



Clerk of the Council
Suite 23 Liberty House
Greenham Business Park
Greenham, Berkshire RG19 6HW

clerk@greenham.gov.uk
www.greenham.gov.uk
01635 564900

MINUTES of the meeting of Greenham Parish Council
held at St Marys Church Hall, Greenham
on Wednesday 11th January 2017 at 7.30pm

Present:

Gary Puffett	Meg Thomas
Phil Barnett (opening chair)	Paul Walter
Jon Gage	Lindsey Middlemiss.
Julian Swift-Hook	Paul Inman
Billy Drummond	Pragna Hay
Chris Austin	

In attendance: 1 member of the public, 1 member of the press from 19:26.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Outgoing Chairman Councillor Phil Barnett reported that the Monitoring Officer had issued advice regarding the correct completion of Declarations of Acceptance of Office and Declarations of Interest. The advice was read in full to the meeting. The advice was discussed and noted by members. The Minutes of meetings held in September and December recording proper Declarations of Acceptance of Office made by new councillors as required by statute were also noted. The clerical oversight to file Declarations of Interest for new members with the Monitoring Officer within the timescale specified by statute was also noted.

Proposed: Cllr Paul Walter

Seconded: Cllr Jon Gage

Resolved: That Cllr Julian Swift-Hook be elected Chairman of Council

2. VOTE OF THANKS TO COUNCILLOR BARNETT

Proposed: Cllr Julian Swift-Hook

Seconded: Cllr Paul Walter

Resolved: That Council thanks Cllr Barnett for his work as Chairman of Council for the past 21 months.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Balu Sudra

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Gage declared that he works for a company that owns land in the parish.

Cllr Middlemiss declared that she lives in Pyle Hill.

Cllr Swift-Hook declared that he is also a member of Newbury Town Council

Cllr Drummond declared that he is also a member of West Berkshire Council.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Proposed: Cllr Paul Walter

Seconded: Cllr Lindsey Middlemiss.

Resolved: That the draft minutes of a meeting of Council held on 14 December 2016 be amended as discussed, following which they be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. MATTERS TO REPORT

Former chairman Councillor Phil Barnett reported that:

- a) Chris Birch (former Greenham warden) has a new position as Community Engagement Officer for BBOWT.
- b) David Wilson Homes has written to the council regarding the bus shelters on the racecourse estate.

Chairman Councillor Julian Swift-Hook reported that:

- c) Council clerk Roger Chester has resigned with effect from 31 December 2016. Cllr Swift-Hook thanked Mr Chester for his service to the Council over the previous 9 months.
- d) Councillor Alan Agutter resigned on 8 January 2017.

Proposed: Cllr Julian Swift-Hook

Seconded: Cllr Paul Inman

Resolved: That Council thanks Mr Agutter for his work as a member of this Council for the last 13 years.

7. PUBLIC SESSION

There were no comments or questions from members of the public.

8. SALT BINS

Cllr Gage gave a verbal report to Council.

- a) Three quotes have been received for the provision of a salt bin refilling service.
- b) A preferred contractor has been identified and draft contracts were sent to the clerk prior to his resignation. Cllr Gage will establish the current position and report back.
- c) The sourcing of salt has been put out to tender; replies are awaited.
- d) Various safety/liability issues were raised:
 - 1) the possibility of drug litter (and needles in particular) being found in bins;
 - 2) the Council's liability (if any) for the contractor's activities;
 - 3) the location of the bins as originally approved by WBC must not be changed and this must be written in to any contract;
 - 4) the Council's responsibility for maintaining the bins in serviceable condition, and how this issue will be managed/monitored;
 - 5) the Council's insurance cover relating to salt bins.

Cllr Gage undertook to check the position on all of these issues (including with WBC how these issues were managed when WBC had responsibility for the bins), and report back.

- e) Cllr Gage confirmed that planning consent is required for stickers carrying advertising.

Proposed: Cllr Jon Gage

Seconded: Cllr Lindsey Middlemiss

Resolved: a) That the sample stickers already received, with the Council's contact telephone number for salt/grit bin matters (which can be diverted as needed), be put on some of the Council's salt/grit bins by Cllr Gage, at no cost to the Council.
b) That the contract for the supply of road salt and the refilling of bins be brought back to Council for approval when finalised.

9. FOOTWAY LIGHTING OUTSIDE ST MARYS HALL

Proposed: Cllr Billy Drummond

Seconded: Cllr Gary Puffett

Resolved: That a donation of £150 be made towards the cost of footway lighting outside the Church Hall, to be taken from the current year's Section 137 Grants budget.

Cllr Phil Barnett declared an interest as his spouse is a member of the congregation of the church and did not vote.

10. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST FROM BRIAN RADFORD

Council has taken advice from the Information Commissioner's Office on the appropriate way to process Freedom of Information requests. As a result of this advice the request received from Mr Radford will not be an agenda item for council meetings.

11. PLANNING AND LICENCING

The following planning applications were considered:

Number: 16/03477/COND1
Location: 25 Dalby Crescent
Detail: New garage with additional parking - application for approval of details reserved by conditions 5 surfacing and 10 access of approved application 16/02490/HOUSE
Decision: No objection

Number: 16/03405/NONMAT
Location: 1 Water Lane
Detail: Non material amendment for approved application 16/02110/HOUSE re-roof and new glazing. Amendment: Roof change to dual pitched hipped roof
Decision: No objection

Number: 16/03202/CERTE
Location: 2 Windsor Rise
Detail: Rear conservatory
Decision: No objection

Number: 16/03185/CERTP
Location: 12 Westwood Road
Detail: Construction of single storey utility room behind existing garage adjoining kitchen. Conversion of garage to habitable space, replace garage door with window. Fill in existing porch and move front door forward
Decision: No objection

Proposed: Cllr Chris Austin

Seconded: Cllr Billy Drummond

Resolved: That the Decisions above be adopted as the Council's views in respect of each of these planning applications and passed to the Local Planning Authority.

12. FINANCE

- a) Cheque payments.
 - 1) There are currently two cheques signatories, which is sufficient but limiting. The need to authorise two additional cheque signatories was identified; this will be put on the next available Council agenda.
 - 2) Several payments have been requested but details have yet to be confirmed; this will be put on the next available Council agenda.
 - 3) There were no cheque payments presented for approval.
- b) Grant requests – none received.
- c) Budget and Precept - because the necessary Dispensations in accordance with s30 of the Localism Act 2011 are not in place, this item will be deferred to an Extraordinary Meeting of Council, to be called before the end of January 2017.

13. SALT BINS

- a) Three quotes have been received for the provision of a salt bin refilling service.
- b) A preferred contractor has been identified and draft contracts were sent to the clerk prior to his resignation. Cllr Gage will establish the current position and report back.
- c) The sourcing of salt has been put out to tender; replies are awaited.
- d) Various safety/liability issues were raised:
 - 1) the possibility of drug litter (and needles in particular) being found in bins;
 - 2) the Council's liability (if any) for the contractor's activities;

- 3) the location of the bins as originally approved by WBC must not be changed and this must be written in to any contract;
- 4) the Council's responsibility for maintaining the bins in serviceable condition, and how this issue will be managed/monitored;
- 5) the Council's insurance cover relating to salt bins.

Cllr Gage undertook to check the position on all of these issues (including with WBC how these issues were managed when WBC had responsibility for the bins), and report back.

- e) Cllr Gage confirmed that planning consent is required for stickers carrying advertising.

Proposed: Cllr Jon Gage

Seconded: Cllr Lindsey Middlemiss

- Resolved:**
- a) That stickers with the Council's contact telephone number for salt/grit bin matters (which can be diverted as needed) be put on all of the Council's salt/grit bins by Cllr Gage, at no cost to the Council.
 - b) That the contract for the supply of road salt and the refilling of bins be brought back to Council for approval when finalised.

14. CONTROL TOWER

- f) The Chairman congratulated Cllr Gage on being elected as Chairman of the Control Tower Committee.
- g) Committee Chairman Cllr Gage gave a verbal report on the committee meeting that had taken place earlier in the evening.
- h) Committee Chairman Cllr Gage gave a verbal report on the committee meeting that had taken place earlier in the evening:
 - 1) PWLB loan application – the committee is grateful to BALC for support received. BALC has advised that the application should be amended (to address the short-comings) and re-submitted.
 - 2) A contractor has been approved to carry out the urgent repairs identified at the last meeting of Council; the signed contract is awaited from the contractor (estimated 3-4 days).
 - 3) The next meeting of the committee is planned to be on 25th January 2017, at which the remaining works to complete the project will be “brain stormed” and the type and make-up of the legal entity that will lease the building will be further discussed.
 - 4) The security and fire alarms were fully operational as of 23 December 2016. The list of keyholders needs to be reviewed (currently Cllrs Gage, Barnett and Austin). Mr Dean Graham (co-opted member of the committee) is willing to be a keyholder.

Proposed: Cllr Lindsey Middlemiss

Seconded: Cllr Paul Inman

- Resolved:** That Cllrs Gage, Barnett, and Austin, and Mr Dean Graham, be keyholders for alarm/security purposes.

- i) The recommendation of the Control Tower Committee that Council should open a separate bank account for project funds was considered. This would keep project transactions and balances separate and clearly identifiable from council revenue transactions and balances. Cllr Gage will investigate the cost of an additional account and report back.
- j) Cllr Middlemiss pointed out that the Terms of Reference of the Control Tower Committee make frequent reference to responsibilities of the Council's Proper Officer in the context of the authority delegated to the committee. To be considered under the next item (Staffing Matters).

15. STAFFING MATTERS

- a) Council noted the resignation of clerk Roger Chester, effective 31 December 2016. Matters arising were discussed:
 - 1) There needs to be a formal handover/exit interview.
 - 2) Cllr Gage will compile a list of outstanding queries relating to the Control Tower.
 - 3) Cllr Swift-Hook will compile a list of other outstanding queries.
- b) Options for interim clerking arrangements were discussed. It was noted that:

- 1) the clerk normally fulfils the statutory roles of Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).
- 2) Council could appoint an Acting Clerk from among its members.
- 3) Council could engage the services of a locum clerk (though efforts to identify possible candidates have so far been unsuccessful).

Proposed: Cllr Billy Drummond

Seconded: Cllr Lindsey Middlemiss

Resolved: That Vice Chairman Cllr Chris Austin be appointed Acting Proper Officer.

Proposed: Cllr Paul Walter

Seconded: Cllr Paul Inman

Resolved: That Chairman Cllr Julian Swift-Hook be appointed Acting Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

- c) Arrangements for recruiting a permanent clerk were discussed:
- 1) Cllr Swift-Hook advised that the Staffing Committee will meet shortly with a view to progressing the recruitment process
 - 2) It is expected that the new clerk will not be responsible for managing the control tower project because an external project manager will be recruited for that purpose, paid for out of the project budget.
 - 3) Cllr Austin suggested that Council should consider making the clerk position a full-time post, given the growing size of the parish. Cllr Inman suggested that an advert for a full-time post would potentially attract more applicants.

Proposed: Cllr Julian Swift-Hook

Seconded: Cllr Paul Walter

Resolved: That Council allocates a budget of up to £5,000 to the Staffing Committee to fund the cost of the recruitment process, including engaging the services of an external HR consultant to re-evaluate the clerk post, manage the recruitment process and to ensure compliance with relevant employment laws at an estimated cost of £1,000.

Proposed: Cllr Julian Swift-Hook

Seconded: Cllr Paul Inman

Resolved: That the Staffing Committee be increased to five members and that Cllr Meg Thomas be appointed to the Staffing Committee.

16. OTHER ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY OR FOR POSSIBLE INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

- a) For a future agenda:
- 1) BALC advice re: the legality of funding WBC libraries and whether the Council wishes to contribute
 - 2) The Council's website
 - 3) The Council's parish office at Greenham Business Park
 - 4) PR and Media Policy
 - 5) Cllr Inman will update Council re: Racecourse Road matters at the next meeting, to include an update on the bollards problem and slippery roads.
 - 6) Cllr Walter will circulate an email about Racecourse street/flat names
 - 7) Set up a Governance Working Group
- b) Items for information:
- 1) Cllr Barnett is the Council's representative to BALC
 - 2) Cllr Puffett reported that the Thatcham Parochial Charities are inviting grant applications from Greenham residents. Cllr Puffett will circulate details to members.

There being no other business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 22:08 hrs

Chairman

Date