



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Virtually at 20:00 Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

**Members Present**

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Chairman | Jim Donahue  |
| Members  | Hanna Ferguson<br>Jean-Marc Grosfort<br>Katherine Higley<br>Carrie Leadbeater-Hart<br>Diana Smith<br>Jon Steward |

**Officers Present:**

|       |                  |
|-------|------------------|
| Clerk | Jane M. Yamamoto |
|-------|------------------|

**Public and Press:** Dave Bowen, Mike Butt, Cormac Neeson, Richard Wingfield

The meeting started at 20:00.

- 1 **Apologies for absence & Mission Statement** 20:00  
Cllr Jean-Marc Grosfort sent his apologies.
- 2 **Declaration of Interests** by Councillors on any items on the Agenda  
No declarations were made.
- 3 **Public Forum** - an opportunity for members of the public to express their point of view on any item on the agenda. With the Chairman's permission, a member of the public may express their point of view on specific items of business. Five minutes are reserved per item.
- 4 **Chairman's Announcements** 20:05  
A second informal TAPAG Consultation was held on September 3, 2020
  - 10 emails were received just before or shortly after the meeting
  - 9 of these objected to the TAPAG proposal, 1 was in favour. Many of these were in support of one resident's email objecting to double yellow lines in the village and wanting residents parking to be in place before moving forward with changes to parking
  - At least 29 participants spoke at the 3 hour meeting (plus Will Barclay, Jane, myself chairing), based in the notes from the meeting:
    - 8 supported the TAPAG proposal
    - 14 did not support it in its current form. Most of these want at least residential parking to happen at the same time as any parking restriction changes, plus other comments.
    - 6 people were undecided or did not express a strong view

While the number of objections is still far fewer than the number of residents showing support for the proposal in February, I think we need to take them on board and consider carefully what changes are appropriate to the current traffic and parking proposal.

A couple of points to come out of the meeting:

- Some felt that pedestrian safety should be higher priority and more urgent, particularly in front of the Ferryboat and the High Street crossing to Eastfield Lane for the school run. The Ferryboat work can be done largely independent of the other changes.
- Covid-19 has clearly had an impact and the Parish Council needs to consider this, even if the longer-term impacts are still unknown. What we do know is:
  - o Congestion has not been a problem during rush hour periods for the past 6 months
  - o There are fewer people parking in the village to commute to London
  - o In places where there is less parking on the High Street, traffic speeds appear to have increased
- Speeding is an important issue for many and there is currently no concrete proposal to address this.
  - o One point that several people raised was that they worried that the TAPAG parking restriction proposal would increase the speed of traffic in the village. A representative from the Mode Traffic consultant confirmed repeatedly that this was not the case. The village will still have the same traffic calming provisions it currently does in the upper and lower narrows, the toll bridge, and groupings of parking bays. The difference is reduced congestion at key pinch points and these short distances involved will only allow for minimal acceleration.
- Another point to come out of the meeting was that the objectives of the changes has not been communicated clearly, or at least understood by many residents and some people did not agree with the priority of addressing congestion now, given the Covid-19 changes.

Cllr Donahue proposed that the Parish Council holds an extraordinary meeting in the next month or two to consider the feedback and agree on what proposal now makes sense. I believe that an output of the Parish Council discussion should be a clear statement of the objectives and the relative priority of each objective to drive the phasing of its implementation.

Residents Issues:

- Residents raised concerns about Thames Water trucks riding on pavements on Manor Road and damaging the surface. They have asked the PC to raise to Thames Water. I was advised to raise a request for the size and frequency of lorries on Manor Road to Environmental Information Regulations and also if they have other size tankers that they could use. I have done this as a starting point.
- Resident on Hardwick Road backing onto VG asked PC to review a proposal to remove a Sycamore on the border with VG and trim Yew trees overhanging. To be discussed at a PC meeting.
- Glass on the Football goal is continuing. The PC should pursue CCTV.
- Residents have asked for help in resolving a leak on Eastfield Lane near the narrows, where water is seeping out. Clerk raised to Thames Water and Cllr Donahue raised to OCC and Flood forum team/ OCC. Thames Water initially denied responsibility as chlorine tests were negative until recently, when a local resident who is also a Thames Water employee raised this and the tests were proven was positive. Repairs for this leak will now be forthcoming.

- I noted the issue of Ferry Boat pavement that has been recently raised again as it can be done separately from the other initiatives. I will drive this as part of general pavements work – will seek support from Cllr Ferguson and others and update future meetings.
- Still working with OCC to complete to the drainage clearing and culvert survey work. I have been told they should be back next week.
- OCC is also still working with their pavements contractor to confirm timings for the pavement resurfacing. Likely to be in October timeframe. OCC reps were seen inspecting Hardwick Road earlier this week.
- Many people will be aware that drones have been flying over or next to the village boundary from a location on Whitchurch Hill. Concerns have been raised to SODC as noise abatement issues and to Thames Valley police who have visited the site.

- TVP response was: *I have visited the site this morning where the Drones are being flown from which is just behind Castrol but not related. The drone company have hired the field only to fly their aircrafts for a period of two weeks finishing this Friday. The drones are licensed to fly above 50 meters and below 400 and they are registered by the CAA, they are allowed to fly over properties as long as they are over 60 meters as the airspace is free.*
- There was a posting from the company in question on the WOT Web-site: *These are test runs fully CAA compliant. The flight patch is not within or above 100m of any other persons house, or adjoining roads. They only fly a single path, don't carry any cameras, and really aren't interested in anything happening in the village. The local police who attended are more than happy. To add this is not a operation of ATR. We will be in contact with the parish council to redact any information incorrectly published.*

Village Hall – forwarded by Cllr Grosfort, who was unable to attend:

- Unfortunately the code of practice is becoming even more restrictive(in line with our code of practice)
- The Camera club will now not come back before beginning 2021- same with bridge club- the line dancing has closed till further notice.
- This means that most probably we will have no activity and revenue for the rest of this year- However with the grant received we are ok financially.
- Art Exhibition committee had a meeting and would like, if conditions allow it, to do the art exhibition weekend mid-November in order to have something positive happening in the village- we have worked out all set up and circulation to make it viable. We know it will most probably be smaller in term of pieces exhibited and visitors, but it could lift the general spirit of the village. We will decide and let you know by end October if we will go ahead or not.
- We keep working slowly on the general upgrade of the Hall now that the kitchen is 98% finished. We just changed the doors to the toilets and are busy redecorating/painting both toilets.

Councillors questioned the transparency of and how TAPAG communicates. It was explained that although a budget had been approved for TAPAG, the Parish Council must approve any expenditure as TAPAG had no authority to spend any monies.

**Resolution:** It was agreed that the Parish Council would hold an Extraordinary Meeting on Thursday, October 1<sup>st</sup> at 20:00 to discuss TAPAG. No further decisions, including spending approval will be made on progressing the current proposals until this meeting has taken place.

The proposed changes were discussed. The Clerk reminded all that the minutes should be accurate and impersonal.

**Resolution:** The Councillors approved the changes proposed by Cllr Leadbeater-Hart with clarification from Cllr Smith.

6 **Planning Applications** 20:35

6.1 P20/S2260/HH  
Shepherds Close, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7HN  
Proposed single story rear bedroom extension – extension granted 12/8/2020 to 12/09/2020

**Resolution: It was agreed to submit No Objections.**

6.2 P19/S4631/O  
Eastfield House, Eastfield Lane, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7EJ  
Partial demolition of existing care home, construction of extension and associated works and change of use of land at the rear of the Home from C3 to C2to provide additional external amenity space (as amended by additional information received 14 April 2020 and 6 August 2020).

**Resolution: It was agreed to submit Objection with comments Attachment 1**

6.3 P19/S2736/LB  
2 Hill Cottages, High Street, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7HG  
Installation of three roof lights to the rear elevation

**Resolution: It was agreed to submit Objection with comments. The Council agreed with the previous decision made by the conservation officer to reject this retrospective application and would need to see a revised proposal that addresses the conservation area concerns before changing its previous objections.**

6.4 Proposed Tree Works at Cricket Ground/Village Green, Eastfield Lane, Whitchurch-on-Thames  
TPO 97S13/TPO 10S18 Attachments

**Resolution: It was agreed to submit No Objections.**

7 **Finance:** 20:40

7.1 **Resolution:** The following payments were approved for September:

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Clerk salary (August, September 2020)                                  | BACS       |
| Former Clerk Salary (August 2019) 14 hours PC work ad 2 hours Handover | BACS       |
| Playground repair  | £410 + VAT |
| Sanitiser, rust treatment, paint                                       | £85.21     |
| Jim Donahue (Zoom) 1 months  | £14.39     |
| Village Green tap repair   | £400       |
| OALC (Chairmanship Skills Online) Cllr Smith                           | £36        |
| ROSPA (Playground inspection)  | £94.80     |

7.2 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) 20:45

It was suggested that the CIL monies due on October 28, 2020 of £1,464.74 could be allocated to the proposed Tea Hut on the Village Green for the Cricket Club.

**Action:** The Clerk to check with SODC if the October 28, 2020 CIL funds of £1,464.74 could be allocated to the proposed Tea Hut.

**Resolution:** It was agreed that the CIL monies should be automatically transferred to the Parish Council's account as is the norm.

7.3 Debit card for Clerk

It was recommended that the Clerk obtain a debit card to pay for small ongoing expenses. For example, the Parish Council's Zoom subscription.

**Resolution:** It was agreed that the Clerk should apply for a debit card.

- 8.0 Audit 20:50  
The Clerk sought approval for the 2019-2020 annual accounts, annual governance statement and the Notice of Public Rights and Publication.  
It was agreed that the Council required more time to review all the accounts prior to the signing of these documents.  
These, along with the financial risk document will be reviewed prior to the October 8, 2020 meeting.
- 9 New Pavilion Working Group/Pavilion refurbishment – Cllr Donahue, Mike Butt, Cormac Neesom 21:00
- 9.1 Motion to discontinue New Pavilion Working Group  
Cllr Donahue provided an update that now that the Cricket Club was no longer in support of building a new pavilion, the remaining members of NPWG have resigned and he recommended that the NPWG be formally dissolved. There was a recommendation to discuss the process of the working group in the future.  
**Resolution:** It was agreed that the New Pavilion Working Group be dissolved.
- 9.2 Cricket Club to make proposals for refurbishing existing buildings 21:15  
Cormac presented slides for refurbishment of the cricket pavilion, and replacing the Tea Hut with a new building. This would include providing water supply and replacing the electrical system for the Tea Hut. The Tea Hut was used for the Village Fete and the Primary School (sports day) and the lack of water and electricity hindered the organisation of these events.  
A builder within the Cricket Club provided an indicative pricing to replace the Tea Hut of £30k with contingency. Works to refurbish the pavilion changing room would be £15k with contingency and with Cricket Club members helping.  
The Cricket Club proposed that the Parish Council own the Tea Hut and the Cricket Club own the Pavilion and changing rooms. Alternatively, the Cricket Club could own both buildings, but the Parish Council would support this. The Cricket Club would be willing share the costs of the utilities of the Tea Hut: such as 50% of water and electricity or whatever was agreed. The Cricket Club would have the priority of use during the Cricket season but would continue to facilitate other users. For example, no cricket would be planned to allow Sports Day or the Village Fete. The Cricket Club currently makes no money from private use of the facilities.  
Cormac expressed frustration with the slow process for this refurbishment. The Cricket Club wasted £5-6k on repairs in recent years and the poor state of the facilities contributed to them losing junior and girls' cricket teams. They are keen to complete the works as soon as possible.  
Mike advised that the Tea Hut used to be the WOT Bowls Club.  
The Parish Council thanked the Cricket Club for their clear proposals. It advised that work on the new pavilion had been abandoned and would consider taking

responsibility to replace and own the Tea Hut. 3 quotes would be required and councillors would need to be able to allocate time to lead the Tea Hut development activity including fund raising. It was recommended that the Parish Council and the Cricket Club work together to obtain funding. The Cricket Club advised that they would be approaching Vice-President benefactors, funding applications from Covid-19 continuity and others for smaller amounts.

**Resolution:** It was agreed that the Parish Council would no longer pursue development of the new pavilion that had previously been given planning approval.

**Action:** Parish council to review the implications of taking on responsibility for replacing and owning a new Tea Hut and provide the Cricket Club with their decision.

10 Manor Road Playground Report and Repair – Cllrs Ferguson and Steward (Attachment 1) 21:45

Cllr Ferguson recommended Option 1 for the repair of the playground equipment. It was suggested that a maintenance plan be developed after the Manor Road playground report concluded it held a medium and low risk. With regular maintenance, perhaps with the help of the Green Team, the facilities would not fall into disrepair.

Cllr Steward offered to continue spraying disinfectant once a week after having sprayed it once every day. Cllr Leadbeater-Hart offered to share the responsibility. Cllr Steward was trying to save a Rowan tree within the grounds by placing soil round the bottom of it. Cllr Higley advised that the tree surgeons had recommended to pull it out.

**Resolution:** It was agreed to approve the expenditure for Option 1 and to approve the expenditure for additional sanitiser, rust paint and treatment.

11 Opening of Village Hall – Cllr Grosfort  
See above in the Chairman’s Announcements.

12 Village Green – Cllrs Ferguson and Steward

12.1 Update on sign 21:50

Cllr Ferguson presented 3 quotes. The Village Green Working Group were happy to go ahead with the cheapest one from Kingdom Signs. It was £345 + postage for one sign and £200 fitting and 2 signs £735. The Parish Council was able to input into the design. It was suggested that the logo of WOT PC be placed on it.

**Resolution:** It was agreed to purchase 2 signs from Kingdom Signs and have it fitted by the company.

12.2 Use of CCTV

Cllr Ferguson presented 3 quotes: 1) First supplier was not fully comprehensive and excluded some aspects for £960; 2) ICU was for £1,018; 3) Digital Dan was for £1,900. All required to have mains electricity at a minimum. The system would be locked in the Pavilion with only 1-2 nominated persons to have access, password protected and the Cricket Club must agree to have it. It would be recorded footage as there was no WIFI. Cllr Ferguson recommended ICU.

It was recommended to have 2 cameras pointed at the goal area and one at the entrance of car park or rest of the field. The next steps would include to carry out

further consultations and privacy impact assessment, to establish ongoing costs (electricity and persons monitoring footage), to develop CCTV user policy and to appoint a Data Officer.

It was not clear if the glass found on the green was old or new.

**Action:** Cllr Leadbeater-Hart to double check with members of the AFC Whitchurch and Cricket Club if glass in front of the goal posts were new.

12.3 Repair of water tap near Football pitch

Cllr Steward reported that no one would provide a quotation for the repair of the tap. Cllr Steward would ask Nick Plumridge if he would repair it but would be willing to do it himself at cost of materials only.

**Resolution:** It was agreed that £400 was approved for the labour and materials to repair the tap.

12.4 Update on gate security

Cllr Ferguson reported that OCC would visit the Village Green in October to provide guidance on appropriate security options.

12.5 Tree Cutting on Hardwick Road adjacent to the Village Green

22:05

-Motion to authorise residents with fence backing onto Village Green with authority to remove Sycamore Tree on border with Village Green and to trim overhanging Yew branches

-Motion to authorise replacement tree on Village Green near where Sycamore was.

**Resolution:** It was agreed to provide approval for the residents to remove the Sycamore tree and to trim Yew branches.

-Cllr Smith recommended that a tree be planted on the Village Green for Pam Wilkinson. It could be planted some distance from the boundary and as a replacement for the Sycamore to be felled.

**Resolution:** It was agreed that a memorial tree should be planted on the Village Green for Pam Wilkinson to replace the one that is being removed.

12.6 BBQ on Village Green/Cricket Club – Cllr Higley

Cllr Higley advised that a resident asked who owned the BBQ and who cleaned it. The Council was advised it belonged to the Cricket Club. Cllr Steward offered to clean this on Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>.

13 Yew Trees on Manor Road and other trees from playground to High Street – Cllr Higley

22:00

Cllr Higley updated that a recommendation to do the survey to submit to SODC would take up to 8 weeks to get a response.

14 PAWS Apple Juicing Day and 10-year Anniversary

22:15

Cllr Donahue advised that this event had been cancelled due the recent Covid-19 restrictions to restrict social gatherings to 6 people.

15 Residents Issues Update

**Resolution:** it was agreed that the September 2020 update to the Residents issue could be published on the village web-site, including closing the issue related to the boat.

- 16 To review progress on any open actions from previous Parish Council meetings and agree any revision of actions on the action list. 22:25  
- Already covered in other topics and will be reflection in an update to the Action log.
- 17 Azalea landscape maintenance – Cllr Steward reported that the current contractor from Azalea had broken equipment and could not carry out some of the village maintenance. A councillor raised the concern that overgrown bramble on Muddy Lane impacted pedestrians, including school children and parents.  
**Action:** Cllr Steward will ask if the bramble on Muddy Lane could be cut by hand.
- 18 To confirm the date and time of the Extraordinary Meeting on Thursday, October 1, 2020 and the next Parish Council Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup>, October 2020 at 20:00.  
**Resolution:** Meeting dates approved.
- 19 Meeting Close 22:30

## Attachment 1 – Repair of Playground

Hi Jon, Jim and Jane,

I have received quotes for fixing the slide in the playground. As you know, the floor panel needs replacing as it has a hole, and the sooner it is replaced the better. I also noted that one of the roof panels was also starting to have some wear and tear damage so I also asked the providers to include the replacement of the roof panels as an additional cost in the quotes. One of the providers who visited the playground to measure up also confirmed that the roof panels were in need of replacement.

Are we having a council meeting next week where this expenditure could be approved? If so, I will then circulate the below to the whole of the council in preparation.

The play-equipment is by Ludoparc which is a French provider. They only have 1 or 2 spare part suppliers in the UK and the spare parts are very expensive so all the providers have recommended replacing the floor panel (and roof panels) with alternative material than official Ludoparc replacement panels. This makes sense to me.

### **1. Ard Playground**

Replacement material: Mexideck (similar to existing material)

Cost of replacing just floor panel with Mexideck: £350 + VAT

**Cost of replacing floor panel and the roof panels x 2 with Mexideck: £410 + VAT**

Cost of replacing floor panel and the roof panels x 2 with Ludoparc spare parts: £1665 + VAT

### **2. CJM Services**

Replacement material: Marine weather proof mesh deck panel

Cost of replacing just floor panel with mesh deck: £315 + VAT

Cost of replacing floor panel and the roof panels x 2 with mesh deck: £905 + VAT

### **3. Playgoundworks Ltd**

Replacement material: HDPE grip board as a replacement.

Cost of replacing just floor panel with mesh deck: £545 + VAT

Cost of replacing floor panel and the roof panels x 2 with mesh deck: Requested but not yet provided, but based on floor replacement cost, the most expensive provider.

Regards,

Hanna