

WHITCHURCH ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall

Thursday 8.00pm 18th April 2019

Present

Chairman – Cllr Jim Donahue

Vice Chairman – Cllr Rachel Hatcher

Cllr Warren Beard

Cllr Katherine Higley

Oxfordshire County Councillor – Cllr Kevin Bulmer

Members of the public – David Green, Jennifer Bruce, Ian Bruce, Sally Trinder, Will Barclay, Trish Hollinghurst, Pam Wilkinson, Shirley Hutchins, Hilary Jensen, Neil Huntington, Julie Huntington, Jonathan Steward.

1. Apologies for absence, read Mission Statement

Cllr Keith Brooks and Cllr David Bowen sent their apologies.

Cllr Hatcher read out the Mission Statement.

2. Receive Declarations of Interest

None

Public Forum

The Boat Will Barclay presented a brief paper expressing concerns about ‘The Boat’. The concerns were related to the perception of ‘The Boat’ as a piece of art and the location. Currently it obscures the entrance to the church which has a rare bell shaped entrance. He felt that there was a lack of consistency in terms of refusing the yurts at Bozedown Farm and maintaining ‘The Boat’ when both were in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Will Barclay stated that a number of residents had expressed their concerns about its location affecting the value of their property and a number of people would like it removed.

Will Barclay felt that due diligence had not been followed as no planning permission for an art feature had been sought before it was installed. Planning would require risk assessments, scale and measurements, installation plan, nature of any community involvement, a design statement, site ownership and a maintenance plan. This would need to happen wherever any art work is sited not just in a conservation area. and art features need to be discussed at village level. He also expressed concerns about money being spent on maintaining ‘The Boat’ when this is public money and with the Village Plan requiring investment would funds be better directed towards these planned projects.

Will Barclay suggested moving ‘The Boat’ to another area of the village eg the Village Hall or the Village Green. He would like to hear from the Parish Council what should happen next.

Planning application for 9 Swanston Fields Neil Huntington explained the Village Plan has an unfavorable view on infill and granting permission for this building work would set a dangerous precedent. Whitchurch on Thames is dominated by trees and this is one of the features of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, many gardens include mature trees. If one planning permission is passed then many others might follow. Shirley Hutchins expressed concerns about highway safety and pedestrian safety. In the past planning has been refused twice due to access issues and this proposal would add to parking problems. Planning at SODC should be looking to maintain rural areas. Ian Bruce commented that this planning application would alter the appearance of the street and a developer could take advantage of this precedent.

Agree minutes of Parish Council meeting and review open actions

- i. Minutes for 21st March approved and signed off.
- ii. PC 19 – ‘20 is plenty’, 2 stickers and a flyer are being distributed around the village. Cllr Hatcher felt that the conversations taking place with people as the information was handed out was proving to be useful. Closed
- iii. PC-49 TAPAG minutes, Cllr Hatcher explained she would share information from TAPAG meetings with the Parish Council and invite people to talk to her rather than read minutes on the website. Hilary Jensen suggested a page for TAPAG on the website. It was agreed the minutes from the meeting of 11th April 2019 would be sent to councilors and updates would be shared with the village via the Village Bulletin. Closed
Action: Cllr Hatcher to send minutes from TAPAG meeting 11.4.19 to parish councilors.
Action: Cllr Hatcher to share TAPAG updates with residents via The Village Bulletin.
- iv. PC-61 Update on Terms of Reference for TAPAG , there are now draft Terms of Reference and these are to be on the agenda for May. Open
- v. PC-69 Fire Risk Assessment for Cricket Club – The Cricket Club have been sent a copy of the Fire Risk Assessment to use if they wanted. Close
- vi. Councillor Training – It was agreed that 12th June 7pm-10pm was the best date for councilors to attend training with Elizabeth Howlett.
Resolution: Councillors agreed 12th June 2019 7pm-10pm was the best time for training.
Action: Ina Chantry to contact Elizabeth Howlett and confirm date of councilor training 12th June 2019 7pm-10pm.

5. Review planning applications

i. P19/S0826/FUL 9 Swanston Field, RG8 7HP – Proposed three bedroom single storey dwelling and creation of additional vehicular access to form a part shared part private fenced drive. Cllr Jim Donahue has spoken to most of the neighbours. This is infill and there are already two on Swanston fields but they have separate drives whereas this one has two drives very close together and would be partially shared. The street lamp appears to be in the way of the planned drive. The planned drive is very close to the cut and raises issues of pedestrian safety. The plan does not appear to be following planning design guidelines as it is very close to the boundary.

Resolution: Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council voted to object to the planning application on the grounds of squeezed in and manufactured access, unsympathetic infill, overdevelopment, overlooking and unneighbourly, inconsistent with local architecture, highway and pedestrian safety, parking and setting a precedent for future developments.

Action: Ina Chantry to contact Jane Murphy at SODC asking for this planning application to be taken to the Planning Committee.

- ii. P19/S0961/HH Swanston House, High Street RG8 7ER, construction of hard surfaced tennis court with hard fencing. Cllr Beard had checked the SODC website and as of 18th April there had been no objections. The court was planned for the east boundary that was currently screened by mature trees. The court would have a hard green surface. David Green expressed concerns about the proximity of his property to the boundary and the fact the new fencing would be higher than the boundary wall. Permission had already been granted for four trees to be removed.

Resolution: The Parish Council had no objections to the planned work but raised concerns about the increased level of noise. Cllr Hatcher abstained.

Action: Ina Chantry to find out and clarify SODC policy on tree removal from property.

- iii. P19/S0997/HH Foxglove Manor, Whitchurch Hill, Rg8,7NT variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of application P14/S3607/HH changes to the loggia and car port. Erection of outbuildings, minor engineering works and small extension to the existing dwelling to form an open loggia. Plans had been previously approved in 2014 and this is a renewed and amended application.

Resolution: The Parish Council had no objections to the planned work.

- iv. P19/S1092/HH 14 Swanston Field, RG8 7HP, Single storey timber outbuilding for use as a garden room. Cllr Beard had checked the SODC website and all comments were supportive.

Resolution: The Parish Council has no objections to the planned work.

6. Receive County Councillor's report

Cllr Bulmer's formal report is attached to the website. However Cllr Bulmer confirmed that a grant application will be looked upon favourably once checks have been made.

Action: Parish Clerk to send grant application to Councillor Priority Fund.

A recent meeting with Will Barclay, as a representative of TAPAG, meant that Cllr Bulmer and the highways officer, Matt Archer, were up to date on the issues facing Whitchurch on Thames.

7. Finances

- i. Approve payments and note receipts for the preceding month

Payment	Amount	Receipt	Amount
Clerk's salary and expenses		Precept	£13,291.39
Dog bin emptying Jan-Mar	£52.38		
Site Spider – web site hosting	£50.00		
D Maynerd – repair of 'The Boat'	£103.46		
Clerk expenses – ink, stamps etc	£42.36		
K Brooks - expenses	£23.41		
Castle Water – Water bill Village green	£500.59		

Total – les Clerks salary	£772.20	Total	£13,291.39
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- ii. Current bank reconciliation noted and signed off
- iii. Trial balance for current year 2018-19 noted and signed off
- iv. Nominal Ledger by Account for year 2018-19 noted and signed off.
- v. Detailed Receipts and Payments by Budget heading up to 31/3/19 noted and signed off.
- vi. Summary of Receipts and Payments by Budget Heading 2018-19 noted and signed off.
- vii. Annual Return detailed for 2018-19 noted and signed off.
- viii. Transactions including VAT for 1/10/18-31/3/19 noted and signed off
- ix. Cashbook breakdown 2018-19 noted and signed off.
- x. Annual Return for 2018-19 agreed by the Parish Council and signed off.
- xi. Variance Report agreed by Parish Councillors and signed off.
- xii. Risk Assessment for 2018 -19 had been approved at the parish council meeting in February 2018, it was agreed to review and accept the proposed new Risk Assessment at the meeting in May.
- xiii. Financial Regulations for 2018-19 had been approved at the parish council meeting in February 2018, it was agreed to review and accept the proposed new Financial Regulations at the meeting in May.
- xiv. The Parish Council agreed to the proposed rise in the Parish Clerk’s salary to £10.57 per hour from 1st April 2019.
- xv. The Parish Council approved an application for a Direct Debit card for Parish Council business for the use of the Parish Clerk within the Financial Regulations.

8. Village maintenance

There have been two quotations to repair the plinth one for £840 and another for £1,100 plus VAT. The repairs are being paid for by the car company who caused the damage. The preferred company, AFJones had originally replied saying they were too busy however it was agreed the Parish Clerk would contact them and ask if the repair work could be booked in and carried out at their earliest convenience.

Resolution: To approach AFJones, the Stonemasons and ask to be booked in for the repair work to the plinth.

Action: Ina Chantry to contact AFJones and ask for to be booked in for work on gate plinth to be completed.

9. Pavillion

Neil Huntington explained that updated plans had been circulated to all councilors. The toilets had now been changed to unisex cubicles as this gave greater flexibility when two teams were playing. The proposed raised patio would have a picket fence surrounding it. The raised patio would be the same height as the entrance into the pavilion. This would increase the footprint of the pavilion and makes it a better outside area and more useable. Cllr Hatcher pointed out the plan would reduce the amount of mud being brought into the pavilion and could reduce damage to the grass immediately outside the building. Cormac is in favour of the proposals.

The next stage is to start pricing up the various works that will need to take place. Currently £7,000 has been approved with the majority of this being the cost of the architect. Costs of more than £500 will need three quotations

Resolution: All Parish Councillors approved the changes to the design of the pavilion

Resolution: Up to £250 can be approved by an individual councilor where they have responsibility for a specific area, if it is within the current plans.

Action: Parish Clerk to check the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations agree with each other and match information.

10.GDPR

Cllr Higley had shared with councilors an updated Privacy Notice. It was agreed the information we kept, as a parish council, were names and email addresses and planning application information.

Resolution: The Parish Council agreed to adopt the privacy statement.

11. Resident's Issues List

Village Green – closed, weekly cuts are starting in April. The cut will be on a Friday to ensure the cricket pitch has short grass.

Action : Parish Clerk to find grass cutting schedule and sent to the web site.

Dog fouling – there was a brief discussion on having a bin on the Village Green. It was agreed it needed to have sections for recycling and non-recycling.

Action: Parish Clerk to investigate costs of a new bin for the Village Green.

‘The Boat’ – it was agreed the Parish Council needed to find out about planning permission for The Boat’

Action: Parish Clerk to find out planning regulations for ‘The Boat’ and feed back to the Parish Council

Hartslock Bridleway, Bozedown Farm and 9 Swanston Fields are all planning applications the Parish Council has objected to.

Action: Parish Clerk to check if Bozedown Farm and Hartslock Bridleway planning applications are going to a Planning Committee Meeting at SODC.

Ownership of the verge, this is being clarified by the traffic consultant.

Ivy on the wall – Closed, this has been raised with the owners.

Hoptons – Cllr Donahue had visited the owners and they explained the householders in 1985 had been granted planning permission for an access to Manor Road. The request for a lowered kerb was granted by SODC as part of permitted development in 2017. It was agreed the Parish Council needs to maintain Parish Council owned land near Hoptons to maintain legal liabilities. Cllr Donahue has asked the owners to contact the Parish Council if they were concerned about tree maintenance.

Resolution: Parish Council to maintain land near Hoptons.

12. Any Other Business

Neil Huntington raised the issue of damage caused to Eastfield House by a group of teenagers. They were arrested by the Police but the next day three more broke into the property. Windows have been broken. This has been graded by the Police as anti-social behavior and not breaking and entering. The current fencing around the property has become damaged. Majesticare do have a duty of care and if an intruder was injured while on the property Majesticare would be liable.

Action: Parish Clerk to contact Majesticare and ask if the fencing could be improved to increase security.

The Annual Assembly is planned for later in May and each group representative is allowed two to three minutes to give a verbal update.

Date of next meeting 8.00pm 16th May 2019, at the Village Hall.