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BARKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes** of the annual meeting of the Barkham Parish Council held on 14th June 2022 in the Studio Hall, Arborfield Green Community Centre at 7.30pm.

**Present**: Mrs Stubbs (in the Chair), Mr Scott, Mr G Dexter, Mr Heyliger, Mr Wrobel, Mr Langford and the Clerk.

**22/067 To receive and accept any apologies for absence** Local Government Act 1972 Sch12

Mr Bundred – On holiday

Mr Barker - On holiday

Cllr Kaiser – Attendance required at another meeting.

**22/068 To receive any declarations of interest on items on the agenda** (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/1464)

None

**22/069 Minutes of the Council Meeting** LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41(1) **–**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10th May 2022 were approved and signed as a true record.

**22/070 Public Participation (allotted time 15 minutes)** Public Bodies (admissions to meetings) Act 1960 s.1 extended by the LG Act 1972 s.100

Adjournment of the Meeting will be called if any members of the public wish to address the Council on any matters or concerns relating to Barkham.

None

**22/071 Planning**:

1. **Planning Applications –** Council discussed and agreed any comments or objections on planning applications received before 14th June 2022. As follows:

**221485** -23 Aggisters Lane, Barkham, RG41 4DW

**Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension with 3 roof lights, including changes to fenestration and amendments to elevation materials.**

No comment

**220991** - 378 Barkham Road Barkham Wokingham RG41 4DL

**Householder application for proposed single storey front extension, first floor side extension, garage conversion, erection of single storey detached garage, and changes to fenestration. A new access point for the garage.**

Further to our previous comments, Barkham Parish Council have no comments on the extension to the house, provided that the action for the bat survey is undertaken, however we wish to point out a discrepancy within the documents.

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In the plans, the previously proposed garage has been removed, but it is still mentioned in the text for the application.  Barkham Parish Council remain opposed to a garage being built to the rear of the land due to the exit onto Edneys Hill and the removal of trees that would be required.

**221608** -The Scrapyard, Highlands Avenue, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4SP

**Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for the erection of a building for use as an administrative office for the A1 Recycling Centre.**

Barkham Parish council queries whether the 4-year rule applies to commercial properties and would like this answered by WBC. The Clerk will contact WBC to raise the question.

**221607** -The Scrapyard, Land at Highlands Avenue, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4SP

**Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for the use of land to store materials and equipment associated with the A1 business operations.**

No comment

**221572** -Barkham Manor Farm, Barkham Road, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4DQ

**Householder application for the proposed construction of garden swimming pool and ancillary building with toilet, changing facilities and garden room.**

Barkham Parish Council (BPC) objects to this application.

This site has a long and contentious planning history that has bearing on this application.

The original planning application to build a dwelling on this site – F/2011/2071 – was initially refused by Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) but allowed on appeal by Inspector K D Barton in his decision notice dated 01 Jul 2013 – APP/X0360/A/12/2189271.  In making this decision, he endorsed a number of conditions proposed by WBC which included Condition 8.  This stated:

***Within one month of occupation of the permanent dwelling hereby permitted the existing mobile home shown to be removed on the approved plan shall be removed/demolished and all resultant materials shall be removed from the site.***

The reason for this condition is given in Section 9, Appendix 7 of the statement made by WBC relating to the above appeal:

***In the interests of the amenity value of the area.  Relevant policies:  Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP3, CP7, CP11 and Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WLL2.***

After many exchanges, an enforcement notice was issued for the removal of this unlawful dwelling in May 2020, upheld on appeal by Inspector A Walker as recorded in his decision notice dated 15 Jun 2021 – PA2201481 & APP/X0360/C/20/3252493.

It is also important to note that Inspector R J Perrins who presided over a number of linked appeals relating to other matters at the location – APP/X0360/C/16/3142135 & 138 and APP/X0360/W/16/3141924 & 922 - clearly states in Section 56 of his decision notice dated 04 Dec 2018 that:

***The combination of these factors*** *[Note: which are outlined in preceding sections]* ***leads me to conclude that the development has resulted in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the countryside and is at odds with the aforementioned planning policies and the Framework which seeks development that is sympathetic to local character and landscape setting.***

These comments by Inspector Perrins further underpin the requirement to remove the aforementioned mobile home and for the reasons given in the statement made by WBC in March 2013 - Section 9, Appendix 7.

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It is, therefore, somewhat perverse that proposals are now being brought forward to build the proposed swimming pool complex and ancillary building within months of the said unlawful building being removed.

In the event this application is approved, a condition should be stipulated that the associated ancillary building should never be used for residential purposes in any form.

To be consistent, BPC requests this application be refused.

**221580** -73 Bearwood Road, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4SX

**Householder application for the proposed single storey rear extension, double storey side extension, raising of roof to create first and second floor habitable accommodation with 1No front three storey gable, following demolition of 2 No. chimney stacks, existing front and rear extensions and existing garage and changes**

**to fenestration.**

Barkham Parish Council will check nearer the date for comments to see if any residents have any concerns before making a decision on any comments. This will be agreed via delegated authority before the date for comments is reached.

**221556** -23 Baston Road, Arborfield Green, Wokingham, RG2 9ZW

**Householder application for proposed single storey detached outbuilding to the rear.**

No comment

**220421 -** Parcel V2n, Biggs Lane, Arborfield Garrison, Arborfield

**Application for the approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline planning consent O/2014/2280 for the erection of 73no. dwellings within parcel V2N with associated internal access roads, parking, landscaping, open space, footpaths and drainage. (Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be determined).**

Barkham Parish Council query whether all the points raised in the transport plan have been addressed by the developer..

1. **Approved and Refused Applications**

**220851** - Feathercot, School Road, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4TP

**Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for an existing dwelling**.

This application has been approved by WBC

**220835** -30a, Barkham Ride, Wokingham, RG40 4EU

**Householder application for proposed single storey outbuilding to the rear of the property.**

This application has been approved by WBC

**221065** -351a Barkham Road, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4DJ

**Full application for the proposed part demolition of existing bungalow, two storey rear extension, raising of the roof to create enlarged first floor accommodation, internal alterations and changes to fenestration.**

This application has been approved by WBC

**220391** -Parcel P, Arborfield Garrison, Arborfield, Reading

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**Application for approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/2014/2280 dated 02/04/2015. The Reserved Matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) comprise details of 43 dwellings within Parcel P with access via Princess Marina Drive, associated internal access roads, parking, landscaping, open space, footpaths and drainage.**

This application has been approved by WBC

220944 -8 Somerville Close, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4SW

Full application for the change of use of amenity land to residential garden, including erection of new 1.8m boundary fence and side gate (part retrospective)

This application has been approved by WBC

1. **Any Other Planning Business**
2. **School Road ETRO –** Council discussed the ETRO and agreed that the Clerk should contact WBC Highways to query:
3. Who makes the decision on whether to extend the ETRO?
4. Why there was a change in start date to what had previously been communicated?
5. The ETRO is not on the WBC website, so how are residents supposed to be able to see the plans and make comments?

A Letter is to be sent to Martin Heath thanking him for his latest input dated 31st May 2022 pointing out that we still do not understand why there was a difference in start date etc.  Copies to Moore, Saunders and Glencross.

A letter is to be sent to Andy Glencross seeking response to our earlier letter dated 31st May 2022, questioning the difference in start date and requesting dates for the follow-up meeting he has offered.  Copies to Moore and Saunders.

It was also agreed that a letter previously agreed needs to be sent to the inspectorate, now that we have the necessary information. An article is to be written to be included in the Village Info magazine with information regarding the ETRO and how the residents can make representations.

1. **Local Plan Update** – Council considered the possible implications of the LPU with the change in leadership at WBC. It was agreed that BPC should write to the new leader of the council to ask about the 5 year land supply and the metric of how it is calculated, and to enquire whether the LPU is still on track. The letter will be approved under delegated authority before the next meeting. A letter is also to be sent to key players about the 5 year land supply.
2. **Planning Article in the BVRA magazine** – Council considered changing the articles submitted to the BVRA for inclusion in the magazine. It was agreed that key planning articles should be published in Village Info as it goes to all the residents of Barkham, whereas the BVRA magazine only goes to circa 700 households. A different article with the same message but different wording needs to be included in the BVRA magazine.

Dates of distribution for both magazines needs to be coordinated, so they are not distributed at the same time.

1. **Next meeting with WBC Executives** – Council considered agenda items to be discussed at the next meeting with WBC Executives, which is to be arranged in the coming month or two.

It was agreed that chairing of the meeting should be done by BPC, and due to Mrs Stubbs connection issues, it was agreed that Mr Dexter will chair the meetings.

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Agenda items will be as follows:

* Pick up on items not covered at the last meeting:
* Planning (protecting the LP);
* Grass, Verg and Hedge cutting issues (photos taken by Mr Dexter to be shared with WBC);
* Feedback on the solar farm.

1. **Instalcom** – Council received an update on the Instalcom site. The site has now been split in 2 by a fence. The Far side of the compound is being used for storing vehicles, and this is inline with the permits for the site. The near section is being used as a car park. The maroon/red porta cabins that were erected have been removed, and it appears that the house is being used as offices, although this has not be clarified. If the house is being used for offices, BPC query if there is permission for this to occur.

The Clerk will write to the enforcement officer to advise of the changes witnessed and to query about the house use. The Clerk will ask if they are aware of the changes at the site.

**22/072 External Report – Ward Councillor report.**

No report was given, as the Ward Councillor was unable to attend the meeting.

**22/073 Delegated Authority Report**

The following decisions were made via Delegated Authority in May 2022 as the decisions were required to be made before the Council was due to meet in June.

**Finance:**

**Queens Jubilee Equipment Expenditure**

An Amazon order, after approval from the Chairman of the Council (in line with the financial regulations), was placed for craft equipment for the Queens Jubilee Fun Day totalling £122.06. The order included equipment for the day, and a hot water urn, for use at the Jubilee, and for future Council events.

**Planning and related items:**

**Crest District Centre Feedback**

At the meeting on the 12th May, the Council delegated the drafting of a response to 2 Councillors and the Clerk, using items raised prior to the meeting. The draft response was sent to full council for approvaland was approved by majority for submission. The submitted response to the questions was:

1. **What do you like about the proposed District Centre plans?**

The openness of the district centre, with the ability to walk between areas, such as the shopping centre and green space is appealing and welcome.

1. **What concerns, if any, do you have regarding the proposed District Centre?**

It is disappointing that the neighbourhood centre (3 retail units) is not yet open to residents with the shops promised.

The plans have not yet taken into account residents needs or the views and needs of existing users of the community centre.

There are concerns over lack of parking at the sports pitches (cricket, tennis and football pitches), and the congestion this may cause on surrounding areas, when people try to find somewhere to park.

There are concerns as to how long it will take to create the district centre. When is it due to open?

1. **What do you like about the proposed Sports Pitches plans?**

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N/A

1. **What concerns, if any, do you have regarding the Sports Pitches plans?**

Parking for users of the proposed senior pitches adjacent to the tennis courts, especially if matches are arranged with other teams. Where are they supposed to park?

1. **What do you like about the Community Centre proposal?**

The repurposing of an existing building is appealing and welcomed.

1. **Do you have any concerns or changes you would like to see regarding the Community Centre?**

The layout of the centre is not conducive for users.

The high ceilings are not conducive to a cosy feeling when meeting friends.

The fabric of the building is tired and will need upgrading

The ideas for the centre are still in an embryonic stage.

1. **We are looking for ideas on how to re-develop the horse stables, note there could be a mix of uses and the stables cannot be split up. Please let us know if you have any suggestions as to how the stables could be best utilized that will benefit the community**

Artisan Workshops

Small, informal meeting facilities for home workers who occasionally need more space.

Museum portraying the heritage of the garrison area.

Art Centre

Petting zoo?

1. **Is there anything else you would like the team to consider as part of the proposed plans?**

For inclusion in the District Centre:

Post Office

For inclusion in the Community Centre:

Office for Barkham Parish Council, plus meeting room facilities suitable for public meetings, where there could be large numbers in attendance

The needs of charity status Poperinghe Pre-School to be provided for

A community Hall that can be hired for Children’s parties, wedding receptions etc.

How will the proposed medical triage area be manned – it should be on the ground floor.

Church @ the Green requirements

Other current users of the existing community Centre to be provided for these include: Hair dresser, British Autism Advocate, Health Visitors (as part of the medical area?), Beauty therapist, Chiropractor and others that use the centre.

Pedestrian Routes:

There is no obvious North/South route. A footpath on the east of Princess Marina Drive from Biggs Lane to the Village Centre is needed to accommodate the newer properties to the north of Biggs Lane. Otherwise, people will simply walk on the grass verge.

Barkham Parish Council would like to be involved in all the planning and design stages, along with other stakeholders, and may be willing to help fund the Community Centre development, if needed (subject to funds and full council approvals).

**22/074 Clerks Report**

**Land at Highlands Avenue**

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No progress has been made. The Clerk has sent an email to the solicitors, but has not yet received a response. There is still no information on the Land Registry site.

**Item ongoing**

**Enforcement Issues**

Land by Coppid Hill House – This is now being progressed to Court proceedings.

The Coombes –

* Land adjacent to White Heart Grove – No updates have been received regarding these cases since the last meeting
* Plot B. – No updates have been received regarding these cases since the last meeting
* Beech Wood – No updates have been received regarding these cases since the last meeting

**Items ongoing**

**Drainage Issues**

Following our meeting with WBC drainages team the following have occurred by WBC:

Issued a 28 day order (ORD2200749) to replace 2 gully covers and frames o/s Brook Cottage, Barkham Street.

This has been completed

Issued a 28 day order (ORD2200750) to replace the gully o/s Ridgeland House, Barkham Road.

This has been completed

Issued a 24hr order to clear all gullies on Barkham Road between  the junction with Edneys Hill and Bearwood Road.

This has been completed

Contacted Street Cleansing re the removal of  the detritus against the base of the wall at Barkham Manor, Barkham Road.

I am not sure if this has been completed I will check with Street Cleansing

I have written to the owners of the land adjacent to the ditch on Church Lane asking them to clear the ditch.

I have not had a reply and will chase it up. Is this what you are referring to as Barkham Fields.

**Items ongoing**

**School Road / Langley Common Road Junction**

The road Safety Group continue to work to try to reduce the speed limit along Langley Common Road, to make the junction safer.

**Item Ongoing**

**Trees at Barkham Fields (possible CIL Project)**

No update to give

**Item Ongoing**

**Closed Items:**

**Queens Platinum Jubilee**

The fun day was successful, with those attending expressing their appreciation. Barkham Ladies send thanks to the council for organising the event and providing the items needed for the tea and cake stall.

Cllr Dexter congratulated the Jubilee Family Day Steering Group and especially the Clerk for organising a successful event.  Although it started slowly – so did the weather – it was evident from those leaving that they

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had had fun.  These events grow year on year building on previous successes and this outcome should give confidence to host other events in the future.

**Item Closed**

**22/075 Review and adoption of Parish Documentation –** Council is asked to approve the policies listed below:

**Standing Orders,**

Council had to decide whether to approve and readopt the Standing Orders (Reviewed and re-adopted February 2021) with the amended with minor Changes, or whether to change the current SOs for the shorter and simpler set, as proposed by Mr Scott and Mr Bundred.

The options were put to a vote. 5 were in favour of adopting the reviewed standing orders, 1 vote was against the adoption of the current Standing Orders and for the adoption of the shorter version.

**Resolved:** Council approved and readopted the Standing Orders (Reviewed and re-adopted February 2021) with the amended with minor Changes.

**Financial Regulations and Polices**.

Council approved the Financial Regulations (Reviewed and re-adopted November 2019)

**Operations**

Council approved the Asset Register (Updated March 2022)

**Finance** Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 s.6

Council approved the Financial and Risk Assessment (Approved May 2018 Reviewed Annually)

**22/076 Finance**

* 1. **Accounts** – Council agreed the accounts and payments for May to June 2022 LGA 1972 s150 (5)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Payments for May to June 2022 authorised at Council meeting on 14th June 2022 | | | |
| S/O | Staff Wages | £970.74 | June 2022 salary – LGA 1972 s111 |
| DD | Nest | £96.52 | Pension Contribution Employer & Employee – June 2022 – LGA 1972 s111 |
| DD | Plusnet | £32.14 | Internet and phone charges – June 2022 – LGA 1972 s111 |
| DD | Lloyds Bank (Credit Card) | £263.67 | Credit Card bill – May Payments  £3.00 – monthly fee. – LGA 1972 s111  £143.88 – Zoom subscription – LGA 1972 s111  £4.00 – Poundland – Jubilee craft items LGA 1972 s111  £38.50 – The Range – Jubilee items LGA 1972 s111  £24.26 – Aldi Stores – Jubilee refreshments / prizes LGA 1972 s111  £27.95 – Sainsburys – Jubilee Refreshments LGA 1972 s111  £22.08 – Sainsburys – Jubilee Refreshments LGA 1972 s111 |
| BACS | Amazon | £147.01 | Amazon Orders – Queens Jubilee Items LGA 1972 s111 |
| BACS | Breakaway Brass Band | £50.00 | Donation/payment for the band playing at the jubilee fun day LGA 1972 s111 |
| BACS | Netwise | £360.00 | Website hosting agreement LGA 1972 S.142 |

Payments are to be authorised by Mrs Stubbs and Mr Heyliger

1. **Report on Monies received**

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**£114.00** – Savills Refund – Community Centre Hire (missed session) **£770.46** – HMRC VAT return **£25.00** – Joslyn Crafts – Stall at Queens Jubilee Fun Day

**Note:** The Savills refund may be incorrect, and this is being looked into, any payment to be made back to Savills will be put at the July meeting of the council.

1. **Update on Tivoli payment for April** – Council noted, that no payment was made to Tivoli in May for Aprils bin emptying due to the invoice not being received. The Clerk has chased this, and due to the increase, invoices have not yet been issued. The Clerk will chase again to be able to pay the 3 months outstanding in July.
2. **Transfer of monies to Savings Accounts** – Council agreed to transfer money from the Unity Trust Current Account to the Natwest and Nationwide Savings accounts. Council agreed to transfer £55,000 to each of the savings Accounts. Transfers will be raised with the payments listed above.

9.32pm – Vote to continue – 5 in favour 1 against. Meeting continued.

1. **CIL Monitoring form –** Council reviewed and approved the CIL monitoring form for the financial year 2021-2022 for publication.
2. **Bus Stop Replacement –** Council decided they would like to replace the Bus Shelter by the Bull, but wanted to look into moving of the shelter, closer to the bus stop. The Clerk will contact WBC highways to see who owns the land to the rear of the bus stop, and whether it is possible to move the shelter closer to the stop up the hill. Once this information is known, council will make a final decision. The 2 quotes received may need to be updated if the shelter is to be moved. The remains of the old shelter will need to be removed.
3. **Parish Online Mapping Software** Local Government Act 1972 s.111 – Council agreed to re-purchasing Parish online Mapping Software at a cost of £237.60 for another year. The payment will be raised along with the other payments listed above.
4. **Grant to fund Refugee Welcome Event –** Council agreed in principle that they will consider making a grant payment to help fund a Refugee Welcome Event, which is being organised by Wokingham Churches Together at Elms Field on the 16th July to welcome refugees and their support families to the borough. A final decision will be made once more information is known.

**By virtue of the confidential nature of the business to be contracted the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the next business item under Section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Press and public were able to re-enter the meeting once the business item concluded.**

9.45pm – The Clerk left the rooms for discussions to take place.

1. **Staff Salary Increase –** Council agreed a salary increase for the Clerk of 1 Salary Scale point to scale point 20 which is a rate of £13.75 per hour. The pay increase is to take effect from 1st June.

Council thanked the Clerk for all her hard work over the past year.

9.50pm – The Clerk returned to the meeting

**22/077 Approval and signing of Parish Accounts for the Financial Year End** Internal Audit Accounts & Audit Regulations 2003 reg 2

1. Council received a report on the internal audit. The report was unqualified.
2. Council approved the accounts for the Year End.

The Unity Trust Current Account Bank balance as of the 31st March 2022 was £ 140,829.23

The Unity Trust Savings Account Bank balance as of the 31st March 2022 was £ 75,334.39.

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The Natwest Savings Account Bank balance as of the 31st March 2022 was £ 85,014.38

The Nationwide Savings Account Bank balance as of the 31st March 2022 was £85,000.00

1. Council approved the **Annual Governance Statement** for the Annual Audit. The form was duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk
2. Council approved the **Annual Accounting Statement** for the Annual Audit. The form was duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

**22/078 Parish Office Operations**

* 1. **Investment Strategy –** Due to the meeting running over time, this item was deferred to the July meeting.

**22/079 Councillors Forum**

Mr Scott raised the level crossing issues. A meeting had been requested of WBC highways who asked for a letter to be sent in. Mr Scott does not think it is possible to resolve the issue via letter. Mr Scott and Mrs Stubbs to work together to look at the issues at the crossing.

Mr Heyliger reported that the Morelock MSID Vario, vehicle activation sign (VAS) is now being trialled on Barkham Road with a battery . If successful, it will be recommended for purchase under CIL to be deployed as a permanent VAS connected to the lamp post outside No 298, and a request will be made to WBC for it to be mains powered.

Mr Heyliger gave an update on an analysis on the number of Trucks/HGV's/Transit Vans travelling along School Road only week days captured on the bi-directional Data Logger. This is sited close to the entrance to Langley Pond Farm

Over a 12-day period there were 2752 vehicles in that category, averaging 230 each week day and from that total roughly 14% were exceeding 40-mph (in a 30-mph zone) with a few even exceeding 50-mph.

It was further noted that out of those exceeding 40 mph, roughly 3 times as many were travelling towards Arborfield Cross than in the opposite direction. It’s impossible to know how many of these are Instalcom vehicles, and this might be the result of several vehicles turning right out of Woods Lane and then returning later in the day via LCR, so as to avoid the difficulty of exiting LCR junction on the way out.

On the other hand, it was noted that for those vehicles going less than 30 mph, the position is reversed with roughly 70% more going towards LCR rather than in the opposite direction. This might suggest those exceeding the speed limit (as above) are lighter vehicles (such as Transit Vans) whilst the larger HGV's coming from LCR junction are more likely to slow down before they approach Woods Lane.

The team will be taking another set of results on Friday and then relocating the Data Logger to Barkham Street.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.05pm.