



Minutes – Annual Meeting of the Parish Council Tuesday 16th May 2023

Present: Cllrs Clint, Starkey, Stevens, Strong, Fox and Kaiser; also, the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), and the Clerk.

Other: Paul Townsend – to advise the Council on traffic surveys. He attended the meeting for the following items; 174/23-178/23, and item 184/23 (3).

174/23 To receive and accept any apologies for absence – Apologies have been received from Cllr Murphy.

175/23 To receive any declarations of interest on items on the agenda - Cllr Murphy declared an interest in planning application 230807.

176/23 Election of Chair, Vice Chair and the Committee Chairs.

The Clerk outlined the process to appoint members of the council to the chair, vice chair and committee chairs and vices. As no other persons wished to stand for Chair, the current Chair remained in position. The following positions were appointed:

Chair Cllr: Clint

Vice Chair: Cllr Murphy

F&GP Chair: Cllr Murphy

Parks Chair: Cllr Starkey

Planning Chair: Cllr Fox

Vice Chair F&GP: Cllr Strong

Vice Chair Planning: Cllr Kaiser

Parks Vice Chair: Cllr Stevens

177/23 Signing of Declaration of Office – Cllr Clint signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form, witnessed by the Clerk who also signed the form.

178/23 Minutes of Council Meeting – The Tuesday 18th April 2023 minutes were approved by the Council. Proposed by Cllr Starkey, seconded by Cllr Kaiser, all in favour. Cllr Clint signed the minutes.

179/23 Public Participation (allotted time - 15 minutes)

Apart from Paul Townsend, no other members of the public were present.

180/23 Clerk's Report – for information only

The Clerk has:

- 1) Obtained approximately 18 Litres of various graffiti removal chemicals used for a variety of surfaces free from Wokingham Borough Council (WBC). The Handyman has been using them to remove the graffiti on the shelter in the Park.
- 2) Reported fly tipping – earth and stone on Greensward Lane.
- 3) After originally stating WBC were not participating in the ‘No mow in May’, the Clerk has now received confirmation they are. Clerk has asked WBC:
 - a) How this has been communicated to residents?
 - b) if football pitches can be cut before this weekend?
 - c) if the grass cutting at Arborfield Cross can be synchronised?
 - d) when the next planned grass cut is due?

181/23 Reports from external bodies:

- 1) Borough Councillor – a report was submitted which included: Ward boundary changes, Arborfield Village improvement scheme, grass cutting, fly tipping, residents’ issues and the SHARE scheme offering free food.
- 2) Police – The Clerk was unable to obtain a crime report for the meeting so will circulate the report to Cllrs when it has been received.

182/23 Reports from meetings attended by Councillors, if any.

Cllr Stevens attended:

Fields Neighbourhood Action Group – Cllr Stevens updated the council on: continued problems with Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB); Police are visiting Schools to give talks on knife crime and safeguarding; electric scooter usage is increasing; University community events – including sports and recreation consultation. An update to the local plan has been requested from WBC but there has been no response to this so far.

Village Hall meeting – Cllr Stevens summarised the meeting as: currently waiting to hear back from Swallowfield Medical Practice regarding how they will organise running a surgery from the Village Hall, and if they need the room which is currently the Parish Storeroom. The defibrillator at the Village Hall was purchased by the Parish Council but will remain in situ. The Village Hall show will be held on the 9th September, fire alarm testing to be carried out, waiting to hear when the pole-dancing academy will start running a class.

183/23 Council Priorities

1) Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

Clerk to meet with Chair to discuss what further action can be taken to tackle ASB. Potentially meet with ASB team from WBC and the Police to formulate a plan.

2) Planning – no further large scale developments to discuss. Response to Duck’s Nest Farm has been submitted; there was a period where comments were unable to be submitted for this application and as a result WBC extended the response deadline and more residents have submitted comments. The traffic data being collected by volunteers will be useful in submitting comments for future applications.

3) Council Property

a) Update on Coombes Woodland – discussed in Part II, refer to item 193/23.

4) Community and Communication.

- a) **Celebrating the King's coronation** -the picnic in the Park was cancelled due to the poor weather forecast.
- b) **Annual Parish Forum** – this is to be held on Tuesday 23rd May at the Village Hall. Cllr Starkey has organised a Duke of Edinburgh student to help set up and help at the event. Reports will be submitted to the Clerk by the Chair and the Chairs of the Committees to be compiled and printed ready for the Forum.
- c) **Feedback from Exec Cttee meeting on council ways of working and filling council vacancies.**
Cllr Clint summarised the feedback that generally full council meetings were long because of the number of decisions being made and not all members of the council felt they had the knowledge to engage in all decision-making processes while the sub-committees lacked power or authority.

One solution could be to give more delegated powers to committees. Alternatively, the council could use informal working groups where there is no requirement to be quorate and can also hold meetings online, but using working groups would mean all the decisions made would need to be ratified at full council meetings.

The RFO had confirmed with the internal auditor that the Council could work either way – have all ratification at full Council meetings or would be able delegate greater powers to committees as long as our policy documents state where decisions can be made and detail any spend limits.

Cllr Fox explained Wokingham Town Council have committees, working groups and strategy groups. The council discussed potentially the Parks and Planning committees, which already have defined budgets, could work in this way providing they spent within their specified budget.

Cllr Kaiser raised the issue of how the Council would ensure Committees were spending money sensibly. It was pointed out that the Clerk and RFO would ensure the Council is following processes correctly. The RFO would place the order, and in doing so would be checking the suitability of the spend. In addition to this, a further measure could be to have not only two Cllrs required to approve the spend online which is already necessary, but for the two Cllrs to be from different Committees to ensure other committees are scrutinising the spend. The rules regarding spending over a certain value and obtaining quotes for the tendering process will still apply as per the Financial Regulations.

Cllr Kaiser also highlighted the need to review the budget during the year to check the spend of the committees. The council already produces a budget forecast, so any spend by committees would be monitored against the budget.

Action on the Exec plus the Clerk and RFO to meet to agree figures for the committee budgets.

5) Climate Emergency

Prior to the meeting Cllr Clint and Stevens met to discuss ways in which the council could work to minimise its environmental impact. A document was circulated prior to the meeting suggesting how the council could do this. This included installation of solar powered benches to charge mobile phones and other small devices, electric vehicle charge points and solar panels both of which were suggested to be included as part of the Phase II Pavilion build.

Also increasing the biodiversity of the Park by establishing a wild flower meadow. The issue of dogs messing in the area was raised, this could be prevented by having a contained area, perhaps fenced off with 'no dogs allowed' signs, or alternatively have an area where dogs could mess. The Council is obtaining advice from WBC about planting. It was pointed out there are grants available for tree planting and buying solar panels. Other ideas included improving our hedges and planting more trees.

The following Cllrs agreed to be part of a Climate Emergency working group: Cllrs Clint, Stevens, Starkey, Fox and Strong.

6) Cost of Living Crisis

Clerk to continue to signpost people to places where they can get help.

184/23 Planning

1) Planning Report - for information only.

223435 NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

Address: Hogwood Farm, Sheerlands Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG40 4QY

Proposal: Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/2014/2179, as varied by application 181194. The Reserved Matters comprise details of 100no. dwellings, associated internal access roads, parking and landscaping. Details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be considered.

Decision: To approve the proposal.

230763 NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

Address: The Old Swan, Eversley Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9PQ

Proposal: Householder application for the erection of a single storey detached outbuilding to the side of the dwelling (Retrospective).

Decision: To approve the proposal.

230807 NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

Address: The Old Forge, Eversley Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9PG

Proposal: Full application for the proposed conversion of existing salon (internal to dwelling) to habitable accommodation, plus removal of hardstanding and associated landscaping.

Decision: To approve the proposal.

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

230872 Approval of Reserved Matters Consultation

Parish Barkham

Address: Arborfield Green District Centre, Arborfield Green, Arborfield, Berkshire

Proposal: Application for approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/2014/2280 (dated 02/04/2015). The Reserved Matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) comprise details of a mixed-use District Centre including 200 dwellings, commercial floorspace (Use Class E), a pre-school, public open space, pedestrianised high street, and a mixed-use community centre building including cafe, associated community facilities and day nursery. New vehicular,

pedestrian and cycle accesses to be provided with associated internal roads, parking, landscaping, drainage, substations, plant, bin and cycle storage.

Deadline: 09/05/2023 – able to respond until the end of May.

Agreed Response: Arborfield and Newland Parish Council welcome the submission of the planning application for the Arborfield Green Village Centre and note that the applicant has submitted this application significantly later than was required in the original approval of the outline plan for SDL. The Council notes the strength of feeling in the local community that the lack of facilities is affecting residents' quality of life and is leading to a significant increase in road traffic in the area as residents have to use private cars to access shops and other facilities. In this context we would like to see Crest Nicholson proceed with this development with all haste and WBC to impose a planning condition to ensure that the facilities envisaged in this application are built before the housing that is also part of this application. While we support the overall design and aims of the application and we welcome the re-use of the ex-army building as the community centre we would like to see the old stables brought into the landscaping and use plan in this parcel so that this important historical asset can be enjoyed by the local community.

Proposed by Cllr Stevens, Seconded by Cllr Starkey; all in favour.

230915 Full Planning Approval Consultation

Address: Reddam House School, Bearwood Road, Wokingham, RG41 5BY

Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of a new maintenance shed following the demolition of 2no. dilapidated maintenance stores.

Deadline: 11/05/2023

Agreed Response: Arborfield and Newland Parish Council have no objection to this application.

Proposed by Cllr Strong, Seconded by Cllr Kaiser; all in favour.

230916 Listed Building Consent Notification

Address: Reddam House School, Bearwood Road, Sindlesham, RG41 5BG

Proposal: Application for Listed Building Consent for the proposed erection of a new maintenance shed following the demolition of 2no. dilapidated maintenance stores.

Deadline: 16/05/2023

Agreed Response: Arborfield and Newland Parish Council have no objection to this application.

Proposed by Cllr Strong, Seconded by Cllr Kaiser; all in favour.

231006 Householder Consultation

Address: 14 Emblen Crescent, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9PA

Proposal: Household application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension with pitched roof with roof lights. New pitched roof to replace existing flat roof to retained side block. New windows proposed to front and side elevation of side block.

Deadline: 27/05/2023

Agreed Response: Arborfield and Newland Parish Council have no objection to this application.

Proposed by Cllr Strong, Seconded by Cllr Kaiser; all in favour.

3) Outcomes from Traffic Survey

Paul Townsend attended the meeting to report on progress with traffic surveys. These had been instigated at the request of the Chair and were being carried out by SpeedWatch volunteers and some Councillors. The purpose of the surveys is to provide the Council with information that will help

in formulating responses to the several major planning applications that are either in progress or expected.

Two types of survey are involved:

- a) surveys designed to establish current peak hour traffic flows on key roads in and around Arborfield, particularly those likely to be proposed as access points for new development; and other heavily-loaded parts of the local road network.
- b) surveys designed to establish the traffic generating characteristics of residential development. Surveys carried out at Penrose Park in 2013 and 2018 have been repeated. Surveys have also been carried out at Oak Drive, off Biggs Lane, which provides the sole traffic access to a significant amount of new residential development. Information on dwelling numbers has been requested from the developer Crest Nicholson, so that further residential trip rate comparisons can be established.

Paul Townsend reported there are a number of roads yet to be surveyed, which it is hoped will be completed by the third week in June. Final results will be reported at a future meeting.

4) Any Planning matters considered urgent – none.

185/23 F&GP

1) F&GP report – for information only – no items.

2) Sign off accounts and statutory returns for year ended March 2023 including report from Claire Connell

The final internal audit report from Claire Connell had been circulated to councillors in advance of the meeting. The report was NOTED, with the control objectives being found to have been achieved throughout the financial year, with the exception of controls relating to the exercise of public rights and the publication of the external audit report for the 2021-22 AGAR.

The Annual Governance Statement for 2022-23 was APPROVED. Proposed by Cllr Clint, seconded by Cllr Kaiser. The form was duly signed by the Chair and Clerk.

The Annual Accounting Statements for 2022-23, having been signed by the RFO ahead of the meeting, was APPROVED. Proposed by Cllr Clint, seconded by Cllr Kaiser. The form was duly signed by the Chair.

The RFO outlined that the 2022-23 AGAR would now be submitted to the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn and published on the Parish website. The notice relating to the Exercise of Public Rights from Monday 5 June to Friday 14 July, will also be published by the end of the month.

3) Accounts - To agree and sign payments for May – A hard copy of invoices was signed at the meeting. Cllrs Clint and Stevens to authorise online payments.

In future the monthly payments list will be circulated in advance of the meeting to all Cllrs.

**Arborfield & Newland Parish Council
May 2023 Payments**

Type	Payee	Amount	Description
BACS	Morgan Security	152.43	Replacement lock and key for Park gate
BACS	A1 Loo Hire	240.00	Hire of toilets for proposed Coronation event
DD	BT	57.79	Office telephone May 2023
DD	OPUS Energy	41.86	Electricity 20/3 to 18/4/23
DD	Waste Managed	134.40	Park Bin Emptying 21/5 to 20/6/23
DD	EE	21.96	Parish mobile phone - May 2023
DD	Gigaclear	36.00	Pavilion internet - May 2023
BACS	SCS	1,269.72	Grounds Maintenance - April
DD	SSE	128.91	Street lighting 4/4 to 2/5/23
DD	British Gas	237.30	Pavilion Gas 11/4 to 15/5/23
BACS	Tivoli	119.22	Dog bin emptying April 2023
BACS	Security Control Systems	102.00	Security camera reinstallation for Pavilion works
BACS	itQED	780.00	SharePoint migration
BACS	itQED	102.60	IT support - May 2023
BACS	Viking Direct	41.65	Office stationery
BACS	Enerveo	2,811.12	Streetlight repair Whitewell Close
BACS	RES Fire	201.60	Pavilion six monthly fire alarm and emergency lighting test
BACS	Claire Connell	212.50	Internal Audit services
BACS	Geldards	1,134.00	Legal advice re proposed purchase of Coombes Woodland
BACS	D J Mace	1,228.85	Electrical work re Pavilion refurbishment
BACS	D J Mace	431.90	Repairs to Pavilion PIR and security lights
BACS	Yardley Builders - final payment	10,352.12	Pavilion building works

BACS	Cut Price Carpets	8,154.00	Pavilion flooring
BACS	Gem Tec	456.00	Reinstallation of Pavilion alarm
DD	Lloyds credit card	15.00	Chocolate for Easter egg hunt (£12)
			Card fee (£3)
DD	HSBC	5.40	Bank account charges
BACS	Barry Thorne	36.99	Ink cartridges for History Society
BACS	BALC/NALC	671.25	Annual subscription fees
	Subtotal - Bills & Invoices	29,176.57	
	Subtotal Wages	3,189.36	
	Total	32,365.93	

4) Pavilion Phase II Project Update

Overall, the Pavilion phase I has been delivered within the specified budget. Special thanks were given to Cllr Murphy and the RFO for the development and delivery of this Project.

Further to approval provided at the April full Council meeting, the Architect has been instructed to submit drawings and obtain planning permission for the phase II scheme agreed.

5) CIL Co-funding proposal by WBC

WBC have requested £24,000 of CIL money to be spent on local bus services as part of a co-funded project with WBC. RFO to obtain further information from WBC about this proposed project.

6) Nursery Opening Readiness Actions

In advance, Clerk had circulated a table of actions requiring completion before the nursery can operate.

The Clerk and RFO were confident these actions were on track to be completed by 22nd May – as requested by Cllr Murphy.

Action	Responsibility	Status	Next steps
Trim internal store and new office doors.	Yardley Builders	Complete	N/A
Keys cut for store door	Handyman	Not started	N/A
Change office door lock and get keys cut.	Handyman	In progress	N/A
Agree car park gate opening time	Council	Council to	N/A

of 7.30 a.m. for weekdays, term time only.		agree	
Caretaker asked to do earlier gate opening time.	Clerk	Not started	N/A
Display Fire extinguisher, escape route signage	RFO	In progress	N/A
Obtain brackets for fire extinguishers.	RFO	In progress	Fit to wall
Extinguisher brackets fitted to wall	Handyman	Not started	N/A
Install electrical sockets to new office	RFO to organise electrician	In progress	N/A
Clearance and tidy storeroom	Clerk/Handyman/RFO	In progress – items to clear identified	Clerk to book clearance
Monthly invoicing	RFO	In progress	Consult with lessee
Documents to be received from Nursery lessee	Nursery Lessee	In progress	N/A
Set up Pavilion Management WhatsApp group	Clerk	Complete	N/A

7) Proposed Nursery signage and banner

In advance, Clerk had circulated the proposed Nursery signage and banner designs with proposed locations, as shown below.



Proposed locations:

- 1) the banner goes at the back of the building.
- 2) the entrance sign shares the pole with the existing Arborfield & Newland Parish sign at the entrance of the car park.
- 3) the standing sign goes in the entrance for the pavilion where the garden fence is.
- 4) the main sign shares the pole with Arborfield & Newland Parish Council sign which is located right at the back of the pavilion (facing the car park).

The Council agreed to all of the above signage and display locations.

8) Parish Office – relocation update

The Clerk had circulated in advance the schedule of actions as below.

Action	Date
Office clearance started – continue to clear w/c 15 th and May w/c 22 nd May.	11/05/23
Removal company quotes obtained	13/05/23
Phone BT – divert landline to mobile?	w/c 15 th
Continue to use current mailbox	Ongoing
Put up relocation signs in village hall noticeboard, parish noticeboards and on village hall door.	w/c 15 th
Handyman to remove key safe from wall.	w/c 22 nd
Move items from parish storeroom to Pavilion	w/c 22 nd
Move items from Parish Office to Parish storeroom.	w/c 22 nd
Box up all items to move	w/c 22 nd
Proposed move date of 30 th May	-

Following the Clerk receiving a quote for removal costs, the Council agreed to spend £80 for the parish office move.

9) Any other F&GP matters considered urgent.

a) Pavilion bin collection

The Council has been paying a fee of £100 + VAT a month for a weekly collection of the large waste bin at the Pavilion. The service provider is Waste Managed. Waste Managed have increased their fees by 11.75%, making the monthly cost £112 + VAT. The Council agreed to pay annually in advance rather than monthly and in doing so, we will negate the price increase and reduce the annual cost by £240 + VAT.

The Council also agreed to the following expenditure:

- b) For the Annual Parish Meeting, £200 for refreshments including a celebratory cake to mark the 75th Anniversary of the Council.

c) £300 for the removal and disposal of various items of rubbish from the Pavilion

186/23 Parks

1) **Parks Report** – for information only – no items.

2) & 3) **Parks 3-year plan update and possible actions for 2023.**

The Council discussed replacing the electronic SportActive game. The Clerk has now obtained a quote for its removal and making good the surface totalling £1,600 excluding VAT. It was suggested the Council could ask for feedback from school as to what play equipment pupils would prefer to have in the Park.

3) **Any Parks matters considered urgent.**

The Council agreed to spend £113 for the replacement of wooden fencing at Pound Copse entrance.

4) **Park Gate opening for Nursery – propose to change to 7.30am**

The Council agreed to the following:

- a) changing the opening time of the Park to 7.30am to enable the Nursery to start at 8.00am during weekdays only; weekend opening time to remain at 8.00am.
- b) the locking of the Park gates will align with the clocks changing; i.e. locking will change from 6pm to 8pm when the clocks move forward in March and, return to 6pm in October when the clocks move backwards.
- c) changing the sign in the Park to display the above information.

187/23 Risk Management

1) **Risk Management Report** – Some risk assessments and checklists are still outstanding for Pound Copse, Old Churchyard, Parish owned land, and street furniture.

2) **Risk Assessments and Checklists**

Risk area	Annual Risk Assessment Responsibility	Due Date of Risk Assessment	Check List Frequency	Due date of Checklist
Playground	Vanessa Starkey	18/04/2024	Weekly	15/03/2023
	Play Inspection Company	July 2023	6 Monthly	N/A
Park	John Kaiser	08/11/23	Quarterly	RA deferred pending pavilion works
Pavilion	Elliot Strong	04/08/23	Monthly	RA deferred pending pavilion works
Carpark	John Kaiser	08/11/23	Quarterly	RA deferred pending pavilion works
Parish Office & Store	Paul Stevens	27/04/2024	6 monthly	27/10/2023
Pound Copse	Andrew Clint	13/10/23	6 monthly	13/04/23
Old Churchyard	Paul Stevens	22/11/23	6 monthly	22/02/23

Parish Owned Land	Andrew Clint	6/11/22	6 monthly	06/05/22
Street furniture	Nick Fox	13/09/23	6 monthly	13/03/23
Streetlights	Colin Watts	N/A Checklist only	6 monthly when the clocks change	October 2023

3) Any RM matters considered urgent – none.

188/23 Correspondence

Date received	Method	Sender	Content
4th May 2023	Magazine	Clerks and Councils Direct	Council news - England and Wales
3rd May 2023	Magazine	SLCC	Clerk info

189/23 Action list – to run through and update the action list.

Clerk and Chair to ensure this is up to date for other Cllrs to view and amend on Sharepoint.

190/23 Actions from April Exec Committee Meeting and April Full Council Meeting.

Prior to the meeting the Clerk circulated the table below to show stage of completion – blue represents actions pending, green – completed, orange – still outstanding.

AL92	18/04/2023	165/23 Council Priorities	Email Crime report to ASB Team member who deals with Arborfield	Clerk		April FC	Completed	Apr-23
AL93	18/04/2023	167/23 F&GP 2)	Chase Brownies for Bank Details	Clerk	Emailed 11/05/23 Received 12/05	April FC	Completed	12/05/2023
				CW	No requirement to maintain current a/c balance		Completed	
AL94	18/04/2023	167/23 F&GP 3)	Check money required in bank account in order to have bonds			April FC		15/05/2023
AL95	18/04/2023	168/23 Parks	Check with handyman - can he replace loose posts at Pound Copse entrance	Clerk		April FC	Completed	Apr-23
AL96	18/04/2023	168/23 Parks 2)	Chase SportActive Quote to remove electronic game	Clerk	Quote received	April FC	Completed	
AL97	18/04/2023	168/23 Parks 3)	Ask WBC who maintains the bus stop on Baird Road	Clerk	Emailed 10/05/23	April FC		
AL98	25/04/2023	5)	Obtain Quote for Office Move	Clerk		April Exec	Complete	12/05/2023
AL99	25/04/2023	8)	Cllr Murphy to speak to lessee of the pavilion who will be running the Nursery about holding an event in May.	JM		April Exec		
AL100	25/04/2023	8)	check with the internal auditor that changes regarding spending authority to the Standing Orders are permitted.	CW	Internam Auditor - can make changes to standing orders to reflect who has authority to spend.	April Exec	Completed	

191/23 Any items for consideration to include items for the next meeting agenda – no items suggested.

192/23 Date of next meeting – The next full council meeting will be a full Council meeting on **Tuesday 20th June 2023.**

There being no further business to discuss in Part I, the meeting ended at 21:13.