

TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 11 February 2025 in the Main Hall, Calcot

Present

- Parish Councillors:** Mr C Taylor (Chairman), Ms J Stewart, Mrs S Vickers, Mrs R Reynolds, Mrs C Basden, Mr A Linden, Mr R Loaring, Mr F Royal, Mr J Lally, Mrs H Manghnani, Mrs R Braine, Mr M Powers
- District Councillors:** Mr C Taylor, Ms J Stewart, Mr N Foot (arrived late)
- Public:** Two members of the public
- In attendance:** Miss J Major (Clerk), Miss S Williams (minutes)

Mr Taylor welcomed those present and reminded everyone that the meeting would be recorded for minute-taking purposes.

25/013 Open Forum

- a) Members of the public – there were no comments or questions
- b) Councillors – Ms Stewart said that West Berkshire Council (WBC) had written to staff and service users of three day care facilities, including Greenfield House at Calcot, to say it was withdrawing from delivering day services. She was particularly concerned that a project team had not been convened before the announcement was made, and had written to WBC to ask why there was no timeline. She would also try to find out as much as possible, including checking whether there was a statutory requirement to provide the services, and would like the matter included as an item on the agenda of the next meeting.

25/014 Apologies for absence: Apologies had been received from Parish Councillors Mr N Furlong-King, Mrs P Furlong-King, and District Councillor Mr R Somner.

25/015 Declarations of interest:

Mr Taylor declared an interest in respect of resolution 25/023-2 as he was a West Berkshire Councillor

25/016 Approval and adoption of minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14 January 2025: The draft minutes had been circulated before the meeting. The minutes were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

25/017 Matters arising: There were no matters arising

25/018 Planning:

- a) 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 5 March 2025 so that the parish could be represented.

25/019 District Councillors' report: Ms Stewart and Mr Taylor had submitted written reports before the meeting – see Appendices C and D.

Ms Stewart reminded everyone that there was still time to complete the survey on pharmacy provision by the deadline of Sunday 16 February.

25/020 Clerk's report: The report had been circulated before the meeting – see Appendix E.

The Clerk said that she hoped the list of priorities for the coming month was useful. As March approached, her main priority would be preparing for year-end, including financial year-end closedown and three audits. This was a very busy time of year, and the year-end work would be her main focus from the end of March to the end of June.

25/021 Final report on additional detached youth work to Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC): The report had been circulated before the meeting and, after discussion, was noted.

25/022 Communications Working Group: Ms Stewart explained that, because of other commitments, the newsletter had not progressed as far as hoped. She thanked Mr Loaring and Mr Taylor who had both written items for the newsletter, and explained that it had been agreed that the Clerk and officers would put together a draft document for the Communications Working Group to review.

In response to a query, Ms Stewart said that the content was intended to be informational and to focus on things taking place within the parish.

As there was interest from newer councillors in joining the working group, Ms Stewart asked that this be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

25/023 Resolutions

Mr Taylor reorganised the following two items so that 25/023-2 was discussed first.

25/023-2 West Berkshire Council (WBC) redevelopment of disused tennis courts at Cotswold recreation ground: The redrafted Licence for Alterations had been circulated before the meeting. Mr Taylor explained that there were three specific issues and invited the Clerk to clarify them. The Clerk read out the legal advice received on the three issues as follows:

1. CDM regulations: Some standard wording had been included and removed. The legal advisor still felt it should be included but said that, in the interests of progressing the matter, WBC's amendments could be accepted.
2. Indemnity of project: WBC wanted only direct losses to be included, the legal advisor had also wanted to include indirect losses (clause 15). The Parish Council needed to decide if it was prepared to accept the additional risk.

3. Plans and drawings. The legal advisor was concerned that the Parish Council had not had sight of the final plans or drawings and, under the Licence, would have no right to object or request changes. WBC would not share the documents before a contractor had been appointed but would be obliged to do so before work commenced. Ms Stewart felt that, as it was a playing surface rather than a building, there should be minimal concern. Mr Foot said that WBC's rules of procurement would not allow the drawings to be shared before appointment of a contractor but, if the Licence was signed immediately, he would bring the plans to a future meeting.

It was unanimously agreed to accept the three outstanding issues and that a clean, final version the Licence for Alterations should be signed by two councillors and the Clerk would make the necessary arrangements.

A district councillor left the meeting.

25/023-1 Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP): A report had been circulated before the meeting and Mr Taylor gave some background, explaining how the process had been started around ten years previously.

After discussion, it was unanimously agreed that:

- with Mr Page's permission, his letter would be sent to WBC's Planning department, to Carolyne Culver, Head of Scrutiny, and to the Planning Advisory Group (PAG);
- members of the NDP Steering Group should be contacted to thank them for all their work over the years; and
- work on the NDP should be paused for up to six months until the outcome of the Local Plan Review and changes to the planning process were known.

25/023-3 Barton Rovers Football Club: The Clerk had circulated some background information before the meeting. She explained that the club had used the facilities at Turnhams Farm for its annual tournament for some years. Although there had been some complaints in the past, the club was very receptive and worked to make improvements. The event was very well attended.

It was unanimously agreed that Barton Rovers Football Club could use Turnham Farm recreation ground (for parking) and changing rooms on Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 July when it was holding its annual tournament, subject to the same conditions as the previous year.

25/010-4 Standing Orders: The updated Standing Orders had been circulated before the meeting. Ms Stewart suggested that, before making a recording at a meeting (Page 5, 3e), permission should be given. She also pointed out a typo on page 8.

After discussion, it was unanimously agreed to adopt the Standing Orders.

The changes would be accepted and the document would be tidied up and recirculated.

Mr Powers left during the above discussion.

25/010-5 Temporary Internal Control Auditor: A report had been circulated before the meeting. Mr Taylor explained that, at the last meeting, approval had been given for Mr Furlong-King to be absent for up to six months. As he was the Internal Control Auditor, this meant temporary cover for up to six months would be needed.

Mrs Manghnani offered to take on the temporary role and was unanimously accepted.

25/024 Review of financial position and payments for January 2025: The information had been circulated before the meeting, and was noted.

25/025 Chairman's remarks: Mr Taylor said that a social event for councillors was being arranged for 7.30-9.30pm on Wednesday 26 March in the Jubilee Annexe, and Mrs Manghnani would be catering. It would be an opportunity for old and new councillors to meet informally as well as to talk to officers who would also be invited.

Quite a few volunteers now helped at the youth clubs and one (the first to volunteer) had just been employed by Berkshire Youth as a youth worker. She had also been proposed for a Community Champion Award and, although she had not won that, she was being commended.

The meeting finished at 9.20pm

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 11 March 2025

Chairman

Appendix A – Decisions

24/02419/HOUSE	<u>37 Compton Avenue, Tilehurst</u>	Granted
Section 73a: Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of previously approved application 22/01542/HOUSE – Part single, part double storey rear extension, double storey side extension. Garage will be removed and footprint reduced creating side access. Ground floor internal space creates a utility room and WC, new family room with kitchen diner formed to rear, entrance hall widened and porch added to the front elevation. First floor extension and reconfiguration to provide two new bedrooms and en suite		

Appendix B – New Planning applications

25/00026/HOUSE 7 Blackthorn Close, Tilehurst
Proposed single store side extension and new flat roof and cladding
to existing conservatory

This Council has no objection to the proposal

25/00055/HOUSE 5 Withy Close, Tilehurst
Proposed first floor extension and garage conversion

This Council has no objection to the proposal

25/00059/HOUSE 20 Foxcombe Drive, Tilehurst
Removal of existing garage and construction of single storey side
extension. Construction of new porch with WC.

This Council has no objection to the proposal

24/02612/HOUSE 13 Foxcombe Drive, Tilehurst
Two storey side extension

Note: The plans had been amended in response to comments from Tilehurst Parish Council and WBC Highways about insufficient parking. Parish Council objected “as it believes an additional car parking space is required for a four-bedroomed house”. The new plan showed three off-road parking spaces.

The Council notes the amended plans and revised parking arrangements.

Note: An e-mail was sent to the case officers for 13 and 20 Foxcombe Drive to say that as the properties are opposite one another, it was hoped the work could be co-ordinated so as not to take place at the same time.

Appendix C – Ms J Stewart's District Councillor's report

Council

There was no meeting of Council in January. The next meeting is on 27 February (Budget).

Executive

Executive met on 12 December to discuss:

- Financial year 2024/25 Quarter Two Capital Financing Performance Report (EX4514)]
- 2024/25 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter Two (EX4517)
- Contract for Award Under Delegated Authority from Executive (EX4583)
- Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report 2023-24 (EX4598)
- Care Leaver Annual Report 2023-24 (EX4643)
- Early Response Hub Annual Report 2023-24 (EX4639)
- Commercial Property disposal - Units 1 and 2 Cleveland Gate Retail Park, Guisborough (EX4635)
- Risk Management Strategy (EX4547)
- 2024/25 Performance Report Quarter Two (EX4541)

The next meeting is on 13 February.

Environment

New Kerbside Recycling: In response to public feedback, certain plastic pots, tubs and trays can now be included with regular recycling. As well as plastic bottles, cans, and aerosols, residents can now recycle items such as clear yoghurt pots, spread tubs, clean ready meal trays (without film lids), and fruit punnets (without film lids). Communal bin users can also dispose of these items in the red-topped wheelie bins.

Items need to be rinsed and any plastic film and lids removed. WBC is pleased to be able to launch this new service over a year ahead of the government's Simpler Recycling deadline, thanks to the work the waste team have done in partnership with Veolia.

Safe disposal of vapes: Last September saw the introduction of kerbside battery collections - it's great to see residents now utilising this service. WBC would like to remind residents NOT to place batteries (INCLUDING VAPES) inside bins.

Residents need to follow these simple steps:

- Batteries: Veolia's collection team will collect the most common household batteries, including D, C, AA, AAA, AAAA (1.5-volt), A23 (12-volt), PP3 (9-volt), CR2032 (3-volt), and LR44 (1.5-volt).
- How to recycle: Place used batteries in a clear bag, like a freezer or sandwich bag, and put it on top of the black wheelie bin on collection day. The new waste collection vehicles have special compartments to ensure these batteries are safely recycled.
- Safety first: Batteries should not be placed inside the wheelie bin. Doing so can cause them to ignite during the waste compaction process, posing a significant fire hazard.
- Exceptions: While the team will gladly collect most household batteries, there are some exceptions: Car/moped batteries, lithium-ion (Li) power tool batteries, and vapes, should continue to be taken to household recycling centres in Newbury, or Padworth. To schedule a visit, book an appointment online.

Health and Wellbeing

Pharmacies: West Berkshire has the fewest pharmacies in the country – on average there is one for every 10,000 people. WBC is currently working to assess needs for the coming years and residents can help by sharing their experiences of using pharmacies in West Berkshire. Public views are very important as they will help to understand the needs of the District, and this will help shape future pharmacy services in the area.

Children and Education

Safeguarding Children: Private fostering happens when a child under 16 (or 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who isn't their parent or close relative for more than 28 days.

Examples include:

- A child living with a friend's family due to a family breakdown;
- Children sent to the UK for education or medical care while their parents remain abroad;
- Teenagers staying with their boyfriend or girlfriend's family;

These arrangements are not uncommon, but they are often hidden. As a community, we can help identify these situations to ensure children receive the support and protection they deserve. WBC is hosting a Private Fostering Awareness Seminar on Tuesday 11 February from 3:00pm-5:00pm in the Chandos Room at Shaw House. The free session is open to professionals and those in the community who may come across private fostering arrangements. Attendees will learn how to identify children in private fostering arrangements and report these cases to the local authority effectively.

Culture and Leisure

AWE Exhibit: West Berkshire Museum has an interactive exhibition to mark 75 years of Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) by exploring its work and Education Collection of artefacts. AWE has protected the United Kingdom through nuclear science and technology. It is also one of the largest employers in West Berkshire, operating out of Aldermaston and Burghfield. At these sites, warheads are designed and manufactured for the Continuous at Sea Deterrent, alongside services to prevent nuclear threats.

West Berkshire Museum is open from Wednesday to Sunday, 10am – 4pm. Entry is free but donations are welcomed.

Current Consultations

- [Proposed School Term and Holiday Dates for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2026/27](#) – Closes 28 February
- [Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025](#) – Closes 16 February 2025
- [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Thematic Review \(2025\)](#) – Closes 13 February 2025

Appendix D – Mr C Taylor's District Councillor's report

There was no full council meeting during January and the next one will be the budget setting meeting on 27 February.

The council Lib Dem administration has announced some changes to the eight proposed areas of savings which were consulted on:

- Downland Sports Centre will remain open under the Everyone Active contract
- The proposal to switch off street lighting at night will not go ahead, lights will be dimmed instead
- The proposal to cease the provision of the Adult Respite in the Community service has been discounted (I'm not entirely sure what that means).

This does mean there may now be some discussion about devolving certain services to Parish Councils, eg retention of dog bins , pop-up libraries to replace the mobile service.

I will be meeting with members of the minority group in the next few days to determine any amendments we might propose to the budget.

During the past month I attended the Eastern Area Planning Meeting and site surveys, Licensing Committee Meeting, Members Development Committee and the second meeting of the Young People's Mental Health Task Force.

Ward Case work has included questioning a council decision to change the collection points of waste bins in Royal Avenue, a Special Education Needs dispute, a fence damage dispute, reporting back on a residents association set up survey, chasing up clearance of the Poppy Way garages fly tipping. I have been offered a meeting with a senior home delivery company manager whose staff have repeatedly been illegally riding motorbikes in pedestrianised areas in Calcot when making deliveries. This follows intervention by our member of parliament.

I have submitted an objection to the West Berks Local Plan consultation relating to the Pincents Lane housing and the proposed changes to the Tilehurst settlement boundary.

I will be attending a meeting later this week with Calcot Schools, where I am a school governor, and West Berkshire Education officers.

Appendix E – Clerk’s report

1.0 Background

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

2.0 Activity updates

- 2.1 The final report on extended detached youth work at Calcot had been submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

- 2.2 Two Members’ Bid applications had been submitted to West Berkshire Council (WBC).

The Clerk and an Officer had met with a potential contractor to discuss the resurfacing at Cotswold recreation ground. A meeting had been arranged with another contractor, after which the options would be presented to the Parish Council so that a contractor could be selected.

- 2.3 The Parish Council’s comments on the Local Plan Review had been submitted.

- 2.4 The Parish Council’s comments on the Berkshire Association of Local Council’s Constitution had been submitted.

- 2.5 The extension to the grass cutting contract had been agreed. The grounds maintenance contract was also being progressed and a number of companies had been sent the invitation to tender.

- 2.6 Ms Stewart, Mr Taylor and the Clerk had attended meetings with West Berkshire Council in regard to the finalising of the Licence for Alterations agreement for the refurbishment of the disused tennis courts at Cotswold recreation ground. This had been a time-consuming exercise, with numerous hours being spent on it by the Clerk and Officers. It is hoped to draw this to a conclusion very soon.

- 2.7 The Clerk had attended a catch-up meeting with the Parish’s legal team regarding the Licence for Alterations application, Section 25 Notices served and Lease renewal for Cotswold Sports Centre. The whole process was fairly slow with the Clerk having to spend time chasing for information and documents.

- 2.8 Installation of the Big Rig at Calcot was scheduled to commence on Wednesday 12 February 2025, with works being finished by Friday 14 February 2025. As this was to be part-funded from the Community Infrastructure Levy scheme, a report would be submitted to WBC once installation was complete.

3.0 **Other matters**

- 3.1 Residents had contacted the office regarding a bus stop on Overdown Road, Tilehurst, which had been knocked over. Several of the enquiries had been redirected by WBC who had incorrectly advised it was the Parish Council's responsibility. The Clerk had contacted the Transport Team at WBC (which is responsible for this) and the matter was being dealt with.
- 3.2 Recently, there had been an increasing number of hall enquiries where attendance numbers exceeded those permitted. To try and prevent this continuing, the hall Conditions of Hire were being reviewed and updated to make the wording made firmer.
- 3.3 The Clerk attending Risk Management training, organised by the Community Council for Berkshire (CCB). The first part of the training was conducted by the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service and was predominately about fire risk, with the second part being general risks.

Although this was a refresher course, as legislation had changed, work would be required to update Parish Council procedures and collate all relevant documentation differently going forwards.

- 3.4 The half term activities, scheduled to be delivered by Berkshire Youth during the February half term will no longer be taking place.
- 3.5 Mr Linden and the Clerk attended the Local Plan Review – Information Update session hosted by WBC. The on-line session reiterated the timeline of events leading up to the most recent amendments to the Draft Local Plan document and how the amendments have been derived.

The session was attended by 25 people, with numerous questions being raised by representatives of various Parish Councils. Whilst most of the information wasn't new, it was nonetheless still a worthwhile session.

- 4.0 **Priorities for February 2025** – this item gives information on upcoming priorities of the Clerk and officers over the coming month(s).
- 4.1 Contractors had been invited to tender for the grounds maintenance contract, bids would be reviewed and brought to the March meeting.
- 4.2 Collating information for a final report to Greenham Trust on how funding received had been used for youth work in the parish. Berkshire Youth is still very slow to send information (which needs thorough checking), so this is proving time-consuming.

- 4.3 Arranging Staffing Committee meeting to agree the facilities assistant job description before advertising the vacancy.
- 4.4 Progressing corrective works in the Jubilee Annexe.
- 4.5 Progressing remedial work to the external wall of the Main Hall kitchen.
- 4.6 Investigating the possibility of installing fire alarms at other halls.
- 4.7 Reviewing the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 4.8 Updating the asset register.
- 4.9 Reviewing the Financial Risk Management Scheme, ahead of presentation to Full Council for adoption.
- 4.10 Obtaining costings from Berkshire Youth for a 2025-26 Partnership Agreement.
- 4.11 Collating the documentation required as part of the Risk management Process
- 4.12 Preparing for the financial year end closedown
- 4.13 Preparing for the Final Internal Audit Inspection
- 4.14 Drafting the Annual Report
- 4.15 Reviewing Leases for the Cotswold Sports Centre, car park and tennis courts.
- 4.16 Reviewing the supplemental agreements, which forms the basis of the Parish's contribution towards the running and maintenance of the Cotswold Sports Centre.
- 5.0 **Further reports**
- 5.1 The Clerk will provide further updates at the meeting as necessary.
- 5.2 Members are asked to note this report.