

Wonersh Parish Council

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

Present: Cllrs Max Gibbs, Chris Howard (Chair), Stephen Lavender and George Sobek.

In attendance: Lisa Davison, County Councillor Kevin Deanus, Borough Councillors Jane Austin and Michael Goodridge and five members of the public.

23/24 285 To consider and approve apologies for absence.

The Council considered and approved apologies from Cllrs Mike Band, Ben Knight, Rob Merriman, Anthony Shutes and Kevin Sloan.

The Council noted that Vice Chair, Cllr Howard would be in the chair for this evening's meeting.

23/24 286 Wonersh Parish Code of Conduct – Declarations of disclosable interests.

Cllr Chris Howard declared a non-pecuniary interest in 23/24 302, Cllr Lavender declared a non-pecuniary interest in 23/24 297 and Cllr Sobek declared a non-pecuniary interest in 23/34 299 and 23/24 300.

23/24 287 Open meeting for members of the public to raise matters with the Council.

There were two members of the public present, one with an interest in 23/24 299-301 and the other with an interest in 23/24 300.

Borough Councillor Jane Austin and County Councillor Kevin Deanus were in attendance for some of the meeting. Borough Cllr Jane Austin noted that the Borough Council budget had been approved and rent had increased by 7.7% and parking charges by 15%, plus an evening charge of £2 was introduced. Concern was expressed regarding the harmonising of the constitutions between Waverley and Guildford Borough Councils, particularly with the implications and costs of the legal proceedings in relation to activities at Guildford Borough Council. This and other Council-related business were contributing to high staff turnover and low morale. She highlighted ongoing efforts with the petrol station in Bramley and the meeting with Thames Water to understand their response to earlier incidences and the current status.

County Cllr Kevin noted that the Section 1.06 agreement was still eagerly awaited with respect to the transport requirements for the redevelopment of St John's Seminary. In discussion with Parish Councillors, the importance of submitting projects to Your Fund Surrey at the earliest opportunity was noted, though planning permission was required in advance of this. It was reemphasised that each project would be considered on its own individual merit rather than expected to be within a different geographical area.

The Clerk raised the correspondence regarding the bridleway between Lot 3 of Barnett Hill Fields and Blackheath noting the Parish Council's interest in improving the connectivity between Lots 2 and 3 also. County Cllr Deanus signposted regarding advice on how members of the public can assist with improving Public Rights of Way. Cllr Howard noted that there might also be interest from the Environment Groups in each village in assisting with this.

23/24 288 To consider and approve the minutes of the Council Meetings held on 14 March 2024.

These were approved and Cllr Howard signed these. Cllr Howard brought items 23/24 298, 299, 300 and 301 up the agenda for discussion with members of the public present.

23/24 289 To receive progress reports about matters previously considered and approved by Council.

The Clerk noted the correspondence from the Guildford Diocese regarding responsibilities for the decent maintenance of the wall. The Council summarised the current position as in the approved minutes of recent meetings. and took the view that further legal advice was required in relation to the next steps. The requested that the Clerk follow up with solicitors specialising in these matters and bring to the May Council Meeting.

Action: Clerk to confirm current position with the Diocese for clarity.

Clerk to follow up regarding legal advice as to next steps.

Clerk to include on the May Council Meeting agenda.

23/24 290 To receive the approved minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings held on 15 February and 7 March 2024.

These were received.

23/24 291 Finance – to consider and approve the following:

- (a) The list of payment and receipt vouchers in March 2024.
- (b) The end-February 2023 and end-March (year-end) 2024 financial statement.
- (c) The reconciliation of accounts (year-end), completed by non-signatories.
- (d) £7,660 repayment of Public Works Loan Board loan.
- (e) £176.71 (Clerk, 12 months) and £91.80 (Assistant, 6 months) mileage reimbursement.

The Council resolved to approve these items.

23/24 292 Finance – to note receipt of:

- (a) £1,045 community room rent.
- (b) £10,000 Surrey County Council Member's Allocation from Your Fund Surrey, towards a new roundabout at Lords Hill Playground.

This was noted, with thanks to County Councillor Deanus.

23/24 293 To consider and approve the required paperwork for the internal audit submission, specifically:

- The year end accounts (23/24 291 b) and reconciliation (23/24 291 c)
- The year end fixed asset register, including the insurance values
- The year end general and allocated reserves
- The AGAR response, subject to internal audit review
- The explanation of variance
- The PWLB statement
- The exercise of public rights
- The response to the interim internal audit assessment

These items were approved in full by Council. Actions for the 2024/25 financial year are to further consider the reserves for the closed burial ground, primarily in relation to legal costs,

and how to reflect the reserves for Barnett Hill Fields, so that donations are accurately allocated to the purchase and development of the community asset.

Action: Assistant to the Clerk to populate the bank reconciliation folder in the Audit files.

Clerk to share link with auditor in advance of the Internal Audit.

Council / Risk and Audit Committee to consider the allocation of reserves and accounting for donations as part of the budget setting process.

23/24 294 To receive and approve the updated HR Handbook.

The Council thanked the Personnel Committee members for the efforts made to advance this and approved the document, subject to the Clerk formatting it to meet accessibility requirements and updating the contracts considerate of the updated NALC model contract options.

Action: Clerk to complete formatting and update the model contracts.

23/24 295 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.

Cllr Lavender noted that the Wonersh Environment Advisory Group were progressing the actions already considered by Council.

Cllr Howard provided an update as to the recent meeting of the Shamley Green Environment Group. Updates shared for information were:

- The tree was planted on Hullmead, though this may require moving away from telephone cables
- Further planting is planned in already approved areas

She highlighted the following in particular requiring Council attention:

- Neighbouring residents require access to pond periphery around the Brickies Pond.
- Criminal damage has impacted upon posts on the duck pond green and at Hullbrook / B2128 junction, a police report has been submitted regarding the latter.
- Introducing a meadow has been proposed for the common land at the entrance to Nursery Hill subject to landowner approval.
- The use of weevils to reduce and hopefully eradicate azolla on the Brickies Pond, funded by SGEG donations held by the Wonersh Foundation.

Action: Clerk to update the padlock codes and share with neighbouring residents.

Clerk to advise contractors to repair posts at the earliest opportunity.

Clerk to follow up on the process for the entrance to Nursery Hill to become a wildflower area.

Clerk to advise the Shamley Green Environment Group of the approval in principle of the use of weevils to reduce / eradicate the azolla.

Clerk to include purchase of weevils on the next Council Meeting agenda.

Clerk to request a risk assessment of the group, should volunteers be applying the treatment.

Clerk to advise the ponds maintenance contractor as to the Council decision and the roles and responsibilities once agreed.

Assistant to the Clerk to support the purchase process, should the Parish Council purchase the treatment upon receipt of the amount from the Wonersh Foundations.

In discussing the environmental communications with the school, it was noted that there was no internal appetite for a 20-mph zone in the vicinity of the school but in wider discussions with the Environment Group there is the request for the entrance to Shamley Green Village to be improved.

Action: Clerk to include on June Council Meeting agenda.

23/24 296 To receive the request from Surrey County Council to maintain the ditch alongside Lords Hill Playground and approve next steps.

Cllr Howard updated the Council as to the prompt meeting with the routine maintenance contractor in response to concerns highlighted by Surrey County Council regarding the ditch alongside the Lords Hill playground, in relation to localised flooding.

It was noted that some initial clearance of vegetation had been completed and following discussion with the Surrey County Council contractors, the routine maintenance contractor will await slightly drier weather and promptly clear the silt and vegetation where this is contributing to the issue. The Council approved that this be completed at the earliest opportunity and this and downstream vegetation be reviewed more fully as the year progresses and when other ditch works are completed. The Clerk will follow with Waverley Borough Council that works downstream might be required.

The Council also noted that the main problem appeared to be upstream, where a blockage in the vicinity of public right of way was preventing water from being channelled away from the road. The routine maintenance contractor had improved the inlet to this area. The Council requested that this be highlighted to Surrey County Council Flooding and Highways team

Action: Clerk to update Surrey County Council highways and flooding team

Clerk to advise Waverley Borough Council as to potential works downstream.

Cllr Gibbs raised the issues with the ditches in Blackheath and the build-up of silt, including since the culverts had been cleared by a resident volunteer working party. It was suggested that he follow up with Cllr Michael Goodridge if works weren't completed soon.

Action: Cllr Max Gibbs to follow up with Borough Cllr Michael Goodridge if required.

23/24 297 To consider and approve the Parish Council's letter of support for Wonersh Bowls Club's application to Your Fund Surrey.

The Council welcomed the proposals from the Wonersh Bowls Club to rebuild the pavilion for club and community use and pledged Council support for funding applications related to this.

They noted and supported the wording of the letter proposed by Cllr Shutes. In the first instance this was to Your Fund Surrey and County Cllr Deanus confirmed his awareness of and support for the application.

Action: Clerk to submit the Council's letter to Wonersh Bowls Club in support of funding applications.

23/24 298 To consider and approve the rental fees for parish council hireable assets and approve next steps.

The Council received the hire fees introduced by Waverley Borough Council for the 2024/25 financial year and this was approved as a basis for reintroducing fees. It was noted that the fairs have been waived this year but in future years decisions around this can be made as part of the budgeting process.

Local provision of fitness classes, coaching and stoolball require a follow up to ensure necessary policies are in place and charges are applied considerate of the approved fee structure. There was support within the Council for some flexibility within this for the 2024/25 financial year, mindful of the small businesses utilising the commons. This is discussed in relation to some examples in agenda items 23/24 299-301.

Action: Assistant to the Clerk to update booking forms to reflect these fees.

Clerk to enquire as to the nature of requirements with Waverley Borough Council for the leased land and any contractual arrangements with users and apply across all bookings.

Clerk to follow up with users in the first instance.

Assistant to the Clerk to invoice users.

23/24 299 To receive an update from Wonersh Cricket Club with regards to the request for football provision and approve next steps.

The Council welcomed the report from the Wonersh Cricket Club with proposals for junior football on the outfield, as discussed previously by Council and approved in principle. The Council was still keen to see this progressed; recommendations included in the report were considered and initial responses were:

- Wonersh Parish Council to arrange the grass cutting, mindful of their wider responsibilities for the common – they supportive in principle for the Cricket Club's preferred contractor but the Council would need to consider this with respect to policies.
- Wonersh Cricket Club to enter a single agreement with the Football Club with side letter with Wonersh Parish Council
- Trial arrangements for a year before committing longer term, this would provide the opportunity to explore operational and neighbourhood implications of introducing football in this locale.
- The proposed 50% revenue sharing with the intention to build up a reserve for the pavilion was considered acceptable, the Council had not budgeted for any costs in budget setting, so costs would need considering by Council.

- Considerate of the decisions taken under 23/24 298 it was noted that expected hire costs would be £43.50 for 9v9 and £40.10 for 7v7, without the use of a pavilion. Other providers and Guildford Borough Council have lower relative charges.
- Dependent upon how the pavilion is used, a greater number of hours for cleaning were considered necessary.

Other matters raised included for the Wonersh Cricket Club to be aware of any planning restrictions when making the pavilion more available for public use, for instance responding to attendee demand for refreshments and snacks during football training.

It was noted that the Cricket Club were currently exploring the operational incomes and outgoings of the pavilion and were in discussion with the Chair of the Council in relation to this. The Clerk noted that this is something which requires Council attention rather than that of individual Councillors and it was requested that reports be submitted to Council for consideration by the Risk and Audit Committee in the first instance.

Action: Clerk to follow up with the Cricket Club's preferred contractor and confirm costs and arrangements.

Clerk to include on June Council Meeting agenda to confirm whether progressing with the contractor is within the Council's policies and to approve the next steps.

Clerk to request draft copies of contracts with the Football Club from Wonersh Cricket Club and Council to consider this.

Clerk to request that Wonersh Cricket Club discuss the proposed hiring structure with the football club, mindful of the charging flexibility in the initial year, and update the Council.

Clerk to request that the Cricket Club provide a sufficient level of cleaning considerate of the extended pavilion use.

Clerk to include any costs to Council on a future Council Meeting agenda for consideration.

Clerk to advise Wonersh Cricket Club regarding expectations in relation to planning conditions for use of the Cricket Pavilion, with Waverley Borough Council having processes in place to review this is required.

Clerk to advise Cricket Club regarding the need for matters in relation to the pavilion to be brought to Council and associated Committees.

23/24 300 To receive an update with regards to the request for cricket camps and approve next steps.

The Cricket Club confirmed that this was separate from the Wonersh operations, but the Club was supportive and keen to see the initiative prosper. As such, they had provided access to the pavilion toilets and the wider area should weather make this necessary for lunch and refreshments for a small proportion of the profits.

Wonersh Parish Council confirmed they were also supportive and that for the initial year an introductory daily price of £25 was approved, with a view to this being reviewed in future years.

The suggestion that charges for the use of the common be ringfenced for investment into the area was noted and will be considered when budget setting. The Clerk noted that of the dates suggested 1 and 22 August were dates of Planning Committee Meetings, which could have implications for pavilion use until 10.30am and for parking.

Action: Clerk to advise organisers of the need for a Risk Assessment including safeguarding considerations given the age of attendees.

Clerk to advise organisers of the daily charge and times at which the pavilion is in use.

23/24 301 To receive the request to provide football coaching on Wonersh Common and approve next steps.

The Council welcomed the request from a qualified professional coach to provide football coaching for up to ten 7–11-year-olds over the summer months, lighting would be required to continue into the winter, so a different venue would then be preferred. The Council noted receipt of his request and the evidence submitted in advance of the meeting, which was commended. The one outstanding item was a Risk Assessment.

The Council, with consideration for the charging structure, approved a monthly charge, pro-rata where appropriate, of £31.80 per month. The Council noted that they did not, at present have contracts in place but requested that the Clerk explore this further and issue one to the applicant on this basis.

The Council were keen to promote the activity locally, as a benefit to the local community and an example of young entrepreneurship and requested that the Clerk circulate further information once received.

Action: Clerk to request risk assessment from the applicant.

Clerk to source and issue a licence subject to defined terms and conditions and monthly hire charge of £31.90.

Assistant to the Clerk to invoice.

Clerk to include promotional information on the website, Facebook page and noticeboard when capacity allows.

23/24 302 To receive and consider the Street Trading Consent New Application - Howe and Co Fish and Chips and approve next steps.

The Council received these and the updated information from the provider. expressed some concerns regarding the operational aspects of the proposed service, in that the provision moved around the area and parked on residential streets. This might be disruptive to residents and travelling with hot oil might have safety implications for employees and beyond.

Cllr Howard noted the plans from the Arbutnot Hall to replace the previous Fish and Chip provision with a local static provider at the Hall on a similar timeslot and noted that whilst the free market could permit both this would no longer make commercial sense.

Action: Clerk to advise Waverley Borough Council as to the Parish Council's position.

23/24 303 To receive the update and questions from Surrey County Council regarding public rights of way for Gerald's Wood and approve next steps.

The County Council's response and queries were noted by Parish Council. It was noted that progress had already been made with creating routes in line with the proposed Public Rights of Way and that the Council were keen for these to be established with the County Council.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Shutes to respond to Surrey County Council in line with what had previously been agreed by Council.

Clerk to include on future Council Meeting agendas should further decisions be required.

23/24 304 To receive the invite to the anniversary celebration of Rev Sally Davies' ordination and approve next steps.

It was noted that this had been postponed and the Council were keen to participate once it was rearranged.

23/24 305 To receive an update on the Annual Assembly in May at Blackheath Village Hall and approve next steps.

Cllr Howard noted the progress made by the Councillors as led by Cllr Shutes on bringing together the format and content of the evening. The opportunity for input from attendees was emphasised. The Clerk noted that she had confirmed that it was standard and expected for the Wonersh United Charities to present as part of the annual assembly, given the parish-focused nature of the charity and the event. It was noted that any format change should be raised by the Chair.

Action: Councillors and other presenters to work together to on format and content.

Clerk to publicise via mailing list and social media.

Assistant to the Clerk to make arrangements with Taurus Wines.

Councillors and Clerk to coordinate in bringing plates of food.

Councillors to decide on and set up room layout considerate of encouraging participation and selection to arrive early to assist with the layout.

23/24 306 To receive any signed off risk assessments for voluntary works and note expected forthcoming ones for Council consideration.

There were no new risk assessments, working parties and councillors were operating under previously approved ones.

23/24 307 To receive the summary of suggested actions responding to the weekly playground inspection reports and approve next steps.

The Clerk noted that progress was being made in maintaining the playgrounds.

23/24 308 Members' business and correspondence for noting or including on a future agenda.

Cllr Lavender noted that the Wonersh Fair Committee were donated some of the profits from the fair to Barnett Hill Fields for seating in the open areas. The Council noted their

appreciation. The Council received the update on the impact of criminal activities on speed watch volunteers and were supportive of follow ups with Police Crime Commissioner and the Police.

Action: Clerk to confirm on future Council Meeting agenda.

23/24 309	Dates of future meetings:	
	Parish Annual Council Meeting:	9 May 2024
	Planning Committee:	18 April, 9 May 2024
	Parish Annual Meeting:	16 May 2024
	Risk and Audit Committee:	20 June 2024

These were confirmed.