



Minutes Tuesday 21st February 2023

Present: Cllrs Clint, Murphy, Starkey, Hughes, Strong and Stevens, also the Responsible Financial Officer and the Clerk.

Absent: Cllr Kaiser

Other: One resident was present in the capacity to be co-opted; one resident attended to raise an issue.

123/23 To receive and accept any apologies for absence – apology received from Cllr Kaiser

124/23 To receive any declarations of interest on items on the agenda – As Chair of Arborfield Village Hall Committee, Cllr Stevens declared 133/23 12) Parish Office – options to relocate as an item of interest.

125/23 Minutes of Council Meeting – The Tuesday the 17th of January 2023 minutes, were approved - proposed by Cllr Murphy, seconded by Cllr Stevens, all in favour.

126/23 Public Participation (allotted time - 15 minutes) **Citizens Advice Wokingham, Chief Executive to attend. Discussion on how we can help residents with the cost-of-living crisis.**

The individual did not attend the meeting.

One resident raised concerns with the Arborfield Village Improvement Scheme.

127/23 Co-option of Councillor – Resident outlined his reasons for wanting to become a Parish Councillor and was subsequently co-opted on to the Parish Council. Proposed by Cllr Clint, Seconded by Cllr Murphy, all in favour.

128/23 Clerk's Report – for information only

During February there have been traveller encampments at Showcase Cinema, Winnersh and Sindlesham Mill, both have now left the sites.

129/23 (a) Reports from external bodies:

1) Borough Council – Report submitted covering Arborfield Village Improvement scheme, the Traffic Survey on Church Lane and Reading FC training ground.

2) Police – Crime report for Arborfield and Barkham submitted for 16.12.22 – 16.02.23.

130/23 (b) Reports from meetings attended by Councillors, if any.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Meeting – 09-01-23 Attended by the Clerk

This included members from WBC ASB Team and the Barkham Parish Clerk. Unfortunately, no members of the Police were present. There has been an increase in the amount of ASB, including carrying knives, bus windows being smashed, eggs being stolen from the Co-op and used to egg houses. It was noted many acts of ASB get reported on social media and not to the Police. Clerk to ask Arborfield Community FaceBook group Admin if they would be willing to make it a rule that people must first report incidences to the police before mentioning it on social media. ASB team to obtain contact for Co-op Area Manager to approach about the problems of littering in the area and, potentially having a security guard to deal with the shoplifting. Clerks advised to advertise how to report ASB on social media, notice boards and Arborfield News.

Borough Parish Liaison Forum – 06.02.2023 Attended by Cllr Clint.

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) are working on their future strategy and will be inviting Parish Clerks and councillor representatives to join workshops to explore how WBC and the parishes can work better together. WBC climate emergency team can advise about how to become more energy efficient.-

Village Hall Committee Meeting – 02.02.2023 Attended by Cllr Stevens.

The Village Hall will be increasing its hire charge, The Village Show has been rescheduled later this year for 9th September. Other events may include a quiz night. Cllr Stevens explained that the Arborfield Village Hall Committee have served notice on the Parish Council to enable them to let the whole space to Swallowfield Medical Practice. From the 1st April the Village Hall will be renting out the full space available to Swallowfield Medical Practice.

131/23 Council Priorities

- 1) Anti-social behaviour (ASB)** – Already covered, see 130/23 (b)
- 2) Planning** – Please refer to 132/23.
- 3) Council Property**
 - a) Pavilion refurbishment and obtaining net zero carbon footprint – see 131/23 (5)
- 4) Community and Communication**
 - a) Easter egg hunt - The Council decided it would hold an event. – Cllr Starkey to organise.
 - b) How does Arborfield mark the King’s coronation? – The council decided it would hold an event, Cllr Stevens to organise.
- 5) Climate Emergency**

Cllr Stevens circulated a document in advance detailing steps the parish council could take to work towards a net zero carbon footprint. Ideas included more recycling facilities, better energy saving of the pavilion such as; solar panels, triple glazed windows and, loft and cavity wall insulation, increasing biodiversity, promoting walking and cycling. This was discussed.

Cllr Stevens and Cllr Clint to meet to discuss implementing the ideas to come to fruition.

- 6) **Cost of Living Crisis** – Planned to be covered by Citizens Advice Wokingham, item 126/23. Individual did not attend.

132/23 Planning

1) Planning Report – for information only

223686

NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

Address: The Copse, Eversley Road, Arborfield, RG2 9PN

Prior approval submission for the proposed change of use of an existing barn to 5 no. smaller dwellings, with associated works.

Decision was to refuse the proposal.

230037

Existing Lawful Certificate Notification – For information only

Address: Cloud Stables, Church Lane, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9JA

Proposal: Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for the use of the site as a livery yard.

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/W/22/3300302

Bartletts Farmhouse, Swallowfield Road, Arborfield, Berkshire RG2 9JX

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
- The application Ref 212926, dated 20 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 16 March 2022.
- The development proposed is new access, gate and driveway at Bartletts Farmhouse, Swallowfield Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9JX.

Decision

1. This appeal is dismissed.

2) To discuss planning applications received by the date of the meeting.

230110 - Full Planning Approval Consultation

Address: Langley Pond Farm Livery Stables, School Road, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4TN

Proposal: Full application for the proposed conversion of the existing equestrian barn, raising of the roof to create first floor accommodation and erection of a two-storey front extension with porch canopy roof and 2 no. dormers to form 1 no. four bedroom dwelling with associated access, bin storage and parking, plus conversion and extension of existing stables to form a garage and storage, demolition of outbuildings and the temporary replacement of an existing trailer home.

Deadline: 21/02/2023.

Agreed Response: Proposed by Cllr Stevens, Seconded by Cllr Starkey.

A&N PC object to this proposed development. We note that a previous application (171597) on this site in 2017 was refused on the grounds of development in the countryside in contravention of the core strategy and

being unsustainable by virtue of necessary reliance on car usage. This proposal has the same characteristics of development in the countryside and outside the settlement boundaries as the earlier application and, on these grounds, we believe should also be refused.

230252 - Full Planning Approval Consultation

Address: Old Grain Store, Swallowfield Road, Arborfield, RG2 9LA

Proposal: Full application for the proposed conversion of existing agricultural barn to a residential dwelling including solar panels and associated access, parking and landscaping, following partial demolition of existing barn. Proposed erection of a detached, single storey garage with 2no. air source heat pumps and detached, single storey annex following demolition of 5 no. existing silos.

Deadline: 28/02/2023.

Agreed Response: We support the submission made by Swallowfield Parish Council in respect of the is this application.

223669 - Full Planning Approval Consultation

Address: Plot 10 Highfield Park, Eversley Road, Arborfield

Proposal: Full application for the proposed addition of 5 no. mobile home pitches and re-arrangement of existing pitches on plot 10 for gypsy and traveller residential use.

Deadline: 03/03/2023.

CLlr Clint to draft a response.

230152 - Approval of Reserved Matters Consultation

Address: Arborfield Garrison, & Adjoining Land, Arborfield, Reading, RG2 9NW - Barkham Parish

Proposal: Application for the approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to outline planning consent O/2014/2280 (dated 02/04/2015). The Reserved Matters comprise details of 135 dwellings within Parcel O2 (including both market and affordable housing) with access from Biggs Lane, associated internal access roads, parking, landscaping, open space, footpaths and drainage. Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be considered.

Deadline: 06/03/2023.

CLlr Clint to draft a response.

3) Any Planning matters considered urgent – none.

133/23 F&GP

1) F&GP report

- The ‘Thank You Afternoon Tea’ on 21st January was very successful, over fifty people attended. Received very positive feedback.
- Ditch clearance by SCS between Sindlesham Road and Reading Road is complete.
- Streetlights – Clerk contacted WBC directly, all problems with the streetlights on Sheerlands Road and Baird Road are being delt with – Clerk continues to follow up with WBC, but no fixed date for repair.
- Whitewell Close streetlight – The light is now replaced and working fully but using a temporary lantern.
- Littering – Two residents spent 4 hrs picking litter – collected 6 bags from Rayner Drive, Baird Road and surrounding roads; Handyman cleared rubbish from grass/tree area along Sheerlands Road; also, a

complaint about litter on Valon Road which was raised with WBC and will be raised with the Co-op area manager in a forthcoming meeting.

- 2) **Accounts** - To agree and sign payments for February – a hard copy of invoices was signed at the meeting. Cllrs Murphy and Stevens to authorise online payments.

The RFO advised that the end of January bank reconciliations had been completed with one small outstanding item which cleared in early February. Cllr Murphy signed the reconciliation.

A summary of the Income and Expenditure for January 2023 and the first ten months of the financial year was considered, together with a forecast for the full year and a comparison to the 2022-23 budget. The RFO reported that forecast income was higher than budget and Expenditure was projected to be lower than budget for the year.

**Arborfield & Newland Parish Council
February 2023**

Payee	Amount	Description
TeaPotty party	222.00	China hire charge for Parish Thank You tea
British Gas	80.48	Pavilion Gas 8-12-22 to 11-1-23
SSE	117.15	Street lighting 1-12-22 to 3-01-23
Nixon Hire	245.13	Charge for cancellation of solar street light
Broxap	27,205.20	Replacement Gazebo - Arborfield Park
Richard Ainscough	300.00	Pavilion electrical work re CCTV installation
OPUS Energy	48.56	Electricity 20/12/22 to 19/1/23
BT	63.40	Office telephone January 2023
Gigaclear	36.00	Pavilion internet Jan 2023
Waste Managed	120.00	Park Bin Emptying 21/2 to 20/3/23
EE	19.20	Parish mobile phone - February
SCS	1,197.85	Grounds Maintenance - January
SSE	105.39	Street lighting 4/1/23 to 2/2/23
Tivoli	119.22	Dog bin emptying December 2022
Viking Direct	62.11	Stationery
TSO Host	9.54	Arborfield.org.uk domain renewal 15/3/23 to 14/3/24
Play Inspection Company	150.00	Annual outdoor inspection
Parish Noticeboard company	1,296.00	Final payment on three new noticeboards
British Gas	90.38	Pavilion Gas 11-1-23 to 11-2-23
HSBC	5.00	Bank account charges
Subtotal - Bills & Invoices	31,492.61	
Subtotal Wages	3,952.54	
Total	35,445.15	

3) Grant Applications Received and Grant Allocation.

The RFO had previously circulated a summary of grant applications for 2023. The RFO reported 9 applications this year. The council discussed the applications and the allocation of the following grants were approved, **totalling £2000**. Proposed by Cllr Starkey, Seconded by Cllr Murphy; all in favour.

Organisation	Grant allocation
1st Arborfield Brownies	£150
Berkshire Vision	£100
1st Arborfield Scouts	£150
Keep Mobile Community Transport	£500
The Coombes School PTA	£250
Citizens Advice Wokingham	£500
Wokingham Job Support Centre	£150
Link visiting Scheme	£200

4) Proposal for IT support

The RFO circulated a proposal for increased IT support.

Following a discussion, the council approved the RFO’s proposals of:

- Having a support package with itQED which includes 12 hours of support per year. Proposed Cllr Murphy, Seconded Cllr Starkey; all in favour.
- Acquire three premium business licences plus a one-off cost for set up and file migration. This is a modernisation of council ways of working to allow electronic file management and document sharing between council members and officers. Proposed by Cllr Murphy, Seconded by Cllr Hughes; all in favour.

5) Arborfield News Update – including advertising and outsourcing as a paid role.

The RFO proposed the following which was approved by the whole Council.

At the October 2023 Parish Council meeting it was agreed that advertising rates could be increased by circa 10%, which would be the first increase in the rates since May 2017. The standard advertising rates become as follows for three issues of the Arborfield News.

	£(ex-VAT)
One page	£320
One-third	£106
One-sixth	£53

Going forward there will be an active campaign to increase the number of advertisers in the Arborfield News, so advertising revenue covers the cost of production. Initial focus on previous advertisers in the magazine and also companies that supply services to the Parish Council.

- 6) **Safety Audit of Arborfield Village Improvements** - this has now been received by the council. The audit took place during November and December 2022 in fine weather. The audit found that the scheme has been installed in compliance with safety requirements and identified only one issue on School Road as 'risk of pedestrian/vehicle collision'; the recommendation is to re-locate the 30mph speed limit sign so there is insufficient space for vehicles to pass round bollards.
- 7) **Ratification of ditch clearance** – The Quote of £148 plus VAT from SCS for the ditch clearance between Sindlesham Road and Reading Road was approved. Proposed by Cllr Clint, Seconded by Cllr Murphy, all in favour. This was carried out under urgent work exception, as per the Financial Regulations 11.1 (ii) and is a retrospective approval.
- 8) **Approve response for WBC Fire and Rescue survey.**
This was drafted by Cllr Strong and approved by the whole Council. Cllr Strong to submit answers.
- 9) **Approve response for WBC survey 'How could we improve journeys around Wokingham Borough?'** Clerk to obtain survey in PDF format.
- 10) **Decide a date for Annual Parish Meeting to be held between 1st March and 1st June.** Clerk to ascertain possible dates available at the Village Hall and prepare a list of invitees.
- 11) **Items to feedback to WBC's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.** – Clerk to email this to all Cllrs.
- 12) **Parish Office – options to relocate.** There are offices currently empty at the Royal British Legion; Clerk to receive feedback from RBL Manager in regard to the possibility of the Parish Office being located here and associated rental costs. The council also discussed the possibility of siting a modular freestanding secure office (with WC and kitchen) at the Park car park where the mobile library used to be. It was agreed that this option was worthy of further investigation.
- 13) **Any other F&GP matters considered urgent** – none.

134/23 Parks

Parks Report – for information only

- Football – There have been some weekend matches on February, however the most recent match has left a large quantity of mud all over the paving slabs outside the pavilion and up the path to the car park, mud on the pavilion floor, lumps of mud in the shower and both toilets, showers not turned off fully. Clerk to contact football teams to remind them of their contractual obligations on rental of the pavilion.
- Wooden posts replaced on slide unit on 8th February. All looks good.
- Play Inspection Company assessment – some moderate risks, Clerk to follow up with Parks Chair and Chair.

- RES completed the repairs to the emergency lights on 1st Feb. There was only one issue, where the light by the entrance had been impacted by a water leak. This will get fixed when the Pavilion works are undertaken.
- A survey has been booked for Pound Copse scheduled for 12th June.

1) Pound Copse (b) fencing requirements update.

WBC do not appear to have received the letter from the council agreeing to the upgrade of footpath 22 to a bridal way. Clerk to find letter and resubmit to WBC.

2) Update on nursery and actions we need to take to be ready for opening.

Refurbishment of pavilion in advance of nursery taking up their contract discussed in part 2.

3) Electronic Play Equipment – maintenance agreement – It is not possible to have an annual maintenance contract for a flat rate. The Council decided not to go ahead with the quote of £400 from Wicksteed which is purely to visit and assess the unit. A second visit to repair would be chargeable. The Council will explore alternative uses for this area of the park.

4) Defibrillator Grant – The Council unanimously approved the quote of £1501.20 from London Hearts to supply a defibrillator and external heated cabinet with keypad lock. Clerk to enquire timeframe quote is valid for in order to synchronise with upgrade/refurbishment to pavilion.

5) Any Parks matters considered urgent – none.

135/23 Risk Management

• **Risk Management Report.**

Checklists now overdue:

- Park,
- Carpark
- Pavilion
- Parish owned land
- Streetlights

• **Risk Assessments and Checklists**

Risk area	Risk Assessment (annually)	Who by?	Check List Frequency	Next check due
Playground	Vanessa Starkey	Vanessa Starkey	Weekly	22/02/2023
		Play Inspection Company – Every 6 months	6 Monthly	July 2023

Park	John Kaiser	John Kaiser	Quarterly	08/02/23
Pavilion	Elliot Strong	Elliot Strong	Monthly	22/11/22
Carpark	John Kaiser	John Kaiser	Quarterly	08/02/23
Parish Office & Store	Karen Hughes	Karen Hughes	6 monthly	13/09/23
Pound Copse	Andrew Clint	Andrew Clint	6 monthly	13/04/23
Old Churchyard	Paul Stevens	Paul Stevens	6 monthly	17/04/23
Parish Owned Land	Andrew Clint	Andrew Clint	6 monthly	
Street furniture	Karen Hughes	Karen Hughes	6 monthly	13/03/23
Streetlights	Vanessa Starkey	Vanessa Starkey	6 monthly when the clocks change	

- **Any RM matters considered urgent – none.**

136/23 Correspondence – none.

137/23 Action list – to run through and update the action list.
 Cllr Clint and Clerk to find a more efficient way to update this.

138/23 Any items for consideration to include items for the next meeting agenda – information only.

139/23 Date of next meeting – The next full council meeting will be a full Council meeting on Tuesday 21st March 2023.

There being no further business to discuss, Part I of the meeting ended at 21.15