

BARKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of meeting of the Barkham Parish Council held on 12th January 2010
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. S. Goldring, Mr. D. Oxbrough, Mr. C. Heyliger, Mr G. Burges, Mrs C. Dando, five members of the public and the Clerk.

Apologies:

Declarations of Interests

Mrs Stubbs declared an interest on any discussions that were to take place regarding the development at the Bearwood Road and The Lilacs junction.

10/386 **Minutes** of meeting held on 8th December 2009 were approved and signed as a true record. Also the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 16th December 2009 were signed as a true record.

10/387 Co Option of new Councillor

Frank Postlethwaite

Proposed by Mrs Stubbs

8 Councillors voted in favour and 1 abstention.

Mr Frank Postlethwaite was duly elected as a Councillor of Barkham Parish Council. The Declaration of Office was duly signed by Mr Postlethwaite.

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

10/388 Report from the Villages Youth Project Worker

Report was read by the Clerk.

10/389 Planning

The only item of importance to report to the full Council was the application to the Environment Agency by Wokingham Car Spares, Highland Ave who have submitted an application to the Environment Agency to increase tipping from 15,000 tonnes to 40,000 tonnes per year. The Clerk reported that she had discovered that the case officer dealing with this application is based at Nottingham (Louise Evans) and a letter from BPC will be sent to her opposing this application. The site itself is set amongst a residential area which already suffers the effects of the existing activities on the site (which include others than the tipping referred to in this application).

The site does not appear capable of accommodating any increase in activities and existing levels should be reviewed rather than increases proposed. In addition the access to the site is down a residential road which is totally unsuitable to take additional heavy lorries laden with waste. The access from Highland Ave on to Bearwood Road (which is only a C road) is also unsuitable with a number of near misses due to lorries needing both sides of the road, and the structure of Bearwood Road was not constructed to take these lorries. BPC strongly oppose this application and suggest that a site visit is undertaken by the Environment Agency in order that they can familiarise themselves with the extent of the activities at this location before any decision is taken.

10/390 The Core Strategy

A suggestion was put forward at the last meeting of BPC that it might be beneficial if BPC joined forces with the neighbouring parishes of Arborfield, Finchampstead and Swallowfield to become one voice with our concerns to WBC that the impact of 3500 houses at Arborfield Garrison will have on our villages. Firstly BPC must identify the issues which concern us the most and pull together our ideas. It was decided that the best way forward would be to form a small group to consist of Mr Heath, Mr Burges, Mr Goldring and to seek the help of Mr French. The consultation period will run from the end of January until the end of February. The main area of concern must be transport, and BPC must stress the necessity of having a bypass from Arborfield to take the extra volume of traffic from this new development away from the villages. The Inspector's report was rather ambiguous on this subject. This small group will consolidate ideas first before contacting the neighbouring parishes.

10/391 Highways

After experiencing very heavy snow over the Christmas period it would seem sensible to press WBC to reinstate grit bins in prime locations, such as at Coppid Hill. The bins would need to be placed in the Barkham Road about 50m either side of junction with Bearwood Road at the point of maximum gradient in the road. There appears to be adequate space on the verge in both locations. Although, on both slopes, the length of the steep gradient is very short, it is one of the steepest inclines in the Wokingham area and always causes problems when there is a fall of snow. Also at the junction of Bearwood Road and Hayes Lane and in The Lilacs. It was suggested that if all councillors looked at their immediate area, and possibly speak to residents BPC could ascertain where the best places would be to locate grit bins. The idea being to target key areas, such as Barkham Hill, BPC can then evaluate the village as a whole and submit a response to WBC as to where the best locations for grit bins would be. Mr Burges kindly offered to co-ordinate the plan with the co-operation of the other councillors, the Clerk to assist with the aid of a map plus a list of the roads within Barkham. Once the snow starts to thaw then flooding will inevitably be a problem, especially in the vicinity of Barkham Street and Commonfield Lane where the drainage is very poor.

The junction of Barkham Road and Sandy Lane, the road has been patched on many occasions and now requires properly repairing, when the snow has gone it would be helpful to take a photograph of the problem and send it to WBC.

The hedge along Langley Common Road has again grown very tall and wide, and is obscuring the sight-lines; it requires cutting back. Clerk to write to WBC.

10/392 Monitoring the Shelter

It is the belief of BPC that the shelter has now been ordered by WBC and therefore questions regarding Risk Assessments, insurance and maintenance will all need to be addressed. Louise Morris (youth worker for WBC) will engage with the young people regarding their use of the shelter both its informal use and possible organised activities during the summer months. Dr Loader will liaise with the Area Police Commander regarding monitoring the shelter and the Operation Lion Cub which was talked about by the PCSOs at the meeting on 16.12.09. If need be a rota of councillors will be organised to keep an eye on the shelter plus if any residents who regularly walk their dogs through the park could report back if there are any problems this would be most helpful.

10/393 Litter

There were no areas that required clearing of litter as everywhere has a covering of snow at present.

10/394 Finance and to decide on the Precept for the year 2010/2011

Neat Ideas – purchase of ink cartridges	220	£40.24 (£34.99 exc VAT)
Barkham Village Hall – rent September – December	221	£84.00
Inland Revenue – Tax & N.I. for the Clerk Nov, Dec & January	222	£71.55

Standing Order for Clerk’s salary for January

£576.62

Standing Order to Royal Bor. Windsor – Pension Fund for Clerk for month of January (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.

Precept

The expenditure for the year was discussed and agreed. A Precept of £24,000 for 2010/2011 was formally adopted. A vote to accept the expenditure for the year took place, all Councillors voted in favour. Details are documented in Appendix A.

10/395 To Discuss the recommendations from Mr Carter’s report following the public meeting on 16.9.09.

1. Facilities for young people, especially those too old for the current play park, should be improved and maintained, both in the Junipers park and possibly elsewhere. It makes sense, to me to take a long term view and form an overall village strategy, to include funding, monitoring and maintenance plans. The opportunity for fund raising within Barkham should not be ignored. Implementation could be phased to occur as and when funding was obtained.

2. There is an opportunity now to convert interest, both negative and positive, into enthusiasm behind formulating and implementing such a youth strategy.
3. Any facilities stand a better chance of being used only for their proper purpose if all residents especially those nearby, support and take ownership of them.
4. The current situation also presents an opportunity to dispel the pervading apathy within Barkham residents with regard to the BPC in general. It makes sense to harness it.
5. A pragmatic, if difficult, preliminary to this would be willingness on all sides to accept the good faith of all other parties, and to take appropriate conciliatory actions.
6. BPC should investigate additional ways of communication with residents, including obtaining feedback. I am certain that poor communication, all around is the primary cause of the current situation. Perhaps a councillor might be given the specific responsibility for public communication and make a communication plan? The aims would be:
 - a. To inform residents of what the BPC did.
 - b. To hear residents views on any given topic.
 - c. To harness the support of residents behind the Council.
 - d. To ensure a healthy supply of would be councillors.
7. Perhaps the annual village assembly could become a forum for more than simply hearing reports from the diverse groups in the village, and become more a debate about improving the general quality of life. It might be appropriate, in addition, to review the attendance at and frequency of the meetings.
8. One outcome might perhaps be to organise a village occasion of some kind (the successful Millennium and Queen's Jubilee events).

This report was a result of the situation which arose from a few residents of The Junipers raising concerns over the proposed youth shelter which is now going to be provided for the young people in the park. Prior to this there has been very little support or interest from residents at Parish Council meetings with only 3 or 4 in attendance, the general feeling was one of apathy. Some residents did not even know of the existence of a Parish Council despite the fact that there are notice boards and regular articles in the BVRA magazine which is delivered to every household in Barkham. At the Village Design Statement Exhibition, held at the Village Hall the attendance was extremely low and very disappointing considering the amount of work which had gone into producing this now adopted and important document which carries considerable weight with regard to the design of future development throughout Barkham, despite its importance residents showed little interest. It was suggested that one Councillor be responsible for communication, Mrs Dando volunteered for the role. Suggestions for better communication are, a regular column in the BVRA magazine, rather than articles on an ad hoc basis, a newsletter, possibly a Village Plan. Clerk to ask the CCB if a speaker could attend a meeting and give BPC a presentation with perhaps a comparison from another small Parish Council who has already undergone the process who could advise BPC how it had benefitted them. Allan Tiplady, the Parish Liaison Officer from WBC maybe able to assist here.

10/396 **Borough Councillor's Report**

Mrs Stubbs reported that there had not been any meetings at WBC. She was aware of the application to increase the tipping at Wokingham Car Spares and was doing all she could to oppose it. She also reported that Councillor Malcolm Bryant had very sadly died on 23rd December, he had been a very active member of WBC who had worked tirelessly to be improve facilities for the young people. He will be very sadly missed and our condolences go to his family.

10/397 **Correspondence**

- a. NHS Litigation Authority Appeal Against Berkshire West PCT Decision With Regard to the Rurality of Swallowfield. The purpose of the appeal was the northern boundary of the rurality, the view is that the northern boundary should not go as far north as suggested but should run along the A327 to where it meets the Loddon River and run the course of the river until it meets the A33.
- b. WBC Telecommunications Pre-Roll Out Meeting to be held on 15.1.10 at WBC between 2.00 – 4.00 p.m. Mr Oxbrough will attempt to attend this meeting, Clerk to request the feedback from the meeting.

- c. WBC – Wokingham Borough Strategic Partnership – BPC did not participate in the consultation; we are now being invited to make any comments by 13.1.2010. Mr Goldring to study the consultation papers and report back to BPC.
- d. WBC – invitation to attend a Strategic Development Location Masterplanning Briefing on 18.1.10 at 7.00 p.m. Mr Heath and Mr Burges to attend.
- e. WBC Election of Town and Parish Representative to Wokingham Borough Strategic Partnership. Candidates are John Heggadon, Dr John Halsall, Roy Mantel (deputy only) and Chris Singleton. BPC to vote for Mr Heggadon as Chairman and Mr Mantel as deputy. Clerk to write to WBC expressing displeasure at the voting criteria (2 votes for first choice and 1 vote for second choice). In future the deputy should be voted for in a separate ballot.
- f. WBC Local Transport Plan (LTP2) expires on 31.3.2011, LTP3 will supersede this and will run until 2026, BPC have been asked to submit our views. Questionnaire to be completed by 5.2.2010. Mr Heath to submit a response to WBC on behalf of BPC.
- g. Arborfield Gardening Association – Best Kept Garden Competition with Arborfield. BPC considered this to be an excellent idea and have invited Mrs Heard (Chairman of AGA) to give a short presentation at the meeting of BPC on 9th February.

Distribution

WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 30.11.09 – 4.12.09.

Minutes of Area Youth Committee held on 1.12.09.

WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 7.12.09 – 11.12.09.

WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Planning Committee on 6.1.2010.

WBC Staff Bulletin Issue 25.

WBC Wheels in motion for the new transport plan.

BaA NAG Minutes of meeting held on 16.12.09.

WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Finance Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 12.1.10.

10/398 Councillors Forum

Mrs Stubbs reported that a local resident of Bearwood Road who is a qualified nurse and currently not working has offered her nursing expertise services to any needy resident, please contact Mrs Stubbs via the Post Office if anyone would like to take advantage of this very generous offer.

There have been 3 burglaries in Elizabeth Park recently, all have taken place when the residents were asleep in bed, and access has been gained through doors not properly secured. Residents need to be extra vigilant especially during the cold weather.

The subject of circulating draft minutes was raised by a councillor. At present the minutes are not posted on to the BVRA web site until they are formally signed off at the next meeting as a true and accurate record of the meeting. The Clerk has taken advice from BALC who advise that if draft minutes are to be circulated and be available to the public to read then they must be clearly annotated as such with the wording “Draft Minutes” as a watermark across the paper. They must also be produced as an adobe pdf file so they cannot be tampered with, if BPC wish to proceed in this way then the relative software must be purchased. The Clerk to research the costs of this and circulate a paper for consideration at the next meeting of BPC.

Meeting closed at 9.55 p.m.

Next meeting of full Council will be held on 9th February 2010 at 8 p.m.

Next meeting of Planning Committee will be held on 26th January 2010 at 7.30 p.m.