



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, Starkey, Murphy, Stevens, McIntosh, the Clerk.

**Also Present:** Borough Councillor Gary Cowan, Richard Platt - resident

**Not Present:** Cllr Kaiser, Hughes, Strong, Clint.

Cllrs Clint and Strong had tried to attend the meeting but were unable to connect via Zoom so informed the Council to continue without them.

The Clerk was the Zoom host of the meeting.

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Picken the Parish Council Chairman.

**96/21 To receive and accept any apologies for absence** – Cllrs Hughes, Strong, Clint. TVPolice

**97/21 To receive any declarations of interest on items on the Agenda** – none

**98/21 Minutes of Council Meetings** – to approve the minutes of the meetings held on:

- Executive Committee Meeting – Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020 – the minutes were read and approved. Cllr Picken will sign at a later date
- Full Council Meeting – Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020 – the minutes were read and approved. Cllr Picken will sign at a later date
- Planning Committee Meeting – Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2020 – the minutes were read and approved. Cllr Murphy will sign at a later date
- Full Council Meeting – Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020 – the minutes were read and approved. Cllr Picken will sign at a later date
- Extra Ordinary Meeting – Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020 – the minutes were read and approved. Cllr Picken will sign at a later date
- Extra Ordinary Meeting – Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 – the minutes were read and approved. Cllr Clint will sign at a later date

**99/21 Public Participation** (allotted time - 15 minutes) – resident Richard Platt attended to highlight concerns regarding Swallowfield Road now that the new junction with the relief road has opened. Following discussion it was agreed that Cllr Cowan and the Clerk would request that WBC attend a site visit to see the issues for themselves. Richard thanked Cllr Cowan and the Council for their time and will wait to hear.

**Richard Platt left the meeting**

**100/21 Clerks Report** –for information only –

- Visits to the office continue more frequently now but the office remains closed to the public. The remainder of the time I continue to work from home. With the VH kitchen being closed I have been bringing milk into the office each time but a small desk top fridge would be useful to have. Can I please purchase one? Argos has a 4 litre one for £40.
- Green food waste bags remain in high demand.
- The boulder to mark the Royal Observer Corps Post adjacent to the new relief road was engraved incorrectly so it has been redone. It is due to be erected in the next few weeks. A small unveiling has been requested at some point but with current Covid restrictions it is not known when this will be. Does anyone have any ideas as to the unveiling?
- Items reported to the Police:
  - Burning of the play equipment in the Bramshill Pub garden
  - A car parked up for months in Melrose Gardens
  - A back gate of an elderly couple in Melrose Gardens being forcibly tried mid-afternoon
  - A man entering Arborfield Park and disappearing in the BT exchange corner
  - Use of bb guns and catapults
- Community Watch – an initial meeting was held with Cratus, the Neighbourhood Watch coordinator, the MOD and Barkham Parish Council in August. A second meeting is scheduled for this coming Friday with a couple of residents who are keen to be involved.
- Arborfield News – a hard copy was delivered early September. All deliverers were asked to contact the office if they weren't happy to deliver. Only one came back to say they have moved up north and are now selling their house. We need a deliverer for Valon Road. Speaking to a few people a hard copy was very welcomed. The October/November issue will be put together in the next week or so and all advertisers have been offered the opportunity to write an article.
- A reminder to all – if a Councillor produces correspondence or speaks as a resident the Council email address must not be used and there should be no reference to being a Parish Councillor. To do so is risking acting *ultra vires* and could bring the Council into disrepute. Please do make sure there are no references in correspondence or verbally if it hasn't been agreed by Council that you act as its representative. All Councillors collectively form the Council, which is a *Corporate Body* and all members must act as such.

#### **101/21 Reports from external bodies:**

- Borough Council - Cllr Cowan highlighted the following:
  - Burning and fires in Highfield
  - Some recent planning applications have been sensitive, but they haven't come to the WBC Planning Committee as yet
  - The Coombes appeal for a cabin has been dismissed.
  - Some personal issues for residents are being dealt with
- Police – apologies were sent. Several issues have been highlighted to the neighbourhood officer

**102/21 COVID-19** – review Covid document, in particular regarding football and reopening the Parish Office. The Clerk reported that the pavilion Covid-19 risk assessment had been done and shared with the football clubs. They in turn had completed their own assessments and supplied copies to the Council. Football matches commenced on 6<sup>th</sup> September and so far the arrangements had worked well. The new NHS Track & Trace QR code will be used at the pavilion when it comes into effect on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

The office will remain closed to the public at the present time. The Clerk is working mainly in the office and now that the Village Hall has reopened to some groups the arrangements put in place were working well.

#### **103/21 Planning**

- **Planning Report** – for information only –

- **Planning applications decisions:**

**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 – approved

**193339 – Nirvana Spa, Mole Road** – full application for the proposed erection of a two storey detached building to provide 70 no. bedroom hotel accommodation ancillary to spa (use Class C1) incorporating replacement gym, ancillary facilities and outside swimming pool. With associated car parking and soft landscaping, following demolition of existing ‘Pulse 8’ gym building – approved

**201610 – The Firs, Carters Hill** – Full application for change of use from existing ancillary outbuilding to independent dwelling – approved

**White Heart Grove, The Coombes** – unauthorised construction of a timber building and its use as a dwelling - appeal dismissed and the enforcement notice is upheld. Partial costs awarded to WBC

This application was submitted after the agenda was published. It is to be informally discussed in any planning matters considered urgent

**202303 – Land at Baird Road** – Outline application with appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for the proposed erection of a two storey building providing 10 1,2,3 bedroom apartments with consideration of means of access to be determined

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

**201947 – 51 Melrose Gardens** – Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension including the insertion of 3no. roof lights, following demolition of existing conservatory – no objections

For information only:

**201650 – 124 Valon Road** – Application for works to protected tree TPO1426/2012 – fell scots pine – for information only

- **Update on the Arborfield Village Improvement Scheme –**

Cllr Murphy recapped as follows:

- This was a WBC consultation taken with advice from their contractor WSP, not a Parish Council or Steering Group consultation.
- The general consensus of residents spoken to seemed to be in favour of the scheme although it was noted that several organisations and individuals objected. Barkham Parish Council circulated a leaflet specifically targeted at questioning some of the scheme. This act was probably outside their remit of obligations as a Parish Council. The leaflet angered people who would benefit from the model filter in School Road.
- An in principle scheme is required for the Arborfield Cross Relief Road to open and the scheme is to be completed within 2 years of the opening, inside a budget of £800,000.

- The current phase was all about taking the original consultation/workshop response preferences to be drawn up into a scheme that was put forward for the recent consultation.
- There has been an awareness of the scheme throughout the process.
- The scheme will be required to pass a 2<sup>nd</sup> test of going through the safety audit report which it must pass.
- Sign off of the scheme must be achieved to release Condition 6 of the ACRR planning application prior to opening the road and commit to a more detailed design in accordance with the in principle plan to deliver the scheme within the next 2 years.

Cllr Stevens expressed the following comments to the report:

- Emailed Parish Council stating he had been left out of the leaflet drop/consultation area. A response had been sent by Cllr Picken.
- He wished to make clear he was never unaware of the consultation however he is very disappointed to find out that he and his neighbours had been left out of the consultation area. He had to ask for a leaflet and obtain them for his neighbours.
- Traffic will not be limited to just the village centre.
- Village Centre is not the exclusive preserve of the people who happen to live there.
- Remains very annoyed that he has been excluded from discussions.
- Has a duty as a concerned member of the community to raise this with the Parish Council, Wokingham Borough Council and the Steering Group which he has done.
- Improvements agreed are minor, especially compared to the vision shared at the workshop.
- A missed opportunity to put the heart and soul back into Arborfield and reclaim land in front of the war memorial would have meant somewhere to commemorate important and significant community events.
- An epic failure of commitment and imagination to say it couldn't have been afforded, it should have been fought for.
- Unfortunate that he wasn't included in discussions so can't comment on the exact costs.
- Made it very clear he was not being disingenuous
- Genuinely shocked that Newlands were left out of the consultation area.
- Didn't find out what the consultation area was until the last day.
- Felt if any of the other members of the Council and their neighbours had been left out of a consultation they wouldn't be just sitting there taking it.
- A failed opportunity to engage with all of the community
  
- Response from Cllr Murphy:
- Concerns understood
- Roundabout changes cost between £2.1 and £3.2million. Agreed this was important however it as not something that could be catered for within the £800,000 budget to meet the Condition 6 requirement.
- It has been made clear that Langley Common Road and roundabout are an issue and would support campaign for a separate budget to deal with them.
- The original consultation highlighted the following main concerns of residents:
- Restriction to traffic moving through the village and roads to the village
- HGV restrictions
- The Steering Group set out to support exactly the issues raised.

- Slightly surprised the consultation area didn't include Newlands however the Steering Group members followed advice from WBC and WSP. It is them who set the consultation area and it's their consultation which required approval.
- **Update on Movie Park in Shinfield** – Cllr McIntosh reported that he had attended a meeting via Zoom with the developers. He noted that the meeting was interesting but much of the information was commercially sensitive. He reported that the plans looked good and would bring employment to the area and that it would be the same or bigger than the Arborfield Studios. An update will be provided when the contracts are solved and more information can be released.
- **Central and Eastern Berkshire Authorities – Joint Minerals and Waste Plan Regulation 19 Proposed Submission Consultation** – the Clerk to ask Paul Townsend for his input
- **Any Planning matters considered urgent** –
  - Finchampstead Parish Council has drafted a letter to Robert Jenrick MP to highlight concerns to the current planning system changes. They are suggesting that all the WBC Town and Parish Councils join forces by putting their name to the letter. This was agreed as it was recognised how well the parishes had worked together previously on the SPPG group, but it was also agreed that the Council would submit an individual response too.  
Cllr Cowan noted that up to 40% of planning permissions granted have not yet been built. He stated that the Parish Council should consider what may come its way in the next 2-5 years. He will forward a report written by the Isle of Wight MP, which is very informative. It was noted that the Parish Council is likely to need to set up a working group to include residents to deal with the planning changes.
  - Planning application 202303 – Land at Baird Road for 10 apartments, which is mentioned in the Clerks report. Cllr McIntosh will look at this application and circulate comments. It was noted that the pre-application advice provided by WBC was available in the application documents and would be helpful to the Councils response.

### **F&GP**

- **F&GP Report** – for information only –
  - The National Salary Award for 2020-2021 has now been published. The Clerks wages have been adjusted.
  - Alan Harland assisted with the form for reclaiming the VAT from September 2019
  - The internal audit was carried out on 20<sup>th</sup> August. The AGAR form was submitted to LLP Littlejohn on 31<sup>st</sup> August. It has been highlighted that a couple of the sections approved by Council in August should have been done after the audit had taken place. This is likely to be highlighted in the audit report.
  - The grant applied for from WBC was successful and was paid into the Unity Trust savings account on 24<sup>th</sup> August.
  - Opus Gas, who the Council is no longer with, have taken a payment of £74.41 on 4<sup>th</sup> August. I am in the process of reclaiming it back.
- **Freckles Pre-school** – update regarding closure - no update
- **Installation of new notice board on Reading Road** – agree quote to install – the Clerk was asked to ask Balfour Beatty if they could install the notice board using their street works licence. Clerk to ask WBC to refund the cost of the street works licence for the bus shelters as they have said there is no fee for the noticeboard due to the Parish being within the borough.
- **Any F&GP matters considered urgent** - none

## Parks

- **Parks Report** – for information only –
  - There is a continual stream of rubbish left by the bottle banks in the park including 4 full carrier bags of empty cans which can be recycled in the black boxes along with household waste. Perhaps look at offering other recycling facilities?
  - CheaperWaste have cancelled the nappy bins as of 21<sup>st</sup> September invoice. They have not yet arranged to collect the 770l yellow waste bin.
  - The bench which had been turned round has been turned back today by Yardley Builders.
  - The memorial bench has been installed today.
  - Finchampstead FC have thanked the Parish Council for allowing them use of the park to train on Saturday lunchtimes. They will make contact again next year.
  - Football matches commenced once a full risk assessment had been carried out in the pavilion. There are no shower or changing facilities but there is access to a toilet. Both Arborfield FC and W&E FC have provided a copy of their risk assessment prior to use.
  - Several groups continue to use the park but have not made contact with us. These will be chased up. The permit paperwork is complete, so the scheme needs to be launched.
  - The PAT testing for the pavilion and the office will be carried out prior to the expiry date on 20<sup>th</sup> November.
- **Pavilion Planning** – update – no update available
- **Dead trees at the Bull Roundabout** – agree quotes to remove the trees – it was agreed to accept the quote from Arborfield Tree Care to remove the two dead trees
- **Any Parks matters considered urgent** - none

## Risk Management

- **Risk Management Report** – for information only –
  - Covid-19 recovery plan covered separately.
  - Several complaints have been made about the amount of dog mess along Pudding Lane. 4 signs have been put up asking owners to pick up after their dog and informs them the next available dog waste bin is just over the bridge in Arborfield Park. The signs have remained in place but it is unsure whether they have been effective yet.
- **Any RM matters considered urgent** – dog bin in Betty Grove Lane – there have been no further comments regarding the bin being replaced by a litter bin further down the lane. WBC have taken over the responsibility of emptying it which will be done weekly.

**104/21 Parish Plan** – to agree way forward to get started – Cllr Picken reported that he had made a start and would report to Council at the October meeting.

**105/21 To agree to readopt the following documents:**

- **H&S Policy** – Cllr Picken – proposed by Cllr Picken, seconded by Cllr Starkey all agreed to readopt with a change to the Lone Working section to reflect that the Council now has a Lone Working policy
- **Risk Management** – Cllr Picken – Clerk to resend this document to Cllr Picken for review and readoption at the October meeting
- **Executive Committee ToRs** – Clerk – proposed by Cllr Picken, seconded by Cllr Murphy all agreed to readopt with the additional sections regarding major projects and the 5 year plan.

**106/21 Remembrance Sunday arrangements** – update – It was noted that with the current Covid-19 restrictions the Parish Council is not able to organise an official event. The Clerk has been in contact with Trevor Bowman and several suggestions had been discussed including the Military Wives Choir videoing the songs, socially distanced beforehand, that they would have sung at the service, a staggered wreath laying timetable and displaying the poppies. It was agreed that the village should be decorated with the poppies, a press statement is to be released making it clear that an event can't be organised. Cllr Picken will lay the wreath on behalf of the Parish Council and it will be discussed nearer the time, depending on Covid-19 restrictions as to whether other Councillors are able to join him.

**107/21 Christmas Carols and thank you afternoon tea** – to discuss and agree alternatives due to Covid-19 restrictions – the Christmas Carols will not go ahead. A thank you reception will hopefully be held as an outdoor event in the park during the summer of 2021. A card to be sent to all who would have been invited thanking them for their help and informing them of the changes.

**108/20 Accounts** – To agree and sign bank reconciliations for August 2020 and agree accounts and payments for September 2020 – bank statements, reconciliations, petty cash and the credit card statement for August and payments for September were circulated to all prior to the meeting and agreed at the meeting. Cllrs Murphy and Stevens to authorise September 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.

Payments for September 2020			
BACS	SCS	£1,141.90	Ground Maintenance for August 2020
BACS	Viking	£94.71	Office supplies/Pavilion supplies
BACS	RES	£227.04	Pavilion safety checks
BACS	PIC	£114.00	Playground maintenance
BACS	Claire Connell	£425.00	Audit
BACS	Netwise	£300.00	Website/Office running expenses
BACS	Mr M Bodington	£581.40	Handyman
BACS	Staff Wages	£2,395.99	Staff wages - includes PAYE & Pension
DD	Opus (Electric)	£0.92	Pavilion utilities
DD	British Gas Lite	£9.92	Pavilion utilities
DD	BT	£104.40	Office running expense
DD	Lloyds Bank	£30.44	Credit Card
DD	Cheaper Waste	£4.46	Pavilion/Park maintenance
DD	CF Corporate	£70.04	Printer

**109/21 Correspondence** –

Date received	Who from	Content	Minuted date	Minute item
05/08/2020	Unity Trust	Bank Statement	22/09/2020	Accounts
11/08/2020	Lloyds	Card Statement	22/09/2020	Accounts
11/08/2020	HSBC	Bank Statement	22/09/2020	Accounts
20/08/2020	HSBC	Bond letters	22/09/2020	F&GP
25/08/2020	HMRC	Tax code for Jackie	22/09/2020	F&GP
25/08/2020	W&E Youth FC	Football contract	22/09/2020	Parks
07/09/2020	Lloyds	Card Statement	22/09/2020	Accounts
07/09/2020	HSBC	Bond letters	22/09/2020	F&GP
07/09/2020	HSBC	Bank Statement	22/09/2020	Accounts
08/09/2020	Unity Trust	Bank Statement	22/09/2020	Accounts
09/09/2020	Unity Trust	Bank Statement	22/09/2020	Accounts

**110/20 Update action list** – the action list was run through and updated

**111/21 Any items for consideration to include items for the next meeting agenda** – information only

- Remembrance Sunday
- Pavilion planning
- Community Events
- Risk Management document
- Parish Plan
- Green project ideas to the Clerk by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September

**112/21 Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.14pm