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BARKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes** of the meeting of the Barkham Parish Council held on 14th February 2023 in the Studio Hall, Arborfield Green Community Centre at 7.30pm.

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

**23/010 To receive and accept any apologies for absence** Local Government Act 1972 Sch12

Mr Heyliger, on holiday

**23/011 To receive any declarations of interest on items on the agenda** (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/1464)

None

**23/012 Minutes of the Council Meeting** LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41(1) **–**

Mr Bundred Raised that Mr Kaiser was present at the last meeting but had been missed on the minutes. The Clerk amended the minutes and signed the amendment.

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10th January 2023 were approved and signed as a true record. The minutes were signed by Mrs Stubbs.

**23/013 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.

4 residents attended the meeting.

A resident attended to address the Council on the planning application for the Pavilion at Arborfield Green and an alternative proposal. The Council responded to his questions.

**23/014 Planning**:

1. **Planning Applications –** Council discussed and agreed any comments or objections on planning applications received before 14th February 2023. As follows:

**223783** -Bluebell Farm, Commonfield Lane, Barkham, Wokingham, RG40 4PR

**Full application for the proposed erection of 1no. replacement dwelling and car port, following demolition of existing dwelling**.

Barkham Parish Council had no comments on this application

**223764** -Sports and Community Infrastructure, West and East of, Princess Marina Drive, Reading, RG2 9BH

**Application for approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to O/2014/2280 for the refurbishment of the existing rugby, football and cricket pitches, the demolition of the existing Pavilion building and the erection of a new Pavilion building, the provision of two play areas, Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)**

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**and allotment, with associated internal access roads, parking, landscaping, footpaths and drainage. Access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be considered.**

Barkham Parish Council had no comments on this application.

Vote to agree no comment as a submission: 6 for, 1 against.

**230152** -Arborfield Garrison, & Adjoining Land, Arborfield, Reading, RG2 9NW

**Application for the approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to outline planning consent O/2014/2280 (dated 02/04/2015). The Reserved Matters comprise details of 135 dwellings within Parcel O2 (including both market and affordable housing) with access from Biggs Lane, associated internal access roads, parking, landscaping, open space, footpaths and drainage. Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be considered.**

Barkham Parish Council had no comments on this application

**230110** -Langley Pond Farm Livery Stables, School Road, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4TN

**Full application for the proposed conversion of the existing equestrian barn, raising of the roof to create first floor accommodation and erection of a two storey front extension with porch canopy roof and 2 no. dormers to form 1 no. four bedroom dwelling with associated access, bin storage and parking, plus conversion and extension of existing stables to form a garage and storage, demolition of outbuildings and the temporary replacement of an existing trailer home**.

Barkham Parish Council object to this application for the following reasons:

The proposed development is in the country side: PA171597 – to build three dwellings at this location – was refused in 2017 for two reasons that are equally relevant to this application.

1. The development would result in an urbanising form of development in the open countryside, beyond the settlement confines which would detract from the rural character and appearance of the area.
2. The location is not sustainable particularly with respect to car dependency.

In addition to PA171597, there have been many applications in the immediate area off School Road during the period 2017 to 2021:  PA171186, 18 dwelling at Langley Pond Farm, PA172165, 70 dwellings at Oakwood View, PA180596, 120 dwellings north and south of School Road, PA203326, Phased development of Woodlands Farm which is currently pending an appeal decision and PA210874, 4 dwellings at Suncot.   All these applications were refused for various reasons but there was a common theme – the detrimental intrusion into the countryside which detract from the rural character and appearance.

For the purpose of CP11 Part 3, it is a moot point whether this proposed development can be described as a conversion - the scale, increased footprint and height, represents a significant build and questions just how much of the existing barn would actually be incorporated.  The proposed dwelling is not contained within the existing building nor is it a replacement dwelling.

The proposed entrance on School Road would interfere with the new turning arrangements installed to facilitate the closure of School Road to through traffic.

**223685** -1 Coombes Lane, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4SU

**Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory.**

Barkham Parish Council had no comments on this application

**223468** -39a Sandy Lane, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4SS

**Householder application for the proposed erection of a 2 storey extension to form additional habitable accommodation, including rooflights and conversion of the integral garage. Erection of a single storey detached garage/garden store with pitched roof to the front of the dwelling along with changes to fenestration, following demolition of the existing single storey front elevation and single storey porch.**

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Barkham Parish Council had no comments on this application

1. **Approved and Refused Applications**

**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.**

This application was approved by WBC

**223793** -330 Barkham Road, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4DE

**Full application for the change of use from mixed sui-generis beauty salon and owners accommodation to children day nursery.**

This application was withdrawn by the applicant

**220294** -Honeysuckle Lodge, Commonfield Lane, Barkham, Wokingham, RG40 4PR

**Application to vary conditions 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12 and 13 of planning consent 203626 for the proposed subdivision of existing 3 no. pitch gypsy traveller site to provide 8 no. pitches (net increase of 5 no. pitches), with ancillary day rooms, storage buildings and parking following demolition of existing buildings. Condition 2 refers to the approved details; condition 4 to landscaping and boundary treatment; condition 5 to submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement; condition 8 to cycle parking; condition 9 to drainage details; condition 12 to a lighting scheme and condition 13 to bin storage. The variation is to change the internal road layout of the site, to alter the wording of condition 4 to be prior**

This application was refused by WBC

**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.**

This application was approved by WBC

1. **Any Other Planning Business**

**NPPF** – Council considered submitting a response to the NPPF Consultation and approved a submission be made to central Government.

The Clerk will work with Mr Dexter to finalise a submission to be sent to Government.

**Local Government Ward Boundary Review Consultation** – Council considered submitting a response to the Ward Boundary Review. A small working group comprising Mrs Stubbs, Mr Langford, Mr Bundred and Mr Barker was appointed to draft a response. A response will be drafted and presented to council at the next meeting in March. Comments must be submitted by 10th April 2023.

**23/015 Delegated Authority Report –** Council received a report on decisions made under delegated authority since the last meeting

**Finance**

**Change to Delegated Authority agreed at January Meeting.**

At the January meeting of the council, authority for items relating to the coombes was delegated to the full council to be agreed via email. Due to the time factor, the Clerk requested that the delegated authority agreed at the meeting be changed to the delegated authority set out in the Financial regulations. The change request was sent to full council for a decision.

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**It was approved by a majority of the councillors – 6 out of the 8 councillors responded in agreement with the change**.

**Quote for upgrading the non-greenway section of footpath BA10, through WBC**

An updated quote was received from WBC to upgrade just the non greenway section of the footpath. As agreed at the Parish Council meeting in January. At the meeting the council agreed to spend £20,000 on the upgrade, but the final figure, once received would be approved under delegated authority.

The Quote totals are:

Option 1 Total: £14,920.00 no path edgings, dig out to be levelled on site

Option 2 Total: £17,760.00 including wooden path edgings, dig out to be levelled on site

It would be an additional £2,450.00 if dig out needs to be removed. All costs are excluding VAT.

The Request was sent to Full Council for approval in line with the delegated Authority as agreed at the January meeting for this item.

**The quote was approved by a majority of the councillors – 6 out of the 8 councillors responded in agreement with the quote for the project. The Councillors approved Option 2 to be accepted**. The Clerk will accept the quote.

**Quote for assessment and valuation of The Coombes from Bidwells**

A quote was received from Bidwells at Arborfield Parish Council (ANPC) to assess the Coombes Woodlands and to provide a valuation for the land. The Quote totalled £2000, which would be shared between BPC and ANPC, as agreed at the parish council meetings.

The Request was sent to the Finance Committee for approval in line with the delegated Authority in the Financial Regulations and as agreed above.

**The Quote was approved by unanimous verdict.** The Clerk will contact ANPC to accept the quote.

**Quote for valuation of The Coombes from Martin and Pole**

A quote was received by BPC from Martin and Pole to provide a valuation for the land. The Quote totalled £540.00 incl. VAT, which would be shared between BPC and ANPC, as agreed at the parish council meetings.

The Request was sent to the Finance Committee for approval in line with the delegated Authority in the Financial Regulations and as agreed above.

**The Quote was approved by unanimous verdict.** The Clerk will accept the quote.

**Quote for assessment and ongoing maintenance scheme at The Coombes from Berks, Bucks and Oxford Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)**

A quote was received from BBOWT at Arborfield Parish Council (ANPC) to assess the Coombes Woodlands and to provide an ongoing maintenance plan for the woodlands. The Quote totalled £435.00 + VAT, which would be shared between BPC and ANPC, as agreed at the parish council meetings.

The Request was sent to the Finance Committee for approval in line with the delegated Authority in the Financial Regulations and as agreed above.

**The Quote was approved by unanimous verdict.** The Clerk will contact ANPC to accept the quote.

**Quote for a negotiation service to identify a price for The Coombes from Martin and Pole**

A quote was received by BPC from Martin and Pole to provide a negotiation service to find a price for the land with the vendors. The Quote totalled £300.00 incl. VAT, which would be shared between BPC and ANPC, as agreed at the parish council meetings.

The Request was sent to the Chairman of the Council, with the Clerk, for approval in line with the delegated Authority in the Financial Regulations and as agreed above.

**The Quote was approved by the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk.** The Clerk will accept the quote.

**23/016 Ward Councillor Report**

Mr Kaiser was not in attendance so no report was received.

**23/017 Clerks Report -** Council received a report from the Clerk

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**Land at Highlands Avenue**

No progress has been made.

**Item ongoing**

**Enforcement Issues**

Land by Coppid Hill House – No update has been received from WBC on this.

The Coombes –

* Land adjacent to White Heart Grove – No update received
* Plot B. – No update received
* Beech Wood – No update received

**Items ongoing**

**Drainage Issues**

WBC have looked into the drainage issue at Barkham Fields, and think they have rectified the issue, however, there is still lots of water on the fields, so further investigation by WBC is needed. This has been reported and we are awaiting a response.

**Item 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. The Monitoring of the closure is ending, and a response will be drafted for approval by Council before the end date of the ETRO.

**Item Ongoing**

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

WBC have been in contact to say planting will take place in February on Friday 17th February. WBC have confirmed that treatment of the bracken will take place before the planting occurs.

**Item Ongoing**

**The Coombes Woodland Maintenance**

This has been put on hold due to the possible sale of the woodlands, and BPC’s investigations into purchasing the land with Arborfield PC.

**Item ongoing**

**Instalcom Appeal**

The 3rd day of the Appeal hearing was held on the 20th January, and the appeal was concluded. We await the inspector’s decision.

**Item ongoing**

**Next meeting with WBC Executive Officers**

The Working group has met with the Executive and slow progress is being made. Mr Dexter gave a brief update.

**Item ongoing**

**District and Community Centres**

The promise by Crest to review the Community Centre option costings is yet to occur. The meeting promised for January is yet to be scheduled. The Clerk has chased, and Crest are in discussions with WBC over the

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plans, so the meeting cannot take place until these have concluded. The Clerk has resent the comments from the recent consultation to CREST and WBC for consideration in their ongoing discussions.

**Item ongoing**

**BVRA/BPC Survey**

Review of the joint BVRA/BPC Survey is needed to agree any conclusions and actions.  The Future of BVRA Development Watch is currently uncertain and needs to be looked at.

**Item ongoing**

**Solar Farm**

Work is yet to commence on the Solar Farm. We were informed that WBC would:

1. Establish a resident liaison forum and
2. Consider the request for land to extend the churchyard.

Neither of these have yet occurred. The Clerk has contacted WBC to request an update. A response has been received from WBC that the appointment of the lead contractor was imminent and once that had been finalised it would be possible to have further discussions.

**Item ongoing**

**Closed Items:**

**Treatment of the Bracken at Barkham Fields**

WBC will undertake this as part of the new planting in February or March.

**Item closed**

**23/018 The Coombes**

**Motion:** Mr Bundred moved to take the discussions surrounding The Coombes to a part 2 section of the meeting, due to the commercially sensitive nature of the discussions and the need for them to be kept confidential at this point. The motion was seconded by Mr Dexter. Vote – Unanimous agreement. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 S1 (2)

The items on the agenda were moved to a part 2 meeting which was closed to the public and held after the public meeting had concluded.

**23/019 Finance**

* 1. **Accounts** – Council agreed the accounts and payments for January to February 2023 LGA 1972 s150 (5)

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| Payments for January to February 2023 authorised at the Council meeting on 14th February 2023 |
| S/O | Staff Wages | £1050.78 | February 2023 salary – LGA 1972 s111  |
| DD | Nest | £103.54 | Pension Contribution Employer & Employee – February 2023 – LGA 1972 s111 |
| DD | Plusnet | £32.14 | Internet and phone charges – February 2023 – LGA 1972 s111  |
| DD | Lloyds Bank (Credit Card) | £5.65 | Credit Card bill – January Payments£2.65 – Co-op – Milk and Teabags LGA 1972 s111£3.00 – monthly fee. – LGA 1972 s111 |
| BACS | Tivoli | £65.26 | Bin Emptying - LGA 1972 s111 |

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| BACS | Barkham Village Hall | £4770.00 | CIL Payment for Patio Replacement Planning Act 2008, Part 11 S.216 & Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 (as amended) |
| BACS | Martin & Pole | £840.00 | £540.00 Land Valuation for The Coombes LGA 1972 s111 £300.00 Negotiations service for The Coombes LGA 1972 s111 (50% of this cost is to be repaid by Arborfield PC) |
| BACS | Amazon | £51.73 | Office Stationery order LGA 1972 s111 |

* 1. **Report on Monies received**

£19.41 – WBC – Refund from overcharge on 2019 election fee

* 1. **CIL Expenditure** Planning Act 2008, Part 11 S.216 & Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 (as amended) – Council agreed to purchase new speed watch equipment due to changes made by Thames Valley Police and the type of equipment needed.

It was agreed that BPC should purchase from Westcotec, a Portable Battery Powered Automated Number Plate Recognition (ASWC) Radar Camera Recorder, with all accessories including Battery, Charger, Tripod, software package, mounting bracket and Case **costing £3845 excluding VAT**.

* 1. **BVRA Request for funding for Kings Coronation celebrations** – At the December Meeting the Council agreed that if the BVRA would organise an event for the Kings Coronation, the Council would be willing to support the event financially. The BVRA would like the Council to assist with funding the event, and have asked for £5000 to cover the costs of a Barkham Day of Celebrations, which include a broadcasting the coronation at the Village Hall for all to attend, Children’s entertainment and an evening Barn Dance.

**Council agreed to pay £5000 to cover the costs of putting on the event**.

**23/020 Parish Office Operations**

**New Laptop for the Clerk** – Council agreed to the clerk purchasing a new laptop, as the current laptop is old, slow and outdated.

Council did not feel £900 was sufficient to buy a new laptop, so gave approval for expenditure of up to £1200 to cover the cost of the new laptop.

**WBC - New Local - Working in Partnership Strategy Meetings** – WBC have joined with New Local to improve partnership working with organisations. A meeting is planned for the 6th March to be held with the Parish Councils to progress this. Council appointed 2 Councillors – Mrs Stubbs and Mr Langford to attend the meeting with the Clerk, who will then report back to Council.

**23/021 Councillors Forum**

None

There being no further business the part 1 meeting closed at 9.28pm

Part 2

It was agreed by resolution to a motion that item **23/018 The Coombes** on the Agenda be taken under Part II. Due to the confidential nature of the item, members of the public in attendance were asked to leave the meeting for the discussion of the item. No members of the press were present at the meeting. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 S1 (2)

**23/018 The Coombes**