

ST. NICHOLAS HURST PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN ST NICHOLAS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL, HURST
ON TUESDAY 5TH MARCH 2024 AT 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors P. Curry (in the Chair), Ewart, Lyon,
Palmer, Robinson and I Smith.

OFFICERS: Mrs. M. Bradshaw (Clerk).

PUBLIC: Twenty four Members of the Public.

9403 Public Forum

The Chair welcomed twenty four members to the public forum and noted that four questions had been submitted ahead of the meeting. In no particular order, the questions were presented:

1. "Does the Parish Council know the procedure for reporting areas in Flood Zone 1 with critical drainage problems to the Environment Agency so that developers are required to undertake a Flood Risk Assessment as part of their application and shouldn't we be expecting one from Shorewood Homes in any case, given the drainage situation in Hurst?" (Mr T. King)

The Chair thanked Mr King for his question and explained that the Parish Council cannot pre-empt any response until an application is presented. Mr King expressed his concerns as he understood there were proposed plans to pump water into Hogmoor Lane where water is already prone to rising and ditches cannot cope. The Chair reiterated that she could not comment and that Councillor W. Smith had already undertaken walkarounds with the Flood Officer from Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) highlighting at risk areas.

2. "Regarding imminent planning applications: Residents are most concerned about the likelihood of the Broadwater Lane application proceeding without proper public scrutiny. What measures will the PC proactively adopt to assert full community involvement?" (Mr S. Gregory)

The Chair confirmed that, once an application comes forward, both the Parish Council and Members of the Public could comment on it. Mr Gregory replied that residents feared the application would not get full consultation.

Councillor Palmer expressed his disappointment that residents had not been so keen to support other recent applications which greatly impacted the village.

The Chair noted that the Parish has been extremely fortunate to benefit from the dedication and expertise of Councillor W. Smith for many years in his capacity as both Borough Councillor and Chairman of the Parish Council and that will change come May. When an application is received, the Parish Council will follow its usual procedure. Mr Gregory noted the work Councillor W. Smith had undertaken on behalf of the Village and said residents were simply trying to be proactive, in this case.

3. 'What steps can be taken to prevent Shorewood from timing their planning application between the March and May meetings, thus circumventing HPC's right and responsibility to comment on it? e.g.
 - HPC call a Special Meeting to consider the Application as soon as submitted
 - HPC call a Special Meeting in response to a request by HPC electorate
 - HPC request WDC defer until HPC has considered it" (Mr J. Vimpany)

The Chair confirmed that, if the Parish Council considers it necessary, a meeting will be called. Councillor Lyon noted that this same question had been answered at January 2024's meeting of the Parish Council.

4. "In what way does the Parish Council expect Shorewood Homes, as the developer, to overcome significant concerns expressed over the safety of pedestrians crossing the A321 and of cyclists seeking to cross that road from and to the proposed development?" (Dr J. Lade on behalf of Mr R. Leigh)

The Chair reiterated her previous position.

Councillor Palmer asked if anyone was aware of who had cleared, or instructed to be cleared, the hedgerow and bushes along the main road. He believed that some of the trees may have TPO's on them. No one present was able to provide an explanation.

9404 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jarvis and W. Smith.

9405 **Declarations of Interest**

There were none to declare.

9406 **Vacancies on the Parish Council**

The Clerk explained the process with regards to the forthcoming local elections in May. She encouraged people to apply for Parish Councillor roles and directed them to the nomination papers, which all candidates would need to complete, on WBC's website.

She suggested that specific questions be directed to Electoral Services. However, current Parish Councillors or she would be very happy to answer questions relating to the role. Finding a suitable candidate who lives in Ashridge Ward is proving to be particularly difficult.

9407 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9th January 2024 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

9408 Matters arising

The following matters arising from the previous minutes were noted:

- two dog waste bins have now been procured for Lodge Road and Donkey Bridge and will be installed this month; and
- two allotments holders have reduced their current plot sizes, so freeing up some availability.

9409 Planning Applications

Members discussed the applications attached to these Minutes. It was agreed that Members had no adverse comments with regards to applications 233110, 240017, 240109, 240110, 240242, 240393 and 240467. Comments previously submitted to WBC in respect of 240144 were restated. Members objected to application 233036.

Councillor I. Smith presented his thoughts on application 240198. Discussion pursued and Members agreed that they would object to this application.

RESOLVED: the Clerk to communicate the Parish Council's planning comments to WBC.

9410 **Finance**

The following accounts were presented for approval this month:

Mar-24										
						Main Fund	CIL*	Neighbourhood Planning	Lodge Rd Appeal	Total
Previous Balance						£ 69581.88	115691.22	-5027.62	4825.99	185071.47
The following accounts are presented for approval this month:										
Ref	Expenditure - Payee									
12.1	P Curry (Postage)					14.19				
12.2	5G (telephone Jan 24)					34.75				
12.3	itQED (remote support)					30.00				
12.4	Treetop Landscapes (Xmas tree)					324.00				
12.5	St Nicholas CE Primary (Room ire 9/1/24)					25.00				
12.6	SCS (Replacement orchard trees)					1260.00				
12.7	Thames Water (School Rd)					26.56				
12.8	SCS (grounds maintenance)					777.57				
12.9	WEL Medical (defib battery and starter kit)					286.80				
12.10	5G (telephone Feb 24)					40.07				
12.11	M Bradshaw (reimbursement)					188.00				
12.12	M Bradshaw	Salary (Jan 2024)			1597.71					
		(Income Tax)			-115.80					
		(National Insurance)			-65.96					
		(Pension)			-63.91					
		Office			40.00	1392.04				
12.13	NEST Jan (Employee pension £63.91 + Employer pension £65.23)					129.14				
12.14	HMRC Jan (Employee's Income Tax £115.80 + NI £65.96)					181.76				
12.15	M Bradshaw	Salary (Feb 2024)			1597.71					
		(Income Tax)			-116.00					
		(National Insurance)			-65.96					
		(Pension)			-63.91					
		Office			40.00	1391.84				
12.16	NEST Feb (Employee pension £63.91 + Employer pension £65.23)					129.14				
12.17	HMRC Feb (Employee's Income Tax £116 + NI £65.96)					181.96				
12.18	Lyreco (stationery)					48.38				
12.19	Glasdon (2 no. dog waste bins and posts)					700.58				
12.20	SCS (grounds maintenance)					777.57				
12.21	King (refund of % of Lodge Rd appeal donation)								191.85	
12.22	Keep Mobile (grant)					550.00				
12.23	The Link Visiting Scheme (grant)					450.00				
12.24	Citizens Advice Bureau (grant)					600.00				
12.25	Arc Youth Counselling (grant)					400.00				
12.26	P Curry (reimbursement of expenses)					2.40				
12.27	5G (telephone March 24)					40.30				
12.28	ITQeD (annual licence renewal)					825.12				
12.29	S Snell (installation of 2 no. dog waste bins)					120.00				
	Total Expenditure					10927.17	0.00	0.00	191.85	11119.02
	Income									
	Dunt Lane field rent					160.00				
	Total Income					160.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	160.00
	Revised balance c/f					58814.71	115691.22	-5027.62	4634.14	174112.45

Grant applications for 2023/24 were presented by the Clerk. Members felt they wished to support the following organisations who had requested grants:

- Citizens Advice Bureau - £600
- The Link Visiting Scheme - £450
- Keep Mobile - £550
- Arc Youth Counselling - £400

They did not feel they could support, this year, the following organisations who had requested grants :

- Age Concern Twyford and District
- Wokingham Job Support Centre

RESOLVED:

all payments were approved; and
grants in the total value of £2000 were approved in respect of year ending
2023/24.

9411 **Community Hub**

The Chair welcomed Mr Glyn Crocombe, the Chairman of the Martineau Trust. Mr Crocombe presented to Members revised plans which had been drawn up in respect of the new proposed community hub at the site of the present Scout Hut. The plans reflect a like for like footprint to the existing building and are scaled down from the original architect's plans organised by Councillor W. Smith.

Mr Crocombe believed the suggested building would be fit for purpose and could be erected whilst the existing Scout hut remained so enabling Scouts to continue to run through the build period.

The building was considered to be suitable for the Scouts, Parish Council and any other parties who wished to hire the facility.

The build cost was estimated to be in the region of £260k. The proposed building would be of timber construction with a flat or pitched roof which would carry a 50 year warranty. Mr Crocombe invited questions from members.

Councillor Lyon noted that the Parish Council, at present, hold a pot of CIL monies in the region of £115k, leaving a shortfall of £145k. Mr Crocombe added that he believed the Hurst Village Halls could support the project to a financial value of £30-40K. Discussion was held around the possibility of potential future CIL monies, although none could be guaranteed.

Councillor Ewart queried why more use is not made of Dinton Pastures Country Park who have excellent facilities. She felt the cost of the new build was high.

The Clerk noted that three quotes for any building would be required and that planning consent would have to be sought by the Hurst Village Halls in the first instance. Mr Crocombe concluded that he would speak to WBC to ascertain whether planning permission would be required and would report back.

9412 **Correspondence**

Citizens Advice mobile unit

The Clerk reminded Members that the mobile Citizens Advice van would be at the Village Halls on the 26th March between 1pm and 2.30pm.

Martineau Lane – siting of new electricity box

The Clerk reminded Members that she had previously circulated to them the three potential options for the siting of a new electricity box on Martineau Lane. After consultation with officers at WBC and consideration of the three options, Members agreed unanimously that they favoured the new box being cited at the same location as the existing box. They did not feel it appropriate that the box be moved to the village green.

Councillor W. Smith's departure

The Clerk informed Members that she was arranging with Councillor Palmer a leaving event to mark Councillor Wayne Smith's enormous contribution to the Parish. He will be stepping down from his role as Borough Councillor and Chairman of the Parish Council at the May elections. Councillor Palmer said he would contact the Cricket Club or one of the local pubs to see if a venue could be secured. Details to follow.

9413 **Information Reports**

There were none to bring to this meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.55 p.m.

Signed.....

Date.....