



**Arborfield & Newland Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Council**  
Held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020  
Remotely via Zoom Conferencing: 8pm

In accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 this meeting was held virtually via Zoom Conferencing.

**Present:** Cllrs Picken, Clint, Starkey, Murphy, Stevens, McIntosh, Hughes, Strong, the Clerk.

**Not Present:** Cllr Kaiser

The Clerk was the Zoom host of the meeting.

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Picken the Parish Council Chairman

**54/21 To receive and accept any apologies for absence** – Cllr Cowan if he is unable to access Zoom. A written report has been circulated and can be found as Appendix A to these minutes

**55/21 To receive any declarations of interest on items on the Agenda** - None

**56/21 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting** – to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – the minutes were read and approved. They will be signed by Cllr Picken when lockdown has eased.

**57/21 Public Participation** (allotted time - 5 minutes) - None

**58/21 Clerks Report** –for information only

- Visits to the office continue, generally on a Monday and a Thursday. The remainder of the time I continue to work from home.
- There is conflicting advice between government and the scientific advisers on whether people should work from home if they can or return to work if safe to do so.
- NALC have issued guidance on whether meetings can be held face-to-face and have provided a check list. As the first item is can the Council meet remotely and the answer is that yes A&NPC can then it seems sensible to continue for the foreseeable future to meet via Zoom. The current legislation for Councils to be able to meet remotely is in place until May 2021.
- Fly tipping reports continue unfortunately, but WBC are generally very quick to clear it.
- Green food waste bags remain in high demand.
- Travellers remain within Wokingham Borough.
- Considerable time has been spent recently at or regarding the park and the Arborfield Village Improvement Scheme.
- I am on leave as of the afternoon of Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> July returning to the office on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August. Cllr Starkey to pop to the office to check the post box and answer phone.

**59/21 Reports from external bodies:**

- Borough Council – See Appendix A

## **Cllr Kaiser joined the meeting**

- Police – No report

**60/21 COVID-19** – Parish Council update report and recovery strategy paperwork including delegating to the Vice Committee Chairman the task of putting together a report regarding the impact of Covid-19 on the Council including finances – the document was circulated to all with the agenda. It was noted that the playground now has a separate risk assessment regarding its reopening. It was noted that at the Executive Committee meeting held prior to this meeting it was agreed that the task of reporting the impact on the Council of Covid-19 was not a sufficiently sized task for the Vice Committee Chairman. The Clerk and Cllr Clint will put a financial statement together and the Clerk will compile a report for the records over the summer. A risk assessment is to be carried out regarding reopening the office and consultation with the Village Hall Management Committee.

## **61/21 Planning**

- **Planning Report** – for information only
  - **Planning applications decisions:**

**200993 – Land at the Coombes** – Full application for the proposed installation of timber post and wire security fencing and 2 no. gates – refused

**201308 – 5 Newlands Cottages, Mole Road** – Householder application for the proposed erection of a two storey rear extension and changes to fenestration, following demolition of existing single storey rear extension – approved

**201263 – Sunrise, Eversley Road** – Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey side extension and a single storey rear extension with 2 no. rooflights, plus changes to fenestration – approved

**201321 – 27 Tyler Drive** – Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension including 2 no. rooflights following demolition of existing conservatory – approved

**191669 – Mallards, Eversley Road** – Outline planning application for a two storey detached dwelling on land adjacent to Mallards, Eversley Road – appeal dismissed

**201183 – Reddam House, Bearwood Road** – Tree works in the Sindlesham Conservation Area to allow safety and continuity of electricity supply. This work was refused

**201485 – Woodpeckers, Church Lane** – Householder application for the proposed erection of a two storey side extension with 2 no. part dormers and a single storey rear extension with 1 no. rooflight – no objections was agreed via email. Subsequently approved by WBC

**190309 – White Heart Grove, Coombes Woodland** – Enforcement appeal – without planning permission the unauthorised construction of a timber building and its use as a dwelling - a virtual appeal hearing will take place at 10am on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2020. Cllr Murphy to attend.

- **To discuss planning applications received by the date of the meeting – to include:**

**201302 – High Bank, School Road** – Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension including 1 no rooflight, single storey side extension following demolition of existing single storey side extension, alterations to roof, single storey front extension to create porch after demolition of existing porch and changes to fenestration – no objections

**201610 - The Firs, Parkcorner Lane** - Full application for change of use from existing ancillary outbuilding to independent dwelling – following a discussion it was agreed the Council could not support this application as it would create an additional independent dwelling in an undeveloped area.

**201667 – Bartletts Farmhouse, Swallowfield Road** – Application to vary condition 7 and remove condition 9 of planning consent 183165 for the full application for the proposed erection of an outbuilding for a mixed use ancillary residential and operation of a home based cake decorating class business. Condition 7 refers to house of use, to the change Saturday operation hours to 10am – 5pm. Condition 9 refers to the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. – no objections

#### **Application arrived after the agenda had been published**

**201573 – Bound Oak Industrial Estate, Wokingham Lane** – Full application for the erection of 8No buildings for B1c, B2 and B8 industrial and commercial use with the addition of a sui generis Energy Centre comprising a Combined heat and Power facility and Lithium Ion Battery store in Unit 1 to include landscaping and access works, following demolition of the existing buildings

It was agreed that insufficient time had been available to consider the application documents for any decisions to be made and it had not been listed on the agenda.

It was noted that Cllrs Murphy and McIntosh had previously met on site with the applicants and also attended a follow up remote meeting. The applicants were praised for engaging with the Parish Council and residents early with their plans. Residents’ concerns relate to the entrance and pedestrian safety.

The Council will discuss and consider this application at a later date but prior to the response deadline date of 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020

#### **Appeals**

**193087 – The Coombes, Coombes Lane** – Full application for the proposed erection of a closed board fence 2m in height and 1 no gate – the Parish Council does not support this application. Comments to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

**200153 – White Heart Grove, The Coombes** – Full planning application for the proposed installation of woodland security fencing - the Parish Council does not support this application. Comments to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and are to include additional comment regarding recent rental advertising of the property.

**193337 – Copse Barn Hill Lane, Carters Hill** – Full application for the erection of a two storey dwelling and detached garage following demolition of the 2no existing stables – comment reiterating the Parish Councils objection to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

#### **For information only**

**201679 – Bearwood Riding Centre, Mole Road** – Application for works to protected trees TPO1471/2014, Area 1

- **To consider an application for Goods Vehicle Operators Licence – A&C Transport Services Ltd –** Increase at existing operating centre: Bridge Farm, Reading Road – New authorisation at this operating centre to be 2 vehicles, 2 trailers – no objections
- **To receive update report regarding the Arborfield Village Centre Improvement Scheme –** Cllr Murphy – the scheme is agreed in principle following a number of meetings between the Steering Group, WBC and WSP as well as other stakeholders including the Coombes School and Barkham Parish Council. Caroline Lavelle has taken on the role of Chair of the Steering Group. Barkham Parish Council raised a number of queries, which WBC are answering. The scheme will now go out to consultation and a time frame for this is awaited. The Steering Group have made it very clear they will not accept the condition being discharged so the relief road can open prior to the outcome of the consultation.
- **To receive report from second visit to Bound Oak Industrial Estate –** Cllrs Murphy & McIntosh – see comments above regarding application 201573
- **Any Planning matters considered urgent -** None

### **F&GP**

- **F&GP Report –** for information only –
  - The National Salary Award for 2020-2021 has not yet been agreed.
  - Alan Harland has completed the accounts for YE March 2020. He has confirmed he will be available to carry out the Accounts for YE March 2021 at the same fee.
  - The Internal Audit has not yet been carried out. This needs to be arranged with Claire Connell.
  - Unclaimed vat from October 2019 has been sent to HMRC for payment within the April – June quarter.
- **To agree and sign the accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 as prepared by Alan Harland –** proposed by Cllr Clint, seconded by Cllr Murphy all agreed to approve the accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. The Clerk will arrange for the Statement of Accounts to be signed by the Parish Council Chairman, adhering to the current Covid-19 social distancing guidance.
- **To accept and discuss the final Internal Audit Report 2020 from Claire Connell –** The Clerk had reported in her F&GP report that the Internal Audit has not yet been carried out. Arrangements for it to take place during August are being made, prior to the AGAR submission deadline date of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020.
- **To agree and complete the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 Part 3 –** the AGAR Section 2 figures were agreed as correct. The Section 1 statements were run through and completed. The Clerk will arrange for the AGAR forms to be signed by the Parish Council Chairman, adhering to the current Covid-19 social distancing guidance.
- **Arborfield News –** to discuss and agree future issues – the Clerk reported that the April/May issue had been issued online and that there had not been a June/July issue. It was agreed that the August/September issue will be available in hard copy and posted on the website and that the decision to offer a free advert to all advertisers would be honoured for this issue.
- **Any F&GP matters considered urgent -** None

### **Parks**

- **Parks Report** – for information only
  - The playground equipment reopened on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July following a Covid-19 risk assessment being carried out which highlighted that an inspection of all equipment by PIC and the display of clear signage was required.
  - Bottle banks still being emptied fortnightly. Clothing banks – one seems have been emptied. I have chased up emptying of the other one but not heard back from them yet.
  - There is a continual stream of rubbish left by the bottle banks in the park including today – 4 full carrier bags of empty cans which can be recycled in the black boxes along with household waste. It was noted that the dumped fridge freezer on Swallowfield Road had not been cleared despite several residents reporting it to WBC. Clerk to chase up removal.
  - The need for CCTV and signs seems even more needed since lockdown has eased.
  - The bench for the family from Chamberlain Gardens will arrive w/c 3<sup>rd</sup> August and will be installed that week by Yardley Builders.
  - CheaperWaste need to be contacted to cancel the nappy bins as Freckles are not reopening.
  - Finchampstead FC commence their training on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July.
  - LAS Fitness held a trial session last Friday which was successful. They have booked Tuesday evenings moving forwards.
  - Exercise groups using the park. The park has been inundated with fitness instructors turning up to carry out their group classes. It is almost impossible to catch up with them all but some have been contacted via their adverts on Facebook. It transpires that if instructors are contacting WBC for permission they are being told it's fine and they can just turn up. I have had a conversation with Nick Austen, Interim Assistant Director Customer & Localities at WBC and he is going to trace the source and ensure they know to provide the correct information. Two notices have been displayed in the park asking that all exercise/yoga/bootcamp/football groups contact the Council prior to use. It would be helpful if this information could be circulated via Facebook too. Also to add a section to the website and include a downloadable booking form.  
It was also suggested that this information be placed in the Parish Councils notice boards.
  - Parks 5 Year Plan – it was reported that Walk 1 is complete, the map is draw and the discs are in place. It is ready to be launched.
  
- **To discuss and agree football pitch rates for Season 2020/21** – it was noted that it isn't known when the football season will commence post Covid-19.  
Proposed by Cllr Picken, seconded by Cllr Starkey all agreed to keep the rates for 2020/21 as the previous season.

- **Any Parks matters considered urgent** - None

### **Risk Management**

- **Risk Management Report** – for information only
  - Covid-19 recovery plan covered separately.
  - Nothing else to report

- **Any RM matters considered urgent** - None

**62/21 Accounts** – To agree and sign bank reconciliations for June 2020 and agree accounts and payments for July 2020 – bank statements, reconciliations, petty cash and the credit card statement for June and payments for July were circulated to all prior to the meeting and agreed at the meeting. Cllrs Clint and Stevens to authorise July payments on the bank account the following day. The Clerk will arrange for signing of the paperwork in line with social distancing regulations, as a significant amount has built up over the past couple of months.

Retrospective Payments for July 2020			
BACS	TDP Ltd	£504.29	Park Benches - Bench paid for by Amie Airey
Payments for July 2020			
BACS	SCS	£1,141.90	Ground Maintenance for May 2020
BACS	Alan Harland	£350.00	Annual Audit
BACS	Derek Finney	£720.00	Bat Surveys - SPF
BACS	SSE	£182.70	Street light maintenance (Annual)
BACS	Mr M Bodington	£737.64	Handyman
BACS	Staff Wages	£2,561.75	Staff wages - includes PAYE & Pension
DD	Opus (Electric)	£0.00	Credit to next bill
DD	British Gas Lite	£12.50	Pavilion utilities
DD	BT	£126.21	Office running expense
DD	Lloyds Bank	£461.72	Credit Card
DD	Cheaper Waste	£132.34	Pavilion/Park maintenance
DD	CF Corporate	£70.04	Printer
DD	SSE	£128.12	Street light usage

### 63/21 Correspondence –

Date received	Who from	Content	Minuted date	Minute item
02/07/2020	SSE	Invoice	21/07/2020	Accounts
06/07/2020	Unity Trust	Bank Statement	21/07/2020	Accounts
06/07/2020	Alan Harland	Letter & Invoice	21/07/2020	F&GP/Accounts
07/07/2020	Unity Trust	Bank Statement	21/07/2020	Accounts
07/07/2020	HSBC	Bank Statement	21/07/2020	Accounts

### 64/21 Re adoption of Council Documents:

- Parks Committee Terms of Reference – readopted without change
  - Planning Committee Terms of Reference - readopted with inclusion of the Neighbourhood Plan
  - F&GP Committee Terms of Reference - readopted with change to reflect responsibility for the 5 year Plan being moved to the responsibility of the Executive Committee
  - Electronic Communication - readopted with additional wording regarding emails and inclusion of What's App
  - Social Media - agreed not to have a policy. Include Facebook details into the Publication & Editorial Policy
  - Document retention & Disposal – readopted without change
  - Grant & Donations Policy – readopted with the inclusion of wording relating to Covid-19 related grants
  - Email Policy – agreed to not have a policy. Include wording into the Electronic Communication policy (see above)
  - Lone Working Policy – adopted
  - Publication & Editorial Policy – readopted with the inclusion of Facebook information
- Proposed by Executive Committee:
- H&S Policy – to be reviewed at the September meeting
  - Risk Management Policy – to be reviewed at the September meeting
  - Risk Assessment- General, Financial, Staffing – all three risk assessments were readopted
  - Executive Committee Terms of Reference – to be reviewed at the September meeting

- Disciplinary Policy – the Parish Councils policy was compared to the new Model documents from NALC. It was agreed to readopt the Councils policy without change as it is more comprehensive than the NALC document
- Grievance Policy – the Parish Councils policy was compared to the new Model documents from NALC. It was agreed to readopt the Councils policy without change as it is more comprehensive than the NALC document

All the above were proposed by Cllr Picken, seconded by Cllr McIntosh, all agreed.

**65/21 Parish Plan** - update following collation of post it notes – to be brought to the September meeting

**66/20 Pavilion extension plans & Freckles Pre-school** – discuss and agree submission of planning application and future use – it was noted that the future remains uncertain due to Covid-19. It was proposed by Cllr Murphy, seconded by Cllr McIntosh that the current planning drawings be submitted without change. It will be a couple of months before the application is determined by which time the Covid-19 situation may be clearer.

It was reported that Freckles had cleared their equipment from the pavilion the previous week without prior notification to the Council however the keys have not been returned. It is noted that there is some repainting and cleaning required in the pavilion in order that it be returned to the state that Freckles took the building on. They are required, as per the lease, to give a 6 month break notice which has not been forthcoming. Although it was realised that they were put in a difficult position regarding Covid-19 the lease remains in place and the Council should endeavour to secure parishioners funds. The offer to meet has been extended to Freckles but they have not responded. A further letter to be sent to them to remind them of the obligations of the lease and to offer again to meet to discuss an exit plan and provide a response by date for this to happen.

**67/21 Action List** – the action list was run through and updated

- Cllrs Starkey & Kaiser to provide information for the website
- Clerk to resend Declaration of Office form to Cllrs Kaiser & Strong

**68/21 Any items for consideration to include items for the next meeting agenda** – information only

- Parish Plan update
- Pavilion update
- Freckles update
- Arborfield Village Improvement Scheme update
- Outstanding documents for readoption

**69/21 Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.20pm

## **Appendix A**

### **Borough Councillor report**

Very little to report this month. The Borough Council is slowly working back to its idea of normality but it has a long way to go. The Borough Council has approved a plan to ban all public/Member participation at planning meetings which I disagree with. As a result of this decision I have informed the Planning Committee Chairman that I would not attend any planning meetings until the public participation ban is lifted.

As a member of the Planning Committee I have to be cautious on my comments as I need to remain free to comment at planning meetings without any bias. I would be very interested in the outcome of the Parish Councils observations on Bound Oak was I intend to meet with the local residents to get their feedback also.

The Arborfield Village Improvement Plans are impressive and anything I can do to help I will be happy to do so.

I have been involved in several issues within the Parish on behalf of residents and I would say that have all been resolved satisfactorily with the exception of burning again in the vicinity of Poperinghe way. I am awaiting Council Officers responses on options etc.

If I can be of any help to the Parish Council or any residents please get in touch. Regards

Cllr Gary Cowan.