

## TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 27 June 2023 in the Jubilee Annexe, Calcot

#### Present

**Parish Councillors:** Mr C Taylor, Mrs T Downes, Mrs R Reynolds, Mr N Furlong-King, Mrs P Furlong-King, Mrs R Braine

**District Councillors:** Ms J Stewart, Mr R Somner

**Public:** 16 members of the public were present

**In attendance:** Mr J Walton, Bewley Homes - presenting  
Miss J Major (Clerk), Miss S Williams (minutes)

Mr Taylor opened the meeting by introducing himself and welcoming everyone present. He explained that this was an Extra Ordinary Meeting called specifically to discuss planning application 23/01080/FULMAJ – Proposed redevelopment of the existing club house to provide a new, enlarged club house, reconfigured car park, reconfigured external spaces and associated landscaping (Site A), supported by enabling residential development with associated landscaping, vehicular access and parking (Site B). The application would be the only matter discussed. He clarified the format of the meeting and advised that an audio recording would be taken for the purpose of taking minutes. A member of the public asked if he could video record the meeting. He was permitted to do on the proviso that the recording was for his own personal use only.

#### **23/113 Open Forum**

Mr Walton of Bewley Homes gave a presentation about the application, explaining that Calcot Park Golf Club, like many others, was attracting fewer and fewer new players, and that the location of the club itself meant it was very wet in winter and dry in summer. The reduced income and high maintenance costs had put the club in financial difficulties. The idea behind the application was to expand the club house facilities to include a bar/restaurant, function room and swing room which would be open to members and non-members. The proposed housing was needed to fund the redevelopment of the club house.

Following the presentation, several members of the public made statements or asked questions. Issues raised included: the environment and loss of trees; local infrastructure being inadequate; increased traffic and congestion; access; existing covenants prohibiting proposed usage of the club house by members of the public.

Mr Somner said he was attending the meeting as an observer so would not take questions, although he would be happy to respond to e-mails after the meeting. He explained that there were already 21 objections and 15 comments supporting the application on West Berkshire Council's planning portal so it would definitely be called in to Eastern Area Planning Committee. He clarified the process saying there would be a site visit which members of the public could attend. The meeting itself would be a week later and was also open to the public. Each group (ie in support, objecting, etc) would have five minutes' speaking time, so it was important to co-ordinate in order to make sure all points were covered.

**23/114 Apologies for absence:** Apologies were received from Parish Councillors Mrs S Vickers and Mrs J Slevin.

**23/115 Declarations of interest:** There were no declarations of interest relevant to the agenda.

**23/116 Agreement on response to be submitted to West Berkshire Council:** Mr Taylor said he had recently been elected a District Councillor and had been appointed to sit on the Eastern Area Planning Committee. He was attending the meeting solely in his role as Chairman of Tilehurst Parish Council.

Mrs Downes asked what would happen if this application was refused and the golf club closed. It was explained that there were other areas which might be suitable for development, and that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the specific application.

Mr Taylor said that, as the parish council had strongly supported the Neighbourhood Development Plan working group's proposal that part of Calcot Park Golf Club be designated a Local Green Space (LGS), it was probably obliged to oppose the application, at least until the decision on the LGS designation was known.

He explained that he had been contacted, before the meeting, by local residents expressing their concerns about the proposed residential development at the golf course. Issues discussed included: the impact on New Lane Hill; the fact there were three other possible development sites in the area; inadequate affordable housing; the four-storey flats being out of keeping with other buildings; lack of amenities such as schools and doctor's surgeries; a bat roost in the existing club house; the modern appearance of the proposed club house being incompatible with older buildings such as Calcot Court; Biodiversity Net Gain assessments/statements were missing; loss of trees; lack of follow-up with the public after meetings.

Mr Taylor invited comments from other councillors but none were made. He then suggested the parish council object to the application, at least until the LGS designation was decided on the basis that: the affordable and social housing element of the residential development was only 20% when it was usually 40% on a green field site; further evidence was required to show there would be Biodiversity Net Gain; and increased traffic congestion and safety issues on New Lane Hill.

It was unanimously agreed that a response on these lines be sent to West Berkshire Council.

**The meeting finished at 8.55pm**

**The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 11 July 2023**

**Chairman**