

## TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting held on-line on 9 March 2021

*An audio recording was taken of this Meeting, in order to overcome potential technical difficulties, but will be deleted as soon as the Minutes are approved in the Meeting due to be held in April*

#### **Present:**

**Councillors -** Mr K Page (Chair), Mr C Taylor (Vice-Chair), Mr G Dennis, Ms A Foster, Mr T Marino, Mrs R Reynolds

**District Councillors -** Mr R Jones, Mr T Linden, Mr T Marino, Ms J Stewart, Mr R Somner

**Public -** 8

#### **21/040 Open Forum:**

- a) Members of the public – there were no comments or questions raised.
- b) Councillors – there were no comments or questions raised

**21/041 Apologies for absence:** Apologies for absence were received from parish councillors Mr L Marino and Mrs J Lane.

**21/042 Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest relevant to the Agenda.

**21/043 Approval and Adoption of Minutes:** The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 9 February 2021, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read. They will be signed by the Chairman in due course.

**21/044 Matters Arising:** There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

**21/045 Clerk's Report, including Covid-19 Update:** In addition to the Report, which can be found in Appendix C of these Minutes, the Clerk also advised that West Berkshire Council have today forwarded details of a consultation on the Settlement Boundary Review. As the deadline for comments is not until the 21 April this item will be added to the Agenda for the April meeting.

#### **21/046 Planning:**

- a) Eastern Area - As it is likely that the application for the proposed development on land at Pincents Lane will be on the Agenda for the Eastern Area Planning Committee Meeting on the 31 March 2021, Mr Taylor agreed to Mr Page's suggestion that he would represent the parish. All Members were in agreement.
- b) Decisions - See Appendix A
- c) New applications - See Appendix B

## **21/047 District Councillors' Reports:**

### **Ms J Stewart –**

- i) Ms Stewart has forwarded to the Clerk the Parish Monthly Report for March. This can be found on the parish website.
- ii) A resident had reported a water leak which, although coming from Berkshire Drive, was affecting Hildens Drive. This was reported to Thames Water two weeks ago, who rectified the problem. However, the incident resulted in pot holes in the road, the repair of which is the responsibility of Thames Water. Ms Stewart has raised a note with Thames Water for the repair, but if anyone has any updates please let her know.
- iii) Volker have donated top-soil to be used to form an embankment at the car park in Hildens Drive. Security lighting is to be installed shortly.
- iv) Surviving to Thriving is a new Covid mental health fund which has been set up by West Berkshire Council, aimed at local not-for-profit organisations, to provide grants to enable them carry out their activities to help mitigate the impacts of Covid-19 on mental health and wellbeing. WBC has contributed £100,000 with Greenham Common Trust match-funding this, making a total fund available of £200,000.

### **Mr T Linden –**

- i) A planning application has been received by West Berkshire Council for change of use for units on the Sainsbury's site at Calcot, from general retail to the sale of food and drink.
- ii) Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue has submitted an objection to the proposed Pincents Hill development.
- iii) The new Chief Fire Officer for Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue will be confirmed on the 24 March.

**Mr R Jones** had nothing further to add.

**Mr R Somner** reminded everyone that there is still time to comment on West Berkshire Council's Active Travel Plan consultation, which is especially relevant to the schools in Calcot. The consultation ends on the 23 April.

**21/048 Maintenance Report:** The Clerk gave a brief report on maintenance issues during the month. The full Report can be found on the parish website.

**21/049 SLCC Practitioners' Conference:** The Clerk reported on the Practitioners' Conference which she has recently attended, having forwarded a full report to Members prior to the Meeting. She advised that there were some good talks, with several useful points being discussed.

**21/050 Neighbourhood Plan:** Mr Page reported that good progress was made last summer, with a draft Plan being drawn up, which was forwarded to West Berkshire Council for feedback. Following a meeting with WBC the number of houses needed to meet requirements going forward (175) was put into the Neighbourhood Plan, but it was discovered that there is insufficient sites identified in the NP to meet this number of proposed new properties, if the land at Pincents Hill is discounted.

Policies that can be included in the NP include infrastructure, and the protection of green space; but not the building of GP surgeries and schools. All green spaces in the parish therefore need to be identified

Mr Taylor added that it may be possible to designate the land at Pincents Hill as green space, but this cannot be done while a planning application is in place. Therefore it is important that a consultation is carried out before any further planning applications are received.

**21/051 Donation requests:**

A donation request has been received from Reading Citizens Advice Bureau. Mrs Reynolds proposed that the amount donated should be £500. This was seconded by Mr Dennis, and unanimously agreed. The donation will be made under S142 of the Local Government Act 1972.

A donation of £500 was given to Reading Age UK, and £500 to Carebus, both under S137 of the Local Government Act 1972. This was proposed by Mrs Reynolds and seconded by Ms Foster, with all Members in agreement.

**21/052 Anti-Social Behaviour Working Party/Berkshire Youth:**

Berkshire Youth is a longstanding Berkshire based charity providing Youth Services across the entire county of Berkshire. They have recently secured a contract to refurbish a large youth centre in Newbury and have a “detached youth work” contract with Newbury Town Council focussed on ASB hotspots.

Discussions have been held with Berkshire Youth and it became clear that they could provide detached youth work by engaging with young people in the 13 - 19 age group in recreation grounds, with regular reporting and liaison with the parish council, police, schools and other support groups. They could assist in setting up youth clubs, youth projects, and youth surveys, and could support the refurbishment and launch of the new community facility at the Calcot Centre annex.

The ASB working party has had two meetings with Berkshire Youth with a view to drawing up a contract for them to provide youth services, and Mr Taylor advised that further discussions are needed to discuss this Council’s requirements.

Precise costs, periods of coverage and contractual details would need to be agreed but it is anticipated that based on similar contracts this could be in the region of £20,000 per annum

for a 3 year contract. Berkshire Youth may be able to provide a top up, to any parish council payment made, from other grant funding they have available.

The Clerk advised that the procurement rules, as confirmed within the Standing Orders, would apply to tenders relating to this contract. Further advice will be given to the working party at the next scheduled meeting.

The ASB working party would like to negotiate a detached youth work and additional youth services contract with Berkshire Youth, and to present the contract and further recommendation to Full Council for a final decision.

Mr Page asked Members if they wanted the ASB working group to continue with discussions with Berkshire Youth with a view to agreeing a contract. All Members were in agreement.

### **21/053 Anti-Social Behaviour Working Party/mobile security:**

The ASB working party sought proposals from various mobile security companies, the quote from Parkguard, who specialise in local authority parks, being the only one they thought was worthy of consideration. Their quote was for either a 9 week or 13 week contract with two security personnel, covering all four recreation grounds for 40 hours coverage per week. The quote including VAT was £17,280 for 9 weeks and £24,960 for 13 weeks. The staff would be SIA registered but with no additional powers (Parkguard also have "higher" level police support security staff but these could not be quoted for a short contract). The service can be implemented at a maximum of two weeks' notice.

During the more recent lockdown the working party was advised by Sgt Lond of Thames Valley Police that policing of our parish recreation grounds had been increased due to the need to enforce Covid regulations. More recent police advice is that this increased service is likely to remain in place until June 2021 and that if the Parish was to introduce mobile security it would seem more appropriate to do so when police coverage is reduced. The working party had already determined that any mobile security would be better delayed until spring/summer when anti-social behaviour in recreation grounds tends to be worse.

The ASB working party recommended deferring any decision on a mobile security contract with Parkguard while current extended policing is in place. All Members were in agreement.

**21/054 Dog Waste Collections:** For many years, the dog waste bins on parish owned recreation grounds have been emptied under contract by Reading Borough Council.

The Clerk has received notification from RBC that the cost of this will be increased in the 2021/22 financial year to £17,261.72 inc VAT (from £5,194.04 for 2020/21), the main reason for the increase being the cost of disposal by them, although there is a smaller element of increased labour cost included. The parish has 26 dog waste bins, and these are emptied twice weekly.

A quote has been obtained from a management company who carry out dog waste collections, for a cost of £208 per week, excluding VAT.

Changes in legislation have been introduced permitting dog waste to be disposed of in general waste bins as there is no longer a need to incinerate the waste. This allows parish councils to bring this service in-house.

This Council is contracted to use SITA for the collection of general waste. The charge currently paid includes a weight limit threshold. If this threshold is exceeded, a supplementary charge is applied. Because the additional weight of the dog waste is an unknown, it is difficult to calculate the potential cost that will be involved.

The Clerk recommends that the service is brought in-house for a trial period in order to determine if this would be feasible long term, and to establish the costs involved.

Mr Dennis proposed that Members accept the Clerk's recommendation, which was seconded by Mr Taylor, with all Members in agreement.

**21/055 Financial Information:** Members reviewed the expenditure for February, which was retrospectively noted.

**21/056 Chairman's Remarks:**

a) Mr Page advised Members that Mr L Marino has resigned from his position as a parish councillor. He thanked Mr Marino for his contribution to the Council meetings and the ASB working party.

b) Mr Page has recently attended the BALC AGM. He was not very impressed with the meeting, although he did note that there is training available for Councillors.

c) At the BALC AGM, Parish On-Line gave a brief presentation on the mapping software that they offer. The software could be used to map parish assets, e.g. benches, bins etc along with providing assistance in the production of a Neighbourhood Plan. Parish On-Line has offered to conduct a free introductory training session, the details of which has been forwarded to all Members ahead of this meeting.

d) As soon as the CIL grant has been confirmed by West Berkshire Council, steps will need to be taken to get the work started on the vacant CCA building as soon as possible, as the project needs to be completed within the next financial year. A working party will therefore need to be set up quickly to manage the project.

e) Mr Page advised members that this would be Mrs Elvidge's last meeting, ahead of her retirement at the end of the month. On behalf of the Council, he thanked her for her hard work and dedication while at Tilehurst Parish Council.

**21/057 Exclusion of public and press from Part 11:** Members voted unanimously to exclude members of the public from Part 11, because of the confidential nature of the item to be discussed.

**The Meeting closed at 9.20 pm**

**The next Meeting will be held on 13 April 2021**

**Chairman**

**PART 11**

**21/058 Staffing Committee:** Over 70 applications have been received for the recently advertised position. A short list has been drawn up, and eight applicants will be interviewed at the end of this week by the Clerk, Ms Foster and Mr Taylor.

## APPENDIX A - DECISIONS

20/02670/HOUSE	<u>142 Fairford Road, Tilehurst</u> Single storey front extension, double storey side extension and conversion of garage into habitable room.	<b>Granted</b>
20/02880/HOUSE	<u>The Brambles, Long Lane, Tilehurst</u> Removal of thicket fence and reposition of new masonry front wall with associated gates.	<b>Granted</b>
20/02918/HOUSE	<u>33 Cotswold Way, Tilehurst</u> Demolition of existing garage. Construction of two storey side and single storey rear extensions with associated external works.	<b>Granted</b>
20/02977/REG4	<u>Springfield Primary School, Tilehurst</u> Application for a second entrance on Barton Road for Springfield School.	<b>Granted</b>
20/02979/HOUSE	<u>3 Sandown Avenue, Calcot</u> To erect a prefabricated concrete garage with brick effect cladding which will be the same/nearest colour of existing house. The garage will have a Pent style roof with white up and over door/windows/fascias/gutters and downpipes as per the existing house.	<b>Granted</b>
20/02903/FUL	<u>5 Ivybank, Tilehurst</u> Sub-division of a single dwelling unit into 1no. 1bed ground floor flat and 1no. 4bed single dwelling unit.	<b>Refused</b>
20/02536/HOUSE	<u>44 Fairford Road, Tilehurst</u> Proposed 2 storey side and rear extension including a 1 bed annex following demolition of garage and lean-to store.	<b>Granted</b>
20/03020/HOUSE	<u>Apple Tree View, Alder Drive, Tilehurst</u> Single storey side extension.	<b>Granted</b>
20/02951/FUL	<u>2 Greenfinch Close, Tilehurst</u> Remove fir trees, erecting closed board fence 50cm from the existing chain link fence, screening with Japanese Laurel.	<b>Granted</b>
20/03023/HOUSE	<u>201 Overdown Road, Tilehurst</u> SECTION 73 – Removal or Variation of Condition 2 (approved plans) of approved application 20/02083/HOUSE: Front porch. Two storey side extension. Single and two storey rear extension.	<b>Granted</b>

21/00054/HOUSE

14 Dark Lane, Tilehurst

**Granted**

Demolish conservatory; convert garage to habitable space; single storey rear extension.



## **APPENDIX B - NEW APPLICATIONS**

21/00058/REG4      Denefield School, Long Lane, Tilehurst  
Creation of 3G Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) with perimeter fencing,  
macadam hardstanding areas, storage container and soil bund.

**This Council has no objection to the proposal.**

21/00146/HOUSE      35 Hildens Drive, Tilehurst  
Proposed rear extension and change of use to existing garage into  
habitual space. Proposed front entrance porch.

**This Council has no objection to the proposal.**

21/00206/HOUSE      28 Ashbury Drive, Tilehurst  
Demolition of existing garage and addition of 2 storey side extension.

**This Council has no objection to the proposal.**

21/00201/HOUSE      34 The Knoll, Tilehurst  
Single storey rear extension.

**This Council has no objection to the proposal.**

## **APPENDIX C - CLERK'S REPORT**

### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 This report provides information to the council on activities undertaken by the Clerk and other team members along with other matters appropriate to the council.

### **2.0 Activity updates**

- 2.1 The Clerk continues to work with the landowner and Volker Highways with regards to the installation of a footpath within the Cornwell recreation ground.

- 2.2 The Clerk has been in contact with the Neighbourhood Police Team with regards to recent vandalism within the children's play area at the Calcot recreation ground.

The damage has been repaired in-house and details of this has been reported to members within this month's maintenance report.

### **3.0 COVID – 19 Updates**

- 3.1 Following the announcement of a 4 step "road out of lockdown" grassroots football is potentially able to recommence from 29 March 2021. At present, the guidance around this hasn't been issued so it is not clear under what restrictions this will be. Preparations for the commencement of matches is taking place and this is being done on the assumption that use of the changing rooms will not be allowed and that teams are not permitted to share equipment. Contact has been made with all contracted teams and the situation will continue to be monitored before matches go ahead.

The Covid-19 specific risk assessments, previously prepared, will be updated as necessary once the guidance has been issued and these will be sent to all contracted teams.

- 3.2 Potentially, from 12 April 2021, community buildings can start to reopen. Like the grassroots football, the guidance has yet to be issued so we are not certain which groups are permitted and under what restrictions. Once the guidance has been updated, we will be able to ascertain whether or not we will be able to reopen all three buildings. The situation will be closely monitored and all of the relevant precautionary measures will be in place before the halls are opened.

Our regular hall hirers have been contacted and we will continue to work with them to ensure that we are providing a safe environment for their return. In addition to this, we are starting to see enquiries for one off bookings for parties. At this stage we are unable to confirm bookings, but it is hoped that the situation around this will be clearer in due course.

The Covid-19 specific risk assessments, previously prepared, will be updated as required once the guidance has been issued and these will be sent to all hirers.

### **4.0 Other matters**

- 4.1 The Clerk attended this year's Virtual Practitioners' Conference and a report on this has been circulated to all members.

4.2 An updated model Code of Conduct document has recently been published by the Local Government Association. The Clerk is in the process of reviewing this, against this Council's current document, ahead of making recommendations to members.

4.3 Following a discussion with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the Clerk is currently working on the process for reporting risks, risk management and governance to members.

#### 5.0 **Decisions made under delegated authority**

5.1 At the February 2021 Full Council Meeting, members delegated the decision as to whether or not to provide an additional salt bin in The Knoll to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

Following further discussions with the resident who made the original request, it was ascertained that a second bin in the same location would be sufficient. With this in mind, it was decided to remove the existing small bin and replace it with one twice the size.

Having confirmed that this complies with the terms of the existing Highways Licence, and that we already had a large bin in storage, our Maintenance Office has swapped the bins ensuring that the replacement is in the same location.

5.2 With the imminent restart of grassroots football, the local leagues have asked football teams to establish the availability of their home pitch, with a view to playing the remaining games by extending the season.

Having been contacted by four of our contracted teams, and following a discussion with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, it has been agreed that we will allow an extension to the dates stated within the contracts issued and permit play up until the end of June 2021. This comes on condition that the pitches are playable, is weather permitting and that all teams agree to adhere to the current Covid-19 guidelines at the time.

This permission will not be extended after this date as it would start to encroach on the school summer holidays, when the recreation grounds are used more, and to afford us sufficient time to carry out pitch maintenance ahead of the new season. This decision was not taken to Full Council as it was time sensitive and an urgent decision was required.

5.3 Further to minute 21/012 Community Foodbank, a Temporary Licence to Use is in place, which has been agreed by the parish's solicitor. The Mother Earth Foundation now have use of the building, solely for the purpose of running a foodbank, from 1 March 2021 until 30 June 2021. No rent will be charged for this however, it has been agreed that the group will cover the cost of the electricity used.

The foodbank opened its doors to residents in need on 1 March and an update as to how well used it is will be distributed to all members once it has been established.

6.0 **Further reports**

6.1 The Clerk will provide further updates at the meeting, should this be necessary.