

Minutes
of the Sulhamstead Parish Council Meeting held at
Sulhamstead and Ufton Nerve Village Hall on Thursday 20 July 2017 at 7.00pm

Present: Mrs Margaret Baxter (Chairman), Mrs Rosemary Sanders-Rose, Mr Richard Smith, Ms Teresa Sosna, Mr Roger Ashfield, Mr Ivan Wise and District Councillor Keith Chopping (joined at 7.28pm).

In attendance: Mrs Fiona Jones (Clerk)

Open Forum: Members of the Public were invited to comment on any of the items on the agenda before the meeting convened.

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

1) Apologies for Absence

There were none.

2) Declarations of Interest by Councillors

There were none.

3) Open Forum

No comments

4) Approval of Minutes of 16 May 2017

The Minutes were approved and signed.

5) Matters arising from Minutes of 16 May 2017

Removal of Public Footpath Signs off Hollybush Lane

The Clerk had chased the matter up with WBC. She was informed that they were busy with grass cutting and would not be able to take action until the Autumn. **Action: Clerk**

6) Local Interest

a) Public Open Space (POS)

Damage to the fence in the Public Open Space (POS)

The Chairman had written again to the land owner of the field adjoining the Public Open Space, but had had no response. It was agreed to speak to the land owner in person.
Action: The Chairman

In addition, it was agreed to obtain quotations for the repair of the fence and notify WBC of the cost. **Action: Councillor Wise**

Councillor Wise reported that Thames Water had completed the work to temporarily resolve the sewerage problem in the POS but it was likely to be ongoing. It was agreed to obtain a full report from Thames Water on the work they had undertaken, how the problem had been resolved and what their concerns were for the future. **Action: Councillor Wise**

Councillor Wise reported the bridge and wooden posts on the perimeter of the POS had been repaired.

b) Website

The stats for May and June were:

954 unique visitors 2,571 page impressions

847 unique visitors 2,430 page impressions

c) Local Roads, Signs and Weight limits

Councillor Smith had reported to WBC that two speed limit signs at the top of Sulhamstead Hill were very overgrown and obscured from the view of drivers. Mr Smith had followed this up with WBC but no action had been taken by their contractor. It was agreed to write to the home owners at 2 Sulhamstead Hill and ask them to cut back their hedge. **Action: Clerk**

Councillor Sanders-Rose reported that no action had been taken regarding a long pot hole in Shortheath Lane near Councillor Chopping's residence. Councillor Chopping had agreed to investigate and report to WBC if necessary. **Action: Councillor Chopping**

Councillor Wise raised his concerns about the speed of traffic in Ufton Lane / Church Lane as well as lorries that were over the weight limit but still using the canal bridges. It was suggested that CCTV could be installed at Tyle Mill Bridge with a view to reporting vehicles who disregard the weight limit to the police or the Council. Councillor Chopping agreed to write to WBC highways department to propose the idea. Councillor Smith pointed out that there was some doubt as to whether CCTV images would provide sufficient evidence to secure a prosecution and it was agreed that this would be investigated with the Police.

The Chairman expressed her concern at speeding generally within the area.

Action: Councillor Chopping/Councillor Smith and Chairman.

It was also agreed to look into costs for a CCTV Camera. **Action: The Chairman and Clerk**

The Chairman reported that the bridleway near Benhams Farm was closed due to a dead tree which was dangerous and requiring removal. The land owner was in dispute with WBC with regard to ownership of the tree. The Chairman had visited the site with Mr Hurst to see if the tree presented any danger to the adjacent play area. It was concluded that it did not and so the Parish Council has no further involvement in the matter. Councillor Chopping informed the Council that it was likely that WBC would remove the tree.

d) Household Waste and Recycling

Councillor Chopping reported that a planning application was in progress for allowing Padworth to handle general waste.

Councillor Smith had reported a problem with rubbish at the junction of Island Farm Road and the bridle way exiting from Firlands. Despite having reported the issue to WBC on several occasions, the problem had not been fully resolved. The overflowing bins had been emptied but the surrounding rubbish had not been removed. Councillor Chopping agreed to raise this matter with WBC. **Action: Councillor Chopping**

e) Willink Leisure Centre

The Clerk had contacted the Clerks of Burghfield and Stratfield Mortimer Parish Councils to inform them of the Council's intention to stop paying for the Leisure Centre and to seek the

views of the respective councils who were also contributing. The Chairman had subsequently spoken to the Clerk at Burghfield, but the Clerk from Stratfield Mortimer had not yet responded. **Action: Clerk**

f) Newsletter

The newsletter was reviewed by the Council and they agreed to publish and distribute it mid September. Any comments on the draft newsletter were to be submitted to Councillor Wise and Councillor Sosna by Friday 28 July.

Action: Councillor Wise and Councillor Sosna

g) Notice Board

The insurance company had approved the purchase of a replacement notice board to be located at the junction of Three Firs Way, subject to the £100 excess and the recovery of any VAT on the purchase. **Action: Clerk**

h) Councillor Vacancy

The Clerk had notified WBC of the current councillor vacancies and had also advertised them on the notice boards. The Clerk notified the Council that If ten or more people notified WBC electoral office that they want an election then this must take place. In the event that this does not happen, then the Council may co-opt new members as soon as possible after the 14 days notice period. **Action: Clerk**

It was agreed to also advertise the vacancies on Facebook. **Action: Councillor Sosna**

i) Berkshire Association of Local Councils (BALC) Membership

The Council had joined BALC. It was agreed to ask a member of BALC to attend the next Council meeting to discuss how they can help the Council with the planning decisions which have been taken recently. **Action: Clerk**

j) Street Lighting

A member of the public who works on street lighting for a living had offered to convert the remaining Parish Council owned street light to LED. This had been carried out free of charge by Mr Rob Woolcock who had also agreed to maintain the light going forwards. The Council were very grateful for Mr Woolcock taking this on. The Chairman took an action to write to Mr Woolcock to thank him. **Action: The Chairman**

k) Litter Picking Vacancy

The Clerk had been informed that Mrs Karen Eagle had resigned her post. The Chairman recorded the Council's gratitude to Mrs Eagle for her hard work over the last 5 years and agreed to write to her to that effect. The Council discussed increasing the litter pickers' pay from £55 to £60 for 7 hours work per month and this was unanimously agreed. It was agreed that the vacancy should be advertised on Facebook. **Action: Clerk**

l) Community Broadband

Mr Lindley provided an update on progress and informed the Council that the network was now live. Work was currently taking place to identify the best location in order to introduce the service to customers in Whitehouse Green.

m) Minerals and Waste

The Council had held a joint meeting with Ufton Nervet Parish Council to discuss the proposed sites for gravel extraction and agreed the feedback which had been entered into the portal by the Clerk.

7) **Planning Applications**

a) **Planning Decisions**

17/00739/FUL Thames Valley Police Training Centre, Sulhamstead

Erection of storage building and fence. Permission was granted.

16/02759/FUL The Spring Inn, Sulhamstead

Permanent siting of two storage containers for domestic storage within the curtilage of the public house. Permission was granted.

b) **New Applications**

17/01809/HOUSE 19 Bluebell Drive, Burghfield Common

Proposed single storey rear extension. Addition of side door. The application was discussed and no objections were raised.

17/01883/HOUSE 7 Brocas Road, Burghfield Common

Part single storey rear extension, part two storey side and rear extension. The application was discussed and no objections were raised.

c) **Burghfield Park, Theale 16/01240/OUTMAJ**

The application had been refused. The Council felt that it was likely to go to appeal and in that instance representations should be made about the Council's ongoing concerns over the potential increase in traffic in the area.

d) **Jackaways Cottage**

The Chairman had written the Planning Inspector about the concerns regarding the removal of the trees on the south-east boundary of the site. To date she had not received a response.

e) **Firlands – Planning Conditions**

The Councillors were concerned that the proposal to discharge water off-site would cause problems in the POS. Councillor Sanders-Rose suggested that the use of a balancing pond might be a possible alternative. After discussion it was agreed to write to Planning to object to the amendment of planning conditions in relation to the discharge of site water off-site. **Action: The Chairman**

f) **Solar Farm**

Councillor Sosna had written to Andrew Heron, the planning officer for the Solar Farm, to enquire how the planning conditions would be enforced.

g) **Benhams Farm**

Councillor Chopping reported that Mr Atkinson had appealed to the Secretary of State regarding the refusal of his recent appeal and it had been agreed that his appeal be re-heard.

8) **Finance:**

a) Account Balances at 30 June, 2017:	Current:	£11,070.33
	Deposit:	£ 4,676.85
	Investment:	£10,000.00
	Bond:	<u>£30,000.00</u>
		£55,747.18

An up-to-date Bank Reconciliation had been sent to the Councillors prior to the meeting.

b) Budget Forecast

Income and Expenditure year to date were sent to the Councillors prior to the meeting and were approved at the meeting.

c) External Auditor

The external auditor had enquired why the council had such large reserves. The Clerk had responded that the Council had been given £40,000 by WBC for the maintenance of the Public Open Space and this was the money held in reserve.

d) Risk Assessment Update

The risk assessment had been reviewed and was formally adopted by the council.

e) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

Further to the review of the Financial Regulations at the Finance Committee, subject to the changes agreed, the council approved the adoption of the revised regulations. The Standing Orders required further work so it was agreed that the Chairman and Vice Chairman would review them and they would be re-presented at the next full Council Meeting. **Action: Chairman and Vice Chairman**

9) Review of Post/ Any Other Business

There was no post to review and no matters of any other business.

Next Parish Council Meeting

To confirm that the next Parish Council Meeting will be on Thursday 21st September, 2017 at 7.00pm, to be held in the Sulhamstead and Ufton Nerve Village Hall.

Mrs Fiona Jones (Clerk)

Distribution

All Councillors

Clerk – Sulhamstead Parish Council

Mr Keith Chopping

Notice Boards

Website