

BARKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of meeting of the Barkham Parish Council held on 8th June 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 G. Burges, Mr F. Postlethwaite, Mr. D. Oxbrough, four members of the public and the Clerk.

Apologies: Mr C. Heyliger (on holiday) and Mr S. Goldring (on holiday)

Declarations of Interests

None

10/476 **Minutes** of meeting held on 11th May 2010 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

10/477 Report from the Villages Youth Project Worker and other youth related matters

See attached report.

The youth shelter is still in pristine condition and is being used by the young people regularly. A public consultation took place on Sunday 6th June at The Junipers open space led by WBC to advertise the Playbuilder Scheme. There was a steady stream of people who were all interested in the planned improvements, children were drawing pictures of what they would like to see in the park. A few residents expressed concern over the proposed siting of the improved facilities but their fears were soon put to rest when the WBC team assured them that the funding was relatively small and therefore the equipment purchased would not encroach on to the boundary of their properties. The area behind the existing play area was the suggested area, all trees will remain, the overgrown area will be cleared with a climbing/scramble type trail which will follow the existing path between the trees. WBC must first carry out various site visits to check for badgers, bats etc. If all progresses to plan then installation may take place by the end of the summer. Mrs Stubbs thanked Mrs Heath for providing the very welcome refreshments.

10/478 Planning

There were two planning applications that were referred to the full Council meeting:-

F/2010/1006	Land to the east of Coppid Hill House, Barkham Road Proposed erection of 2 buildings for equestrian use (stables, tack room, feed store and machinery) plus parking and new driveway.	Delegated Opposed
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Clerk to write to WBC opposing this application. The site is located in the countryside and any development on this site would cause harm to the landscape and open character of the area. The land is currently outside of settlement boundaries and forms part of the Strategic Green Wedge. The erection of two buildings for equestrian use is considered to be excessive development, the proposed new access is unnecessary as there is already access to the property. Two drives running parallel to each other would suggest an ulterior motive such as future development. The previous application was for the sole purpose of keeping horses personal to the applicant, there should therefore be no need for a new access road and a development of this size. The horses on the land come from a neighbouring farm and there appears to be no activity related to horse riding, the number of horses on the land already exceeds that recommended by the British Equestrian Federation. Clause 2.1 of the Design Statement appears to be factually incorrect, it states that "the land in question was previously known as Barkham Hill Stables", from the original plans it would appear that Barkham Hill Stables were located on the land which now forms part of Villa Field land.

F/2008/0172	Coppid Hill House Unauthorised change of use of land from agricultural to residential.	Dismissed by the Inspector 24 th July 2009
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The Enforcement Officer John Steepe visited the site on 2nd June to gather further information to this enforcement case. The Notice has been complied with in part but not in full, BPC suggested that no further

planning applications should be considered until the compliance notice has been adhered to but WBC state that the two processes are separate and WBC is unable to refuse to progress a planning application due to outstanding enforcement matters, this is because development control is a statutory duty. The occupier has been advised that strict compliance is required. Application F/2010/1006 (above) has now been submitted to WBC, Mr Steepe believes this will remedy the situation. BPC disagree, reluctance to comply with the Enforcement Notice has nothing to do with the current application, the fence is still in the wrong place and requires moving back.

EXT/2010/0968	41 Bearwood Road	Proposed
	Application to extend implementation date of planning	Opposed
	Consent F/2004/3625 for a further 3 years (proposed erection of a building for parking, storage and maintenance of vehicles (renewal of consent F/2000/0549)	
	The new details show a plan of proposed building.	

Clerk to write to WBC again opposing this application for a further extension to the planning permission. There have already been two extensions and to date no work has commenced. BPC see no need for a further extension. It was suggested that expansion of the site would generate further traffic movements. Clerk to also question the planning officer if the planning permission is transferable to a tenant BPC were under the impression that it was for the owner only.

10/479 **Core Strategy** – Mr Heath to report to the Council

Another Southern Parishes meeting was held on 24th May followed by a special meeting at Shute End on 25th May. This was supposed to be a briefing meeting ahead of a Special Executive Meeting on 3rd June that had been called to adopt the SPD covering the various SDL Master plans. The meeting on 25th May was conducted in two parts. The first was attended by WBC Officers and Councillors and took the form of a briefing by the Officers by questions and answers. The second part was also attended by Parish Councillors, mainly but not exclusively from the Southern Parishes. Mr Heath attended the latter meeting but not the former meeting. Mark Cupit (Head of Development Control at WBC) made a presentation that was supposed to demonstrate that they had taken full account of the consultation exercise. He also advised that the WBC response to the consultation exercise would be published the next day. In practise hardly any changes seem to have been incorporated. The only change as far as Arborfield SDL was cosmetic “Remove illustrative commencement line of Arborfield By Pass and use alternative symbol/text to make clear that the offsite transport infrastructure will be subject of a subsequent planning application and formal public consultation”. The main thrust of the comments from the Southern Parishes was that the plan had become unrealistic with regard to the lack of a confirmed date for the MOD to vacate the site, with 2014-5 the earliest likely date. Also that lack of infrastructure provision made an early start on construction ill advised. Consequently the phasing should be altered to reflect these problems. WBC seemed to be in complete denial of the problems. For example it was claimed that Thames Water had made no requirements for improvement of the sewage works. It was pointed out that in one of WBC’s own reports that Thames Water had indicated the necessity for a major upgrade, possibly involving a new plant that would take 8-10 years to complete. Closing the meeting Susan Law (Chief Executive of WBC) advised that the SPD should be adopted as soon as possible, so that developers could not undermine the plans through premature planning application. Specifically she stated that Councillors were receiving “the best professional advice from the Officers”. Informal discussion with Borough Councillors indicated that they were very unhappy with the situation presented by the Officers. It was therefore no surprise to learn that the Special Executive Meeting on 3rd June would be postponed, with the issues to be discussed at the Executive Meeting on 24th June. The official reason given was that several Members could not attend on 3rd June. Interestingly the WBC response to the consultation did not appear the next day, which is a poor reflection on the Officers’ commitment to the exercise. It now appears that a briefing meeting will be held, possibly next week. Attendees to include David Lee, Angus Ross and Cris Lancaster. In the words of one of our colleagues from another parish, “It seems to me that they still think this is about the blasted maps and the David Lock content on design of streets and houses. They just seem to have no idea that we are a group capable of considering the overall strategy and seeing the bigger picture”. Another interesting development is the letter from Eric Pickles indicating that regional targets will be scrapped. This has apparently left WBC officers scrambling around working out what it really means and whether they have passed the point of no return. John Redwood is also stirring this pot. Finally, the Scoping Report submitted on behalf of MOD Estates has been rejected because it does not cover the whole SDL, this is encouraging.

10/480 Highways

Mr Rixon the Highway Inspector for WBC has replied to points raised from our last meeting:-

1. Land at The Gables, WBC took photographs both before and after the recent footway improvement works in Barkham Street and these show that there was always a narrow section of footway at this address. The works to the footway were completed before the new fence was erected by the owner and the footway was not disturbed during its construction, the new fence following the back edge of the footway. The Council's Highway adoption plans for this area could not prove any encroachment of small amounts of metrage.
2. The water leaks reported by BPC outside 43 Bearwood Road and 364 Barkham Road have been reported to the water board and will be repaired shortly. It was also noted that there is a further leak at the junction of Sandy Lane and Bearwood Road, this has been reported by a resident.
3. The vegetation around the signs at Barkham Street/Commonfield Lane was cut back last week.
4. The drainage dept have now cleared the gully opposite Greenacres House and road sweeping will be actioned during the normal sweeping cycle. To date this still has not been done, the gutters from the bridge as far as The Bull require sweeping and the blocked drain has not been cleared.

Mr Rixon declined our invitation to attend the meeting of BPC on 8th June.

It was noted that vast highway improvements are being carried out in Shinfield with the construction of a new roundabout and widening to the pavements, this work is surely costing WBC a vast amount of money which could be better used towards repairing the many potholes which are still evident around the Borough. This item to be added to the agenda of the next District Parish Conference.

10/481 Provision of Salt Bins – to discuss the provision of salt bins and their position throughout the Parish. Mr Burges to submit his recommendation to WBC and liaise with the Clerk.

10/482 Litter

It was noted that residents are putting out black sacks ready for the refuse collection, foxes are tearing open the bags and leaving litter over the pavement, residents should be encouraged to use dustbins and to clear up any rubbish which is outside their property. This is not the responsibility of WBC Waste Services.

10/483 A Village Plan - to discuss if Barkham Parish Council wishes to pursue this.

Dr Loader has spoken to Old Windsor who have recently produced a Parish Plan, they are larger than Barkham with 4000 residents compared to Barkham who have 1800. They conducted a survey of the residents to ascertain their needs. Dr Loader will read the report in detail and report back to BPC.

10/484 Finance

BALC – Course for D. Oxborough (allotments)	239	£25.00
WBC – 1 refuse vehicle at The Junipers for May	240	£188.00 (£160 exc VAT)
Barkham Village Hall – grant	241	£3000.00
WBC Villages Youth Project - grant	242	£4445.86
St James Church – grant	243	£500.00
Relate – grant	244	£400.00
Arborfield Junior School – grant	245	£400.00
Standing Order for Clerk's salary for June		£589.43
Standing Order to Royal Bor. Windsor – Pension Fund for Clerk for month of June (Employee & employer contribution)		£135.26

To date 898 books have been sold, an income of £4691.24, thus leaving 102 unsold, and the Council is now in credit to the amount of £725.57.

10/485 Borough Councillor's Report

Mrs Stubbs did not have a report but continues to assist residents with any problems and is always available at the Post Office.

10/486 Communication Strategy – Dr Loader to discuss

Dr Loader gave BPC a brief resume of ways in which BPC can improve communication with the residents:-

- Notice boards throughout the village.
- BVRA magazine
- Website

Regular articles in the BVRA magazine bearing the BPC logo will keep residents aware of Council news. How residents contact BPC and how we handle the responses needs to be addressed by either email or letter, preferably letter which is then signed. The website must be kept up to date.

10/487 Correspondence

- a. Thames Valley Police – invitation to Police Liaison Meeting on 15.6.10 at WBC at 7.00 p.m. Dr Loader and the Clerk to attend.
- b. WBC Winter Service Review – See above Provision of Salt Bins.
- c. WBC invitation to a community workshop on Saturday 19 June at Finchampstead Baptist Centre. North and South Wokingham in the morning and Arborfield/South M4 in afternoon. Parish Councils are allocated one place. BPC have requested 2 places for Mr Heath and Mr Burges.
- d. Environment Agency – Russell James Pike, Highlands Ave. Application to increase the tipping from 15,000 tonnes to 40,000 tonnes per year. The deadline for comments has now been extended until 1st July. BPC wrote opposing this application on 13th January 2010, our comments have been acknowledged by the EA.

Distribution

WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Audit Committee on 20.5.10.
WBC Agenda for The Annual Meeting of the Council on 20.5.10.
WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 3.5.10 – 7.5.10.
WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 10.5.10 – 14.5.10.
WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Planning Committee on 26.5.10.
WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Executive on 27.5.10.
Post Office – Barkham Branch Refurbishment
WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Licensing and Appeals Committee 3.6.10.
BaA NAG Minutes held on 19.5.10.
WBC Agenda Meeting of the Standards Committee on 8.6.10
WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 7.6.10.
WBC Agenda for the Meeting of the Personnel Board on 15.6.10.
WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 17.5.10 – 21.5.10.
WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 24.5.10 – 28.5.10.

10/488 Councillors Forum

None

Meeting closed at 10.02 p.m. .

Next meeting of full Council will be held on 13th July at 8 p.m.

Next meeting of Planning Committee will be held on 22nd June 2010 at 7.30 p.m.