

BARKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Page 09/729

Minutes of meeting of the Barkham Parish Council held on 8th December 2009
in Barkham Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Mrs P. Stubbs (in the Chair), Mr F. A. Scott, Dr. R. Loader, Mr L. Heath, Mr. D. Oxbrough, Mr. C. Heyliger, Mr G. Burges, Mrs C. Dando, four members of the public and the Clerk.

Apologies: Mr. S. Goldring (work commitments)

Declarations of Interests

None

09/372 **Minutes** of meeting held on 10th November 2009 were approved and signed as a true record.

Meeting adjourned in order that any members of the public could address the Council on any matters or concerns relating to Barkham.

09/373 Report from the Villages Youth Project Worker – Louise Morris

No report had been received from Louise.

09/374 Planning

There were no planning applications that required referring to the main meeting.

Core Strategy Report from the Inspector – comments from Mr Heath

“The good news is that the Barkham Square proposal has been turned down. However I would not be too complacent about the possibility of it being resurrected at some points in the future. Otherwise the contents are fairly disappointing. The housing figures have been accepted but there must be doubt as to whether adequate infrastructure will be provided. The inspector was convinced by some traffic modelling that in my opinion was of very poor quality and contains some dubious assumptions. Consequently he believes that traffic flows will be reduced even after all the extra housing is built. 3500 houses plus increased traffic will have a huge impact on our roads and if a bypass from the roundabout at Penrose Park to the A327 at Farley Farms could be paid for by developers this would take the traffic away from the villages of Arborfield, Barkham and Finchampstead. I am disinclined to go hastily into making public statements, but we do have to push the council at each stage of the planning process. We will also have to come to a consensus on the main priorities that can be resolved. We need to decide whether there is value in working with neighbouring parishes.”

At the next meeting in January BPC must

- a) agree our priorities in preparation for a response to WBC within the framework of the Master planning consultation which will be early next year.
- b) decide whether it would be beneficial to work with the neighbouring parishes of Arborfield, Finchampstead and Swallowfield to campaign jointly for the priority issues.

This to be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

09/375 Highways

Reply from Angus Ross regarding Barkham Manor Ponds – Mr Ross got the Environment Agency over a few weeks ago. Two ladies came and went around the lakes, up to Hayes Lane, talked to the man at Rainbow Rides and also went up the hill to the properties along Hayes Lane and also those behind Bearwood Road. The Environment Agency found no obvious cause for the lack of water other than either the water table dropping (part of the 'supply' should come from a spring) or abstraction by Thames Water into the holding tanks in Highland Avenue opposite A1 (EA to follow up). Regarding Rainbow Rides, it was clear that they could divert water onto their reservoir but that no water was coming off the hill to feed either their reservoir or come on down to Barkham Manor. Therefore blame cannot be apportioned there. Mr Ross will pass on any further information from the Environment Agency.

The pavement along Barkham Street will swept week commencing 30th November. To date this has not been carried out, Clerk to advise WBC and to find out what the frequency of sweeping this pavement should be.

The hedge along Langley Common Road was reported to the Highways Inspector, David Rixon at WBC who has looked at the hedge along Barkham Square and he feels that there is no obstruction to highway visibility at present but he will keep an eye on it.

The bus stop flag along Barkham Street has raised concerns with just having one flag for both sides of the road, the Clerk reported this to WBC who state that this is common practice particularly in rural areas where services are infrequent, to have one bus stop post applying in both directions with "both sides of the road" on the flag. This can be to save on street furniture where it is difficult to find sites or to save costs where passengers are low. WBC will contact Thames Travel on passenger numbers boarding / alighting at the Barkham Street stop. If a stop was to be put on the opposite side of the road, the stop would have to be located outside someone's house and this is often met with opposition from local residents. Keith Baker (Executive Member for Highways at WBC) has stated that if BPC wish to have a post on the other side of the road then he would like BPC to consult with the residents which in this case is likely to be the residents of Brook Cottage. This house is currently up for sale so the residents might have some issues with this as a selling point. In addition to this the highway adopted land in this area is narrow and the bus pole and flag would need to be installed at the back of the footway, ideally the bus pole and flag should be on highway land and there may well not be enough space. Also WBC would need to check what utility services are under this area before any holes are dug. It was noted that the new bus stop has now been erected with a raised hard standing, if it is not feasible to put up a flag on the opposite side of the road then if the pavement could be raised to match that on the opposite side of the road this would make it plain to potential passengers that the sign covers both directions of travel. Clerk to suggest this to WBC.

BPC also raised the issue of the footpath through to the bridge but were told that it would not be possible as there was insufficient room between the hedge and the edge of the road, now that the leaves have fallen it can be seen that through years of neglect a secondary self sown hedge has established itself parallel to the original hedge, BPC requested that this self sown hedge be removed. WBC has replied stating that Traffic and Structural Engineers will visit the site and report back to us. Traffic Management and Structural Maintenance teams later visited the site to look at whether the footway could be extended around the corner in to Church Lane and whether the hedge would be an issue. They are going to see if they can extend the footway without cutting back the hedge but they also need to check whether the hedge is on highway land or if it is on private land. The issue isn't that it may have expanded through self sowing but whether it will still be on private land. In the meantime WBC will see if they can get the footway in without cutting the hedge and as soon as they know how they can go forward then J. Tredwell will come back to us. The work may not fit in to this year's timetable so it might need to wait until the New Year.

09/376 The proposed bus shelter at Langley Common Road

The location of the bus shelter on Langley Common Road was raised by a Councillor suggesting that it was moved toward Rickman Close, WBC state that this is not advisable as the location of bus stops denotes that on single carriage way roads it is normal practice to stagger bus stops in opposing directions so that buses tail-to-tail and move away from each other, if the bus stop and shelter were to be moved further west the buses would then be stopping nose-to nose, which can be dangerous if cars try to overtake the stationary bus and are then confronted by an oncoming bus. This was discussed, the Wokingham to Reading direction has a lay-by so the bus is able to pull in and hence visibility is not affected, there are 2 buses an hour, one bus only goes as far as the Garrison, the other continues into Wokingham, this service crosses with the bus going in the opposite direction at Arborfield Cross and hence the problems raised by WBC would not arise. BPC have requested that if the shelter cannot be moved nearer to Rickman Close then it will only be acceptable to have a shelter with a top and a back but no sides in order that vision is not obstructed. Shelters of this design have been installed along Rushey Way, Lower Earley. If neither of these alternatives is possible, then BPC is unwilling to give its approval to the installation of a shelter or to any contribution towards its installation or maintenance.

09/377 Playbuilders Fund / Youth Shelter

The Playbuilders Scheme is aimed at children 8 – 13 and will be built of natural products using the natural contours of the land. The Youth Opportunity Fund awarded to the young people to provide a youth shelter is aimed at young people aged 14 – 19, this is a Government grant which if not used will be returned to Central Government and utilised elsewhere. The two schemes cannot be amalgamated. Mrs Stubbs and Mr Burges will liaise with Mr Cristo at WBC to ascertain if there is a shelter that will complement the equipment of the Playbuilder Scheme in order that these funds are not lost. This must be decided at the next meeting of BPC.

09/378 Litter

The date of the annual Parish Cleanup will be Sunday 21st March 2010, this date has been set by WBC and will again be a Borough wide event.

There were no areas that required clearing of litter.

09/379 Finance and to discuss the proposed Precept for 2010/2011

| | | |
|---|-----|---------------------------|
| WBC refuse lorry at The Junipers for November | 217 | £173.65 (£151.00 exc VAT) |
| SLCC – annual membership fee | 218 | £106.00 |
| PC World – purchase of Norton Security | 219 | £58.71 (£51.06 exc VAT) |

| | |
|--|---------|
| Standing Order for Clerk's salary for December | £576.62 |
| Standing Order to Royal Bor. Windsor – Pension Fund for Clerk for month of December (Employee & employer contribution) | £129.11 |

To date 893 books have been sold, an income of £4666.24, thus leaving 107 unsold, and the Council is now in credit to the amount of £700.57. The Clerk has taken a further 10 books into Henry Street Garden Centre.

Mr Heyliger reported to BPC the discussion of the Finance Committee regarding the proposed Precept, this will be voted on at the next meeting of BPC for delivery to WBC by 4.2.2010.

09/380 Borough Councillor's Report

Mrs Stubbs did not make a report, but she continues to help residents with their problems.

09/381 Correspondence

- a. WBC Strategic Partnership – Nominations for Town & Parish Councillor representation on WB Strategic Partnership. Clerk to suggest that John Heggadon who is currently Chairman of BALC & WDALC would be the best candidate for the position.
- b. Thames Valley Police – Proposed Youth Shelter for Barkham.
- c. WBC – invitation to a presentation at WBC on 16th December regarding the major works around Wokingham by the major utility companies.

Distribution

Thames Valley Police – Overview of meeting held on 13.10.09.
WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Finance Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 19.11.09.
WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Council on 18.11.09.
WBC Minutes of Committee Meetings for the period 5.10.09 – 29.10.09.
WBC Staff Bulletin Issue 23.
WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 2.11.09 – 6.11.09.
WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 9.11.09 – 13.11.09.
WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Executive on 26.11.09.
WBC Minutes for Campaign Against Litter Meeting 2.11.09.
BaA NAG Minutes of meeting held on 18.11.09.
Arborfield News Issue 72.
WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Standards Committee 2.12.09.
WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 16.11.09 – 20.11.09.
WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Personnel Board 9.12.09.
WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Finance & Scrutiny Panel 7.12.09.
WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Planning Committee on 9.12.09
WBC Agenda for Extraordinary Meeting of the Executive on 10.12.09.
WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 23.11.09 – 27.11.09.

09/382 Councillors Forum

The bench in the park at The Junipers which backs onto the bridleway has been damaged. Clerk to report to WBC.

The report issued by Mr Carter after the public meeting on 16.9.09 had suggested recommendations, these to be put on the agenda for the next meeting of BPC.

Meeting closed at 9.58 p.m.

Next meeting of full Council will be held on 12th January 2010 at 8 p.m.

Next meeting of Planning Committee will be held on 22nd December 2009 at 7.30 p.m.