



## **Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Wonersh Parish Council held on Thursday 9 May 2024 at 7.30pm, at the Wonersh Sports Pavilion.**

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

In attendance: Lisa Davison, County Councillor Kevin Deanus from 9.15pm

### **24/25 001 To elect the Chair of the Council.**

The Council resolved to elect Cllr Shutes as the Chair of the Council (proposed by Cllr Howard and seconded by Cllr Knight).

The Acceptance form was signed at the meeting in the presence of the Clerk.

### **24/25 002 To elect the Vice Chair of the Council.**

The Council resolved to elect Cllr Howard as the Vice Chair of the Council (proposed by Cllr Shutes and seconded by Cllr Lavender).

The Acceptance form was signed at the meeting in the presence of the Clerk.

### **24/25 003 To consider and approve apologies for absence.**

The Council considered and approved apologies for absence from Cllrs Band, Merriman, Sloan.

The Clerk raised the point Cllr Band had last attended a Planning Committee meeting 14 December 2023 and was preparing to resign from the Council. This would occur on the basis of non-attendance at meeting, should he not be present at a Meeting on or before 14 June 2024, unless his reason for non-attendance be approved by Council. The Council noted the desire that Cllr Band remain to sign at least two of the three leases and resolved to specifically approve the reason for his absence on that basis. The reason for this approval relates to the long-term investment from Cllr Band in Parish Council and related matters.

**Action: Council to approve the above statement at the June Council meeting, permitting Cllr Band an extension to his absence at meetings if he so wishes.**

The Clerk noted that some Councils would be proposed to roles in absentia and requested that these Councillors verify their willingness to hold such positions when approving the minutes of this meeting at the June Council agenda.

**Action: Cllrs Merriman and Sloan to confirm their willingness to**

### **24/25 004 Wonersh Parish Code of Conduct – Declarations of disclosable interests.**

Cllr Howard declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 24/25 014 (j). There were no further declarations of disclosable interests.

### **24/25 005 Open meeting for members of the public to raise matters with the Council.**

There were no members of the public present.

### **24/25 006 To consider and approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 April 2024.**

The Council approved the minutes with the exception of the stakeholders benefiting from the use of the outfield, which as highlighted should be 50% to the Parish Council and 50% to the Cricket Club from all proceeds.

**24/25 007 To receive progress reports about matters previously considered and approved by the Council.**

*[Cllrs Gibbs and Sobek arrived]*

Cllr Shutes noted the concerns raised regarding the signage on the Pepperpot which requires some attention. It was noted that the Clerk had raised it with Highways and would follow up again to understand the next steps in making this safe and repairing it.

**Action: Clerk to follow up with Surrey Highways and investigate options for repair, starting with the Routine Maintenance Contractor.**

Cllr Howard also raised the Surrey Hills Sign which was splitting on the route into Blackheath and that similar had occurred to the one on the route out of Shamley Green and a straightforward repair had been completed. It was proposed that the Council's Routine Maintenance Contractor repair this sign.

**Action: Clerk to discuss with Routine Maintenance Contractor.**

Cllr Shutes raised the lack of response from the resident making use of part of the Barnett Hill Field as a kitchen garden. The Clerk has already followed up and is awaiting a response.

Cllr Sobek raised the issue on the large board placed by Barnett Hill Hotel on Wonersh Common. It was confirmed that signage was at present [subject to the guidelines on the Wonersh Parish Council website](#) and whilst no charges were in place, these could be removed and held at the Parish Council. It was also of note that [other legislation is place at a County Council level, which influences the nature of signage which can be utilised near highways](#) and there is a [reporting system in place](#) and also [other planning requirements](#) in some instances.

The Council took the view that it was important that those advertising using such signs be made aware of the guidelines and legislation and requested that the Clerk draft a letter permitting informed decisions to be made by all parties. It was also recommended that a consistent approach be used across the common area and that the Routine Maintenance Contractor could collect offending signs for storage at the Parish Office, should the Council opt to pursue this approach in line with the policy.

It was noted that this was likely to be a common issue and the Clerk might find consulting SALC helpful in this instance.

**Action: Clerk to draft letter highlighting what signage is appropriate on the local commons and highways as applicable.**

**Clerk to enquire via SALC as to other local experiences with this.**

Cllr Lavender raised the proposals for a Christmas tree to each village and a banner to install on the balcony to the Cricket Pavilion sharing seasons greetings. The Council agreed in principle to joint fund Christmas trees and banners up a maximum of £300 for Wonersh as this included the purchase of the banner and lights, which will be reused, and less for the villages where the tree is the main purchase.

**Action: Cllr Lavender to investigate costs.**

**Clerk to include on the September Council Meeting Agenda with consideration for all three villages.**

Cllr Sobek updated the Council regarding thoughts on the design, positioning and funding of the cricket nets and the current status of this project. Cllr Shutes summarised the Council position on this, which is included in under [Agenda item 23/24 150 in the October Council Meeting Minutes](#), with position D being between the [two initial suggestions on this map to the east of the cricket outfield](#).

**24/25 008 To receive the approved minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 28 March and 18 April 2024.**

These were noted.

**24/25 009 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.**

The Council elected all Councillors to the Planning Committee and resolved to delegate the aforementioned responsibilities.

**Action: Planning Committee to elect a chair as the first item of next Committee Meeting.**

**Clerk to include on agenda.**

**24/25 010 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.**

The Council elected Councillors Chris Howard, Anthony Shutes, George Sobek and Kevin Sloan to the Risk and Audit Committee and resolved to delegate the aforementioned responsibilities to the Committee.

It was noted that all members were welcome to attend and actively engage with agenda items and actions given the importance of Risk and Audit activities to the Council.

**Action: Risk and Audit Committee to elect a chair as the first item of next Committee Meeting.**

**Clerk to include on agenda.**

**24/25 011 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 elected Councillors Max Gibbs, Chris Howard, Stephen Lavender and George Sobek to the Personnel Committee and resolved to delegate the aforementioned responsibilities.

**Action: Personnel Committee to elect a chair as the first item of next Committee Meeting.**

**Clerk to include on agenda.**

Cllr Shutes raised the Clerk's request to get a work mobile to help manage work life balance and to provide capacity for work related apps. The Council approved this in principle and requested that the cost of this be explored.

**Action: Assistant to the Clerk to explore the options and costs.**

**Clerk to include on an appropriate agenda.**

**24/25 012 To appoint Members of the Council's working parties and portfolio leads:**

**(a) Commons Working Party**

All Councillors were appointed to the Commons Working Party, Cllr Shutes as the lead for Wonersh and Cllr Howard as the lead for Shamley Green.

**(b) Commons Land Asset Transfer**

Cllrs Band, Howard and Shutes were elected the Commons Land Asset Transfer Working Party, which will cease to exist once leases are signed.

**(c) Shamley Green Community Room**

Cllr Merriman was elected as portfolio lead, the Council approved resident membership of this Working Party, should this assist in the day-to-day operation of the space.

**(d) Emergency Planning**

Cllrs Gibbs, Howard and Shutes were elected as portfolio leads on Emergency Planning.

**(e) Website / PR / Newsletter / Communications**

The Council noted that this was an area requiring further resourcing. It was suggested that Cllr Gibbs lead from a Councillor perspective on the website rejuvenation and domain transfer, working with the Assistant to the Clerk and with the support of Cllrs Band and Howard consider comms more generally. Cllr Lavender was maintained as the lead on the newsletter and there were further discussion around how further staff / contractor time could be allocated to this, including the potential for outsourcing this subject to budget approval. It was noted that an standing agenda item on what needs communicating externally, by whom and using which communication channels could offer part of the solution.

**(f) Traffic, Parking and Cycling Working Party**

Cllr Lavender was elected as portfolio lead and all Councillors encouraged to participate. This working party also has resident member.

**(g) Climate Change Working Party**

Given the integration of climate change and biodiversity into the Council strategy, this Working Party has achieved its objectives in full and will cease.

**(h) Closed Burial Ground Working Party**

Cllr Howard, Shutes and Sloan were elected to the Closed Burial Ground Working Party.

**(i) Sports Pavilion and Field Working Party (proposed)**

The Council resolved to set up the proposed working party and Cllrs Lavender, Shutes and Sobek were elected as members on behalf of the Council, with Sobek as the portfolio lead. Members of the Cricket Club could be beneficial depending upon how this develops.

**(j) Allotments**

Cllr Lavender was elected as the portfolio lead to this role.

**(k) Playgrounds**

Cllr Lavender was elected portfolio lead for the Wonersh Playground and Cllr Howard for Lords Hill. These Working Parties also have resident members.

**(l) Wonersh Environmental Advisory Group**

Cllrs Anthony Shutes and Ben Knight were elected as portfolio lead for WEAG and all members of the Council and general public are welcome to participate in activities.

**(m) Shamley Green Environment Group**

Cllr Chris Howard was elected as portfolio lead for SGEN and there are processes in place to determine resident membership. All members of the Council and general public are welcome to participate in activities.

**(n) Barnett Field Group**

Cllr Shutes and Lavender were elected as members of the Barnett Field Group, which has residents members and there are processes in place to determine these.

**(o) Gerald's Wood**

Cllr Shutes was elected as the link Councillor with respect to Gerald's Wood. It was noted that the form of this Working Party had changed following the closure of the company and this would be reviewed up until

**(p) Wonersh Community Speed Watch**

Cllr Stephen Lavender was appointed as the representation on the and the lead of Wonersh Speed Watch. It was noted that this was a Parish Council-led initiative in Wonersh. Residents members are welcome.

**24/25 013 To appoint representatives of the Council, if appropriate, to other bodies and organisations:**

**(a) Surrey Association of Local Councils**

Cllr Shutes was elected as the representative to Surrey Association of Local Councils.

**(b) Blackheath community traffic (and verges) working party**

Cllr Gibbs was elected to Blackheath Community Traffic Working Party and it was noted given that the important role of caring for ditches and verges in maintaining accessibility to the village that this Working Party might be rebranded to recognise this.

**(c) Shamley Green Community Speed Watch**

It was noted that this Community Speed Watch was independent of the Parish Council but has a Council representative on it. Cllr Merriman was proposed for this role

**(d) Wonersh Connections**

Cllr Anthony Shutes was appointed to this role.

**(e) The Arbuthnot Hall Committee**

Cllr Howard was appointed to this role. It was noted that other Shamley Green Members would be welcome to join the Committee.

**(f) Longacre School traffic management consultation committee.**

Cll Howard was appointed to this role.

**24/25 014 Finance – to consider and approve the following:**

- (a) The list of payment and receipt vouchers in April 2024**
- (b) The end-April 2024 financial statement**
- (c) The reconciliation of accounts, completed by non-signatories**
- (d) The schedule of due payments over the present financial year which arise on a regular basis as authorised under the Council’s Financial Regulations**
- (e) The appointment of Councillors Gibbs, Howard, Lavender, Merriman, Shutes and Sloan as signatories to the Wonersh Parish Council bank accounts**
- (f) The authorization of a monthly direct debit mandate for the payment which can be made online**
- (g) The continuation of a Council amazon account for purchasing office supplies and community room supplies following associated processes**
- (h) Payment of up to £90 for the deposit return for plot 10a**
- (i) Payment of £400 for the annual rent of the allotment land**
- (j) Payment of £1,126.50 to NALC and SALC as an annual subscription**
- (k) Payment of £192 to Rialtas as an annual fee.**

The Clerk noted that a number of further items related to the Community Room would be added to the (d) the schedule of due payments and circulated with the minutes and reported verbally on what this included.

The Council delegated a decision as to the deposit return on 10a to the Clerk and Cllr Lavender.

The Council resolved to approve 24/25 014 (a)-(k) inclusive on that basis.

**24/25 015 Finance – to note receipt of:**

- (a) First payment of 2024/25 precept of £63,113 from Waverley Borough Council (50%)**
- (b) £2,036 from the Wonersh and Shamley Green Playground Committee towards phase 1 of Lords Hill Playground rejuvenation**
- (c) £248.07 from the Wonersh Foundation for the Gerald’s Wood steps.**

Noted.

**24/25 016 To review and adopt the following [policies, documents and procedures](#):**

- (a) Code of Conduct & Register of Members’ Interests**

The Clerk reminded Councillors to review and confirm their Register of Members' Interests with consideration for advice received from SALC and WBC and to update these if required.

**Action: Clerk to circulate blank register with copy of minutes and the advice from SALC/WBC.**

**Councillors to review and update as / if required.**

- (b) Standing Orders**
- (c) Financial Regulations**

It was noted that the updated Financial Regulations had been received from NALC and was in the files. The Clerk noted that on the advice of the Internal Auditor these will be reviewed by Officers with consideration for local practice, which is acceptable. The Council delegated a review of this to the Risk and Audit Committee, with any recommendations to be made to Council.

**Action: Officers to review and update the model Financial Regulations to reflect current practice.**

**Risk and Audit Committee to review and make recommendations to Council.**

- (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) Publications Scheme**
- (l) Guidelines on Temporary Signage on Common Land**
- (m) Outdoor event licence**
- (n) Outdoor fitness licence**
- (o) Co-option Process**
- (p) Statement on third party tree requests**
- (q) Planning Code of Good Practice**
- (r) Village Design Statement**
- (s) Finance and Investment Policy**
- (t) Emergency Plan (Internal)**
- (u) HR Handbook (Internal)**
- (v) Training of Members and Council staff, under consideration as part of the Civility and Respect Pledge.**

The Council resolved to approve all policies, documents and procedures as they stand. They noted the system of review to be delegated to the Risk and Audit Committee and the process to be overseen by Cllr Sobek and the comments mentioned above on individual elements.

**Action: Risk and Audit Committee to oversee the policy review process with HR-related items to be led by the Personnel Committee.**

**24/25 017 To review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment.**

The Council approved the asset register and requested that the Clerk update the details to reflect the decision taken to insure new playground equipment. The Council also requested that the Risk and Audit Committee consider the value to which the well in Blackheath was insured for Council review in due course.

**Action: Clerk to update files to include the extent to which new playground equipment is insured.**

**Risk and Audit Committee to review the insurance value associated with the Blackheath Well.**

**24/25 018 To review and confirm of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks. 24/25 014 (I) To consider and approve payment of £1,018.85 to Zurich Insurance of the 2024/25 Insurance.**

The Council confirmed this subject to the actions under 24/25 017 and resolved to approve payment.

**24/25 019 To consider increasing the Assistant to the Clerk's contracted hours by six hours per month (increase to 32 hours per month total) and approve next steps.**

The Council welcome the Assistant Clerk's request to increase their hours. They noted that priorities would be updating the website, including adopting a gov.uk domain and creating a longer-term budget plan. They noted a preference for project work and aspects related to Council financial aspects of Council business, which might include managing CIL expenditure as projects developed. The Clerk provided indicative costs which the Council confirmed was acceptable.

**Action: Clerk to advise Assistant to the Clerk.**

**24/25 020 To receive an update on the PWLB extension request and approve next steps.**

Cllr Shutes drew attention to the draft response to DHLUC in the meeting files regarding an extension to the drawdown period for the PWLB loan and to the initial resolution by Council on at the extraordinary meeting on 29 March 2023. This was:

*"It was RESOLVED to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £400,000 over the borrowing term of 50 years, £300,000 towards the purchase of the land and to grant £100,000 to the redevelopment of the Arbuthnot Hall. The annual repayments will come to around £28,760.00.*

*It is also intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments by 15% which is the equivalent of an additional £14,560.00 in the first year, with repayments based on the EIP approach. This will be subject to a precept increase consultation"*

It was noted that £200,000 had been drawn down towards the purchase of Barnett Hill Fields with £58,000 being covered by Parish Council reserves pending the potential sale of Gerald's Wood and the remainder by donations. The sale of the wood is progressing but not a pace at

which the Council could draw down the £58,000 this summer if it did not proceed for any reason. The redevelopment of Arbuthnot Hall was progressing but it was recognised that the planning approval process could extend beyond the draw down period also.

Whilst the signatories to the request remain, some councillors have changed since this request so the Council resolved to approve the initial request and also the request for an extension.

**Action: Clerk to response to the PWLB with the Council's decision to request and extension and the continued support for the loan.**

**24/25 021 To receive an update on the lease of common land from Waverley Borough Council and approved next steps.**

The Council noted the decision in March to review the progress made with respect to the lease between Shamley Green Cricket Club and Waverley Borough Council and it was noted that this was still outstanding.

The Council welcomed the recommendation from their solicitor that the Shamley Green lease be updated to permit the underletting of the Cricket Club whether the land asset transfer lease is signed prior to, or following agreement with the Cricket Club. They held the position, at this stage, that Waverley Borough Council is to agree the lease with Shamley Green Cricket Club, prior to signing.

The Councils resolved to approve all leases, subject to the small change to the Shamley Green lease mentioned above. The Council delegated signing authority to Cllrs Band, Howard and Shutes for the signing leases.

It was noted that, with the change in personnel at Waverley Borough Council, Directors' approval was required for Waverley to countersign.

**Action: Clerk to advise all parties and request paper copies of the Wonersh and Lords Hill contracts.**

**Authorised signatories to sign contracts.**

**24/25 022 To receive an update on Gerald's Wood and approve next steps. 24/25 014**  
*(m) To consider and approve payment of up to £1,000 to Wellers Hedleys for conveyancing fees for the sale of Gerald's Wood.*

Cllr Shutes provided a brief update as to the Surrey County Council position on the Public Rights and Way and the requirement for a safety audit as to the entry / exit points. *[Update: The council resolved to approve a fallback position with legal agreements between the Council and purchaser should the Public Rights of Way not be granted by Surrey County Council.]*

The Clerk noted that whilst conveyancing costs had been approved in principle this had now been included on an agenda for formal approval. The Council resolved to approve this.

**Action: Clerk to advise Wellers Hedley.**

**24/25 023 To receive an update on arrangements for football club activity on Wonersh Common, led by Wonersh Cricket Club and approve next steps.**

The Council noted that further to discussion last month the 50/50 split between Wonersh Cricket Club and Wonersh Parish Council would apply to all activities benefiting from use of the outfield. To option for this to be held in reserve for pavilion maintenance was noted.

**Action: Clerk and Pavilion and Sports Field Working Party to discuss further with Wonersh Cricket Club.**

**24/25 024 To receive an update on the closed burial ground wall and approve next steps.** *24/25 014 (n) To consider and approve payment of up to £550 to Surrey Hills Solicitors for advice in relation to the Closed Burial Ground Wall.*

Council resolved to approve this expenditure and welcomed the advice as to the extent of what would be considered decent maintenance of a closed burial ground wall, with historic damage caused by trees from a neighbouring property, acknowledged at handover. The challenges in getting permission from the diocese for actions to ensure public safety was also noted as something which would be beneficial to better understand.

The Clerk was requested to send contextual information to the solicitor and set up a zoom meeting between the Working Party, the Clerk and the legal representative.

**Action: Clerk to provide contextual information to the solicitor and request a zoom meeting, noting that a budget for a maximum of two hours had been agreed.**

**Clerk to include on Risk and Audit Committee Agenda, subject to sufficient progress being made.**

**24/25 025 To receive an update on the Shamley Green Community Room and approve next steps.** *24/25 014 To consider and approve (o) payment of £1,066.24 to Waverley Borough Council for business rates for the community room for 2024/25 (to be reimbursed WBC), (p) payment of £64.99 to SB Heating for gas safety checks; (q) payment of £240 to SB Heating for the repair of the boiler.*

The Council welcomed the financial summary on income and expenditure for the community room from the Assistant to the Clerk. They noted that there was healthy research for maintenance and hire fees were covering operational costs. This would be kept under review and the Council noted a continued commitment to not subsidise community room operations and explore options to increase income. This will be considered further by the Risk and Audit Committee and Council over the coming months reviewed again during budget setting activities in the Autumn.

The Council resolved to approve all payments.

**Action: Clerk to include on appropriate agendas.**

**24/25 026 To receive correspondence from SGN regarding the tree on common land and the wayleave on Wonersh common and approve next steps.**

Cllr Shutes reported that SGN had responded to the concerns raised regarding the ash with evidence of ash dieback in close proximity to the black box, noting that SGN would not be looking to resolve the issue but were expecting Wonersh Parish Council to follow up.

As this was on the other side of the ditch on Wonersh Common the Parish Council held the view that riparian rights were in place here and the Clerk will follow up with the owner.

A request to cut back brambles the other side of the ditch from a neighbouring resident was also noted and the Council maintained the view that this is the resident's responsibility.

**Action: Clerk to advise residents of their riparian rights.**

**24/25 027 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. 24/25 014 (s)**  
*To consider and approve payment of £1,215 to CABI for weevils to treat the azolla in the Brickies Pond (payment received from the Wonersh Foundation / SGEG)*

The Council noted the updated on the use of weevils to treat the azolla in the Brickies Pond. Payment was approved and it was noted these works had been funded by the Wonersh Foundation. It was noted that treatment was to be applied by volunteers from the Shamley Green Environment Group and that a risk assessment had been received. The Council reviewed this and resolved to approve these actions.

**Action: Assistant to Clerk to follow up on the purchase of the weevils.**

**Clerk to advise Shamley Green Environment Group.**

**24/25 028 To receive an update on the annual assembly and approve next steps.**  
*24/25 014 To consider and approve (s) payment of £35 to Blackheath Village Hall for hall hire charges, and (t) payment of up to £152.30 to Taurus Wines for the purchase of refreshments for the annual assembly.*

Cllr Shutes updated all and requested any extended updates. The Council confirmed that refreshments would be served prior to the presentations. The Council resolved to approve these payments, increasing the refreshments slightly if required.

**Action: Officers to follow up with Taurus Wines.**

County Councillor Kevin Deanus arrived at this point and the Council enquired as to the progress made with the 20mph zone in Wonersh Village and the funding of this. There were concerns expressed that funding would be reduced for the wider Wonersh Village improvement schemes from the section 1.06 money. It was noted that the review of the Surrey County Council policy was required before Wonersh would be eligible without the introduction of traffic calming measures and that in other situations planning money is also drawn upon to progress projects of this nature. Still, investment in nearby villages and the timescale between when this was noted as being accepted and when it will be progressed was a disappointment as was the Surrey County Council processes which underrepresent village settings in the more rural areas of Surrey. The recommendation was for Councillors to follow up the Surrey County Council Transport Planning Officer.

**24/25 029 To receive any signed off risk assessments for voluntary works and note expected forthcoming ones for Council consideration.**

The risk assessment for the application of weevils was noted as approved.

**24/25 030 Members' business and correspondence for noting or including on a future agenda.**

Cllr Howard drew the Council's attention to the Surrey Association of Local Councils Net-walking event at Hampton Estate on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024 10-12 and encouraged attendance. The Council noted that this could come out the training budget.

**Action: Councillors to advise Clerk as to whether they would like to attend.**

**Clerk to book Councillors onto event.**

Cllr Shutes drew Council's attention to an event proposed for the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2024, provisionally in the Memorial Hall. Know your Wonerish is aimed at organisations across the Village and new neighbours.

**24/25 031    Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council for the year ahead.**

The Council resolved to approve the meeting schedule.

**Action: Clerk to publish on website and include on noticeboards.**