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BARKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes** of the meeting of the Barkham Parish Council held on 13th December 2022 in the Studio Hall, Arborfield Green Community Centre at 7.30pm.

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

**22/135 To receive and accept any apologies for absence** Local Government Act 1972 Sch12

Cllr Kaiser – Arborfield Parish Council meeting attendance

**22/136 To receive any declarations of interest on items on the agenda** (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/1464)

All Councillors have been granted a dispensation for the discussions of the draft budget and Precept.

**22/137 Minutes of the Council Meeting** LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41(1) **–**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8th November 2022 were approved and signed as a true record. The minutes were signed by Mrs Stubbs.

**22/138 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

**22/139 Planning**:

1. **Planning Applications –** Council discussed and agreed any comments or objections on planning applications received before 8th November 2022. As follows:

**223307** -12 Thorn Close, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4SQ

**Householder application for the proposed conversion of existing garage to create habitable accommodation, to include changes to fenestration.**

Barkham Parish council have no comments on this application

**223012** -20 The Junipers, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4UX

**Householder application for the proposed conversion of existing detached garage to create habitable accommodation plus changes to fenestration.**

Barkham Parish council have no comments on this application

**223281** -Little Hayes, Hayes Lane, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4TA

**Householder application for the proposed erection of a two storey front/side extension (east elevation), two storey side extension to include garage (west elevation), two storey rear extension to create habitable accommodation following demolition of existing front extension, existing conservatory and car port with changes to fenestration.**

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Barkham Parish council have no comments on this application

**Outline Planning Approval Adjoining Parish Consultation**

**223528** - 33 Barkham Ride, Barkham, Wokingham, RG40 4EX

**Outline application for the proposed erection of 68 residential dwellings with associated access, following demolition of the existing dwelling and out buildings. Access only to be considered. (with Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be reserved).**

Barkham Parish Council object to this application.

As stated in our response to the Local Plan Update in January 2022, the main problem with this proposal is traffic.

Any attempt to mitigate the increased traffic on Barkham Ride, a narrow country lane with a 6ft 6in width restriction, by widening the road will further impact the rural setting of the area contrary to the ABNP.  Further, such a move would not solve any problems but simply move them to Commonfield Lane, Barkham Street and the section of Barkham Ride that passes through Finchampstead.

Barkham Parish Council request this application be refused.

**223579 -** 22 Barkham Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 4EU

**Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for the use of the building as 2 no. residential dwellings, 22a and 22b Barkham Ride, for more than four years.**

Barkham Parish council have no comments on this application

1. **Approved and Refused Applications**

There were no approved or refused applications to report.

1. **Any Other Planning Business**

**WBC Planning Portal problems** – Council discussed the problems raised with the WBC planning portal. A WBC Officer has been in contact with the resident to say the issues are being looked into, so no action is needed at the moment, but will be followed up in January if necessary.

**Arborfield Green District Centre Consultation Event** – Council received feedback on the consultation event held by Crest on the 8th December. It was agreed the District Centre Working Group would compose a response for the consultation.

**Local Plan Update –** Council received an update on the Local Plan update. There isa shortage in the 5 Year Land Supply. A new Levelling Up Bill is due to go before Parliament which addresses some of the issue faced by WBC, if they have an up-to-date Local Plan. It is not known when this Bill will go before Parliament or if it will be passed. What is Worrying is that this may bring Barkham Square back on the agenda.

The Council agreed that talks are needed with Arborfield and Finchampstead Parish Councils on how we can work together to prevent developments appearing.

**The Coombes –** The Council has been notified that The Coombes Woodlands are being put up for sale, and there are concerns as to how this woodland can be protected for residents to enjoy. Council agreed that a group of Councillors will look into this, and will liaise and work with Arborfield PC to see how this can be achieved.

There will be an agenda point on the January Agenda, where this will be discussed in full and any decisions will be made.

**22/140 Ward Councillor Report**

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As Councillor Kaiser was not in attendance, no report was received.

**22/141 Clerks Report**

**Land at Highlands Avenue**

No progress has been made.

**Item ongoing**

**Enforcement Issues**

Land by Coppid Hill House – Update from WBC Enforcement - A lot has happened in gaining the evidence of noncompliance.  Letters under caution have been sent to the owners and they have responded.  The Officer has carried out visits.  He has all the evidence that the notice, while not now occupied, has not been fully complied with.  He has consulted internally on the evidence he has, and a bit more is needed, to satisfy the court.  This does not add any delay and pursuing this with expediency.

The Coombes –

* Land adjacent to White Heart Grove – No updates have been received regarding these cases since the last meeting
* Plot B. – The water tower has been restored to a just a water tower, with the additional building removed.
* Beech Wood – No updates have been received regarding these cases since the last meeting

**Items ongoing**

**Drainage Issues**

WBC will look into the drainage issue at Barkham Fields, and the Clerk will follow up in a few weeks.

**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. Monitoring is ongoing at School Road, so the Council can comment on the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order before the end date.

**Item Ongoing**

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

No update since the last meeting, however, the tree planting season has only just begun. Mrs Stubbs will contact to the contractors regarding the Bracken, to see when it can be treated.

**Item Ongoing**

**The Coombes Woodland Maintenance**

Contact needs to be made with the resident who manages the woodland, to see if he is willing to meet with the councillors to discuss the maintenance plans for the woodland.

**Item ongoing**

**Instalcom Appeal**

The Appeal hearing was held on the 29th and 30th November, unfortunately the Inspector did not have time to complete the appeal, and it will be reconvened on 19th January, after a site visit.

**Items ongoing**

**Next meeting with WBC Executive Officers**

The agenda for this meeting is in the process of being set, and a date will be set for the meeting in the new year.

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**Items ongoing**

**Treatment of the Bracken at Barkham Fields**

No action can be made until the new year due to product licensing. Mrs Stubbs will contact to the contractors regarding the Bracken, to see when it can be treated.

**Items ongoing**

**Closed Items:**

None

**22/142 Finance**

* 1. **Accounts** – Accounts and payments for November to December 2022 LGA 1972 s150 (5)

|  |
| --- |
| Payments for November to December 2022 for authorisation at Council meeting on 13th December 2022 |
| S/O | Staff Wages | £1050.58 | December 2022 salary – LGA 1972 s111 |
| DD | Nest | £103.54 | Pension Contribution Employer & Employee – December 2022 – LGA 1972 s111 |
| DD | Plusnet | £32.14 | Internet and phone charges – December 2022 – LGA 1972 s111  |
| DD | Lloyds Bank (Credit Card) | £3.95 | Credit Card bill – November Payments£0.95 – Postage Stamps LGA 1972 s111£3.00 – monthly fee. – LGA 1972 s111 |
| BACS | Tivoli | £65.26 | Bin Emptying - LGA 1972 s111 |
| BACS | Netwise | £84.26 | Upgrade of website and email hosting package LGA 1972 S.142 |
| BACS | SLCC | £177.00 | SLCC membership renewal LGA 1972 S.143 |
| DD | Unity Trust | £18.00 | Bank Charges LGA 1972 s111 |
| BACS | Arborfield PC | £75.00 | 50% of shared cost for Remembrance Day Parade. LGA 1972 s111 |

1. **Report on Monies received**

£55.00 – CAE Autos – Advert Payment £155.40 – BVRA – Survey costs payment

£120.00 – A1 – Advert Payment

1. **Grant Applications** – Council discussed the grant applications received and amounts proposed by the finance committee for each application.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Payee** | **For:** | **Legal power that the grant comes under** | **Finance Committee Proposal to Council** |
| Link Visiting Scheme  | To help to continue to be able to provide services | Local Government Act 1972 s.137 | £1000.00 |
| CRUSE Bereavement Care  | To help to continue to be able to provide services | Local Government Act 1972 s.137 | £750.00 |

Council agreed to the grants that were recommended by the Finance Committee.

1. **Dropbox Upgrade** – Council agreed to an upgrade of the Dropbox Subscription to a family subscription (up to 6 users) to allow shared use for Speed Watch Councillors to be able to upload and share Speed Watch documents. The cost of the shared use upgrade is £55.43 for the remainder of the current subscription, and is £167.88 +VAT per year after.

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1. **CIL Expenditure**

**California Country Park – WBC funding bid request** – Council considered funding improvement to California Country Park using CIL funds. Contribution requested by WBC is for £25,000.

**Council agreed to fund their share as proposed by WBC**

9.40pm – Vote to continue – All agreed

**Footpath BA10(a) upgrade –** Council considered funding an upgrade to footpath BA10(a) to make it an accessible path during the winter and wet months. The cost of the upgrade to the path is £35,000 - £45,000.

**Council agreed to defer this decision to January as there were further questions which the Clerk will raise with WBC before a decision will be made.**

1. **Accounts –** Council reviewed and approved the income and expenditure accounts as at 30th November 2022. Council was also informed that the bank statements and reconciliations have been checked and approved by the finance committee.
2. **Draft Budget –** Council reviewed the draft budget and suggested changes ready for final agreement in January.

9.50pm – the meeting temporarily closed to the public and the Clerk left the room for discussions.

The Clerks salary was reviewed as part of the budget setting process.

9.55pm – The meeting re-opened to the public and the Clerk returned to the meeting room.

Council agreed to an increase of 1 scale point to take effect from April 2023.

Proposed changes will be made to the draft budget ready for final agreement in January.

**22/143 Parish Office Operations**

**Editorial Policy –** Council reviewed and adopted an editorial policy for its magazine ‘Village Info’.

**Vote –** 7 for and 1 against adoption of the policy.

**Kings Coronation** – Council considered whether any event will be held for the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles in May 2023. Due to the timing of the Coronation, during Elections and Annual Audit, it was agreed that the Council would approach the BVRA to ask them to arrange an event that the Council would be willing to support financially.

**22/144 Councillors Forum**

Mr Wrobel – Did he miss the CIL meeting? No, the meeting was unable to be arranged prior to the Council meeting due to constraints, and so the project list was sent to all councillors for comments prior to the agenda being set.

Mr Wrobel informed the Council that many people he met on walks in The Coombes are against the proposed greenway at The Coombes. Mr Barker said this was his experience too.

Mr Dexter – Arborfield Studio’s will be writing to residents near the studios to inform of some over night filming that issue to take place in January. There will be an email address that residents can sign up to for updates, and the Clerk has agreed to sign up for these updates

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.06pm