

TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 March 2022 in the Main Hall, Parish Office, Calcot

Present:

Councillors -	Mr K Page (Chairman), Mr C Taylor (Vice-Chairman), Mrs J Lane, Mrs T Downes, Mrs R Reynolds, Mrs J Slevin, Mrs S Vickers, Ms A Foster, Mr G Dennis
District Councillors -	Mr T Linden, Ms J Stewart
Public -	16 members of the public were present

Mr Page opened the meeting by welcoming those present and explaining that the meeting would be recorded for minute-taking purposes. He also introduced the new Administrative Assistant who had joined the council as a permanent member of staff in February and would attend meetings to take minutes.

22/033 Open Forum:

- a) Members of the public
- (i) A representative of Calcot Park Golf Club made a statement explaining that the club's facilities and course needed a great deal of work which would have to be funded by developing 30 acres of the club's land. There would be 195 acres of land remaining. Mr Taylor asked if there would be the possibility of holding a meeting with local residents to discuss the matter. It was confirmed that the developer was in the process of preparing a planning application and would be likely to want a discussion with the council and with residents. In response to a question from Mr Dennis, it was explained that members' golf clubs are in decline generally and that there had been under-investment in the course at Calcot for around 50 years.
 - (ii) A local resident spoke about Pincent's Hill. He queried why the planning application, having been unanimously rejected by WBC's Eastern Area Planning Committee, had been referred to the District Planning Committee.
 - (iii) An update was requested as to progress on improving access between the Cornwell Centre and Sulham Hill, where there is currently a stile. The Clerk explained that there were several issues which needed to be dealt with before any changes could be made.
- b) Councillors – there were no comments or questions

22/034 Apologies for absence: Apologies for absence were received from Parish Councillor N Furlong-King, Parish and District Councillor Mr T Marino, and District Councillors Mr R Jones and Mr A Williamson.

22/035 Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest relevant to the Agenda.

22/036 Approval and adoption of Minutes of Council meeting held on 8 February 2022:

The draft Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 February 2022, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

22/037 Approval and adoption of Minutes of Council meeting held on 13 April 2021:

The draft Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 April 2021, having been previously circulated to Members, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman. Adoption of the Minutes had been overlooked the previous year largely as a result of changes to regulations affecting how meetings could be held.

22/038 Matters arising: There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 February 2022.

22/039 Clerk's report: See Appendix C.

Mr Taylor asked that the Council's congratulations on the Clerk's successfully completing CiLCA be recorded. It had taken a great deal of time and commitment and was a great achievement for both the Clerk and the Council.

Mr Dennis enquired whether anyone had been caught damaging the new fencing at Turnhams Farm. The Clerk explained that a dog walker had seen the incident, which took place within hours of the fence being put in, and informed the office, but it had not been possible to identify anyone as the location was not covered by CCTV.

22/040 Planning:

- a) Decisions - see Appendix A
- b) New applications - see Appendix B
- c) Eastern Area - the Clerk would advise members if there was anything on the Agenda for the meeting on 30 March in order that the Parish could be represented.
- d) Pincents Hill - The Clerk had e-mailed WBC's Case Officer for an update but had received no response. The only new information available had come from the District Councillors' February Report which confirmed that the application had been referred to the District Planning Committee and was likely to be discussed on 13 April. It was agreed that Mr Taylor would attend the meeting to represent the Parish Council. He would be kept updated with any further information received.

22/041 District Councillor's report: The report had been circulated before the meeting and Ms Stewart explained that the Pincents Hill update in it had been brief as it was the only information available.

She and Mr Linden were as shocked by the referral as everyone else. Referrals to District Planning were usually made only if the vote had been very close. The District Planning

Committee was made up of members of the Eastern and Western Area Planning Committees so some members would have been part of the Eastern Area decision.

WBC Councillors had been informed of the referral by e-mail on 17 February and the reason given was that there were district-wide implications of the application being refused, as well as the risk of significant associated costs. Ms Stewart had replied to ask if residents had also been advised, and to seek clarification as to the district-wide implications and significant associated costs of the application being refused. If she had not had a reply in a week's time, she would follow up with the Service Director. Unfortunately, she was not available on 13 April, but Mr Linden would attend the meeting to represent Ward members.

Mr Linden added that Alok Sharma MP had sent an e-mail in regard to a possible call-in by the Secretary of State. He also explained what some of the costs of refusal might be, for example, if the application went to appeal, it would be necessary to consult external Highways advisors. He confirmed he would attend the meeting on 13 April to represent Ward members and to raise issues.

Ms Stewart said WBC's annual budget meeting had been held. The Constitution had been changed so it was now possible to spend a full five hours discussing the budget although the meeting had not been quite that long. The meeting was available to watch on WBC's web site.

The next litter pick was booked for 26 March at Turnhams Farm. It was part of the national Great British Spring Clean initiative and Ms Stewart had signed up and pledged 20 bags of litter. There would be an interview with BBC Berkshire beforehand, and WBC would send a photographer on the day and might want to do some short videos and so on as well. Everyone would be welcome on the day and it was hoped that Little Heath School might be involved as it would be very positive for the students' reputation if they were seen to be helping tidy up.

Mr Linden gave an update on the Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, including a review of its budgets, and explained that an extra £5.00 will be added to residents Council Tax demands.

He also said a round of Members' Community Bids had opened. Bids needed to be submitted by Friday 3 June and could up to £5,000 per member. A copy of the details would be sent to the Clerk.

22/042 Maintenance report: The report had been circulated before the meeting and was noted. Mr Page thanked the Maintenance Officers for doing such a good job despite the fact it must be very frustrating to have to redo things so often because of vandalism.

22/043 To receive a report detailing requests for financial donations: Mr Taylor declared an interest as he had, in the past, been closely associated with Tilehurst Junior Youth Club having been Chairman of the Trustees for a number of years.

The Clerk confirmed there had been only two requests, those from Reading Age UK and Tilehurst Junior Youth Club.

Mrs Vickers queried how much could be given and suggested that Reading Age UK be asked if they would really like more than the £500 requested. The Clerk explained that additional money could be given and was available in the budget but a requirement of S137 funding was that the expenditure must be commensurate with the benefit to parishioners, so it would need to be evidenced that there was additional benefit.

It was unanimously resolved that the requested donation of £500 be made under S137 of the Local Government Act 1972. It was also agreed that the Clerk would contact Reading Age UK to find out how a further £500 donation might be used on behalf of parishioners. If it would lead to added benefit, the donation could be increased to £1,000 in total.

It was unanimously resolved that the requested donation of £500 be made to Tilehurst Junior Youth Club from allocated funds for youth projects.

The Clerk confirmed that she was working on setting up a new donations procedure with an applications process and a page on the Parish Council's web site. It should be in place for the new financial year.

22/044 To allocate a sum to be available for applications from organisations arranging events as part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations: The Parish Council was not organising any jubilee events itself but it was agreed that it would make funds available for other organisations.

It was suggested that money be donated to people organising street parties. The Clerk explained that although funds could be made available under S111 of the Local Government Act 1972, a donation could not be given to an individual, only to an organisation which held a bank account in its name.

It was unanimously resolved that a sum of £1,000 be made available for organisations arranging local events to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022, and that a small working party be set up to assist the Clerk in setting up the criteria and allocating the funds. Anyone wishing to join the working group should contact the Clerk and Mr Page.

22/045 Review and adoption of the Governance and Risk Management Scheme: The Governance and Risk Management Scheme had been circulated before the meeting. It was unanimously resolved that it should be adopted as it was and that the Clerk and Mrs Slevin would carry out further work to it and bring an amended and reformatted version to the next meeting.

22/046 Update on review of Standing Orders: It was unanimously resolved that the Standing Orders should be adopted as it was, and that the review would continue and an updated document would be brought to the June 2022 meeting for adoption.

22/047 Review tenders for the grounds maintenance contract 2022-25 and resolve upon the contractor to be appointed: An anonymised report giving details of the four tenders

received, together with some background information and due diligence checks on the contractors, had been circulated before the meeting.

After discussion, it was resolved (eight in favour, one against) to award the contract to Contractor D, Countrywide Grounds Maintenance Limited.

22/048 Review tenders for the grass cutting contract 2022-25 and resolve upon the contractor to be appointed: An anonymised report giving details of the five tenders received, together with some background information and due diligence checks on the contractors, had been circulated before the meeting.

It was unanimously resolved to award the contract to Contractor I, Scofell Landscapes Limited.

22/049 Review the financial position and retrospectively note payments for February 2022: Expenditure was reviewed and retrospectively noted.

22/050 Chairman's remarks: Mr Page thanked everyone for attending, particularly the members of the public who had stayed. He added his congratulations to the Clerk on completing CiLCA, saying he knew it had taken a great deal of time and he felt the Council had already benefitted from the hard work put into it. He thanked everyone who had attended the meeting to discuss the Standing Orders, it had been very productive and would be a great help in preparing the amended document. He finished by reiterating his thanks to the Maintenance Officers for dealing with all the recent bad weather and for re-repairing items, replanting trees, and so on, which had been vandalised.

The Meeting finished at 9.05pm

The next Meeting would be held on Tuesday 12 April

Chairman

APPENDIX A – Decisions

21/03101/HOUSE	<u>27 Highbury Road, Tilehurst</u> Conversion of single garage to habitable space with changes to fenestration	Granted
21/02828/HOUSE	<u>5 Foxcombe, Tilehurst</u> Single and double storey rear extension plus front entrance porch	Granted
21/03045/HOUSE	<u>50 Meadowside, Tilehurst</u> Demolition of existing conservatory and construction of single storey rear extension. First floor extension above existing. Extension of existing roof space and partial conversion of extended roof space to habitable accommodation. Raising roof and brickwork over garage and house to bedrooms 3 and 4 to maximise floor and usable space to bedrooms 3 and 4	Granted
21/02721/FUL	<u>17 Laytom Rise, Tilehurst</u> Change of use of land from amenity land to garden land, creation of vehicle access and erection of boundary treatments	Refused
21/02940/FULD	<u>347 The Meadway, Tilehurst</u> Erection of two detached five-bedroom houses along with relevant landscaping	Granted

APPENDIX B – New Planning Applications

1. 22/00130/HOUSE 241 Overdown Road, Tilehurst
Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension

This Council has no objections to the proposal.

2. 22/00301/HOUSE 9 Fullbrook Crescent, Tilehurst
Single storey front porch with part garage conversion with new roof

This Council has no objections to the proposal.

3. 22/00323/HOUSE 17 Voller Drive, Tilehurst
Demolition of attached garage and erection of two storey side extension

This Council objects to the proposal as it believes the increase from three to four bedrooms requires that an additional off-road parking space be provided.

4. 22/00050/HOUSE 24 Oregon Avenue, Tilehurst
Single storey side extension

This Council has no objections to the proposal.

5. 22/00343/HOUSE 69 Long Lane, Tilehurst – adjacent parish (Purley on Thames)
Wrap around front single storey porch extension, rear single storey extension into garden and lantern over existing kitchen

This Council has no objections to the proposal.

6. 22/00471/FUL Unit 1, Savacentre
Change of use of Unit 1 to allow unrestricted use within Class E(a) including the sale of both non-food and food and drink products

The Council has no objections but in view of other issues and applications in the area, this Council has concerns about the effect on traffic and would like to be certain that Highways has considered, and is satisfied with, the likely impact on traffic.

7. 22/00548/HOUSE 15 The Sadlers, Tilehurst
Alterations to access steps and handrail plus new canopy roof

This Council has no objections to the proposal.

8. 22/00413/HOUSE 57 Longworth Avenue, Tilehurst
Demolition of detached garage. Construction of two storey extension to form integral garage, kitchen extension, first floor bedroom and en suite. Internal alteration to ground floor. Changing flat roof existing to pitched at rear.

This Council objects to the proposal as it believes the increase from three to four bedrooms requires that an additional off-road parking space be provided.

APPENDIX C - Clerk's Report

1.0 Background

- 1.1 This report provides the council with information about activities undertaken by the Clerk and other team members, and gives updates on other matters of relevance to the council.

2.0 Activity updates

- 2.1 Refurbishment of the annexe at the Calcot Centre has progressed very well and thought is now being given to reporting completion of the work to West Berkshire Council in order to receive the grant. Planning of the opening event is also underway.
- 2.2 New fencing was installed at Turnhams Farm recreation ground. Within hours of the contractor leaving site, an adult was seen moving the post so that it did not set correctly. See maintenance report.

3.0 Vandalism and anti-social behaviour

- 3.1 Motorbike damage to pitch at Calcot.

4.0 Other matters

- 4.1 Grass cutting and grounds maintenance contracts: As part of the council's procurement process tender documents were drafted and uploaded to Contracts Finder.
- 4.1 The Clerk recently attended the three-day virtual Practitioners' Conference.
- 4.2 Mr Taylor, Mrs Downes and the Clerk have been carrying out the audits of the recreation grounds. Over a period of three weeks, they have visited the Cotswold, Turnhams Farm, Cornwell and Calcot recreation grounds, reviewing the facilities in place, before making recommendations for improved facilities.
- 4.3 Mr Taylor and the Clerk attended a remote meeting called by Alok Sharma MP to discuss Pincents Hill.
- 4.4 The consultation on the National Joint Council (NJC) pay award for 2021/22 has now been concluded, with an agreement to a 1.75% increase being reached. As all staff members are contractually on the NJC pay scales this rise, backdated to April 2021, will be applied accordingly.
- 4.5 The Clerk has now passed CiLCA, having completed the qualification this month. The Clerk is now entitled to a one spinal point pay rise in recognition of this achievement

and this will be applied from April 2022.

Although the council now has a qualified clerk, it is unable to adopt the General Power of Confidence (GPC) as it does not meet the eligibility criteria. Further details explaining both CiLCA and GPC can be found using the following links:

<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/1563-cilca-an-introduction-for-councillors-april-2015/file>

<https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/general-power-competence--0ac.pdf>

5.0 **Further reports**

- 5.1 The Clerk will provide further updates at the meeting, should this be necessary.
- 5.2 Members are asked to note this report.