



Minutes - Full Council Meeting Tuesday 18th April 2023

Present: Cllrs Clint, Starkey, Kaiser, Stevens also the RFO and the Clerk.

Absent: Cllrs, Hughes Murphy, Strong, Fox and Hughes.

Other: No other people were present.

158/23 To receive and accept any apologies for absence – apologies received for Cllrs Murphy, Fox, and Strong. Cllr Hughes had resigned with immediate effect prior to the meeting. The Council would like to give a vote of thanks to Cllr Hughes for all her work.

159/23 To receive any declarations of interest on items on the agenda – Cllr Murphy declared an interest in planning application 230807.

160/23 Minutes of Council Meeting – The Tuesday 21st March 2023 minutes were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr Clint, seconded by Cllr Stevens, all in favour.

161/23 Public Participation (allotted time - 15 minutes) - **No members of the public were present.**

162/23 Clerk's Report

The Clerk has reported issues to WBC - flooding of ditch at Baird Road at Whitehall Drive junction and a pile of branches to be collected at Melrose Gardens.

163/23 (a) Reports from external bodies:

1) Borough Council - not submitted.

2) Police – A police report for Arborfield and Newland, and Barkham parishes was submitted for the period 11-02-23 to 12-04-23.

164/23 (b) Reports from meetings attended by Councillors, if any – no reports.

165/23 Council Priorities

1) **Anti-social behaviour (ASB)** – The police report showed there had been an incident of children shooting something at a resident's window causing it to shatter. This behaviour appears to be an ongoing problem, with several bus windows having been shattered in recent months. The Council agreed the crime report should be sent to the Anti-social behaviour (ASB) team member who covers Arborfield and Newland parish to make them aware of the incidences that are occurring. Clerk to action this.

2) Planning

a) Update on Duck's Nest Farm objection

An objection was submitted from the Council to Wokingham Borough Council

However, the objection was emailed to Planning, as unable to be submitted through the Planning Portal. Cllr Clint has emailed WBC to make them aware this planning application was not listed under Arborfield and Newland Parish, therefore people searching for applications within the parish would not see it. Cllr Clint to follow up with WBC to ensure this detail is prevented from being omitted for future applications.

b) Agreement on retaining a planning lawyer in case of future planning appeals. Cllr Clint to obtain a quote.

The council resolved this action, proposed by Cllr Clint, seconded by Cllr Stevens, all in favour.

3) Council Property

a) Update on Coombes Woodland.

The council concurred to continue as previously agreed to try and purchase the Coombes woodland. Proposed by Cllr Clint, seconded by Cllr Stevens, all in favour.

4) Community and Communication.

a) Feedback on easter egg hunt.

Cllrs Starkey and Clint ran the Easter Egg Hunt. It was a successful event with 30 children taking part. Improvements suggested for future years were to keep the Hunt just within Arborfield Park rather than exploring on streets nearby, and secondly to display an Arborfield and Newland Parish Council banner, to clearly identify the council.

b) Feedback on gazebo opening.

Despite a very wet and windy event there was a good turnout of pupils from The Coombes and residents. It was agreed was a positive event for the Parish Council.

c) Celebrating the King's coronation.

Cllr Stevens updated the Council regarding the organisation of the 'Picnic in the Park' event.

Cllr Stevens has actioned the following:

- written a Risk Assessment which was previously circulated to the Council.
- booked two First Aiders from St. John's Ambulance.
- arranged the hire of two portable toilets.
- booked the ukulele band who will perform for some of the event.
- Cllr Starkey, Cllr Clint, and the Clerk offered to help on the day.

The RFO confirmed the Council's current insurance covers Public Liability Insurance for this event.

Action on Cllr Stevens to obtain an Events licence from WBC, and also a Performing Right Society (PRS) licence to allow streaming of music on Spotify.

5) Climate Emergency

Cllrs Stevens and Clint to meet to discuss implementing ideas discussed previously.

6) Cost of Living Crisis

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

166/23 Planning

1) **Planning Report – for information only**

RFS/2023/088086 - Land off Mole Road, Sindlesham, Wokingham, RG2 9JG

A new access with brick piers, walls and fencing have been constructed. The new owner has been advised to stop any further works, planning application to be submitted. WBC Planning will keep a watching brief on the site.

Work to Conservation Area Tree Notification

Address: Diagon House, Eversley Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9PQ

Proposal: SECTION 211 NOTIFICATION FOR WORKS IN A CONSERVATION AREA

T1, Willow – Selectively prune back to previous upper crown pruning points in order to reinstate the pollard form.

This does not require consultation.

230110 NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

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.

Outcome: not to determine the application as it has been withdrawn upon instruction from the applicant/agent. This means the Council have not made a decision on the application and will not be pursuing it any further.

230658 NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

Address: 44 Attwood Drive, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9FE

Proposal: Householder application for the proposed conversion of existing store area to habitable accommodation, and changes to fenestration.

Decision: to approve the proposal.

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

The agreed responses below were agreed by the whole council. Proposed by Cllr Clint, seconded by Cllr Stevens, all in favour.

230718 Householder Consultation

Address: Oak View House, Baird Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9XZ

Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey detached car port and vegetation screening.

Deadline: 19/04/2023

Agreed Response: Object: Arborfield and Newland Parish Council (the Council) OPPOSES this application. The decision issued 23/1/23 to dismiss the appeal on retrospective application 221517 for the single storey garage noted "overall that the positioning of the garage is such that it causes demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the street scene". The Council does not believe that building an open-sided car-port in the same location addresses the reason for dismissal at appeal and therefore the council is opposed to this application. The council also notes that the original approved application for the dwelling did not include the high wall and gates that have been constructed at the front of the site which are also out of character for the area and cause demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the street scene and the Council requests WBC to investigate whether this feature is also a breach of the original planning consent.

230732 Outline Planning Approval Consultation

Parish: Wokingham Town

Address: Bridge Farm, Reading Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9HT

Proposal: Outline application with (all matters reserved for future approval except access to Reading Road) for two commercial units of flexible use comprising Use Classes B2 (General Industry), B8 (Storage and Distribution) and E(g) (Commercial, Business and Services)

Deadline: 21/04/2023.

Agreed Response: Object: Arborfield and Newland Parish Council (the Council) OPPOSES this application. This proposal represents development in the countryside, outside the settlement boundary, is not sustainable for transport to and from the site providing no meaningful alternatives to car use for workers commuting to the site. For these reasons it is in contravention of the WBC Core Strategy and the Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood plan and therefore Arborfield and Newland Parish Council is opposed to this application.

230758 Householder Consultation

Address: Bartletts Farmhouse, Swallowfield Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9JX

Proposal: Householder application for the proposed new driveway access and dropped kerb.

Deadline: 22/04/2023

Agreed Response: Object: Arborfield and Newland Parish Council (the Council) OPPOSES this application. The Council notes that the planning report submitted with this application fails to mention application 212926 which was for the creation of a gravel drive and parking area, new access onto Swallowfield Road and fencing and gate -- this application was rejected by WBC and dismissed at subsequent appeal. The Council feels this application is substantially the same as the previous application and therefore should be rejected by WBC due to the harm to the heritage asset, access concerns onto Swallowfield Road and further development in the countryside.

230763 Householder Consultation

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).

Deadline: 28/04/2023

Agreed Response: Other: Arborfield and Newland Parish Council (The Council) has no objection to this application.

230807 Full Planning Approval Consultation

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

Deadline: 27/04/2023

Agreed Response: Other: Arborfield and Newland Parish Council (The Council) has no objection to this application.

3) Any Planning matters considered urgent – none.

167/23 F&GP

1) F&GP report

From the RFO:

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

The RFO advised that the end of March bank reconciliations had been completed and the only outstanding item was the grant to 1st Arborfield Brownies, where we were still waiting on bank details before making the payment. Cllr Clint signed the reconciliation.

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

Type	Payee	Amount	Description
Bank transfers			
	Bank transfer	40,000.00	Unity Trust savings to Current a/c
	Bank transfer	625.00	Unity Trust Current to rent deposit a/c
BACS	Gallagher Insurance brokers	2,800.44	Annual insurance premium
DD	BT	50.20	Office telephone April 2023
DD	OPUS Energy	49.90	Electricity 17/2 to 19/3/23
DD	Waste Managed	134.40	Park Bin Emptying 21/4 to 20/5/23
DD	EE	21.96	Parish mobile phone - April
DD	Gigaclear	36.00	Pavilion internet April

BACS	SCS	1,197.85	Grounds Maintenance - March
DD	SSE	137.45	Street lighting 2/3/23 to 3/4/23
DD	British Gas	125.95	Pavilion Gas 9/3 to 11/4-23
BACS	Tivoli	119.22	Dog bin emptying March 2023
BACS	Security Control Systems	102.00	Security camera removal for Pavilion works
BACS	Oak Tree Communications	675.00	April Arborfield News printing
BACS	itQED	1,136.40	IT software licenses
BACS	itQED	102.60	Monthly IT support
BACS	D J Mace	1,277.35	Electrical work re Pavilion refurbishment
BACS	Bidwells	2,193.67	Valuation work re Coombes Woodland
BACS	Barkham PC	419.84	Share of costs re Coombes Woodland project
BACS	Shinfield Window Co.	2,738.50	Supply and fit windows and door at Pavilion
BACS	Claire Connell	212.50	Internal Audit services
BACS	Scribe	673.92	Annual software license for Scribe Accounts
BACS	Paul Edwards - Architecture	1,511.25	Fees re Pavilion refurbishment including Building regs fee
DD	Lloyds credit card	194.44	Donation to Royal British Legion re Remembrance Sunday (£100)
			Groceries for Gazebo opening (£71.44)
			Chocolate for Easter egg hunt (£20)
			Card fee (£3)
DD	HSBC	5.00	Bank account charges
BACS	Howdens	3,593.36	Pavilion kitchen
BACS	Yardley Builders	24,000.00	Pavilion works
	Subtotal - Bills & Invoices	43,509.20	
	Subtotal Wages	3,357.82	
	Total	46,867.02	

3) HSBC Bond Renewal

The HSBC bond with invested funds of £110k matures in May. The funds will not be required until at least the point where phase 2 of the Pavilion project is well underway.

The RFO proposed to re-invest the capital sum for a period of 3 months. All in favour.

RFO to check amount of money required to remain in HSBC current account to be able to keep the bonds.

4) Internal Audit Report

This was circulated in advance of the meeting to all Councillors and the contents were noted.

5) Utility Renewals

The contract for the supply of electricity at the Pavilion comes up for renewal on 14 May 2023. Under our current three year deal we are paying 16.2p per kWh plus 30.3p per day standing charge. Opus Energy, the current supplier, is offering a two-year fixed term contract at 32p per kWh plus 86p per day standing charge.

The Opus quote is overall broadly competitive when looked at through one of the energy comparison sites. By way of further comparison, if the Council does not take out a fixed term contract, the current variable rate with Opus is 45.2p per kWh.

Finally, based on the Opus two-year quote, electricity costs should be well within the 2023-24 budget for Pavilion electricity costs.

The Council agreed the proposal to authorise the RFO to renew the electricity contract with Opus for a two-year period.

6) Pavilion project:

- a) Pavilion Phase 1 update (both progress and financial)
Work on the Pavilion extension and refurbishment is making excellent progress. In line with current regulations, the Council approved three new fireproof doors at a cost of £465 plus VAT; and also approved a spend of up to £500 for fire retardant solution to be applied to the wood cladding. The Handyman is in agreement to applying this.

- b) Pavilion Phase 2 plans, progress, estimated costs & timescales.
The Council agreed to the spend of £1350 + VAT to prepare plans and to submit the planning application for phase 2. This includes the addition of a parish office, changing rooms, toilets and a storage area. Proposed by Cllr Clint, Seconded by Cllr Starkey; all in favour.

- c) Plans for Nursery occupation.
The Nursery are planning on using CCTV. The Council agreed they must ensure the CCTV is not to be used at any other times whilst the Pavilion is in use.
The RFO reported that the Finance Chair was meeting with the Nursery on 4 May to hand over the keys and would discuss the CCTV issue at that meeting.

7) Parish Office – options to relocate.

The Clerk updated the Council with possible options to locate the parish office on a temporary basis until the Phase 2 building work is complete. Swallowfield Medical Practice are yet to confirm if they require the Parish Storeroom or not. The Council approved “Plan A” for the interim period prior to completion of phase 2 of the pavilion work – sharing an office with Barkham PC Clerk. Barkham Parish Council have approved this.

8) Streetlighting Maintenance Contract

The Council has 19 streetlights. 18 of these lights have been fitted with low energy lanterns, whilst it appears that it was not possible to put a low energy lantern on the 19th light on the footpath behind Anderson Crescent.

The Council has a three-year streetlight maintenance contract with Enerveo which is due for renewal. The maintenance contract is very basic. (a clean every three years and electrical test every six) and costs just £9 a year for the 18 streetlights with the newer lanterns. Maintenance of the older lamp is charged at £59 pa.

The Council agreed to authorise the RFO to sign the new maintenance contract with Enerveo, whilst exploring the cost of replacing the older streetlight with a newer energy efficient model.

9) Bank Holiday cover for May.

The following bank holiday cover for the Park was agreed:

Date	Open	Close
01 st May 2023	Cllr Clint	Cllr Murphy
8 th May 2023	Cllr Stevens	Cllr Stevens
29 th May 2023	Cllr Starkey	Cllr Fox

10) Any other F&GP matters considered urgent.

The RFO proposed that a transfer from the HSBC current account to the Unity Trust current account, so that CIL funds would be available in the correct account for spend on approved projects if required. The proposal was unanimously agreed by all Cllrs.

168/23 Parks

1) Parks Report – for information only

Pound Copse – Clerk received a reply from WBC; Public Rights of Way will communicate to Highways to find out if it is possible to upgrade Footpath 22 to a bridleway. This is not expected to progress any time soon.

Parish Litter Pick – held on Saturday 25th March – a successful event had a total of 25 people, collected over 20 bags of rubbish.

Some streetlights are still not working on Sheerlands Road and Baird Road. Clerk to continue to obtain expected repair dates from WBC.

Step on slide broke – has been made safe, Handyman to fix.

Noticeboard location – Clerk and Cllr Starkey propose location of the new notice board - near the bus stop along Baird Road. Clerk awaiting reply from Crest Nicholson Liaison Group as to who owns the land.

2) Parks 3-year plan update.

The Council discussed the possibilities for the Park’s plan could include walks around the Parish, jogging markers around the Park. Also discussed was, the possibility of having a noticeboard purely for information such as a map and QR codes that link to information or the WBC website to report problems such as overflowing rubbish bins was also discussed and what piece of equipment could replace the Sport Active electronic game. Clerk to chase the quote for removal of the Sport Active game from Wickstead.

3) Actions for 2023.

The 3 new noticeboards purchased will be installed at the Pavilion, Arbery Way, and potentially the new location along Baird Road near the bus stop.

As the clocks have now gone back and the evenings are lighter, people are expecting the Park to be open later, however the closing time of the Park remains at 6.00pm until the 31st March.

The Council agreed to align the later times of closing the Park gates with the change of the clocks. New signs to be made to reflect this and will be displayed in the Park.

4) Any Parks matters considered urgent – none.

Cllr Fox enters the meeting at 20:50.

169/23 Risk Management

- **Risk Management Report**

Prior to the April meeting, Clerk has emailed Cllrs any Risk Assessments and Checklists which are overdue and asked to complete by the meeting date.

- **Risk Assessments and Checklists**

The following table of responsibilities was agreed.

Cllr Fox agreed to review and update where necessary the current Risk Assessments and Checklists in use.

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	19/04/2023
	Play Inspection Company (6 monthly)	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	13/09/23	6 monthly	27/10/23
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	Overdue	6 monthly when the clocks change	Overdue
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- Any RM matters considered urgent.

170/23 Correspondence

Date received	Method	Sender	Content
23/03/2023	Magazine	WBC	Borough info
11/04/2023	Magazine	CPRE	Feature: Saving Rivers

171/23 Action list – to run through and update the action list.

With the upcoming IT support, the Action List will be made available to Councillors through Microsoft SharePoint.

172/23 Any items for consideration to include items for the next meeting agenda – information only.

173/23 Date of next meeting – The next full council meeting will be a full Council meeting on **Tuesday 16th May 2023.**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 21.14.