

Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council

MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Monday 1st June 2015 commencing 8.00pm.

PRESENT

Chairman	Keith Brooks
Vice Chairman	Jim Donahue
	James Norman
	Dave Bowen
District Cllr.	Rob Simister
Clerk	Ms. Jenny Welham

1. To receive apologies for absence

None.

2. To receive declarations of interest

None.

3. **Public Forum:** Opportunity for members of the public to address the Council. With the permission of the Chairman, the public may also speak about specific items of business as they arise. Richard Wingfield, Tapag. Mrs. Shirley Sumner, Mrs. Pam Wilkinson, Laura Lucas to speak on the planning application Eastfield Lane. Adrian Coulas-Pitman to observe as he had applied for one of Parish Councillor vacancies.

4. To approve Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 11th May 2015. Cllr Donahue requested a correction to Item 8 Village Green, remove Advisory Group change to Working Group. Correction noted and made. Approved as a true record.

5. District Councillor's Report

Cllr. Simister reported,

SODC are in the process of moving into a leased property at 125 Milton Park, the Planning, Development and Housing departments are already in situ, other departments will be moving into the building over the course of June. Currently there is no reception for the public to visit, this will be ready and available from 29th June.

This move is not a permanent one, SODC have signed a 3 year lease, depending on the insurance assessment a decision regarding their old building that was fire damaged in Crowmarsh will need to be taken.

SODC are carrying out a Corporate Services project to save as much money as possible, which applies to all back office services, it is currently at Market Testing procurement phase, 5 councils in total are involved in this project and 8 companies have come forward to be considered. Cllr. Norman asked if one company is awarded the services does this mean staff redundancies. Cllr. Simister replied saying not necessarily as the existing employees could be taken into employment by the company awarded the contract.

He also advised that the Community Grants for value £15K up to £100K are now open, closing date for applications is 31st July 2015. This would be of interest for any projects the PC are planning such as a new Pavilion.

Young Achiever Awards are also available for 11 to 18 year olds, details can be found on the SODC website. Clerk to obtain the link for the village website.

6. Reports from Other Groups/Committees

Richard Wingfield TAPAG reported

No change to the report he gave at the Village Assembly meeting.

The Gulley clearing and drain clearing has is on OCC's list for this year as advised to the Clerk.

The Clerk is chasing up the white line painting in the High Street, OCC have replied stating they are awaiting a quotation for this. Clerk will keep chasing.

He also requested what was happening about the verge/green area on the entrance to the village at the top of Hardwick Rd/High Street. This is overgrown and the weeds/grass are very long. The Clerk advised that this area is not on the grass cutting contract but she will ask the contractors to trim it. The Clerk had already replied to Richard's email regarding this after talking to the Chairman.

Village Hall Management Committee

Laura Lucas Chairman report

The online banking is now all set up and operational.

Nigel Grove retired from Treasurer has requested to stay on the committee as a member.

7. Planning

P15/S1641/FUL Variation of condition 14 (approved plans) of planning permission P11/S0126 (App/Q3115/A/13/2192681) Eastfield House, Eastfield Lane, Whitchurch on Thames.

Then council looked at the drawings provided some of which had dates of 2010. It was unclear actually what condition 14 was in the previous application, and the application appeared to be completely demolishing the rear with the front of the building remaining. The previous application was for part demolition so this "variation" of condition seemed unclear.

Mrs. Sumner, Mrs. Wilkinson and Mrs. Lucas all object to this application . Mrs. Sumner asked if the footprint remained the same, this was unclear.

Mrs. Lucas advised that she had contacted English Heritage asking for the building to be considered for listing and requested that the PC follow this up with their own request.

Cllr. Simister offered to progress this with SODC Planning and the Clerk will request the SODC Planning Officer grant an extension in time for the PC to reply and to advise County Councillor. If required the PC will have to have an extraordinary meeting to discuss this application to form their reply when the details is clearer.

Cllr. Simister stressed that any objections need to be on planning reasons. The objections to the previous application had all been overdevelopment of the site, traffic issue on Eastfield Road and some in respect of sewage and drainage. The application had been granted on Appeal.

8. Finance

List of payments

19/5 Nova Press Bulletin £367

1/6 D.J Scott Electrical Services Instal defib cabinet £150

1/6 J. Welham Salary May £435.04

1/6 HMRC May Tax £97.76

1/6 Sarah Butterworth expenses for Bulletin £84.06

Total Payments Approved £1133.86

The Clerk presented the Annual Return for External Audit with the Annual Accounting figures (See Appendix 1) and Governance sections all completed and signed by the Internal Auditor. One Governance area had been written up as NO under Risk Management review, all else had passed. The Chairman and Clerk signed the Annual Return for return to External Auditors.

Cllr. Donahue had been asked at the Village Assembly if the Annual Accounts could be published on the website. The procedure for members of the public to obtain copies of the Annual Accounts is for them to request a copy from the Clerk. This is published on the Notice of Audit which the Clerk confirmed is already in the Village Notice Board. The Clerk will get a copy of the notice to the website. Cllr. Donahue requested the Clerk to check if publication onto the website was possible.

9. Village Green – report

Cllr. Donahue reported that he was in the process of forming the working group for the Village Green. He has representatives from the Cricket Club, Football Club, School and Cllr Bowen. A date for their first meeting is being arranged over the next few weeks.

He proposed that the PC vote to remove any charges to the School for using the Village Green. There is strong objection and a lot of anger and high feelings against this. Cllr. Norman stated he thought this would pre empt the result of the public consultation.

Mrs. Sumner stated that she was aware that there was in fact a lot of strong public feeling against the proposal to charge fees to the School.

Cllr. Norman stated that the working group needed to be set up before any votes on fees were taken and how the PC proceed.

Several suggestions where offered by the public present, Mrs. Lucas and Adrian, on charges, such as not charging the school during school hours but to charge any clubs that use it after hours and sports clubs who may make a small profit from subs taken.

Cllr. Donahue again asked the PC to vote on this, he proposed not to charge the School fees during school hours, the Pc voted unanimously in favour and this was agreed.

The Clerk advised that she had been asked by the previous PC Chairman to look into how other parishes run their village greens and she reported that all of the villages in the neighbouring SODC area make charges to clubs for use of greens in their ownership.

The Clerk also updated the PC again about the communications with OCC School and Education Office in regard to the school using the green. OCC own the school. OCC had stated that an Agreement between the School and the PC needs to be drawn up and they have put this process in place. A surveyor will contact the school and the Pc regarding this agreement.

The OCC Officer had been in touch with the School Head and had suggested to the Clerk that in the meantime she email the School asking for a “rough” timetable of when the school use the green. The Clerk reported that the email had been sent several weeks ago to the Head and Business Manager at the school but as yet no reply had been received.

Mrs. Lucas reported that further grass cuttings had been dumped on the VG on the Muddy Lane side, it is presumed from the cutting of the wicket area that is not mown by the PC contractors.

Cllr. Donahue advised he had spoken to the person about this and a possible compost area being set up had been discussed and further review of this will need to be looked into by the working group.

Cllr. Donahue stated that a cost analysis for the Village Green is required, the Clerk to action.

10. Village Environment/Maintenance - report

The Chairman advised nothing new to report.

11. Sustainability & Allotments

The Chairman advised that he had been researching prices for new gates for the allotments on the internet and had a range of pricing from £300 to £900. He has spoken to a contractor who suggested that the gates be built “on site” so that the existing posts can be used as they are in good condition.

The Chairman suggested he gets quotes from Purdy Gates, Cllr. Donahue advised that they are expensive. Bouchier Fencing is an option.

Cllr. Donahue who usually gives this report advised that he does not have a report for this meeting and that in future he will be giving a report at the PC meetings on the “List of Issues” that he has published on the village website. He suggested that when the 3 vacancies are filled one of the new councillors takes the Allotments & Sustainability area over.

12. Other Matters for Chairman

Cllr. Donahue advised that he had replies from G. Weir to the Issues List regarding the Toll Bridge that residents had raised.

Toll Cards charge of £20. Residents are very unhappy about this and want it changed. Pressure needs to be put on the Bridge Company to look into this especially in the light of the recent public inquiry to review and raise the Toll Charges. Richard Wingfield advised to put pressure on them as they will be looking for concessions.

White Line in middle of Bridge. This has not been painted as the Bridge company had taken advice from OCC Highways, and removal of centre white lines on the highway does slow traffic down.

Handicapped resident Blue badge holder asked if crossing the Bridge could be free as other Toll bridges allow Blue badge holders free crossing.

The Bridge company reply stated that no toll bridges give Blue badge holders free crossings apart from the Severn Bridge which has allowed it as a concession.

The Badge holder's son is taking this matter up.

A Bridge User Group has been suggested to be set up.

Cllr Donahue to update the status of these issues on the published list, the status being Open, Closed, No Further Action Required.

Comment had been received about parking in the Lower Narrows area by people using the river with their canoes and causing an obstruction. This occurs mostly in the day time and there are no restriction notices at this area. Richard Wingfield suggested one of the PC letters be placed under windscreens this had in the past solved the issue. The consensus of the PC was that this is not currently a huge issue.

Cllr. Donohue reported on the public consultation on 30th May regarding the War Memorial. He said not many people had attended but they had handed out feedback forms outside the venue and would await their return. When asked people had not been in favour of restoring the memorial back to its original height but the other proposals for the memorial had been given favourably comment. Some residents had offered funds towards the project, so fund raising will be looked into.

The Chairman reported that the vacancy for someone to edit the Bulletin was on the website and so far no replies. Cllr. Donahue said that some people are considering it and will be in touch. Mrs. Sumner suggested only producing it for people who did not use the website, Richard Wingfield strongly supports it continuing and being delivered to every resident regardless of whether they use the site or not.

The Chairman reported he had received and email from a resident who was concerned about the buses being cut to routes 134 and 143. The Public present said it runs every two hours and that the 134 had been cut last year. It was unclear in the email, it was suggested by the sender that the PC set up a volunteer mini bus service. Cllr. Bowen to look into the bus services and report back to PC.

Richard Wingfield asked the Chairman what was happening about the 3 PC vacancies, the Clerk advised that 8 people had applied and applications close on 6th June.

Mrs. Wilkinson asked about funding for the Pavilion, and asked what is happening, the Clerk advised there is a small amount held in reserve in the PC account that had been donated. The Village Green working Group and PC will be looking at this project.

13. To note date of the next PC meeting: Monday 6th July 2015.

Meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Signed.....Chairman/**Date**.....

Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council

MINUTES of the Extra Ordinary Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Tuesday 11th June 2015 commencing 7.30pm.

PRESENT

Chairman	K. Brooks
	J. Norman
	D. Bowen
Clerk	Ms. J. Welham

1. To receive apologies for absence

Mr. J. Donahue.

2. To receive declarations of interest

None.

3. Public Forum: Opportunity for members of the public to address the Council. With the permission of the Chairman, the public may also speak about specific items of business as they arise.

Richard Wingfield to get correct information of the Planning Applications to advise residents on the website how to write into SODC Planning Officer.

4. Planning.

P15/S1641/FUL Variation of condition 14 (approved plans) of planning permission

P11/S0126 (App/Q3115/A/13/2192681.

Eastfield House, Eastfield Lane, Whitchurch on Thames.

P15/S1632/FUL (Full Application)

Application Type (see definition over): Minor

Proposal: The demolition of the pre-existing buildings other than the retained front facade.

Address: Eastfield House Eastfield Lane Whitchurch on Thames RG8 7EJ.

There was discussion about the two applications which are the same. The Chairman had spoken to the Planning Officer Tom Wyatt and he had advised that one is for the Conservation area.

Although the application states the “facade” will be left the entire roof will be changed and the materials used will not be of the quality of the existing.

It was agreed to recommend refusal of these applications. The Chairman to write a letter listing the Parish Council's reasons for refusal and pass to the Clerk to send to SODC with the planning reply form.

Richard Wingfield to report on the Village website and encourage as many residents to write into SODC Planning with their objections. Deadline for reply is 19th June for P15/S1641 and 25th June for P15/S1632.

5. Note date of next PC meeting which will be the Monday 6th July 2015.

Meeting closed at 7.50pm

Signed..... Date.....