

Minutes
of Sulhamstead Parish Council Meeting
held at SUN Village Hall Thursday 17th July 2014 at 7.30pm

Present: Mr. Bill Jones (Chairman), Parish Councillors:, Mr. Ivan Wise, Mrs. Rosemary Sanders-Rose, Ms. Teresa Sosna, Mr. Richard Smith, Mrs. Margaret Baxter and Mr. Keith Chopping

In attendance: Mrs. Elisabeth Shaw-Brookman (Clerk)

Open Forum: Members of the Public will be invited to comment on any of the items on the agenda before the meeting convenes.

Declarations of Interest: Visitors are reminded that declarations of interest must be made where appropriate.

1. Apologies

Apologies received from Mr. Gary Newell and Mr. Roger Ashfield

2. Declarations of Interest by Councillors

None

3. Approval of Minutes of 15th May 2014

Minutes from the meeting held on 15th May 2014 were approved and signed.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes of 15th May 2014

All will be covered under separate headings below

a) Minutes from Annual Parish Assembly 15 May 2014:

Mrs. Sanders-Rose requested that under item 6 - Parochial Charities Report - this should reflect that she had made the request for an update on funding for St Peter's Church on behalf of another member of the parish. This will be noted in the formal minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting.

5. Local Interest

a) Public Open Space

An ownership sign and dog fouling signs should be displayed and the Clerk is investigating the best wording.

Mr. Wise informed the meeting that a number of springs have popped up since the flooding. In one place the water is still running and he recommends that a pipe be laid underground with a walk way over the top completing the pathway around the POS. Bob Hurst Garden Services have quoted £170 to do the work required. This quote was formally proposed by Mrs. Sanders-Rose and agreed by Mrs. Baxter – all were in agreement.

b) Website & Parish Communication –

December	2393 - hits
January:	3102
February:	3212
March:	3202
April:	2633
May	2627
June	3054

There are ongoing discussions about the proposal to have business advertising on the website which would be chargeable and bring in valuable income to cover the costs of maintaining the website. The website is proving a valuable and popular source of information to parishioners in Sulhamstead and surrounding areas. It does however take a certain amount of the Clerk's time and that of our website support agent Mr. Steve Hounsome so it would be of benefit if it were self-financing. Mr. Jones and Mr. Hounsome have drawn up draft wording for the Terms & Conditions. Mr. Jones has spoken to Mr. David Hollins, in West Berkshire's Legal Department, who was very supportive of the venture and gave some advice on how to avoid conflict of interest and suggested that we have trial period of 9 months. Once everything has been drafted and provisionally agreed, the Committee will report back to the Council with a view to starting the advertisements at the beginning of September.

c) Local Roads

An outline of road repairs in our area has just been received from WBC. Details were circulated to the Councillors but can be found on the following link:

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=27889>

The Councillors were delighted that Jacques Lane is due to be re-surfaced in August. However the main areas of flooding in the Lane were due to poorly maintained ditches. The Clerk was asked to contact West Berkshire Council requesting the ditches be cleared as soon as possible to avoid future problems.

The gravel problem in Folly Lane seems to be a little better. The repairs to the swing bridge at Tyle Mill are on-going, this is the Waterways' responsibility. Mr. Smith will keep the Clerk informed on any further highway issues.

The problem of speeding in Three Firs Way is being actively addressed by the PCSOs who will also liaise with Sovereign Housing over the issue.

d) Sunday Bus Service

We have been informed by WBC that from the beginning of September Reading Buses will withdraw their Sunday Lime 2 service from Mortimer Railway Station as it is not proving viable. It may be taken over by another operator and we will be informed in due course.

e) Flooding Issues

1) An update was given by Mr. Richard Smith; covered under 5c above.

2) Consultation on Community Emergency Plan Template & Tool Kit. This was circulated to the Parish Councillors on 14th July – Mr. Smith will look at the Consultation and request assistance from other Councillors if necessary.

6. Planning Applications

a) Planning Decisions taken since last meeting:

Baytree and May Cottages : 14/01395/FULD (revised application): No Objections

The Oaks: : 14/01405/HOUSE No Objections

- b) May Cottage Application: Mr. Jones confirmed the decision not to offer any objections. He explained that the grounds for our original objection had been addressed and met. WBC had objected on different grounds to SPC.
- c) New Planning Applications received were discussed:

7 Shortheath Lane, Sulhamstead 14/01547/HOUSE - Proposed rear conservatory
Rose Court, Sulhamstead 14/01701/HOUSE – Proposed rear PVCu conservatory

No objections were raised with either of the planning applications.

- d) A Draft Proposal called Burghfield Park has been received from Floodline Developments. Members of the public have expressed their concerns about the traffic and flooding implications, together with the impact on local schools and drainage facilities. There is a Public Consultation being held at Burghfield Village Hall on Saturday 19th July 2:30-5pm, one has already been held on 12th July at Burghfield Sailing Club. Parish Councillors will attend the consultation on the 19th July and respond accordingly. Mr. Chopping said that this was not one of WBC preferred sites for the allocation of housing up to 2026.

Mr. Chopping gave a very detailed and helpful briefing on the plans for numbers and preferred sites for housing and gypsy and travellers' sites in West Berkshire up to 2026. The total number of houses required is 10,500 (although the Inspector inserted the words "at least" in front of the number of 10,500). Approximately 9,000 have either been built or permission to build has been given. Of the remaining 1,500 the planning officers have gone through the sites offered and have arrived at a possible list to provide 2,000, although 1,500 are required to achieve the total. There is a formal full Council meeting on Tuesday 22nd July where the final list of preferred sites will be decided upon and issued for public consultation.

The preferred sites in Burghfield are :

Land at the rear of the Hollies Nursing Home, Reading Road

Land adjoining Poundhouse Farm, Clayhill Road

There are no preferred sites within Sulhamstead Parish.

Mr. Chopping gave details of the two sites that had been put forward for housing and gypsy and travellers and explained why these had been rejected.

Land at Firlands: Planning Application for 125 houses. Details of reasons for rejection will be specified in the DPD document which will be issued for consultation on the 25th July.

Land at Benhams Farm: This land had been offered for housing and for a Gypsy, Romany and Travellers site. The offer for housing was rejected and there is no requirement for a gypsy and travellers' site at Benhams Farm as there are sufficient proposed pitches across the rest of the District.

The Clerk was asked to urgently circulate a request to the Parish Councillors for a convenient date to hold a Planning Meeting of the Council to discuss both the DPD consultation document and the planning application for Firlands.

7. Finance

a)

1. Account Balances Current :	£12445.16	
Savings:	£14648.22	
Investment Bond	£30,000.00	maturing 1/10/15
Total:	£57,093.38	

2. Proforma Invoices requiring signatures:

General Technics	£50.00
Clerk's expenses 1.4.-30.6.2014	£93.15
Total	£143.15

An up-to-date Bank Reconciliation was given to the Councillors

b) Update on Audit:

The Audit papers have been sent to Mazars for approval immediately after the meeting on 15th May. The members of the public have until tomorrow (18th July) to contact Mazars with any queries – notice of this was posted on the noticeboards. The Clerk is in contact with Mazars over a query on where the money held for the upkeep of the POS should be shown on the accounts – this seems to be an ongoing issue which the Clerk has asked Mazars to liaise with Auditing Solutions and come back with a definitive answer so that in future she will show it in the correct column.

c) Online Banking.

We are making slow progress towards resolving the issues that have held up online banking. Mr. Wise and Mrs. Baxter are able to access the accounts. Mr. Jones is almost there but the Clerk's application has been twice lost by Lloyds. A very helpful member of staff at Lloyds in Tadley is endeavouring to progress matters and it is hoped that we will have a positive outcome to report at the next Parish Council Meeting.

d) There is a requirement to spend some money on the POS. Details under 9 (d)

e) Donation to SUN School

A request for a donation towards the replacement Shed at SUN School was been received.

Thanks to a very generous donation for the total amount received by the school from the Berkshire Masonic Charity, they no longer require any further monies.

8) Review of the Post

A letter has been received from Mr. Peter Newall Hon., Treasurer/Secretary of The Ufton Nerve Fuel Allotment Charity, in response to a request from a Councillor – via the Clerk – concerning the grants made for the restoration of St Peters Church. The matter will be put before the Trustees at their next meeting.

9) Any other Business

a) New Councillor Applications.

Two applications for the vacant post of Parish Councillor have been received and an interviewing panel will be convened and the applicants contacted accordingly.

b) Mr. Smith had contacted the Clerk after the meetings in May requesting that the APA and AGM be held at a different date to reduce the amount of work required on one night. The Clerk has investigated this and it appears perfectly in order to do this. The suggestion is that we hold the APA on the same night as the March Meeting and the AGM with the May meeting. This was unanimously agreed.

c) Annual Standards Committee Report has been received. The Clerk was asked to circulate this to the Councillors and bring the comments to the Parish Council meeting in September.

d) Condition of the Playpark in Acorn Gardens.

Mr. Wise gave a detailed report on the condition of the play area surface and equipment that need urgent attention. Some the wooden batons surrounding the surface matting are missing and are a “trip” hazard. He had received a quotation from Bob Hirst Garden Services of £370 for repairs. There are places on the climbing frame that also need repair or replacing. Mr. Wise, Mr. Jones and the Clerk will meet with the original suppliers of the equipment on Tuesday 22nd. and they will come back to the Council with their recommendations. Two quotations for the work will be sought. There are possible sources of grants towards the replacement of the equipment should this be necessary.

e) Mrs. Baxter had received a request from Mrs. Diana Bagshaw that the Parish Council consider awarding an Annual Citizen Award for a resident of Sulhamstead. It was agreed that this would be a good idea and the Clerk was asked to contact Mortimer Parish Clerk to investigate how they organise their Award.

10) Next Parish Council Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 18th September 2014 at 7.30pm in the SUN Village Hall.