

Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council Held in the Community Office at 8pm on Tuesday 8th October 2013

Present:

Councillors:

David Tindale – Vice-Chairman
Harvey Batten
Rhian Woods
Robert Barber
Tony Williamson
Neil Boddington
Barry Adby
Bob West
Nick Greaves
Tim Horton
Roddy Orr
Robin Wilson (after co-option process)

Officer:

Kristina Tynan

District Councillor:

Angie Paterson

In Attendance:

Rev C Evans

Press:

Janine Rasiah

Members of the Public:

11

125/13 Apologies for absence
Ian Hill, Nick Hancock

126/13 Co-option onto Council

There were 3 Applications received for one vacancy. Jonathan Bradley, Alexander Dawson and Robin Wilson.

Each applicant gave a short presentation to Council and had the opportunity to ask and answer questions.

After the presentation all candidates were asked to wait in the Clerk's office while a vote was taken, each Councillor having one vote only

Vote:

Johnathan Bradley : 5

Alexander Dawson: 0

Robin Wilson : 6

Resolved: That Robin Wilson be co-opted onto Council. He signed the 'Declaration of Office' form and then joined the meeting.

127/13 Chairman's Remarks

DT stated that Nick Hancock would have like to have attended the meeting tonight but at present he is unable to attend evening meetings. Councillors wished him all the best and sent their best wishes for his recovery.

Britain in Bloom – DT congratulated WIB on their success in this competition as has been reported in the Henley Standard and thanked all their members for their hard work which achieved this Silver Gilt Award.

128/13 To receive Declarations of Interest

Church Hall Land

Tony Williamson stated that he has no financial interest in this item as laid out in the Code of Conduct. He is not a member of the group but in view of his involvement in the past will withdraw from the meeting if any discussion takes place on this item.

Tim Horton said that he is a member of the Watlington Church Hall Concern (WCHC) group and will stay for the presentation but will withdraw if any discussion takes place.

Football Pitch Barriers

Barry Adby stated that he is a member of the Sports Club but has no financial interest in this item and so will take part in any discussion on this item.

129/13 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 10th September 2013 to be signed as a correct record

Resolved: That these minutes were a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Vice-Chairman.

130/13 Matters arising from the Minutes

Outreach Meeting (Minute 121/13 refers) - RB reported that he chaired this meeting and other councillors that attended were IH, HB, BA, RO and BW. The room was completely packed and residents brought up lots of different issues. Caroline Newton and Anna Badcock also attended and it was good that Parish, District and County all had representatives present. Anton Nath from ORCC was also present and was able to contribute to some issues. There were residents from Christmas Common, Pishill, Northend and Howe Hill who attended. The 3 main issues were: Faster broadband, speeding and the Triathlon. Regarding the Triathlon the general consensus was that it was hoped that it would be gone from this area. A formal record of the meeting will be made.

Finance Committee – TH reported that prior to this meeting there was a meeting of the Finance Committee who discussed the issue of the Football Pitch Barrier.

Watlington Hill SSSI (Minute 124/13 refers) – RB reported that anyone attempting to walk the footpath in this area will find that it has been blocked by a fence. He and IH have had a meeting with the Estate Manager from Beechwood Estates.

131/13 Public Questions

Rev C Evans – Presentation on Church Hall Land

CE stated that he has been in Watlington for 26 years and since then the world has altered and Watlington has changed considerably. The Church has not been immune to changes either and there has been a decrease in church attendance nationally which is a continuous decline. Six years ago St Leonards did some vision planning and realised the Church as we know it needed to change

to survive. Since we approached the WPC six years ago the decline in attendance of St Leonards has continued and the present system is unsustainable. St Leonards has an aging congregation and have lost a lot of regular churchgoers through death or illness and they have not been replaced by the younger generation. The 'giving' has changed dramatically and the PCC can not allow this to continue. St Leonards now has the idea of using the Church more by having it as a community space for many forms of activities. The only way to fund this vision is to sell the Church Hall land (The Maria Cook Trust). Capital is needed to make the church more user friendly by putting in a kitchen, making changes to the Tower by putting in another room and toilet facilities and this has been the vision for the last five years. The Church cannot see any other way forward other than selling this land.

Church expenditure has increased whilst income has declined. The cost of Insurance is £4,000, Electricity Costs are in the thousands with costs increasing regularly. The Church also has to find £30,000 for their parish share (Contribution to the Church of England). This is the first year that the Church is not sure if they will be able to pay their way. The Diocese of Oxford is interested in purchasing the land and are thinking of building a rectory on it. They will likely engage in pre-planning discussion with SODC to discuss what can be realistically done on this land. CE stated that he knows that Watlington have a desire to keep this area as open space but St Leonards is at risk if appropriate action is not taken now.

CE stated that he hoped the Parish Council will understand the reasons why St Leonards is going ahead with this and has the goodwill to understand the reasons needed to keep the Church secure for future generations and that the Church is kept open for another 800 years as part of life in Watlington. St Leonards is now reaching the stage that the vision can become reality.

RB: He hoped the Church would consult with WPC as well as SODC at an early stage as they may give some useful input.

RO: It will be very important for the community to know that the money is sustainable for the long term future.

CE: The idea would be that part of the Capital raised through the sale of the land would be put into a recruitment fund to provide funds for the future

RW: Will there a community consultation?

CE: Consultation has been made over the last 5 years and comments made will be fed back to the Diocese of Oxford. St Leonards already feel that they have consulted with the community and they will take advice from the Diocese.

DT: It would be useful if the Parish Council could see the comments which have been made in the past consultation exercises and public meetings.

There being no other comments DT thanked Rev Christopher Evans for coming to the meeting and updating the Parish Council on this issue.

132/13 District Councillors Report – Angie Paterson

AP stated that she was sorry that she was unable to attend the Outreach Meeting at Christmas Common.

Housing Allocation – A paper had been to Cabinet to agree the draft figures for housing allocation to the larger villages. This has had to be done as Woodcote are about to submit their Neighbourhood Plan and they need figures to progress their plan. This will also help Watlington with their NP.

Broadband – SODC have set aside money to be put towards broadband. They have put £500,000 into the budget for this and £500,000 into reserves which could be used towards this. There will be £1M available to help with areas that will not be covered by the OCC broadband funding. SODC will therefore be looking at what they can additionally do to extend coverage. This is something that is being pro-actively worked on to obtain quality broadband coverage to as much of South Oxfordshire that is possible.

Changes in Planning for Permitted Developments – The CLG has an additional consultation for further Permitted Development Right. AP said that SODC would put in a robust response to this. There is growing frustration at the extent of these rights which raise the questions as to whether we really are Plan led? It is widely accepted that many of the new permissions are Treasury driven. SODC are as frustrated as are local communities when things go through under permitted development rights.

Greater Flexibilities in Communities – TW thanked AP for sending though this document to parishes. He said he thought that this has great importance for Watlington. It was noted that this Council will be sending a response to this paper and this is being worked on at the moment by IH, RO and TH who will draft a response to this.

133/13 County Councillors Report

Caroline Newton had sent her apologies and her report when received will be emailed to Councillors.

134/13 Thames Valley Police Report

There was no report sent.

135/13 To receive the Balance of Accounts and approve the list of Payments

Tim Horton read out the Balances of Accounts and proposed that the list of payments be settled.

Resolved: That the Balance of Accounts be agreed and the list of payments be settled and signed by the Chairman.

136/13 Committees:

It was agreed that the Pavilion and Sports Field Committee be taken first.

F. PAVILION AND SPORTS FIELD – 22/9/2013 – Tony Williamson

Resolved: That the minutes be accepted by Council

Dog Fouling on Sports Field – TW reported that he had received a strong letter regarding this today. This will be followed up by the Pavilion Committee which has been dealing with this problem for a long time and has involved the PCSO.

Sports Club – TW reported that there is a great enthusiasm within both the Football and Cricket Clubs. The Football Foundation are pressing us for a Business Plan for the next five years and that appropriate support is being given to the amount of funding they provided for the Pavilion. The Business Plan will link both Cricket and Football within both their development plans. The Sports Club have been working on preparing the Business Plan but we have not seen anything to date and there is a concern that we will need to see something before the Pavilion Committee have to submit their budget to the Finance Committee in November.

Crowd Barriers for Football Pitch

TW stated that he hoped there would have been a comprehensive paper available for this meeting but although information has been received from the Football Club it is not complete. We have today received an email from Beechwood Estates which reads:

‘Whilst talking to Barry Adby yesterday about the third quote for the hedge cutting, he mentioned that the football club might be considering putting in permanent crowd barriers around the football pitch. We have already provisionally agreed to allow the football club to extend the practise area and install new lights, but I’m concerned now that the proposed works might extend further, in which case we will need a separate proposal for any such work’.

TW said it was clear that Beechwood Estates would want to see a formal application from the Parish Council as the leaseholders if Council agree to the barriers. He stated Paul Griffiths has done an enormous amount of work to get the proposal in a coherent form and that Council would not want to lose any opportunity and enthusiasm from sport members. WPC has already agreed to the cricket hard practice area and nets but this proposal is much bigger. TW said he knows that there are concerns and it is important that we see the whole thing in context. He would like to see what other clubs in the Hellenic League have on their grounds. The barrier is an integral part of other things and he hoped that the Parish Council would support the type of barrier needed to be able to continue improving football.

TW said that regarding the 4 conditions stated in the Minutes we have the following:

1. Cost of removal of barrier and re-instatement of ground - £565.00
2. We know the number of posts: 84 in total (42 on each side) to be installed initially.
3. It is not quite clear what type of barrier is actually needed now..
4. The reasoning for installing a Hellenic league standard barrier now is not clear as it is noted that floodlighting, turnstiles etc may be required.
5. A plan to scale showing the area of the crowd barriers has not yet been received which would make it is easier to understand.

The Meeting was then adjourned whist Paul Griffiths from the Football Club gave Council information.

The meeting was then reconvened.

The Finance Committee in a meeting prior to this Full Council had made a Recommendation which is shown below in A and it was asked that this be Withdrawn – this was agreed.

Tony Williamson proposed the following recommendation and this was seconded by Neil Boddington. **Vote** : 9 in favour, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

Resolved: That Council to agree to the installation of a barrier and to guaranteeing its removal and to submitting a formal application to Beechwood Estates, subject to the receipt of; (1) the reasoning concerning the type of barrier that would be needed now; (2) the reasoning for providing a barrier that is not a requirement now but might be needed in a few years time; (3) provision of a plan of the field showing where the barrier would be installed. The Parish Council Chairman and the Chairman of the Pavilion Committee be delegated to consider the information provided and when satisfied, to authorise the application being made to Beechwood Estates The Clerk to check the date of the Beechwood Estates Board Meeting.

A: FINANCE - 19/9/2013 and Recommendation from Finance Meeting which took place prior to this meeting 8/10/13.

Resolved: That the minutes from the 19/9/2013 be accepted by Council.

Recommendation to Council: The Finance Committee sees no reason of principle in the Council not joining in financial transactions with the Sports Club that would enhance further the playing of sport and its general environment, recognising this would be likely to entail the extension of facilities for both the cricket and football clubs.

The Committee recommends the recording of the Council’s appreciation to the Sports Club for the body of work that has gone into giving clarity regarding several issues since the meeting of 22 September.

Whilst fully recognising the degree of interest - especially within the football club – in introducing change quickly, the Committee believes that the expenditure of money and alterations to the land might best be viewed when the Business Plan is at least at a draft stage

and after additional clarification is given to certain matters.

Further, certain of the emerging issues are outside of the formal remit for this Committee to recommend and therefore may involve non-financial judgment within the Council. These issues include:

- 1) The full implications of the achievement of NLS Step 6 (including here a boundary to the ground)
- 2) The formalities required in the lease between Beechwood Estates and the Parish Council – especially in the introduction of barriers and boundaries
- 3) The complete satisfaction among the membership of both sports committees on the location and management of new facilities, including here all safety matters
- 4) The management of and around new structures that may signal some change to the appearance of the area.

It was also stated that Council may wish to again stress its interest to assist in the achievement of a full draft 'Business Plan' that will be implemented through the Watlington Sports Club. Further Council may suggest that the fullest exchange possible takes place between the Sports Club, the Parish Council, the Football Foundation and the OFA on the progressive development of both sports.

The above Recommendation was Withdrawn as agreed above in the Pavilion and Sports Club Committee discussion.

TW did say that he was concerned about the threats from the Football Foundation that Paul Griffiths had stated and it was thought that we need to contact them as their agreement is with the Parish Council and not the Football Club

Staff Issues - There are Confidential Recommendations which will be taken in Confidential Session at the end of the meeting.

Financial Regulations

Resolved: That the attached Financial Regulations for 2013/2014 be agreed.

Floodlighting Request from Sports Club – No Recommendation as Football Club are still investigating the issue for a portable floodlight further to concerns about its security.

Budget 2014/2015 – A timetable has been set which will have time to take into consideration requests from Committees. All Committee chairmen to note these dates.

B: PLANNING – Rhian Woods.

There has been no meeting.

Lys Mill – IH, RW, Anna Badcock, Caroline Newton met with Paul Lucas at SODC. RW reported that it was a very productive meeting and we are now waiting to hear from Paul Lucas when he has extra information from the applicant.

C: STRATEGY – 24/9/2013 – David Tindale

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council with two changes needed. Page 20 to read 'The review of the Local Traffic Plan' instead of 'The relief road' and Page 21 should read 17th October not 7th.

Triathlon Meeting with John Howell – It was noted that the Parish Councils that attended this meeting would all like the Triathlon to not take place in this area.

D. OPERATIONS – 18/9/2013 Barry Adby

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council

Car park New Entrance

Resolved: That the drawings shown at the end of these minutes be agreed as an outline design and to seek costings for this scheme so that we can approach others for funding and also to help

with our budget figure. To approach OCC to see if they would be prepared to co-ordinate this scheme.

TH stated that if OCC took this on the works would be done as a permitted development right.

Ingham Lane/Brook Street Road Works – The dates have been put back to 27/28 Nov, 30 Nov/1st Dec and 7/8 December. The new dates have been put into the October WT.

Car Park Drains – 3 quotes have been sought but only 1 company has got back to us with a quote of £650 for 1 day, 2 men and a gully sucker.

Resolved: That this quote be accepted and we get this work done as soon as possible as it is an urgent issue and needs to be done before the winter sets in.

E. ALLOTMENTS – There has been no report.

G. AFFORDABLE HOUSING – There has been no meeting.

H. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP – The next meeting will take place on the 29th October at 8pm in the Community Office.

137/13 Correspondence for Information - List Attached to Agenda

Correspondence has been passed to the relevant committee to discuss.

138/13 Representation on other bodies – To note reports that have been received

It was noted that we will need to appoint a representative to the Public Charities at the November meeting.

139/13 Other Matters for Discussion at the discretion of Chair

Watlington Hospital Trustees – RO said that these trustees have expressed a desire to build assisted care facilities homes on the fields and they would like to contact the WPC to have a pre application, no obligation meeting at an early stage. We await to hear from them,

Hedges encroaching onto Pyrton Lane – It was agreed that WPC write to all householders with boundaries onto Pyrton Lane to ask them to cut back their hedges to improve sight lines and make the road safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 10.25PM
AND THEN WENT INTO CONFIDENTIAL SESSION TO DISCUSS STAFF AND PENSION ISSUES and 33
HIGH STREET**

Confidential Session to be taken with accordance to:

Confidential Items: EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC ESOLVED: THAT under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for items of business of the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 7,8 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.

33 High Street – Resolved that the Confidential Note from the Strategy Meeting held on 24th September 2013 be accepted and that Ian Hill to fix a date to meet with the three trustees of the Charlotte Cox Trust as soon as is possible.

Salary and Pension Requirement

Salary of the Clerk

Resolved:

- a) that the chairman of the committee should liaise with the OALC officers on the relationship between the clerk's present roles and the advised remuneration for Councils of the size of Watlington, bearing in mind special local factors.
- b) that the details of this review together with outcomes from the Annual Review of the Clerk should be advised to the Finance Committee so that a full recommendation can be made to Council for commencement, if possible, from April 2014.

Pensions and requirements for work-place schemes

Resolved: That Kristina Tynan and Bob Thomas be registered for the NEST scheme and the potential of commitment towards a workplace scheme. Full details of the scheme would be formally provided to these employees.

Meeting closed at 10.30pm

EXISTING 1:100

