encourage local resident interest and ownership.

(h) Allotments;

Cllr Lavender is the portfolio lead on allotments.

(i) Playgrounds;

Cllrs Howard and Lavender were appointed as local leads

(j) Tree management; and

The Council resolved to absorb Tree Management into the Commons Working Party.

(k) Gerald's Wood.

Cllrs Shutes is the portfolio leads on Gerald's Wood, working with Wonersh Woodland Group, formed of resident members.

23/24 016 To appoint representatives of the Council, if appropriate, to other bodies and organisations:

(a) Surrey Association of Local Councils;

Cllr Howard was appointed to this role.

(b) Wonersh Environmental Advisory Group;

Cllrs Knight, Lavender and Shutes were appointed to this role.

(c) Shamley Green Environment Group;

Cllr Howard was appointed to this role.

(d) Blackheath community traffic-calming working party;

Cllr Gibbs was appointed to this role and will explore further its role.

(e) Wonersh Community Speed Watch;

Cllrs Lavender and Shutes coordinate this.

(f) Shamley Green Community Speed Watch;

Cllrs Band volunteer with and represent the Council on the Shamley Green Community Speed Watch; there is an independent coordinator

(g) Wonersh Connections;

Cllr Shutes was appointed to this role.

(h) The Arbuthnot Hall Committee; and

Cllr Band was appointed to this role.

Action: Clerk to Secretary of the Arbuthnot Hall Committee to confirm the Council representative.

(i) Longacre School traffic management consultation committee.

Cllr Howard was appointed to this role.

23/24 017 Finance – to consider and approve the following:

(a) the list of payment and receipt vouchers in April 2023;

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

(b) the end-March 2023 and end-April 2023 financial statement;

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

(c) the proposed reserves for 2022/2023 and 2023/24 financial year;

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

(d) the updated annual forecast;

The Clerk noted that the recommendations considered by the Risk and Audit Committee would need to consider an increase in the repayment cost of the PWLB loan, based on the increase in interest rates. The Council considered and approved this, plus further recommendations from the Risk and Audit Committee (proposed by Cllr Band).

Action: Assistant to the Clerk to update the forecast considerate of the increased payment rate.

(e) the schedule of due payments over the present financial year which arise on a regular basis as authorised under the Council's Financial Regulations

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

(f) the appointment of Councillors Band, Gibbs, Howard, Lavender and Shutes as signatories to the Wonersh Parish Council bank accounts;

The Council resolved to approve these (proposed by Cllr Shutes). The Council noted the important role held by Cllr Knight as a non-signatory, given his role in regularly confirming the reconciliation of accounts and the additional year-end checks.

Action: Assistant to the Clerk to update account signatories for both accounts.

(g) the authorization of a monthly direct debit mandate for the payment which can be made online;

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

- (h) the continuation of a Council amazon account for purchasing office supplies and community room supplies following associated processes;**

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

- (i) payment of 30 hours overtime for the Clerk;**

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

- (j) payment of up £80 for the deposit return for plot 12 a.**

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

- (k) payment of £2,175 to Waverley Borough Council (previously considered under 22/23 207(c));**

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

- (l) payment of £400 for the annual rent of the allotment land; and**

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

- (m) payment of £91 for printing 700 paper copies of the consultation letter and questionnaire for the PWLB application.**

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

23/24 018 Finance – to note receipt of:

- (a) the 2023/24 precept of £98,498.00;**
- (b) a cheque for £10,000 from the Wonersh Foundation / Playgrounds Committee towards phase 1 of Wonersh Playground rejuvenation;**
- (c) £5,161.79 VAT return from HMRC; and**
- (d) the allotment rents.**

The Council noted this.

23/24 019 To review and adopt the following policies, documents and procedures:

- (a) Code of Conduct & Register of Members' Interests;**
- (b) Standing Orders;**
- (c) Financial Regulations;**
- (d) Council's complaints procedure;**
- (e) Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998;**
- (f) Council strategy;**
- (g) Policy for dealing with Unreasonably Persistent Complaint;**
- (h) Grants awarding policy;**
- (i) Easement applications;**
- (j) Request for skips on common land;**
- (k) Finance and Investment Policy; and**
- (l) Training of Members and Council staff, under consideration as part of the Civility and Respect Pledge.**

The Council reviewed and resolved to adopt these policies. Cllr Shutes drew particular attention to the Local Government Association Code of Conduct, which influences Councillors Register of Interests. These must be published on the Parish and Borough Council Website within 28 days of an election.

Cllr Band noted that the Risk and Audit Committee were to meet on 20 July to discuss further current and proposed policies. The Clerk noted that CILCA training may also influence some of these.

It was noted that the co-option policy should also be added to the website.

Actions: Councillors to complete, sign and submit their Register of Interest to the Clerk. Clerk to submit these to Waverley Borough Council.

Risk and Audit Committee to meet to approve the status and review requirements of existing and proposed policies.

Co-option policy to be added to the Council website.

23/24 020 To review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment.

The Council noted the recent review and approval of the asset register, including the existing land and the insurers advice on the increase in land to be owned and leased. They were reassured that the Council's policy would extend automatically to incorporate this.

23/24 021 To review and confirm of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.

The Council noted that whilst there had been some discussion as to the items which were self-insured and extending these, some items required insurance from the provider, so following the recommendations of the Risk and Audit Committee the Clerk had been exploring increased the level at which items such as the Pepperpot was insured.

23/24 022 To consider the terms of the Council's insurance for the next term and approve next steps. 23/24 017 (n) To consider and approve payment of up to £1,000 for the 2023/2024 annual insurance policy.

The Clerk noted the responses to date from insurance providers and the impact of responding to the Risk and Audit Recommendations, specifically:

- Increasing the legal cover;
- Increasing the fidelity guarantee, as recommended by the Internal Auditor;
- Increasing the cover for street furniture.

The Council were disappointed to be advised that their existing provided, Zurich, could not respond to the Council requirements and requested that the Clerk follow up to confirm.

The Council considered the alternative, BHIB, as appropriate if this is confirmed. They queried whether to increase the amount covered for street furniture as the standard cover was more extensive than that offered by Zurich, if selected. The Council noted the higher premiums and agreed that, subject to the Clerk and Risk and Audit Committee members approving the premium, any amount over £1,000 would be confirmed on the June Council meeting, subject to the Council's Financial Regulations on permitted spends.

Action: Clerk to follow up with insurance providers to respond to Council queries.

Clerk to confirm with Risk and Audit Committee Members the selected policy.

23/24 023 To consider and approve the update of Officer contracts to meet the NALC model contract conditions of receiving an annual increment from and including an increase in SCP from April 2023. 23/24 017 (o) To consider and approve payment the back payment in line with the budget approved January 2022.

The Council welcomed the recommendations from the Personnel and Risk and Audit Committees with respect to this and approved the change to officer contracts. Annual increments will now be offered annually up to the SCP for a Council of Womersh's size, currently SCP 32.

Action: Assistant to the Clerk to arrange the back- and future payment of wages with the annual increment applied from April 2023.

23/24 024 To consider and approve the work programme and contract for the ponds maintenance contractor and approve next steps.

The Clerk noted that a draft contract for ponds maintenance was in the files based on the quote from the contractor with recommendations and the requests of the Shamley Green Environment Group.

Action: Clerk to finalise with Cllr Howard and the Clerk of the Shamley Green Environment Group.

23/24 025 To consider and approve the works by the routine maintenance contractor to the bus stops in the parish and approve next steps

The Council noted that works to Womersh bus stop was required as it was on our asset register. The Shamley Green bus stops were noted as Waverley Borough Council's and in need of some attention. It was noted that works to these had not been included in our budget for this year, so should the decision be made to complete these works, reductions in expenditure would be required under related budget headings.

Action: Clerk to follow up with Waverley Borough Council as to Borough Council's programme of works to the bus stops.

23/24 026 To receive a Land Valuation Statement in relation to the purchase of Barnett Hill Fields and approve next steps,

The Council approved this.

Action: Clerk to include in the council files, including the submission to the Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities.

Clerk to make publicly available once the sale of the land has completed.

23/24 027 To receive an update on the annual assembly and approve next steps.

The Council noted the annual assembly arrangements were well underway and Councillors were looking forward to celebrating with the community.

Action: Councillors and the Clerk to bring a plate of food for attendees to enjoy.

23/24 028 To receive any signed off risk assessments for voluntary works and note expected forthcoming ones for Council consideration.

There were no Risk Assessments received.

23/24 029 Members' business and correspondence for noting or including on a future agenda.

The following items were noted for future agendas:

- Commons Working Party Recommendations
- Tree Hazard Assessments;
- Interpretation board / nature cam and associated costs;
- Communications in the Parish Magazines and newsletter
- Personnel matters, following a meeting on 8 June 2023
- Playgrounds rejuvenation
- Lords Hill and other Highways matters
- Introduction of Gigaclear to the area
- Changing our name to community council from parish council

Cllrs also expressed concerns regarding the mowing of the commons by both local contractors and requested that the Clerk set up meetings to discuss local concerns.

23/24 030 Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council for the year ahead.

The Council resolved to continue the existing pattern of meeting every second Thursday of the month, except for August and December, when there would be no Council Meeting. It was noted that Planning Committee Meetings would be every third Thursday throughout the year and Risk and Audit and Personnel Committees, as required.