

Minutes
of the Sulhamstead Parish Council Meeting held at
Sulhamstead and Ufton Nervet Village Hall on Thursday 21 September 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, Mrs Liz Penston, Mr Start Stanley and District Councillor Keith Chopping

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 20 July and 13 August 2017

The Minutes were approved and signed. This was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Councillor Smith.

5) Matters arising from Minutes of 20 July and 13 August 2017

Reinstatement of Public Footpath signs off Hollybush Lane – this had been completed

The fence adjoining the Public Open Space (POS) had been repaired. Councillor Wise had requested a full report from Thames Water with regards to the sewerage leak in the POS.

The Clerk had written to the occupants of 3 Sulhamstead Rd. to request that they trim their hedge around the 30mph speed sign.

The pot hole in Shortheath Lane had not been fixed but Councillor Chopping had chased.

No progress had been made on the idea of using CCTV to record overweight vehicles crossing the canal bridge. It was agreed that Councillor Smith and Councillor Chopping would meet to progress the project. **Action: Councillor Smith and Councillor Chopping**

The dangerous tree on the bridleway near Benhams Farm had been cut down.

The waste around the bins in Island Farm Rd. and the bridleway from Firlands had been removed by WBC.

No response had been received from Stratfield Mortimer or Burghfield Parish Councils with regards to their stance on withdrawing from the Willink Leisure Centre contract.

Two Councillor vacancies had been filled, with Mrs Liz Penston and Mr Stuart Stanley having been appointed.

The new noticeboard had been ordered and was due to be delivered in October. It was agreed to arrange for Bob Hirst to install it. **Action: Clerk**

The litter picker vacancy had been filled by Dawn Fisher. As there had been a good response to the advertisement, The Chairman had proposed that an additional litter picker was appointed. This was agreed by all Members. **Action: Chairman and Councillor Wise**

The Chairman had written to WBC planning department objecting to the amendment of the planning conditions for the Firlands development. She had not yet received a response.

Councillor Sosna had written to Andrew Heron at WBC planning to enquire how the planning conditions for the proposed solar farm development at the Stud Farm, Sulhamstead Abbots, would be enforced. Mr Heron had since left WBC and she had not yet received a response.

6) Local Interest

a) Public Open Space (POS)

Thames Water had damaged the bridge in the POS by taking their equipment over it, and the cost to repair was approximately £650. Thames Water had agreed to contribute towards the repairs and Councillor Wise was in contact with them regarding reimbursement of the costs. It was noted that the remedial work carried out by Thames Water was likely to be temporary and that there would be a further requirement for repairs as the drainage system into the POS was overloaded. Thames Water would be approached to provide a risk assessment for further work if necessary. **Action: Councillor Wise**

The Chairman suggested that it was time to invest some of the financial reserves into the POS to tidy up the paths and overgrown trees. The Finance Committee proposed encashing the bond of £30,000 and using £5000 of the money to improve the POS.. The spend was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Councillor Sanders-Rose. Councillor Wise agreed to arrange for a tree surgeon and Bob Hirst to inspect the site and provide an estimate of likely costs.. **Action: Councillor Wise**

b) Website

The stats for July and August were:

949 unique visitors	2,430 page impressions
---------------------	------------------------

943 unique visitors	2,824 page impressions
---------------------	------------------------

Councillor Smith commented that a lot of information provided by other parties on the website was out of date and the Clerk did not have sufficient resources to maintain the whole site, only the Parish Council aspect of it. It was agreed that the Chairman would write to the Parochial Church Council asking them to update their area. **Action: Chairman**

It was agreed that Councillor Smith would make a list of all out of date topics and work on a strategy to identify how the website could be improved and maintained going forwards. **Action: Councillor Smith**

c) Local Roads, Signs and Weight limits

There was nothing in addition to the matters already discussed in 'matters arising'.

d) Household Waste and Recycling

Councillor Chopping reported that a planning application to allow the Padworth Recycling Centre to handle general waste was likely to go before the Eastern Area Planning Committee in October.

e) Willink Leisure Centre

There was a discussion about the Council's intention to give notice to WBC that they wished to withdraw from the Leisure Centre contract. The Chairman proposed that the Council should write to WBC to this effect and following a unanimous vote by the Members this was agreed. **Action: Chairman**

f) Newsletter

It was agreed that the newsletter could go to print. The Chairman thanked Councillor Wise and Councillor Sosna for their hard work preparing the newsletter. Councillor Stanley agreed to ask for a quote from a printer he knew, and the Chairman agreed to contact Purco Print. **Action: Chairman and Councillor Stanley**

g) Standing Orders

Councillor Smith had reviewed and simplified the Standing Orders. It was agreed that three Councillors constituted a quorum. It was also agreed that the Council should tender contracts with a value in excess of £2000. An amendment to the grievance procedure for employees was agreed whereby a grievance should be brought before the whole Council not the Finance Committee. The Chairman proposed that the new Standing Orders should be adopted by the Council and this was agreed by all the Members. Councillor Smith agreed to circulate the final version once the amendments had been made. **Action: Councillor Smith**

h) Community Broadband

Mr Tanner provided an update on progress and informed the Council that the network was now serving 31 customers. An additional feed was expected to be connected near Wises Firs. Also, a potential feed was available in Camp Road if there was sufficient uptake by residents. SUN Village Hall had been connected with free unsecured wifi.

i) Community Champion

WBC have launched 2017 awards for Community Champions. Various categories are available and nominations are sought by email. Councillor Saunders Rose commented that the Ufton Scout leaders, Vince and Cathryn Knight were deserving of 'best volunteer'. The Chairman asked the Councillors to put forward any candidates to her. The deadline is 27th October. **Action: All Councillors**

j) Boundary Review of West Berkshire

The Boundary Commission had proposed that Suhamstead Parish be split into 2 wards – Burghfield and Aldermaston. The number of Councillors serving WBC would be reduced and the wards made larger. The proposal was discussed by the Council and the Chairman agreed to pull together a response. **Action: Chairman**

k) Joint Fundraising with the Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Rev. Peabody had written to the Chairman to ask if the Parish Council would be prepared to form a combined community and fund raising body with Ufton Nerve Parish Council and the PCC. He proposed that a joint sub-committee with representatives from the PCC and both Parish Councils be created, who would be responsible for organising community fund

raising events. The profits would then be shared between the three parties. The PCC share would go into Church funds and the Parish Councils could decide how they wished to allocate their share.

The proposal was discussed and the Clerk clarified that the Parish Council could not provide or raise funds directly for a church. The Parish Council could however appoint representatives on an independent committee that would raise funds for the community. If the 'three way split' of funds was preferred, the terms of reference of the committee would need to be very clear on this and specify exactly what the funds could be spent on. If the Church wanted to raise funds simply for Church activities or the maintenance of their buildings they would need to do this independently. It was agreed that the Chairman would contact Rev. Peabody to further explore options. **Action: Chairman**

l) SUN School Event 18 November

Mrs Chopping cordially invited all the Councillors and their Partners to attend an event at the school to welcome the new head teacher. If Councillors were able to attend they were asked to let Mrs Chopping know. **Action: All Councillors**

m) BALC Training

It was agreed that the Chairman, Councillor Wise and Councillor Sosna would attend Planning Framework training to be held in October. In addition, Councillor Penston and Councillor Stanley agreed to attend the Fundamental Councillor training. **Action: Clerk**

n) Meeting Dates for 2018

Finance & SPC Meeting – 18 January

APA & SPC Meeting – 15 March

AGM & SPC Meeting – 17 May

Finance & SPC Meeting – 19 July

SPC Meeting – 20 September

SPC Meeting – 15 November

7) Planning Applications

a) Planning Decisions

17/01809/HOUSE 19 Bluebell Drive, Burghfield Common

Proposed single storey rear extension. Addition of side door. Approved.

17/02024/CERTP 54 Normoor Road, Burghfield Common

The Certificate of Lawfulness was granted.

17/01883/HOUSE 7 Brocas Road, Burghfield Common

Part single storey rear extension, part two storey side and rear extension. Approved

b) New Applications

There were none.

c) Benhams Farm

The appeal by Charlesgate Homes to The Secretary of State regarding the recent planning appeal decision for Benhams Farm had resulted in the decision to disregard the original planning appeal. A new appeal would be instigated. The Chairman had spoken to the Planning Inspectorate to clarify the arrangements going forward and they had confirmed that the appeal process would start again and be conducted in the usual manner. Details would follow.

d) The Pines, Sulhamstead

Three Councillors had attended a site visit to discuss the owners' application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for The Pines, and no objections had been raised. At that meeting the owner had also expressed a desire to create a separate entrance to The Pines. While such a proposal was not the purpose of the visit, Councillors visited the site of the new entrance and expressed concern at the proximity of the proposed entrance to a sharp bend in the road and the poor sightlines. The Chairman had subsequently written to the owner to inform them that if they wished to pursue the possibility of a separate entrance for The Pines, they would need to apply for planning permission.

8) Finance:

a) Account Balances at 31 August, 2017:	Current:	£ 8,992.37
	Deposit:	£ 4,677.24
	Investment:	£10,000.00
	Bond:	<u>£30,000.00</u>
		£53,669.61

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. There was a small overspend of £187 on BALC membership.

c) External Auditor

The external auditor had commented that the Council had no powers to hold revenue reserves for general purposes other than for reasonable working capital and should consider earmarking funds for specific purposes. As the Council holds reserves for the upkeep of the POS, the auditor had advised that the Council record during their budget discussions in January that they had reviewed their reserves and they were being held for this specific purpose. **Action: Clerk**

d) Bond Maturity

Further to the agreement to encash £5000 for the upkeep of the POS, it was agreed to reinvest the remaining £25,000 in a bond with Lloyds Bank. **Action: Clerk**

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 16th November, 2017 at 7.00pm, to be held in the Parish Room, St Mary's Church, Sulhamstead Abbots.

Mrs Fiona Jones (Clerk)

Distribution

All Councillors

Clerk – Sulhamstead Parish Council

Mr Keith Chopping

Notice Boards

Website