

WANBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Planning, Finance and Policy Committee held on Monday 10th January 2022 at Wanborough Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Dave Hayward (Chair), Bob Biggs, Joe Smith, Gary Sumner, John Warr and Colin Offer

In Attendance: Angela Raymond (Parish Clerk & RFO) and 3 members of public.

1. Apologies

Apologies received from Mike Webster and approved at the meeting.

2. Declaration of interest:

Joe Smith declared an interest in agenda item 3 – Southern Connector Road

Dave Hayward declared an interest in agenda item 5 – Allotments

Gary Sumner declared an interest in agenda item 3 – Southern Connector Road

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED FOR PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A resident asked questions in relation to the Southern Connector Road (SCR) planning application.

Firstly, asking if the Parish Council have taken into consideration the impact on her and other residents at the bottom of Pack Hill in relation to the discharge of condition planning application. Dave Hayward confirmed that Parish Council does take into consideration all aspects of the applications and meets with Swindon Borough Council (SBC) on a regular basis; the problem is that, in respect of these applications, the work seems to take place before Parish Council have had a chance to make comments.

Secondly, as the Southern Connector road (SCR) will have no through route to the A420 due to the ongoing issue with Symmetry Park access point, has the Parish Council considered the implications this will have in pushing more of the traffic down to Great Moorleaze. Dave Hayward stated that all the plans he has seen for the Southern Connector Road go to the edge of the Lotmead site and then there are dotted lines to the A420 through the NEV; there is an exit point through Great Stall East as well as the disputed exit point at Symmetry Park. The resident stated that SBC have spent a fortune on court proceedings for the access point from Symmetry Park and if they are not successful in their appeal to the Supreme Court then what redesigning work will there be to ensure there is no impact on the Pack Hill end of the SCR.

Gary Sumner stated that the SCR has never been designed to take traffic direct from A420 to Commonhead, traffic should go via the White Hart roundabout. Gary Sumner confirmed that SBC have now had confirmation that their appeal to the Supreme Court has been accepted, so this case will now go ahead; he also confirmed that SBC gained legal advice prior to making the decision to appeal the case at the Supreme Court. The resident asked the Parish Council to keep a close eye on this as the implications of no access from the SCR to Symmetry Park will have implications on the village as a whole and these will be quite significant.

3. Planning Applications Received

S/HOU/21/1970 - Autumn View Kite Hill - Alterations to boundary treatment including the erection of new brickwork piers to the driveway access, trellis fencing and pergola framing, together with perimeter hedge planting to southern boundary.

Resolved: Parish Council unanimously agreed to raise no objection

S/COND/21/1732 - New Eastern Villages Southern Connector Road - Discharge of conditions 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 14, 20 and 26 (Phase 2A) following planning permission of application S/20/1538.

Parish Council discussed the application and stated that the discharge of conditions and the plans included continue to relate to work that appears to have already been completed. Examples include vegetation clearance. It also appears that construction of the road at the bottom of Pack Hill has progressed considerably more than that has been approved in the discharge of conditions.

Resolved: Parish Council to raise the issue with regards to work being carried out prior to discharge of conditions being approved.

Angela Raymond

Parish Clerk & RFO

4. Hooper's Field Sports Facility:

4.1 To review budget and spend for 2021/22

Clerk circulated a financial statement showing the current spend to date vs budget. Colin Offer asked about the Project Manager costs and it was confirmed that this was incurred in the previous year not the current financial year.

4.2 To discuss hall hire hourly charge for 2022/23

Resolved: The committee unanimously agreed to put forward a recommendation to keep the hall hire charge the same: £10 an hour plus VAT for 2022/23.

4.3 To discuss Club Licence Fees for 2022/23

Resolved: The committee unanimously agreed to put forward a recommendation to increase the club licence fees by 4% for 2022/23.

5. Allotments – Annual Fee

Dave Hayward left the room while this item was discussed.

5.1 To review annual allotment charge

Bob Biggs, as chair of the allotment committee, put forward a proposal to keep the allotment charge the same for 2022/23, but to then increase to £40 for a full plot and £20 for a half plot for 2023/24.

Resolved: The committee unanimously approved the proposal put forward by Bob Biggs.

For Items 6.1 Exclusion of Public and Press. To resolve in accordance with Standing Order 3 (d) that 'in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they be instructed to withdraw'. Reason: Staffing matters.

6. Staffing:

6.1 To consider recommendations put forward by Staffing Committee.

John Warr requested that the Clerk leave the room while this item was discussed. Clerk confirmed that she did not need to leave the room for a discussion relating to the new position of "Assistant Clerk", but confirmed that she would for the second item to discuss her salary etc.

Dave Hayward confirmed that the discussion is in relation to the role, not the Clerk as an individual and could not see why there is a need for the Clerk to leave the room while the new position of an Assistant Clerk was discussed. There could be questions that need to be asked and the Clerk would be in a better position to answer.

Discussion on the matter continued and Clerk stated that she would leave the room to try and move the meeting forward but was very disappointed to be forced to into that position.

Assistant Clerk – new position

Two proposals put forward:-

a. Proposal by John Warr and seconded by Gary Sumner.

In consideration of duty of care to the Clerk the Staffing committee should:-

- Review the Clerk's hours to see how they could be prioritised to make better use of time;
- Explore options to find a temporary office within the locality;
- Consult with other local Parish Councils to see if it is possible to have a job share for an Assistant Clerk to provide cover and support for this Council.

Committee voted – 3 in favour (Gary Sumner, John Warr and Colin Offer), 3 against (Joe Smith, Bob Biggs and Dave Hayward). Dave Hayward used his casting vote to vote against the proposal.

b. Proposal by Joe Smith and seconded by Bob Biggs

- That the Committee approve the recommendation put forward by the SLCC Consultant as detailed in the report.
- The committee to recommend that the Council seek to employ a part-time Assistant Clerk.

Committee voted – 3 in favour (Joe Smith, Bob Biggs and Dave Hayward), 3 against (Gary Sumner, John Warr and Colin Offer), Dave Hayward used his casting vote to vote in favour of the proposal

Resolved: The committee to put forward recommendation for proposal “b” to full council.

Clerk’s salary, hours and pension

Staffing committee put forward a recommendation to keep the Clerk’s salary scale point, hours and pension the same as 2021/22 for 2022/23.

Resolved: The committee unanimously agreed the recommendation put forward by the staffing committee.

7. Capital and Reserves:

7.1 To review current capital reserves, including spend to date, S106 & CiL receipts.

Joe Smith suggested that Parish Council approach Taylor Wimpey directly to discuss the S106 money allocated for a MUGA at Hooper’s Field to see if it can be allocated to something else. Clerk confirmed that she has had no success with SBC so felt this would be a good course of action. Committee agreed – *Action Clerk*

Gary Sumner said that he can also raise again with SBC – *Action Clerk to forward previous correspondence on this matter with SBC.*

Dave Hayward stated that Gary Sumner should also chase up the outstanding S106 money due from SBC.

7.2 To review proposed projects and costs for consideration.

Dave Hayward ran through the list of all projects and likely costs put forward by committees as per the schedule circulated by the Clerk.

- Assistant Clerk – Revenue budget allocation of £12k – 13% increase in precept will be needed as discussed earlier in the meeting.
- To fence off the play area at Church Meadow – a one off capital cost, with the estimated budget needed, based on a similar fence to the one at Lower Rec, is £10k. After a discussion it was agreed that this is a “nice to have” rather than essential so the committee agreed to carry forward until the following year.
- To improve surface of Footpath WA14 – a one off capital cost plus ongoing maintenance will be needed. This has been carried forward from last year, one quote received for just under £7k. After a discussion majority agreed that this is a safety concern as the surface of the path is a hazard and it was agreed to allocate a budget from current reserves as follows, but this still be subject to gaining further quotes and approval at full council:-
 - £2k from footpath reserves
 - £0.8k balance on CiL receipt
 - £4.2k from Open Space maintenance reserve
- Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – Planned to be held on Friday 2nd June 2022; application for funds from Community Trust Fund, plus sponsorship will be sought. After a discussion it was agreed that Parish Council would provide financial support for this event out of contingency reserves in order to allow an event to take place.
- Hooper’s Field driveway repairs – Urgent repair work needed to make driveway safe. One quote received is very expensive, with two further quotes waiting to be received. After discussion it was agreed to allocate the Covid-19 grants gained by Clerk to fund driveway repairs. It was hoped the full amount would not be needed.
- Discharge of condition – Tennis Club floodlights – After a discussion it was agreed that the Tennis Club should include this within their own cost for their project to install floodlights.

Angela Raymond
Parish Clerk & RFO

- Pre Contracts Manager for the Hooper's Field expansion project – After a discussion it was agreed that, as this is linked to the expansion project, this should be left for the project committee as part of the overall project.
- Tennis Club floodlights & Petanque terrain – After a discussion it was agreed that the Tennis Club should finance the additional floodlights and the petanque terrain should be included within the grant application for the Hooper's Field expansion project.

A discussion took place as to when it is likely for Parish Council to receive any further CiL receipts from future developments in the village that could help fund some of the above projects. It was agreed that the smaller developments proposed are not likely to bring in much CiL receipts and could still be a while until they are received. Dave Hayward confirmed that none of the developer contributions for the New Eastern Villages are going to Wanborough even though a substantial number of the dwellings are within our Parish. SBC have stated that the NEV will not impact on the Parish, the proposed developments will be self-contained providing their own facilities. Parish Council have argued that now the phasing of the NEV has changed since the Local Plan, with Redlands coming forward first it is clear that future residents moving in will want to use the facilities in Wanborough, especially Hooper's Field and feels it is completely wrong of SBC not to allocate any of the S106 funds from the NEV to Wanborough Parish.

8. Precept:

8.1 To review budget and spend for 2021/22

Clerk circulated a financial statement confirming the total spend vs budget for 2021/22.

8.2 To discuss the budget & precept for 2022/23

Clerk circulated a draft budget & precept for 2022/23. This proposed budget, including the agreed budget for an Assistant Clerk, would mean an increase in the Precept of 13%.

John Warr asked why there is no allocation of budget for "election fees", especially with one Councillor moving away from the area and likely to resign in the coming year. Clerk confirmed that Parish Council have only ever allocated a budget for election fees in an election year; no allocation is normally made for a potential by election as per the financial risk assessment.

John Warr stated that the precept increase shouldn't be any more than 8% and stated that he will not approve the current proposal, confirming his alternative option. Dave Hayward stated that what he was proposing ignores what the committee has discussed and agreed at the meeting so far.

Two proposals were put forward:-

A. Proposed by John Warr and seconded by Colin Offer to increase the precept by no more than 8%, which cannot be done by including a budget for an Assistant Clerk, instead:-

- Allocate a budget of £3.5k to cover cost of a locum or job share for an assistant;
- Allocate a budget of £3k for fencing around the play equipment at Church Meadow
- Keep the £5k allocation for play equipment capital reserve
- Allow £1.5k for jubilee event.

Committee voted 3 in favour (John Warr, Gary Sumner, Colin Offer), 3 against (Joe Smith, Bob Biggs, Dave Hayward), Dave Hayward used his casting vote to vote against the proposal.

B. Proposed by Bob Biggs and seconded by Joe Smith to increase the precept by 13%

Committee voted 3 in favour (Joe Smith, Bob Biggs, Dave Hayward), 3 against (John Warr, Gary Sumner, Colin Offer), Dave Hayward used his casting vote to vote in favour.

Resolved: Committee agreed to put forward a proposal to increase the precept by 13% to Full Council meeting on 24th January 2022. This equates to an increase from £97.99 per year per band D to £110.73 per year per band D. Total precept £103,420.61.

Meeting closed 22.15