

TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 13 August 2024 in the Main Hall, Calcot

Present

Parish Councillors: Mr C Taylor (Chairman), Ms J Stewart, Mr R Loaring, Mrs S Vickers, Mrs R Reynolds, Mrs H Manghnani, Mr N Furlong-King and Mrs P Furlong-King

District Councillors: Mr C Taylor, Ms J Stewart, Mr R Somner

Public: Two members of the public were present

In attendance: Miss J Major (Clerk), Miss S Williams (minutes)

Mr Taylor opened the meeting by welcoming everyone present and explaining that the meeting would be recorded for minute-taking purposes.

24/078 Open Forum

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

24/079 Apologies for absence: Apologies had been received from Parish Councillors Mrs R Braine and Mr F Royal

24/080 Declarations of interest: None relevant to the agenda

24/081 Approval and adoption of minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 9 July 2024: The draft minutes had been circulated before the meeting. The minutes were taken as read and signed by the Chairman

24/082 Matters arising: There were no matters arising from the minutes

24/083 Planning:

- a) Planning appeals - an appeal (ref APP/W0340/D/24/3342506) against the decision on application 23/01846/HOUSE, 24 Bowfell Close, Tilehurst, had been dismissed
- b) Decisions – see Appendix A
- b) New applications – see Appendix B
- c) Eastern Area – the Clerk would advise if there was anything relevant on the agenda of the meeting on 4 September 2024 so that the parish could be represented

24/084 District Councillors' report:

Mr Somner said that August was generally a quiet month. The Annual Report had been discussed at the Full Council meeting on 18 July. There had also been an Executive meeting on 25 July at which the ongoing issue of school funds clawback had been discussed.

Ms Stewart said two schools in the parish were affected by the clawback. One was

Brookfields, and the head teacher had written an article (Newbury Today, 29 July) about it which explained the school's situation very clearly. There was a lengthy discussion about the proposed clawback mechanism.

Ms Stewart said there was a new director of Public Health at WBC, Matthew Pearce, who was very experienced and understood the area. She and Mr Taylor were still trying to make arrangements for green space at Garston Crescent to be used for a community project, perhaps a garden or an orchard.

Mr Taylor said that WBC had given feedback on documents accompanying the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) but had not yet commented on the plan itself. He also reported that he and Ms Stewart continued to deal with a large number of cases in the parish, some of which were very complicated.

24/085 Clerk's report: The report had been circulated ahead of the meeting – see Appendix C. The Clerk went through the report giving updates on items. She reminded everyone that the deadline for making a bid under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Fund was Monday 16 September.

Mr Taylor asked about progress on the complaint about antisocial behaviour at Hildens Drive Play area, and the Clerk confirmed that no one had come forward to volunteer to open and shut the gates each day. It was suggested that, for the time being, the gates be kept locked to prevent the problems. Mr Taylor asked that the matter be included on the next agenda.

24/086 Review of financial position and payments for July 2024: The information had been circulated before the meeting and was noted.

24/087 Chairman's remarks: Mr Taylor had nothing to add.

24/088 Exclusion of public and press: To resolve that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, pursuant to the Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, section 1(2), the public and press are excluded and are asked to withdraw for item 24/089 on the agenda.

24/089 Fencing of tennis courts at Cotswold Sports Centre: The Clerk handed out a document containing a timeline, WBC's risk assessment, and a copy of an e-mail. She gave some background, and clarified that only the Lease on the tennis courts was affected by the issue; there were separate Leases for the sports centre and for the car park. The Clerk went through the timeline and also said that, over the past couple of days, she had been in discussion with the solicitor and the document contained his advice.

The Clerk explained that the legal advisor's recommendation was to serve an s146 notice on WBC advising that it had breached the lease by removing the fence without the Parish Council's permission, and giving WBC the opportunity to remedy the breach within a time period of, say, three months. If WBC did not comply, next steps would be either:

- a) to apply for a Court Order to allow the Parish Council to remedy the breach and claim all associated costs back from WBC; or
- b) to forfeit (ie terminate) the Lease on the tennis courts.

After discussion, it was unanimously agreed to let WBC know that the Parish Council had been advised to serve a s146 notice, but that this would not be done if agreement could be reached as to how best to address the issues and remedy the breach in the Lease (ie replace the fence around the tennis courts). A deadline should be given and, if it was not met by WBC, the notice would be served. The Clerk would seek legal advice as to how to word the letter.

Mr Taylor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

The meeting finished at 9.20pm

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 10 September 2024

Chairman

Appendix A – Decisions

24/00324/HOUSE	<u>46 Partridge Drive, Tilehurst</u> Proposed garage conversion and single storey side extension	Granted
24/00680/HOUSE	<u>7 Longworth Avenue, Tilehurst</u> Single storey side extension to include a side gate and a single storey rear extension	Granted
24/00513/HOUSE	<u>5 Yew Tree Rise, Calcot</u> Proposed single storey rear extension to existing dwelling	Granted
24/00708/HOUSE	<u>7 Gwynne Close, Tilehurst</u> Proposed alterations and extension to ground floor, first floor side extension to form granny annexe	Granted
24/00326/HOUSE	<u>Pike Croft, Ridgemount Close, Tilehurst</u> Proposed single-storey side extension, front extension and internal remodelling. New render and windows	Granted
24/00866/HOUSE	<u>40 Fairway Avenue, Tilehurst</u> Demolition of old single-skin garage. Rebuild new garage with 375mm insulated cavity wall externally. Single storey extension to the rear elevation including width of garage	Granted
24/00779/HOUSE	<u>199 Overdown Road, Tilehurst</u> The proposal consists of converting the existing garage and utility area into a storage/WC/utility and kitchen extension. A first floor extension with additional bedroom and office is proposed in addition	Granted
24/00558/HOUSE	<u>14 Sheraton Drive, Tilehurst</u> Single storey rear extension and garage conversion	Granted
23/02225/HOUSE	<u>1 Clanfield Crescent, Tilehurst</u> Erection of boundary fencing. Half of the boundary will be 1,828mm in height to create a secure back garden area, whilst the other half will be 920mm in height to create frontage and make it more defined that the property is Clanfield Crescent and not Fairford Road	Withdrawn
24/01020/HOUSE	<u>9 Cotswold Way, Tilehurst</u> Rear extension	Granted

Appendix B – New Planning applications

24/01235/HOUSE 169 Long Lane, Tilehurst

Garage conversion, internal alterations and detached workshop

This Council has no objections to the proposal and supports the comments and conditions set out by Highways

24/01336/HOUSE 289 Overdown Road, Tilehurst

Proposed conversion of existing garage into study, cloakroom and storage with small front extension to existing porch and first floor small front bedroom creating a usable room. New lean-to roof over with skylight over cloakroom

This Council has no objections to the proposal but supports the comments and queries made by Highways

24/01388/HOUSE 198 Overdown Road, Tilehurst

Two storey side and single storey rear extension

This Council has no objections to the proposal but notes that confirmation is needed that there is adequate off-road parking

24/01419/HOUSE 19 Clay Close, Tilehurst

Proposed conversion of existing garage into annexe and store

This Council has no objections to the proposal but notes that there is no information about the number of bedrooms in the main property and supports the comments made by Highways in regard to car parking

24/01343/FUL Land at 183 Long Lane, Tilehurst

Erection of one new residential dwelling on the site of former swimming pool. Alteration and conversion of existing workshop to create a residential dwelling. Alterations and extensions to 183 Long Lane

This Council has no objections to the proposal but notes that access from Long Lane to the proposed properties is narrow and might not be suitable for the increase in traffic. It is noted that paragraph 3.5.1 of the Traffic Statement states that the property is in Zone 2 and this might affect the requirement for car parking as it is actually in Eastern Urban Area (as correctly stated elsewhere in the document)

24/01582/HOUSE Pike Croft, Ridgemount Close, Tilehurst

Proposed detached garage

This Council has no objections to the proposal but would like confirmation that it allows for adequate off-road car parking at the property

24/01600/HOUSE 49 Foxcombe Drive, Tilehurst

Single storey rear extension

This Council has no objections to the proposal

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 Mr Taylor and the Clerk met with the household complaining about noise from the MUGA at the Cotswold recreation ground. An acoustic report is being commissioned as agreed at the last meeting and the results of this will be shared accordingly.

2.2 The fencing around the disused tennis courts next to the Cotswold Sports Centre has been removed, despite the Clerk’s concerns. The first complaint was received before the work was completed on Wednesday 25 July. The courts, as well as the sports centre and its car park, are leased to West Berkshire Council (WBC) and the fence was taken down without the Parish Council’s agreement or permission and the Clerk has sought legal advice on the situation. All complaints are being referred to WBC and the sports centre.

2.3 Last month’s Clerk’s Report advised of instances of antisocial behaviour in Hildens Drive play area. Further reports of incidents later in the evening have now been received and are being investigated. A flyer seeking volunteers to open and close the entrance gates has been distributed and is displayed on the nearby noticeboard but, to date, no offers of support have been received.

2.4 Mr Royal and the Clerk attended the Introduction to Planning training delivered on behalf of the Berkshire Association of Local Councils (BALC).

2.5 Mr Taylor, Miss Stewart and the Clerk attended a Community Engagement training session delivered on behalf of BALC. The session was very insightful and a second, follow up session, is to be planned for later in the year.

2.6 There has been little progress on making good the problems in the Jubilee Annexe but some quotes for the work have now been received. The Clerk continues to work with the solicitor on the best course of action to resolve outstanding matters concerning the works carried out by original contractors.

2.7 Following an arson attack, the mini recycling units located at the Cotswold Sports Centre have been moved to the far side of the overflow car park, away from the building.

2.8 A supplemental agreement with Berkshire Youth has been drafted to cover the funding received from Greenham Trust. It has been circulated for comments and will be signed as soon as possible.

3.0 **Other matters**

- 3.1 Sadly, Mark Buckley, the facilities assistant appointed in August 2023, resigned from his role for personal reasons and left on Thursday 25 July. The Clerk is updating the job description for review/approval by the Staffing Committee. The role will be advertised as soon as possible and, until a new person is recruited, the rest of the team will cover.
- 3.2 New crockery and cutlery has been bought for the Jubilee Annexe. When the hall was first opened, a limited number of plates, bowls, cups and glasses were bought as it was not clear how the annexe would be used. As it is now regularly booked for parties and events, the stocks are being topped-up. A catering supplier was used for most of the crockery, but some new mugs, glasses and bowls have been bought from Ikea to find out if they would be suitable for the halls.
- 3.4 The annual service and inspection of the Parish Council's CCTV cameras has been carried out.
- 3.5 An increase in drug dealing around both the Cotswold and Calcot recreation grounds has been noted and reported to the Neighbourhood Policing Team.
- 3.6 Work has continued on the renewal of the leases for the Cotswold Sports Centre, tennis courts and overflow car park.
- 3.7 The electricity contract was due for renewal, so the Clerk obtained eight quotes from various suppliers and carried out due diligence. On completing the comparison of costs, the Clerk has renewed for a further year with British Gas. It is hoped that the market will settle down over the coming year, making it possible to renew for a longer period.
- 3.8 The road closure planned for Royal Avenue between 5 and 9 August has been postponed until Tuesday 27 to Saturday 31 August 2024. This road closure is to enable Volker Highways to carry out highway improvement works including the installation of a Zebra crossing and surfacing works.
- 3.9 The latest newsletter from the BALC provided notification that the Good Councillor Guide, produced by the National Association of Local Councils, has been updated. A printed copy can be requested from the Clerk.
- 3.10 Following a consultation earlier this year, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) fire crews will no longer attend callouts to most automatic fire alarm notifications. This is an important change, particularly bearing in mind we have just registered the alarm to be installed in the Jubilee Annexe with RBFRS. The full Automatic Fire Alarms 2024 Consultation Report is available from the Clerk on request.

3.11 Subscriptions to WBC's 2024/25 [garden waste collection service](#) are now open. This year, the charge for the first bin has been reduced to £55 and payments may be made by credit card as well as by direct debit.

3.12 The following consultations are currently available:

- a) West Berkshire Council would like to find out how satisfied bus users are with local public services. It is also seeking opinions on ticketing improvements, £2.00 National Single Fare Cap, changes to public bus services, suggestions for improvements to passenger waiting areas and views on long-distance coach services.

Further details can be found using the following link:

<https://www.westberks.gov.uk/article/43126/West-Berkshire-Bus-Service-Survey-2024>. The deadline for submissions is midnight on Sunday 8 September 2024.

- b) The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is seeking views on how the government might revise the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to support its wider objectives. Views are also sought on wider proposals such as increasing planning fees, local plan intervention criteria, and appropriate thresholds for certain Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

The consultation opened will close on Tuesday 24 September and may be found via the following link:

[Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

4.0 **Audit and Finances**

4.1 Work on adapting the new model Financial Regulations is underway and it is hoped to present the updated document to Council for adoption at the September meeting.

4.2 The Clerk has received notification from West Berkshire Council of a further round of bids under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Fund. Details have been circulated to members to seek clarification of which projects the Council will submit a bid for. Once a consensus has been reached, a bid will be prepared by Officers and presented to the September meeting for resolution.

5.0 **Priorities for August 2024** – this item gives information on upcoming priorities of the Clerk and officers over the coming month(s).

5.1 Updating the facilities assistant job description and advertising the vacancy.

5.2 Replacing the floor in the Main Hall at Calcot.

- 5.2 Preparing for the start of the football season in September. This includes getting signed contracts with teams in place, carrying out an audit of equipment and carrying out repairs/replacing as necessary.
- 5.3 Continuing to carry out work highlighted in RoSPA reports.
- 5.4 Preparing the grass cutting and ground maintenance specifications ready to put the work out to tender. The contract will again run for three years.
- 5.5 Continuing to progress corrective works in the Jubilee Annexe.
- 5.6 Start to investigate the possibility of installing fire alarms at other halls
- 6.0 **Further reports**
- 6.1 The Clerk will provide further updates at the meeting as necessary.
- 6.2 Members are asked to note this report.