

## BARKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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**Minutes** of meeting of the Barkham Parish Council held on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2017  
in Barkham Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

**Present:** Mrs P. Stubbs (in the Chair), Mr F. A. Scott, Mr. D. Oxbrough, Mr K. Lane, Mr G. Dexter, Mr J. Kaiser (Borough Councillor) and the Clerk.

**Apologies:** Mr L. Heath (on holiday), Mr. C. Heyliger (on holiday), Mr R. Rowe (a prior engagement), Mr A. Crook (family commitments) and Dr. R. Loader (unwell)

### **Presentation from Dee Maddox-Hinton (Strategic Surveyor, Strategic Assets, Resources Directorate, WBC)**

Ms Maddox explained that WBC have been developing a database of WBC owned assets and have carried out reviews of these assets. Three assets have been identified for Barkham

1. Elizabeth Park Open Space, Sandy Lane
2. Whitebeam Close Open Space
3. Land adjoining 293 Barkham Road

Elizabeth Park Open Space comprises a central medium sized cut grass area with a small play area. WBC have delegated powers to transfer the lease for 30 years to Parish Councils with break clauses, this will come with the appropriate funding from Cleaner and Greener towards the upkeep and maintenance. WBC will hold the freehold in order that their expertise can still be accessed. BPC could see no benefit in this scheme and declined to take this any further.

### **Declarations of Interests**

None

17/665 **Minutes** of meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2017 were approved and signed as a true record.

### **17/666 Planning**

There were no planning applications that required referral to the full Council.

### **17/667 Highways**

The white lines along Barkham Street and Barkham Ride are not continuous. It would make more sense to have continuous white lines along the bendy and narrow, 6'6" width restricted section, from the corner with Barkham Street up to Rooks Nest Wood. When passing a bus or lorries, coming in the opposite direction, cars are forced right over to the edge of the road. At night and in the rain it is almost impossible to see the edge of the road without good clear white lines. One often has to come to almost a complete stop to let the bus pass. Also, to make things worse, cars often straddle the centre line of the road because they find it a difficult section of road to navigate. The present position seems to be that there are edge lines where there is no kerb but in most parts of Barkham Ride where there is a kerb, there is no edge line. This is presumably on the assumption that the kerb can be taken to indicate the edge of the road; this is true during daylight, but at night, on an unlit road, especially when the kerb is splattered with winter mud, it is not so. WBC Highways have now agreed to paint the white lines along Barkham Street/ Barkham Ride in order that they are continuous.

The drains from Coppid Hill to Barkham Bridge are again all blocked as with the recent gas main repairs, the contractors have been digging up the road, the mud and general filth has washed down the road and blocked all the drains. The gutters are also blocked from The Bull to Barkham Brook, they have not been swept all winter and now there is a foot width of mud along each side of the road with small trees that have now rooted and have started to grow. It is debatable whether the brushing machine will clear the filth as it has now become so compacted, and has become worse since the gas main work has been undertaken. Clerk to contact Eddie Napper at WBC.

Two street lights are out along Langley Common Road, post number 8 and the light outside Staysure Tyres. Clerk to report to WBC, the on line reporting form is unable to accept this request as it is stating that Langley Common Road is in Arborfield when in fact it is only the last few yards, Rickman Close to the roundabout.

A meeting has been arranged with Matt Gould at WBC for 15<sup>th</sup> February at 11.00 a.m. to discuss the speed limits around Barkham.

**Greenway**

A new greenway will be constructed to link The FBC Centre in Finchampstead via California Country Park to Arborfield Green. It will start at Commonfield Lane and end at the FBC Centre. Part of the route will be using bridleway Barkham 14 which will be resurfaced with flexi pave, a porous paving made from gravel and recycled rubber tyres which is suitable for equestrian use.

**17/668 Litter**

Again more fly tipping in Commonfield Lane, the second lay-by on left there is a domestic fire and the first lay-by on right past Highbarn Farm there are bags of general rubbish. Barkham Ride is covered in litter. All to be reported to WBC for clearance.

The Parish Clean Up will take place on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April. The posters, sacks and litter pickers have been ordered. The format and times to be as previous years 9.30 – 12.30 p.m. at the Village Hall. Clerk to contact Inspector Alistair Lloyd to request police assistance with the roads where it is too dangerous to litter pick such as Barkham Street and Edneys Hill. It is recognised that demand on Community Policing Resource when several Parishes organise litter picks on the same day is high and means that not all requests can be met. The possibility of clearing these areas at different times or staggering litter picks will also be discussed.

**17/669 Finance**

Wokingham Veteran Tree Association	206	£100.00
P. Stubbs – cakes for toddlers Xmas party £18.18 + paint for Parish Office £47.46	207	£65.64
WBC – charge to copy large colour map	208	£17.50
J. Neuhofer – B.T. & Broadband 23.1.17 – 22.4.17	209	£209.82 (£174.85 exc VAT)
Emma Holland – phase 1 of design work for Welcome Map	211	£480.00
Groundwork UK – return of unused portion of N.Plan grant	213	£1493.26
J. Neuhofer – Staples stationery	214	£49.08 (£40.90 exc VAT)
Standing Order for Clerk’s salary for February		£736.60
Standing Order to Royal Bor. Windsor – Pension Fund for Clerk for month of February (Employee & employer contribution)		£182.62

**17/670 To Discuss the Installation of the Defibrillator at the Post Office – Mr Oxbrough**

The defibrillator has now been ordered, this to be installed at the Post Office, Bearwood Road, delivery is 3 – 4 weeks. Mr Oxbrough has been liaising with the owner of the Post Office who is now agreeable for it to be fixed to the wall as it requires a power supply. Two estimates have been obtained by Mr Oxbrough from electricians for the installation, the first was £216 and the second was £280 + £100 in addition, as the work will need to be carried out when the Post Office is closed. The cost will be approx £1,639.44 (£1,366.20 exc VAT). All agreed that Mr Oxbrough should proceed with the installation once the defibrillator has arrived.

**17/671 To Discuss the Parish Office at the Community Centre**

Mrs Stubbs reported that there was now a sign at the Community Centre stating that Barkham Parish Council will soon be taking up residence. Mr Lane has kindly donated 4 office chairs that he longer required. Mrs Stubbs will submit an article for the BVRA magazine alerting residents that Barkham will very soon have an office where residents can call in. Clerk to request that an extra 30 copies of the magazine are printed in order that some can be placed in the office. Mr Kaiser plans to run a monthly surgery on a Saturday morning accompanied by one Parish Councillor, again he will write a piece for the Newsletter in order that residents are aware of his presence.

**17/672 To Discuss the future working with Thames Valley Police – Mr Dexter**

Inspector Lloyd replied to questions submitted. The Community Speed Watch Schemes (CSW) are operated by police volunteers and not police officers. He is not aware of schemes outside of the CSW being supported by letters from the police. Each location requires a risk assessment, the Speed Indication Device (SID) can be used in all three speed limit zones 30, 40 & 50 mph. He suggests that BPC lean towards deterrent as we are aware of the areas where speeding mainly occurs The Community Speed Watch Scheme will help provide speed data through activities and he believes it would be better to invest in response options that can be moved to different

locations for a short time to help to subtly reinforce the speed limit. This could be a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) that goes up for a few days before being replaced by a sign further down the road.

In his tour of the Parish Councils speeding is the number one problem identified and hence the reason for obtaining funding for the CSW/SID. It is a small investment for the Parishes at £200 each that will provide a further response option and a level of enforcement. Inspector John Donachy has identified a member of the community who is willing to become the organiser for the scheme. The next step will be to arrange a meeting for prospective volunteers to come along to get full details of the scheme and hopefully sign up to become a member. It is hoped to get this meeting arranged for the near future. So far five parish councils have contributed towards the speed indication device (SID) that will be used by the scheme in local neighborhoods on Wokingham West. He is very keen to get the scheme up and running as it will have the community and police working together to improve road safety across the area. As presented, the volunteers need Police support to operate the community speed watch scheme and use the SID if formal letters to speeding drivers are to be sent out by the police.

Ideally all of the parishes need to contribute to make up the £2500 required, although any shortfall will hopefully be met by a local budget. However the key thing is that the parishes, WBC, Police & Community Speed Watch need to be working together to solve speeding problems. The Clerk had spoken to Finchampstead Parish Council who use their SID once a week and report that it must be manned by two fully trained people who are either residents, councillors or members of the Neighbourhood Action Group and do not require the presence of police officers for TVP to issue letters to the offending motorists. Mr Dexter thought more research is required and Mr Kaiser suggested that Mr Dexter speak with Simon Weeks who is the Borough Councillor for Finchampstead.

#### **17/673 Local Plan Update**

Mr Oxbrough was delighted to report that the two walks, the circular walk around The Coombes and the linear walk to Rooks Nest Wood have now been completed with maps. The walks are also on the web site. Signage is now required, Mr Oxbrough has met with Rebecca Walkley, the WBC Countryside Officer who is assisting with this, there may be some funding available to help pay for the signs but posts will be required.

Several councillors and the Clerk were invited for a tour of the Bohunt School which is due to open in September 2017 for the first intake of children. All were very impressed with the building which has every up to the minute teaching aid, with numerous science labs, music and practice rooms and games facilities. The building was spacious, light and will be a wonderful place for our young people to continue their education.

#### **17/674 Neighbourhood Plan – Mr Dexter**

The results from the surveys have now been analysed, the Neighbourhood Plan team have now progressed to the next stage. A request is made to the Council for funding to approach Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre at Oxford for information which will aid the Neighbourhood Plan. The proposal is costed at £230 plus VAT which included the 50% discount given for Parish/Neighbourhood Plan activities. As this type of work often leads to follow-up questions, it is suggested that we budget for a total of £400 plus VAT. This will be split 50:50 with Arborfield. The information that Thames Valley Environmental Records will supply will cover protected species, notable species, habitats of importance and ancient woodland in the Parishes of Barkham and Arborfield. Also a Planning Consultant will be involved as this project progresses and this has been estimated to cost £2,700. However, to cover supplement questions, funding up to £4,000 is requested that will again be split 50:50 with Arborfield. All agreed. The previous grant obtained was for the survey and cannot be used for other activities.

#### **17/675 To receive the BALC report – Dr Loader**

No report was received.

#### **17/676 Borough Councillor's Report – Mr Kaiser**

Mr Kaiser reported that WBC were working on the Local Plan. Grazeley has been proposed as the next area for development, the Government has funds available for the development of the necessary infra structure to support the Garden Village principles, these have not yet been applied for but looks to be promising. WBC are out sourcing many of its services in order to save funds, Optalis now take on the responsibility of all adult social care. The Precept is likely to be increased by 1.99% with an additional 3% to be added which is ring fenced for adult care.

Mr Kaiser had presented a report to WBC regarding the Coombes School which had failed the OFSTED Inspection, this was due to lack of management and an action plan has now been put in place to rectify

problems. The school must now become an Academy and with a new head teacher in place it is hoped that previous problems can soon be sorted out.

Traffic is an ongoing problem in Wokingham with road works causing chaos. He has pressed WBC not to allow two main traffic routes to be closed at the same time.

Waste disposal discussions are now taking place, Wokingham remains the only Council still to have weekly collections, recycling levels are down and targets are not being met. Larger items taken to the tip such as sinks and rubble are now being charged for disposal.

**17/677 Correspondence**

- a. Wokingham Veteran Tree Assoc. – letter of thanks for grant of £100.
- b. WBC – Parish Liaison Forum to be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April. Agenda items are requested. No items for the next agenda were suggested.

**17/678 Councillors Forum**

Paul Miller from WBC will attend the meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> March to show BPC the initial designs for Barkham Bridge.

Welcome Map – Progress is going well with the production of the Welcome Map. Crest have offered £1000 towards the cost of producing the map but clarity is required as to what Crest will require to justify this contribution before any decision is taken whether it would be appropriate to accept this kind offer.

Mrs Stubbs stated that she had received a letter from Finchampstead Parish Council who are trying to get The Queens Oak Public House listed as an Asset of Community Value and were seeking our support. All agreed that Mrs Stubbs sign the letter to support them.

Meeting closed at 10.05 p.m.

Next meeting of full Council will be held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at 8.00 p.m.

Next meeting of Planning Committee will be held on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at 7.30 p.m.