



Arborfield & Newland Parish Council

Arborfield Green Community Centre,
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Berkshire, RG2 9ND
Tel 0118 976 1489

E-mail parishclerk@arborfield.org.uk
Clerk: Mrs Annabel Wood

Minutes of a Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 19th September 2023 at Arborfield Pavilion 7:30pm

Present: Cllrs Clint (Chair), Murphy, Starkey, Fox, Strong and Stevens

In Attendance: Mrs Wood, Clerk, Mr Watts, the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Other: Three members of the public to give an update regarding a petition for Church Lane.

231/23 Questions from members of the public in respect of the business on this agenda.

Three residents presented the case behind a petition to close Church Lane as a response to significantly increased volumes of traffic using the road following the implementation of road restrictions as part of the Arborfield Village Improvement Scheme. The council agreed to write a supporting letter to WBC.

232/23 To receive and accept any apologies for absence.

No apologies were received.

233/23 To receive any declarations of interest on items on the agenda.

No declarations of interest were received.

234/23 Minutes of Council Meeting

The minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 18th July 2023 were approved with all in favour.

235/23 The draft minutes from the Parks Committee meeting held on Tuesday 5th September 2023 were noted. (as per standing orders all committee draft minutes are presented to full council)

236/23 A report proposing amendments to the schedule of council and committee meetings was received. The council approved the council and committee meeting dates, and also decided to include a December full Council meeting where the draft budget would be considered. [The Budget will be set in January]

237/23 To receive reports from:

- 1. The Clerk/RFO** - A report was received.
- 2. The Borough Councillor** – a written report was received.

3. Police – A crime report for Arborfield & Newland and Barkham Parish Councils for the period 12/07/2023 – 12/09/2023 had been circulated prior to the meeting.

238/23 To receive reports from external meetings attended by Councillors.

No reports were received.

239/23 Planning

1. To consider and agree recommendations on planning applications received as listed below.

a. 231994

Site Address: Woodpeckers Church Lane Arborfield Wokingham RG2 9JA

Description: Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey side extension to existing outbuilding to form car port, plus erection of new entrance gates.

Deadline: 22/09/2023

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

Comment:

b. 223083

Site Address: Land South of Bridge Farm Reading Road Arborfield Wokingham RG2 9HT

Description: Outline application for the erection of up to 11No commercial units to provide 6,986sqm GIA commercial / employment development predominantly within Class B8 and/or Class E(g) uses with supporting facilities within Class E uses comprising ancillary offices, trade counters and food/drink facilities with highway works and strategic landscaping. Matters of Access, Siting and Scale to be considered only.

Deadline: 22/09/2023

Agreed Please view full comment at:

Comment: https://publicaccess.wokingham.gov.uk/PublicAccess_Live/Document/ViewDocument?id=2429605187444C198EA316B5BC5E9753

c. 230747

Site Address: Land at Eversley Road Arborfield RG29PJ

Description: Full application for the proposed erection of a petrol filling station including forecourt and canopy, 2 no. underground fuel tanks, a single storey sales building, car wash, jet washes, car parking, EV charging and creation of access, cycle parking, car care, plant and substation, plus erection of a fence and boundary treatment, landscaping and associated works.

Deadline: 22/09/2023

Agreed No comment required as this application has been withdrawn.

Comment:

d. 232075

Site Address: Apple Tree Cottage Church Lane Arborfield Wokingham RG2 9JA
Description: Householder application for the proposed raising of the roof to create first floor habitable accommodation along with balcony to the rear elevation. Single storey rear extension. Erection of an entrance gate with fencing and brick piers and railings to the highway frontage.
Deadline: 15/09/2023.
Ext req. to 22/09
Agreed Comment: Arborfield and Newland Parish Council have no objection to this application.

e. 231894

Site Address: 28 Tyler Drive, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9NG
Description: Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of part two storey side part single storey rear extension, plus alteration to fenestration, following the demolition of existing garage.
Deadline: 22/09/2023
Agreed Comment: No comment required as this application has been invalidated pending submission of a tree Survey.

f. 230915

Site Address: Reddam House School Bearwood Road Sindlesham RG41 5BG
Description: Full application for the proposed erection of a maintenance shed following the demolition of 2 no. existing storage structures.
Deadline: 27/09/2023
Agreed Comment: Arborfield and Newland Parish Council have no objection to this application.

2. For Councillors to agree how to respond to the Statement of Community Involvement consultation.

Cllrs Clint, Fox and Stevens volunteered to form a committee to draft a response to this consultation.

3. Any Planning matters considered urgent.

The following planning application was considered as it was received after the agenda was published, and the deadline for responding is before the next full council meeting.

a. 232262

Site Address: 7 Chamberlain Gardens Arborfield Wokingham RG2 9QA
Description: Householder application for the proposed erection of single storey rear extension.
Deadline: 09/10/2023
Agreed Comment: Arborfield and Newland Parish Council have no objection to this application.

240/23 Finance and General Purpose

1. To approve and sign payments for August and September

Payments were approved, and copies of invoices were signed at the meeting by Cllrs Stevens and Murphy. For full list of payments please refer to Appendices 1 and 2.

2. To receive the bank reconciliation for the month of July and August

The bank reconciliations were received, no outstanding items were reported.

3. To receive the report regarding ongoing tree maintenance at Pound Copse and to note the approved expenditure.

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting summarising the June 2023 Arboriculturist report. The council agreed the most urgent item to a tree with a TPO could be actioned following acknowledgement from WBC, and, providing the cost is less than £1000 (as per Financial Regulations 1.15 “, the council must approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of £1,000”).

Authority was given to the Clerk to obtain quotes for the remainder of the work referred to in the Arboriculturist report to be actioned.

4. To receive an update on the maintenance of the Old Churchyard and agree on maintenance approach for the boundary wall.

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting summarising the maintenance carried out to mitigate risk to health and safety and the options available to make the boundary wall safe. The council accepted the builder’s quote of £2140 plus VAT to remove the section of the wall posing a risk and replace with a wooden fence. It was agreed this would be carried out as one project to completion. The resulting budget shortfall of £1,232 in the Old Churchyard expenditure category would be covered by the F&GP contingency budget.

5. To approve spend on refreshments for the joint litter pick with Barkham Parish Council.

The council approved the expenditure of up to £25 by for refreshments. It was decided not to hire a room for this event.

6. To note the expenditure incurred in connection with making Pavilion suitable for new football season.

In order to allow the football teams access to the nets and other items for matches without needing to enter the pavilion, a lockable purpose-built storage cupboard has been made available. The council noted the £650 expenditure for this unit and that the overall cost of preparing for the football season was within the £1,000 estimate previously authorised.

7. To consider any urgent finance matters

There were no urgent finance matters raised.

8. Council to review draft terms, and agree final terms for the proposed purchase of the Coombes Woodland in partnership with Barkham Parish Council

The solicitor's report, the Terms Sheet for both Parish Councils, and the revised approvals required had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Revised approvals were sought for the following:

1) That the purchase by Arborfield and Barkham jointly will be structured as a purchase by tenants in common

- a. Both councils will be listed on the title deeds which will also reflect the share of ownership
- b. Neither party will be able to sell their share without the consent of the other and having first offered their share to the other party at cost
- c. As a further protection, it may be possible to include a restrictive covenant on the deeds after purchase which would bind a future buyer to use the woodland for the same purpose (pending further legal advice)
- d. Councils will be able to reclaim VAT on management costs (which would not be possible under a charitable trust) – VAT on ongoing costs estimated at £5k per year in total.
- e. No VAT will be levied on the purchase as the vendor is not VAT registered.
- f. There is no impediment to moving to a charitable status at a later date if both councils consider it to be necessary or desirable.

2) That the councils will pay Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) on the purchase of which Arborfield's share will not exceed £4,000

As a result of moving to this purchase mechanism Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) will be payable, which is estimated at £13,250 of which Arborfield's share will be £3,630.50

Overspend vs the original approval of £6,000 mainly caused by high search fees

Insurance is expected to be no more than £200 per annum in total

That the council approves up to £5,000 being Arborfield's share of the likely costs from Geldards to draft the agreement between the councils

That power to finalise and execute this agreement is delegated to the Chair of the Council

3) That the total pre-completion costs are currently estimated to be no more than £7,000

4) That the councils will take out separate public liability insurance to cover the whole woodland area and the costs will be apportioned to the councils in the proportions set out above

5) That powers to sign the final purchase agreement, provided the terms do not deviate materially from those set out here, will be delegated to the Chair of the Council

6) That any two councillors are authorised to pay the completion sum of £130k plus any pre-completion costs, including Stamp Duty, to Geldards, in accordance with the bank mandate

7) That the council will enter into an agreement with Barkham to set out the process for running the woodland which will incorporate the key terms set out in the attached Term Sheet

8) That the Council will nominate two councillors to join the Coombes Woodland Working Committee to manage the woodland in accordance with the terms of the attached Term Sheet

The council resolved to the items as listed above. Proposed by Cllr Murphy, seconded by Cllr Starkey; all in favour.

Cllrs Starkey and Fox volunteered to be representatives on The Coombes Woodland Working Committee.

9. To agree the response to WBC Consultation on Changes to Grounds Maintenance and Rubbish Collection.

Following the extension of the deadline to 31st October 2023, councillors agreed to review the draft response to the consultation, ensure specific local factors were reflected, and to review and approve a final response at the October meeting.

a. Council to consider options in response to WBCs proposed reduction in local environmental services.

Councillors to consider options available at the October meeting, pending the receipt of a further quote.

b. To agree a response to the Warm and Welcoming Places Survey.

Cllr Murphy to draft a response to this survey. The council discussed the possibility of the Parish Council providing a warm place; however, any such space would need staffing which is not currently practicable. The council discussed the possibility of offering support through a Community Grant.

c. Council to adopt the following policies:

i) Co-option policy

The proposed Co-option policy was circulated prior to the meeting. The council agreed to adopt it as its own policy.

Proposed by Cllr Clint, seconded by Cllr Stevens; all in favour.

ii) Environment Policy

The adoption of an Environment Policy will be carried forward to the October full council meeting.

d. For Council to receive an update on Pavilion Phase II Project Update by Cllr Murphy.

Planning approval has been granted for the Pavilion Phase II Project subject to certain conditions being met. This has been passed to our architect to review and propose a response to discharge the conditions.

The Phase II build has gone to tender and two prices were received. The council resolved to use the company which provided the cheaper quote. Proposed by Cllr Murphy, seconded by Cllr Clint; all in favour.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 21:15