

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
SWALLOWFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 14TH APRIL 2020, 7:30PM
AS A VIRTUAL MEETING

Present: Cllr. J. Anderson (Chairman) Cllr. M. Binns Cllr. G. Collender
 Cllr. W. Dance Cllr C. Drew Cllr. A. King
 Cllr. M. McDonald Cllr. J. Wheelwright

In Attendance: Liz Halson, Clerk

Members of the Public: 0

2087 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

2088 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

2088.1 Meetings

2088.1.1 Full Parish Council Meetings – it was **NOTED** that as of April 4th 2020 new legislation had been passed by Parliament to allow Town & Parish Councils flexibility in holding meetings. The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, allows for meetings to be held virtually. This applies to meetings to be held before 7th May 2021. The date could be brought forward if Government rules are relaxed.

It was **NOTED** that Swallowfield Parish Council would make use of these flexibilities and will use BT Cloud Phone Meetings to facilitate its meetings which would be recorded for administrative purposes.

It was **NOTED** that regulations had been amended so that public notice of the time and place of the meeting is deemed to be given if published on the council's website. Background papers can also be made available for inspection by publishing them on the website.

2088.1.2 Annual Parish Meeting – it was **NOTED** that Annual Parish Meetings are not included in the definition of meetings which can be held remotely, therefore, there will be no Annual Parish Meeting this year.

2088.1.3 Annual Meeting of the Parish Council – it was **NOTED** that although legislation does allow for the council to hold an annual meeting remotely there is no requirement for a parish council to do so. Appointments which would otherwise be made at the annual meeting will continue until the next annual meeting of the council or until the council decides to make such appointments.

It was **PROPOSED** and seconded that Swallowfield Parish Council does not hold its annual meeting and that all current appointments continue. All in favour.

2088.2 Councillor Vacancy – it was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the current vacancy for a Parish Councillor would not be filled until such time that the council can meet in person. All in favour.

2088.3 Parish Office – it was **NOTED** that the Parish Office is closed. The Clerk and Finance Officer are working remotely and can be contacted on the usual numbers. The Caretaker and Parish Warden are continuing their duties as they can maintain social distancing.

2088.4 Parish Facilities – it was **NOTED** that in response to guidance published by the government the Parish Council had closed the following facilities until further notice:

- Swallowfield Parish Hall –from 19th March 2020
- Playgrounds/Play Equipment in Swallowfield/Riseley/Farley Hill –from 24th March 2020
- Car Parks at Swallowfield and Riseley – from 27th March 2020

It was **NOTED** that the Tea Room closed on 20th March 2020 and that Riseley Tennis Club had closed the pavilion to its members. The courts were being used for exercise and the Tennis Club were following guidelines issued by the government.

2089 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

2089.1 It was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th March 2020 be **APPROVED**. All in favour. It was **NOTED** that these minutes would be signed retrospectively.

2089.2 It was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council meeting held on 23rd March 2020 be **APPROVED**. All in favour. It was **NOTED** that these minutes would be signed retrospectively.

2090 CLERKS REPORT

2090.1 Update on items from previous meetings

2090.1.1 1067.1.5 Loddon Reach Contribution – it was **NOTED** that Graham Stanley has written a piece on the spillway and Cllr. Anderson a piece on details of the council's virtual meetings.

2090.1.2 2067.2.1 – Pre-school toilets – it was **NOTED** that the necessary parts had been replaced and both toilets were now working properly.

2090.1.3 2067.2.2 Foul Water Drainage – it was **NOTED** that following a report from Thames Water stating that there was no blockage and the issue was caused by heavy rain, further inspections were carried out and a blockage identified. A team from Thames Water attended on 27th March to clear the pipework all along Swallowfield Street.

2090.1.4 2071.1 - Parish Stores – it was **NOTED** that the lease had been sealed by the Clerk and signed by Cllrs. Binns and Drew.

2090.1.5 2071.4 Riseley Sports Pavilion – it was **NOTED** that roof repair had been completed.

2090.1.6 2075.1.3 Surfacing in the Natural Play area – it was **NOTED** that due to the current restrictions the surfacing had not been ordered.

2090.2 Other

2090.2.1 Parish Store – it was **NOTED** that Mr Kumar is working very hard to keep residents supplied with essential goods. However, he would like assistance to enforce social distancing. 1

¹ Clerk to organise signs

- 2090.3 Community Volunteers – it was **NOTED** that the community volunteer group now has over 100 volunteers who are assisting over 30 people with shopping, prescription collection and dog walking as well as telephone and social media contact.

[Cllr. Binns joined the meeting]

2091 PLANNING

Chairman of Planning Committee: Cllr. J. Wheelwright

- 2091.1 Current applications - for details see page 2020/696.
- 2091.1.1 200690 - Farley Hill Farm, Church Lane, Farley Hill RG7 1UP No comment
2091.1.2 200711 - Swallowfield Road, Arborfield RG2 9JX Object (6 for, 2 against)
- 2091.2 Application for Lawful Development Certificate - For information, for details see page 2020/698.
- 2091.2.1 200637 - Walnut Tree Farm, Part Lane, Riseley RG7 1RY
- 2091.3 Results - for details see page 2020/698.
- 2091.3.1 200239 - Hill Farm, Jouldings Lane, Farley Hill RG7 1UR Approved
2091.3.2 200322 - 6 Church Road, Farley Hill RG7 1TX Refused
- 2091.4 Tree Preservation Order – for information only
- 2091.4.1 TPO-1719-2020 - Relating to trees at Westwood Copse, Jouldings Lane, Farley Hill RG7
Includes trees of all species at the above site in response to works that involve the removal and damage to trees in the Copse. Westwood Copse is classified as an ancient woodland and local wildlife site.
- 2091.4.2 TPO-1722-2020 - relating to 6 oak trees on the verge of Swallowfield Road, East of Nutters Lane, RG2
WBC considers it expedient to include these 6 mature oak trees at the site above in a TPO as the removal of the trees would be detrimental to the visual amenity of the road.
- ## 2092 FINANCE
- (Budgets/investments/sinking fund/grants/risk assessments/insurance)
Lead Councillor: Cllr. J. Anderson
- 2092.1 Accounts
- 2092.1.1 Month End Accounts – it was **NOTED** that the draft Month End Accounts had been circulated. Final accounts would be circulated for approval once the auditor had completed a review.
- 2092.1.2 Bank Reconciliation Statements – it was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the Bank Reconciliation Statements be signed. All in favour. It was **NOTED** that these records would be signed retrospectively.
- 2092.1.3 Investment – it was **NOTED** that the Investment Report for the period Dec 2019 – March 2020 had been received.
- 2092.1.4 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) – it was **NOTED** that NALC is

calling for an extension of the current statutory deadlines by a minimum of three months, this would comprise approval of accounts by full council by 30th September, instead of 29th June, publication by 1st October, instead of 1st July and to publish the audited AGAR by 31 December, instead of 30th September.

2093

BILLS FOR PAYMENT

Bills List – it was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the bills as listed below be **APPROVED** for payment. On line payments had been checked against scanned copies of invoices by Cllr Anderson and would be authorised by Cllrs. Anderson and Wheelwright as agreed in resolution 2081.2.4. Cross-checking of payments against original invoices would be carried out by councillors once restrictions are lifted as agreed in resolution 2081.2.4. All in favour. ²

1	Select Environmental Services	81.60
2	Patrick parsons	2100.00
3	S A Taylor & Sons	1410.00
4	Stratfield Saye Estate	900.00
5	John Dollin Printing Services	965.00
6	Lucas Plumbing	126.00
7	Woodside	62.40
8	Moorepay	52.08
9	D2D Distribution	252.00
10	K Luke Cleaning Services	208.00
11	RBC	120.53
12	RBC	120.53
13	E.ON	119.96
14	E.ON	81.13
15	HMRC PAYMENTS	596.69
16	CASTLE WATER - TW9215892362	97.37
17	Southern Electric	10.59
18	Southern Electric	2162.82
19	Crown Gas and Power	540.67
20	BACS Charge	17.12
21	Payroll - March	5699.63
22	Lloyds Bank (Alto Card)	287.23
23	BT	237.56
24	Wokingham Council	83.30
25	PWLB-Loan Repayment	9606.75
26	PWLB-Loan Repayment	3612.51
27	Service Charges	40.80

² JA/JW

2094 PROPERTY

(Fieldfare, Halls, Land)
Lead Councillor: Cllr. J. Anderson

- 2094.1 Swallowfield Parish Hall Upgrade – it was **NOTED** that revised outline plans/proposals had been received. Cllrs. Anderson, King and McDonald would review the plans, but meetings with key users would not be arranged at this time.
- 2094.2 Car Park Update – it was **NOTED** that the survey previously postponed because of high water levels would be carried out on 15th April. It was **NOTED** that detailed plans and costings for the entrance had been received. Cllr. Anderson and Clerk would review these with the consultant on 15th April. The consultant would be asked to prepare the detailed plans, costings and draft tender documentation for the overall project as, given the current situation, there was no urgency to modify the entrance and it would be more cost-effective to complete the whole project at once.

2095 ENVIRONMENT

(The Marshes/Van Demans/Swallowfield Meadow/Community/Orchard/
Biodiversity/Footpaths/Waste/NAG/RCAG)
Lead Councillor: Cllr. A. King

- 2095.1 Parish Clean Up Day – it was **NOTED** that the Parish Clean Up Day had been postponed until September.

2096 RESILIENCE

(Flooding/ditches/rivers/Flood Resilience Group (FRG))
Lead Councillor: Cllr. A. King

- 2096.1 Spillway Project Update – it was **NOTED** that construction of the spillway had been completed, the Certificate of Practical Completion had been received and contractors (Morton Pattison & Nigel Jeffries) had been paid. The final payments to these contractors were approved on-line prior to this meeting by Cllrs. Anderson and Wheelwright to enable an application to be made to Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust to call down the EA grant to pay for the work.

The council would like to express its enormous gratitude to the Co-chair of FRG, Graham Stanley, for coordinating and managing this project and to ex-FRG members, Geoff Stephens, Andy Keith and Bill Kirkpatrick for their input in the early stages and for securing the EA funding, all have dedicated many hours to ensure that this project could be completed.

- 2096.2 FRG – it was **NOTED** that the next meeting of FRG is scheduled for 28th May 2020. A decision on how or whether this meeting would be held would be made nearer the date.

2097 RECREATION

(Play areas/skateboard park/recreation grounds/football pitches/mpg court)
Lead Councillor: Cllr. W. Dance

- 2097.1 Playground Inspections
- 2097.1.1 Annual Playground Inspection – it was **NOTED** that the annual playground inspection would take place on 15th April 2020.

2098 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Swallowfield Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 12th May 2020, 7.30 p.m.

If you would like to attend the meeting please email the Clerk at clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk or call on 01189 885929.

You will then be issued with a password and the details which will enable you to join the meeting on-line.

[The meeting closed at 21:02]

DETAILS

2091.1 Current Applications

Agenda Ref	App No	Type	Address	Application
2091.1.1	200690	Listed Building Consent	Farley Hill Farm, Church Lane, Farley Hill RG7 1UP	<p>Application for Listed Building consent for the Proposed replacement of 7 no. windows.</p> <p>The council agreed that the proposal would be in keeping with the property. It was PROPOSED and seconded that the council would not comment.</p>
2091.1.2	200711	Adjoining Parish Consultation	Swallowfield Road, Arborfield RG2 9JX	<p>Full planning application for installation of a solar park to include 40000 solar photovoltaic panels, 11 inverter/transformer cabins , a single control building and associated works to include vehicle access and fencing with Environmental Statement.</p> <p>The council discussed this proposal and listened to arguments both for and against the proposed installation.</p> <p>It was PROPOSED and seconded that the council object to this application for the following reasons:</p> <p>Swallowfield parish council (SPC) wishes to OBJECT to Wessex's application for a solar farm in its current location. SPC is hugely supportive of green energy and see solar as an important contributor to UK's green energy strategy. We are also very supportive of the green diversification agenda being pursued by Farley Farms Estate whose land this application is on. However, this application proposes an industrial site on hugely visually important countryside to the residents of Farley Hill. This is the wrong location for such a application and we believe there are much more appropriate sites on the Farley Farms estate land close to the 33kW electricity network.</p> <p>The landscape of the site is hugely valued by residents of Farley Hill. These fields are the gateway to the village and have huge visual</p>

				<p>amenity; they also provide the green gap between the villages of Farley Hill and Arborfield Cross. The proposed solar farm would be highly visible when driving down Castle Hill and when using the bridleway or the byway beside the site. The proposal includes 2.4m high security fencing that would be adjacent to all these and would be impossible to screen. The site would be hugely urbanising for this rural location.</p> <p>The solar farm is an industrial site with substantial hardstanding roads and 11 buildings proposed to be built on agricultural land we can't afford to lose. By Wessex Solar's own selection criteria, the application site is on grade 3a & 3b agricultural. This is land of better quality than that recommended by the NPPF for solar farm installations which recommends brownfield or grade 4 ag land. Despite the references to sheep and landscaping, this would be an industrial site for a considerable period of time and with no guarantee that it would be returned to a rural landscape at the end of the 40 years referred to in the planning documents. Rural heritage is as important as the environmental arguments for renewable energy</p> <p>The site is important to local wildlife as its adjacent to woodland, with a wide range of wildlife foraging on these fields. It is used by a wide range of animals for foraging including badgers, roe deer, bats and the occasional barn owl. The security fencing will stop most wildlife access into the site. The site itself will be actively strimmed to keep down vegetation to ensure the panels have the light removing the little wildlife that does make it through.</p> <p>The site is prone to flooding and hence is unsuited to a large electrical installation</p> <p>There are better, lower grade land options nearby which are not visible, not environmentally sensitive and are viable locations to connect to the electricity network. Please reject this application.</p> <p>Cllrs. Dance and King voted against the proposal, Cllrs. Anderson, Binns, Collender, Drew, McDonald and Wheelwright voted for the proposal. The resolution was passed.</p>
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2091.2 Applications for Lawful Development Certificate – for information

Agenda Ref	App No	Type	Address	Application
2091.2.1	200637	Lawful Development Certificate	Walnut Tree Farm, Part Lane, Riseley RG7 1RY	Application for a lawful development certificate for the proposed stationing of 4 additional caravans for residential purposes.

2091.3 Results

Agenda Ref	App No	Address	Application	Result
2091.3.1	200239	Hill Farm, Jouldings Lane, Farley Hill RG7 1UR	<p>Full application for an earth security bund, fencing and landscaping.</p> <p>Wokingham Borough Council have requested that further details be submitted for approval before commencement of the work. Details required are Landscaping Details, Landscape Management, Earth mounding and contouring details.</p> <p>Swallowfield Parish Council asked that conditions were applied to ensure that the bunds were formed from soil which did not contain any contaminating materials or chemicals, landfill, hardcore or other contaminants.</p>	Approved
2091.3.2	200322	6 Church Road, Farley Hill, RG7 1TX	<p>Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension with 1no roof light after demolition of existing conservatory, erection of a two storey double garage including 3no roof lights and first floor habitable accommodation following demolition of existing single storey double garage.</p> <p>Reasons for refusal in summary; excessive, inappropriate design, doesn't maintain or enhance the Area of Special Character, bat survey too old.</p> <p>The council did not comment on this application.</p>	Refused