

Wonersh Parish Council

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Minutes of the meeting of Wonersh Parish Council held on Thursday 13 August 2020 at 7.30 pm, online

Present: Councillors Mike Band, Chris Crouch, Chris Howard, Ben Knight, Stephen Lavender, Anthony Shutes, Nathalie Walmsley-Beveridge and Rod Weale (Chair).

In attendance: Lisa Davison, Borough Councillor Michael Goodridge and three members of the public.

MINUTES

20/21 094 To ratify the role of Chairman to the Council.

The Clerk noted that following the May meeting the Declaration of Acceptance of the Chairman should have been signed within two months. This had not been enabled. This was being ratified and the Council confirmed that Cllr Roderick Ian Weale had been elected to this role. Cllr Weale duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance in view of the camera, the Clerk noted this as the Proper Officer to the Council she had viewed this and had signed on receipt.

20/21 095 To consider and approve apologies for absence.

The Council received and approved apologies for absence from Councillor Malcolm Scott.

20/21 096 Wonersh Parish Code of Conduct – Declarations of disclosable interests and, if requested, consideration and approval of dispensations under the Code.

Cllr Howard declared a disclosable interest in 20/21 116.

20/21 097 Open meeting for members of the public to raise matters with the Council.

The members of the public declared interests primarily in items 20/21 112, 20/21 117 and 20/21 118 and were interested more generally in the meeting. One attendee also highlighted concerns regarding parking on the verges in the parish.

Borough Councillor, Michael Goodridge, enquired further as to the area of land unmown in Wonersh and noted that he had been in touch with a WBC Officer with regards to this. The Clerk noted that it was an area that has been highlighted to Parish Councillors also, with consideration for the review of the grass cutting and further discussion with WBC Officers would be useful for them also.

He also updated the Parish Council as to the challenges and opportunities with the potential change from county and borough councils to unitary authorities. This included the potential for an increased onus upon Parish Council to deliver services, with benefit from the expertise at a unitary level. The Parish Council was aware of the borough councils' negative response to the appropriateness of a Surrey-wide unitary authority. They welcomed the role they would hold in this respect to this change, noting the additional staff resources required to fulfil this.

Furthermore, he drew attention to amendments to a planning application in the Parish. It was noted that this was discussed by the WPC Planning Committee earlier that day and the Committee had maintained its original position.

20/21 098 Briefing by the Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team on issues of local interest and concern.

There were no updates received on crime or the requests for speed data from the recent monitoring.

Action: Clerk to follow up with the police.

20/21 099 To consider and approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9 July 2020.

Aside from the request to complete the minutes for 20/21 087, which was received with thanks and has now been completed and minor additions, relating to readability, the Clerk noted the following suggestions from Councillors regarding additions to the minutes:

Cllr Shutes expressed the opinion, at the meeting, that public engagement should happen alongside the tendering of the bunds so as work can be carried out at the optimum time for planting, in September. Whilst actions were not explicitly agreed at the meeting, following this the majority of Councillors were supportive of proposed actions to contact households bordering the common and to publicise on the website, on the common and Womersh village noticeboards. The Clerk noted caution in this respect as bunds had not been included as a specific item on the agenda at this point, and highlighted the importance of more specific agenda items and explicit agreed actions, going forward. It was agreed, that this could be considered urgent, given the desired timescales for completion of the works and that any decision resulting from exploring the feasibility both in terms of resident support and financial viability would be discussed in full, with a view to determining the outcome at an Extraordinary Council Meeting in August.

Actions: Cllr Shutes to support the Clerk in engaging residents bordering the common and via the webpage and noticeboard.

Cllr Lavender to include details in the newsletter.

The majority of Councillors agreed to these additions and the Council resolved to approve these, subject to these amendments (proposed by Cllr Weale).

Action: Clerk to update the minutes accordingly.

20/21 100 To receive progress reports about matters previously considered and approved by the Council.

The Clerk noted that most items were included on the agenda but some items, to be discussed at the Risk and Audit Committee, for recommendations to the September Council meeting had been made available to Councillors under progress, for perusal in advance of these meetings. Documents related to the leases for Waverley Borough Council (WBC) common land, including maps and Service Level Agreements, and the updated Code of Conduct for Councillors.

20/21 101 To receive the approved minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings held on 2 July and 23 July 2020.

These were received.

20/21 102 Finance – to consider and approve the following:

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

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

- (b) the end-June 2020 and end-July 2020 financial statement;**

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

- (c) the payment of up to £250 for commons maintenance works;**

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

- (d) the payment of up to £250 to recognise community service during the lockdown;**

The Council were supportive of this suggestion but resolved to defer approval, pending further discussion to ensure this is inclusive.

- (e) the payment of £246 for Auditing Solutions for the internal audit;**

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

- (f) the payment of up to £750 for a crown reduction to the oak in Shamley Green;**

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

- (g) the payment of £182.04 for Adobe Acrobat Pro;**

The Council resolved to approve this (proposed by Cllr Howard). The Clerk welcomed this and noted that if exploration of a free alternative was available then this will not be required, but if it is this will assist in advancing a number of tasks scheduled for August.

- (h) the payment of £81.00 for replacement of road irons, stolen from Lords Hill Common;**

In recognition of the responsiveness during the lockdown the majority of Councillors agreed that this should be reimbursed. The Council resolved to approve this (proposed by Cllr Howard).

- (i) the payment of up to £400 for Shamley Green Parish Magazine to deliver hard copies of the Parish Newsletter;**

The Council resolved not to approve this and to continue to prioritise online access to the newsletter. In recognition of those for who this would limit access to make a small number of hard copies of the newsletter available in a range of local destinations. This would be highlighted in the Parish Magazine, alongside the advert.

- (j) the payment of up to £100 for speed limit stickers for wheelie bins.**

The Council resolved not to approve this at present but to explore the practicalities further and to defer the decision until the next meeting.

20/21 103 Annual Governance and Accountability Return: To receive the internal auditors report and approve next steps.

The Council welcomed the positive comments from the Internal Auditor and thanked the Clerk for all the hard work on this matter.

20/21 104 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Part 3) 2019/20: To receive and approve Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement.

The Chairman, Cllr Weale, read out the statements in the Annual Governance Statement. The Council resolved to approve this (proposed by Cllr Weale). Who duly signed this in view of the Proper Officer of the Council, via Zoom.

Action: Clerk to countersign prior to submission.

20/21 105 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Part 3) 2019/20: To consider and approve Section 2 – Accounting Statement.

Cllr Weale received the copy of the Accounting Statement, as signed by the Clerk. He read out the values and the Council resolved to approve these (proposed by Cllr Weale).

Action: Clerk to submit all sections of the AGAR, plus the files required for an Intermediate Audit to PKF Littlejohn, the external auditors.

19/20 106 To confirm publication of AGAR on Wonersh Parish Council website from Monday 17 August 2020 to Monday 28 September, to comply with statutory requirements.

The Council confirmed this (proposed by Cllr Band).

Action: Clerk to publish accordingly.

20/21 107 To receive an update from the Parish Survey Committee and Village Working Parties.

Cllr Crouch noted that a positive meeting with County Councillor Young and a Surrey County Council Officer, where general support and expertise was offered with regards to the Wonersh, Pepperpot.

Holding the meeting on site resulted in an appreciation for all of the safety concerns in for users of all modes of transport. This issue was particularly acute for pedestrians with reduced mobility or, e.g. pedestrians with push chairs and younger children, accessing the surgery and pharmacy, village store or travelling onwards to the common and playground. This extends to people accessing / egressing the bus in the village, reducing overall accessibility and presenting a challenge to mode shift, which is important as through traffic on the route increases owing to land use planning and resultant development in neighbouring parishes. This also resulted in the underuse of this village amenity which is a key feature of the village, currently obscured by parked cars. All working party members and Councillors in attendance felt energised by this and work was underway to identify potential funding sources, which was welcomed by the Council.

Cllr Band noted that proposals for the VAS, important to the transport and traffic working party in Shamley Green, with the intention of reducing dangerous traffic speeds, was currently with Cllr Young. They were awaiting an update on this and exploring the available funding sources, considering the evidence available through the Community Speedwatch in the village.

Other Working Parties noted that there hadn't been further progress since the last meetings were scheduled for following month for active groups, with objectives yet to fulfil.

20/21 108 To consider the Council Committee, Working Party and Advisory Group structure and approve next steps.

It was noted that, following the results of the Parish Survey and coming together of the new Council both members, with other organisations and residents, there was a lot of positive activities underway to improve the parish, with much focus upon environmental matters such as transport and commons management. Understanding the Governance of this and its potential to feed into a three to five-year strategy for the Council and longer-term developments would be beneficial. It was noted that this had already been explored for the Commons Working Party and associated Advisory Groups and it was viewed as important that, where possible, structure and roles and responsibilities should be mirrored in the larger villages of Wonersh and Shamley Green. In these villages, actions were already underway in relation to transport and traffic and the environment, plus the playgrounds advisory group in Wonersh.

Action: Cllrs Shutes, Crouch and Howard draft a governance structure with associated roles and responsibilities for committees, working parties and advisory groups, for consideration by the Council.

20/21 109 To receive an update and recommendations from the Community Room Working Party and approve next steps.

Cllr Band reported that the Community Room Working Party had met in response to a request to reopen the space for art classes, should there be demand for in person provision. Following this the Clerk had met with a WBC Officer and would shortly meet with the class provider. It was noted that both Wonersh Parish Council would need to complete a risk assessment for hirers and the hirers would need to evidence their public liability insurance and a risk assessment for their clients. Waverley Borough Council, as the owner and current manager would provide an initial deep clean and Legionella testing, pay for cleaning arranged by Wonersh Parish Council and could provide some support, including removal of furniture, should this be deemed necessary as a result of the risk assessment. The Clerk reported that, given the layout of the space, actions such as having separate entrances and exits would be relatively straightforward. It was requested that the risk assessment be delegated to the Community Room Working Party, for approval at the Risk and Audit Committee meeting in early September and noted that there may be some small expenses in preparing for this, to be considered at the September Council Meeting. The Council resolved to approved this.

Action: Community Room Working Party to create risk assessment for consideration by the Risk and Audit Committee.

Clerk to request copies of public liability insurance certificates and risk assessment from the hirer(s).

20/21 110 To review the probationary period of AEM contractors for the cutting of the Waverley Borough Council land and approve next steps.

The Council agreed unanimously to approve the extension of the contract, there were high levels of satisfaction with the works to date and with the responsiveness to any concerns. At present this should follow the existing schedule put forward by WBC, subject to minor amendments at the recommendation of the Commons Working Party and association village-level advisory groups.

Action: Clerk to inform AEM of their successful completion of the probationary period.

20/21 111 To review the specifications of the grass mowing contracts with consideration for any additional ditch and hedge-cutting requirements and other development in the parish and approve next steps.

The Clerk noted that WBC supported adaptations the grass cutting schedules they used to respond to local requirements and knowledge. However, the current schedules were included in the Service Level Agreements which would be considered in more detail at the September meeting.

Regarding ditch clearance and hedge cutting, specifications were also provided by WBC officers. Based on current SLAs these remain the responsibility of WBC in Shamley Green and are passed on to the Parish Council in Lords Hill and onersh, though clarification is required where these pass through wooded areas rather than the grassed areas the Parish Council has agreed to manage.

As agreed, an inspection of these will be completed by Ward Councillors in each Shamley Green and Wonersh. Following clarification of responsibilities for the drainage ditches, works will be completed this year, either by:

- adding these to the contracts for the existing local contractors, subject to WBC indemnifying this if leases have not been signed; or
- where WBC maintain responsibility, reported to them for action.

Action: Clerk to follow up with Waverley Borough Council regarding maintenance of ditch and culverts. To request the previous schedules and specifications and confirm responsibility.

20/21 112 To consider the proposals for bunds and ditches around Wonersh Sport Ground, on the recommendations of Waverley Borough Council, and approve next steps (note tender to be considered under 20/21 127, if approved in principle.)

Cllr Shutes presented the rationale for the introduction of bunds around Wonersh Common, in response to a risk assessment from WBC and the processes which had been followed to tender based on three quotes and the efforts to consult with residents. He reported that meetings with contractors and comments from residents were generally supportive of bunds, rather than the initial proposal for bunds and ditches, and included some constructive comments which have also been considered in the proposed design. The design is such that access will be provided at a number of points for both pedestrians and users of, e.g. mobility scooters; there will be two vehicle access points accessed via retractable bollards. It will be designed to consider existing planting and infrastructure. The commercially sensitive nature of discussions regarding the contractors would be discussed later.

20/21 113 To consider existing requirements for commons and general maintenance in the parish and the tender for a regular contractor and approve next steps.

Cllr Shutes noted the draft tender for minor works, which was generally approved, subject to minor amendments, then circulated to existing contractors and contractors recommended by other local clerks, for a decision to be made at the September Council Meeting.

Action: Clerk to work with Cllr Shutes to finalise and then circulate to a range of local contractors.

20/21 114 To receive the request to cut back vegetation along the ditch bordering Wonersh playground and approve next steps.

The Council received the request to cut back vegetation to improve a household's view of the common and with consideration for a recent occurrence when a dog got caught in the ditch. The Council historically decided to maintain this vegetation to screen the ditch from the children's playground, in the interests of child safety. The Councillors resolved to review this decision as part of a wider scheme to include but not restricted to planting to screen the SGN box.

Action: Clerk to update the resident.

20/21 115 To receive an update and recommendations from the Commons Working Party and approve next steps.

Cllr Shutes took the opportunity to thank and welcomes the voluntary assistance of local residents and resident groups in managing the commons. Specifically, the Wonersh Woodland Group will take on weeding Chinthurst Triangle and a resident bordering Wonersh Common, felled the Cherry tree with the assistance of other local residents; taking necessary precautions to protect the members of the public and accepting liability.

Cllr Shutes recommended the Parish Council contact Surrey County Council and WBC in advance of the flooding of the road and common land near Shamley Green Village Stores, as a result of maintenance of the drains, in advance of the event.

Action: Clerk to contact the county and borough councils regarding localised flooding.

20/21 116 To receive recommendations from Councillors and the Playgrounds Advisory Group, in response to the annual playground inspection, and approve next steps.

20/21 117 To note the response from Fields in Trust regarding the junior cricket strips on Wonersh Common.

The Clerk noted the response from Fields in Trust supported the development of cricket strips for junior cricket in line with agreement between Wonersh Parish Council and Wonersh Cricket Club. It also highlighted the potential for cricket and football seasons to complement each other, should the decision be made to operate the space in this way.

20/21 118 To receive the football club response to Wonersh Parish Council's decision not to reinstate the football pitch at this time and approve next steps.

The Clerk presented the possibility for the football club to assist with the drainage issues with the sports ground and, requested that, with this potential change in context both here and with consideration for the item above, the Council confirm their position with respect to the football pitch. The Council confirmed that, at this stage, they continue to prioritise Wonersh Cricket Club, as seasons can overlap, but this would be reviewed if the Parish Council was approached by a football club based in the parish.

20/21 119 To receive the request to provide yoga classes on Wonersh Sports Ground and approve next steps.

Two yoga teachers approached the Parish Council regarding the provision of two class-types, paracise and yoga, respectively. These would be provided outdoors, weather permitted, in

response to restricted use of indoor space in relation to the Coronavirus. The Council agreed unanimously to this provision subject to activities being carried out away from the cricket square and strip and subject to time tabling of other users. As per earlier requests of this type, it was agreed that whilst such restrictions are in place, use of the common will be free of charge, even when there is a charge to attend the class. This is subject to the provider holding relevant public liability insurance and completing a risk assessment to a level which is approved by Cllr Band, as the Chair of the Risk and Audit Committee.

Action: Cllr Band and the Clerk to check the provider's paper and confirm any required actions of the provider prior to approval.

20/21 120 To discuss and agree the contents of the Wonersh Parish Council Webpage at present and outline plans for its development both with consideration for accessibility legislation and generally.

Cllr Lavender reported on the contents of the website which is generally satisfactory and provides a good reference point for people visiting the site. He noted that more could be done to direct people to the website and there could be greater use of the banner on the front page to draw attention to specific, current items.

Cllr Howard expressed concern that, given most people access website via a mobile device that the content was not currently optimised for this. Furthermore, the website is a discrete item which could become the responsibility of, e.g. an assistant clerk or other service provider with consideration for staff capacity.

The Clerk noted that the information on the website was largely updated by her and this was relatively straightforward but there was much work required for it to comply with accessibility legislation and that there was limited capacity to do this with other, ongoing priorities. She welcomed any suggestions as to change of content from Cllrs, which she could upload, and Cllr Knight noted that he had previous experience of website development and management and he could assist too.

Action: Councillors to provide updates for content on the website.

Clerk to work with Cllr Knight to ensure that the content was regularly updated.

20/21 121 To consider providing residents with speed limit signs for wheelie bins for use in the parish.

The Council welcomed the idea of measures which could make driver reconsider their speed when travelling through the parish. The practicalities were explored at some length with respect to this and the decision was made to explore this further in terms of whole parish demand before committing. Looking to other parishes where this approach is used, and understanding the Parish Council's role with respect to this, was seen as a priority.

Action: Clerk to enquire about local decisions and to post the question to national networks and feedback to the Council.

Councillors to consider potential cost implications and sources for funds for these and how, should the Parish Council choose to play an active role, this will be implemented / which routes will be prioritised.

20/21 122 To discuss and agree the Parish Council response, if any, to the [Surrey County Council Waverley Parking review](#) consultation, due February 2021.

Cllr Crouch noted that this would be publicly advertised, most likely in Autumn 2020, and that a full Council discussion await this.

20/21 123 To receive reports by Members and the Clerk.

The Clerk reported on some interesting training she had attended via SSALC and Breakthrough Communications, which explored communication strategies. A link to the recording and slides were included in the papers for Councillors. This could complement well the Council Strategy Development.

The Clerk also noted that she had made the minutes of the SLCC local branch meeting available and had followed up with WBC regarding the Legionella testing in the community room.

20/21 124 Members' business and correspondence for noting or including on a future agenda.

Cllr Howard highlighted the importance that the Personnel Committee meeting to make recommendations to the Council regarding employing a locum clerk, completing the Clerk's annual review and exploring the options available to balance the staff time with the current and future workloads of the Council.

It was agreed that a meeting in late August, early September was required to arrange locum support and where possible the appraisal of the Clerk could be discussed then also, if not a later date could be arranged for the latter.

Considerate of time, the Clerk noted that some correspondence had been made available with the papers for Councillor attention and to advise whether these required any specific actions, or to be included on a forthcoming agenda.

20/21 125 Dates of future meetings:

Council: 10 September 2020, 7.30pm

Planning Committee: 3 September 2020, 9.30am

These were approved. Plus, it was noted that a Risk and Audit Committee Meeting was also scheduled for the 3 September, to follow the Planning Committee, 10.15am and that a personnel committee meeting was overdue, given the matters raised above.

20/21 126 To close the meeting to members of the public.

The Council noted that members of the public would be excluded for the next part of the meeting because of commercial sensitivity.

20/21 127 Subject to the approval of Council to the principle discussed under 20/21 112, to discuss and agree the tender for ditches and bunds around Wonersh Sports Ground.

This item was discussed and an agreement made on a contractor, details on these will be published in due course.