

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
SWALLOWFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 10TH MAY 2022, 7:30PM
IN THE ROSE ROOM, SWALLOWFIELD PARISH HALL

Present: Cllr. J. Wheelwright (Chair) Cllr. J. Anderson Cllr. M. Binns
Cllr. L. Edmonds Cllr. I. Fullerton Cllr D. Lamont

In attendance: Mrs. E. Halson, Clerk

Members of the public: 0

2497 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs. C. Drew, Mrs. M McDonald

2498 ELECTION

2498.1 Parish Council Election – it was **NOTED** that at the recent election the following members were elected unopposed: Mr. J. Anderson, Mr. M. Binns, Mrs. C. Drew, Mrs. L. Edmonds, Mr. I. Fullerton, Mr. D. Lamont, Mrs. M. McDonald, Mr. J. Wheelwright.

2498.2 Acceptance of Office – all elected councillors present signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office. It was **AGREED** that Mrs. Drew and Mrs. McDonald would make their declaration prior to the next meeting. ¹

2498.3 Chairman – it was **PROPOSED** and seconded that Cllr. Wheelwright be elected as Chair of the Parish Council. All in favour.

Cllr. Wheelwright signed the acceptance of this office.

2499 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2499.1 Cllr. Edmonds declared an interest in item 2504.1.1

2500 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

2500.1 Mr John Anderson - Cllr. Wheelwright expressed his gratitude on behalf of the council to Cllr. Anderson for his hard work and diligence during his tenure as Chair of the council.

2500.2 Mrs. Angela King – it was **NOTED** that after serving as a councillor for a total of 17 years, four as Chair, Mrs. King decided not seek re-election. The council expressed its sincere gratitude for her passion and hard work on many key projects including the planting of 1,000 trees on The Marshes Nature Reserve, campaigning tirelessly for lower speed limits in the Parish where she had success in Riseley, and the

¹ CD, MM

formation of the Swallowfield Flood Resilience Group in 2007 which is still delivering work on flood attenuation measures across our Parish. The council wishes her a relaxing retirement but hopes that she will continue to work with the council particularly on environmental projects.

2501 COUNCIL

2501.1 Vice-Chair – it was **PROPOSED** and seconded that Cllr. Lamont be elected as Vice-Chairman of the council. All in favour.

2501.2 Planning Committee – it was **PROPOSED** and seconded that Cllr. Anderson be elected as Chair of the Planning Committee (Interim). All in favour.

2501.3 Lead Councillors for Working Groups and External Body Representation – it was **AGREED** that this would be discussed at the strategy meeting to be held on Tuesday 24th May, 7:30pm in the Rose Room.

2501.4 General Power of Competence – it was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the council **CONFIRMS** that it does meet the eligibility criteria (a qualified clerk and two thirds elected members at the last election) and could therefore proceed to use this power from now and until the next election in 2026, as provided through the Localism Act 2011 [sections 1-8 and specifically by s(1)0]. All in favour.

2501.5 Parish Council Meetings – it was **AGREED** that Parish Council meetings would take place in the Rose Room on the 2nd Tuesday of every month and Planning Committee Meetings on the 4th Tuesday of every month if required. Councillors are reminded that notification of these meetings represents a summons and attendance is one of the few legal requirements of a councillor.

2501.6 Adoption of documents – it was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the council re-adopt the following documents for the year April 2022/2023. All in favour.

- Standing Orders (Nov 2018)
- Financial Regulations – (May 2021)
- Risk Management Policy (Sept 2016)
- Code of Conduct (Aug 2015)
- Model Publication Scheme (Apr 2008)
- Freedom of Information
- Complaints Procedure
- GDPR Privacy Notice (May 2018)
- GDPR Hirers Privacy Notice (May 2018)
- Grants, Donations and Financial Support (Mar 2016)
- Sale of Land owned by Swallowfield PC (Feb 2014)
- Tree Management Policy (Nov 2016)
- Social Media Policy (Apr 2014)
- Communications Policy (Nov 2021)
- Guide to Public Participation at Parish Council Meetings (March 2015)

It was **AGREED** that the council should formally document its investment strategy and equality and diversity policy. ²

- 2501.7 Annual Parish Meeting – it was **AGREED** that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on Tuesday 28th June, 7:30pm in the Parish Hall. It was **AGREED** that guest speakers would be invited to address residents and refreshments would be served.

2502 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

- 2502.1 It was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th April 2022 be **APPROVED**. All in favour.

2503 CLERK'S UPDATE

- 2503.1 Updates from previous meetings

2503.1.1 2455.3 Church Road – it was **NOTED** that WBC had complete installation of the dropped kerbs as proposed by FRG in October 2021. Earth in front of the dropped kerb needs to be moved to allow efficient drainage and the gate should be moved as agreed, there is some money left in the grant fund to pay for this.

2503.1.2 2454.2 Email provision – it was **NOTED** that our current email provider had produced the information required to start the transfer of our email.

2503.1.3 2483.1.4 Jubilee picnic tables – it was **NOTED** that the bases for the tables had been installed. The tables would be fixed in place early next week. ³

2503.1.4 2483.2.3 Waste Bin on the byway near All Saints Church – it was **NOTED** that following discussion with WBC and Farley Estate it had been agreed that Farley Estate would empty this bin in the future.

2503.1.5 2489.1 Max Bowker Legacy Event – it was **NOTED** that plans were on track and the date would be published shortly.

2503.1.6 2493.1 Speedwatch – it was **NOTED** that Cllr. Fullerton had circulated a report detailing the results of the recent SpeedWatch sessions.

- 2503.2 Other items

2503.2.1 5.2.1 King George V Playing Field – it was **NOTED** that following several queries/complaints and discussions with WBC, WBC had accepted that it is responsible for maintenance of the field. Their contractor would cut the grass and the estate management team will repair the fence and wall. There is concern from residents that WBC will build on the land. A statement has been prepared which should reassure residents of its status. See page 2022/959.

² Clerk

³ Clerk to send David a photo for FB

2504 PLANNING

Chair of Planning Committee: Cllr. J. Anderson (Interim)

2504.1 Current applications – see page 2022/955 for details

[Cllr. Edmonds did not take part in discussions on the next item]

2504.1.1 220971 - Uplands, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield RG7 1PY No comment

[Cllr. Edmonds re-joined the meeting]

2504.1.2 220980 – Old Cottage, Swallowfield Street, Swallowfield RG7 1QX Comment

2504.1.3 221095 - Wyvols House, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield RG7 1PU No comment

2504.1.4 221241 - Land north of Sheepbridge Court Farm, Basingstoke Road, RG7 1PT
Object

2504.1.5 221302 - Land Adjacent to Dukes Field Cottage, Norton Road, Riseley RG7 1SH
Object

It was **NOTED** that WBC have been asked to comment on the original application made to Hart District Council who are responsible for determination. It was **AGREED** that the council would also object to the original application (22/00586/FUL) lodged on the Hart District Council planning portal and ask that our borough councillor lobbies WBC to support our objection.

2504.2 Results – see page 2022/958 for details

2504.2.1 220350 - 5 Farley Court Church Road Farley Hill RG7 1TT Refused

2504.2.2 220351 - 5 Farley Court Church Road Farley Hill RG7 1TT Refused

2504.3 Tree Preservation Orders (Works Request) - for info only

2504.3.1 221042 - 5 and 6 The Mews, Farley Hill, RG7 1XD

2504.4 Enforcements Investigations – it was **NOTED** there are eight open Enforcement Investigations and two closed since the last report.

2504.5 Appeals

2504.5.1 APP/X0360/D/22/3294863 (214092) – 1 The Street, Swallowfield RG7 1QY – it was **NOTED** that this appeal would be determined on the basis of written representation.

2505 FINANCE

(Budgets/investments/reserves/grants/risk assessments/insurance)

Lead Councillor: Cllr. J. Anderson

2505.1 Accounts Update

2505.1.1 Month End Accounts – it was **NOTED** that the Month End Accounts had been circulated. It was **PROPOSED** and seconded that these be accepted. All in favour.

2505.1.2 Bank Reconciliation Statements – it was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the Bank

Reconciliation Statements be **APPROVED**. All in favour. ⁴

2505.1.3 Internal Auditor – it was **NOTED** that the internal auditor would visit on Friday 27th May.

2505.1.4 BALC – it was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the council should renew its membership of BALC at a cost of £498.52. All in favour.

2506 **BILLS FOR PAYMENT**

It was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the payments as listed below would be approved. On-line payments would be checked by Cllr. Wheelwright and authorised by Cllrs. Anderson and Wheelwright. All in favour. ⁵

1	Deposit Refund	300.00
2	Deposit Refund	100.00
3	Deposit Refund	100.00
4	Lucas Plumbing	493.62
5	Select	81.60
6	Moorepay	159.40
7	Coral Bell	120.00
8	Precision Plumbing	98.34
9	Xylem	2,019.85
10	K Luke Cleaning Services	208.00
11	Earley Town Council	54.00
12	Nigel Jeffries	1,008.00
13	Pretty Green Landscapes	132.00
14	Pretty Green Landscapes	4,741.44
15	Grundon	136.82
16	Grundon	138.44
17	BACS Charge	17.12
18	CASTLE WATER	5.00
19	CASTLE WATER	64.90
20	HMRC PAYMENTS	626.16
21	Lloyds Bank (Alto Card)	415.94
22	Payroll - March	6,375.44
23	Southern Electric	87.67

⁴ JA

⁵ JA/JW

2507 PROPERTY

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

- 2507.1 Property Management/Maintenance – it was **AGREED** that the council should review property management and maintenance. ⁶
- 2507.2 Residential Properties – it was **PROPOSED** and seconded that due to commercial sensitivities the press and public are excluded during discussion of this topic in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 & Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. All in favour.

2508 RESILIENCE

(Flooding/ditches/rivers/ Flood Resilience Group 'FRG')
Lead Councillor: Cllr. I. Fullerton

- 2508.1 FRG – it was **NOTED** that the FRG that the last meeting was held on Wednesday 4th May. Graham Stanley had circulated the notes.

2509 COMMUNICATION

(Newsletter/Website/Annual Report/Media)
Lead Councillor: David Lamont

- 2509.1 Website – it was **NOTED** that Cllr. Lamont had circulated a document showing the proposed look and feel for the new website design and taken feedback from councillors. Cllr. Lamont explained that he would need assistance from all councillors to review the content in the coming weeks. ⁷
- 2509.2 Logo refresh – it was **NOTED** that Cllr. Lamont had circulated the options for the logo refresh. It was **NOTED** that the arches on the bridge were rather high and did not reflect reality. It was **AGREED** that the designer would be asked to make a minor modification. Councillors then voted on their colour preference, it was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the green colour option would be adopted. 4 in favour, 2 against. Motion carried. ⁸
- 2509.3 Newsletter – it was **NOTED** that Cllr. Lamont had circulated a document showing the proposed look and feel for the new newsletter design and taken feedback from councillors. Cllr. Lamont explained that the next newsletter would be the last one in the current format. ⁹

⁶ JA

⁷ DL to coordinate

⁸ DL to instruct designer

⁹ Clerk to confirm that print costs will not increase

2510 CORRESPONDENCE

- 2510.1 Foxborough – it was **NOTED** that the council had received correspondence from a resident in Foxborough regarding inconsiderate/dangerous parking. Cllr. Fullerton had visited the resident and established that concerns are regarding access for emergency vehicles at a part of Foxborough where the road narrows. Cllr. Fullerton explained that it is probably because some of the houses in Foxborough don't have driveways large enough to accommodate multiple cars. The council is investigating with WBC and the police to see what can be done to alleviate the problem.

2511 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Swallowfield Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 14th June 2022 at 7.30 p.m. in The Rose Room, Swallowfield Parish Hall, Swallowfield Street, Swallowfield.

If you would like to attend the meeting, please let the Clerk know in advance as there is limited space.

Due to commercial sensitivities the press and public were excluded during discussion of the following items in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 & Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

2512 PROPERTY

- 2512.1 Residential Properties – it was **NOTED** that the rental of these properties is on a commercial basis. It was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the council accepts the recommendations made by its managing agent, WhiteKnights, on the rent increases for the properties up for lease renewal. 5 in favour, 1 against. Motion carried. ¹⁰

[The meeting closed at 21:34]

¹⁰ Clerk to notify WhiteKnights

Appendix A

2504 PLANNING

2504.1 Current Applications

Agenda Ref	App No	Address	Application
2504.1.1	220971	Uplands, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield RG7 1PY	Householder application for the proposed conversion of garage to habitable accommodation. New porch (following demolition of existing) single storey extension to the rear with a roof light linking outbuilding. It was PROPOSED and seconded that the council would not comment on this application. All in favour.
2504.1.2	220980	Old Cottage, Swallowfield Street, Swallowfield RG7 1QX	Householder application for proposed conversion of garage to create habitable space, first floor side extension, part single part two storey rear extension, 2 no. rooflights, changes to fenestration and associated roof alterations (part-retrospective). It was PROPOSED and seconded that the council ask WBC to consider whether there is enough parking provision and that a condition is applied to ensure that recommendations in the ecology report are adhered to. All in favour.
2504.1.3	221095	Wyvols House, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield RG7 1PU	Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey side, front and rear extension to detached garage and conversion to form annexe accommodation. It was PROPOSED and seconded that the council would not comment on this application. All in favour.

2504.1.4	221241	Land north of Sheepbridge Court Farm, Basingstoke Road, RG7 1PT	<p>Screening Opinion application for an Environmental Impact Assessment for a proposed 26 hectare solar array with associated development.</p> <p>The council discussed the comments circulated by Cllr. Anderson. It was PROPOSED and seconded that the council would comment as follows. All in favour.</p> <p>Swallowfield Parish Council is concerned about the following impacts which will require careful and well considered mitigation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Quoting from the applicant’s letter “Based on initial analysis, the main visual receptors of the Proposed Development are likely to be the residents of the village of Swallowfield.” The existing installation is prominent in views from Swallowfield village and Swallowfield Park (Grade II listed park and garden which is not specifically mentioned in the letter) despite hedgerow planting and landscaping which have proved ineffective (too low) due to the design of the solar farm. Similar measures are suggested as the means to mitigate this in this new proposal but may not be effective for similar reasons, partly because some of the proposed installation is on higher ground, albeit somewhat more distant.b) The impact on the Loddon Valley and this gap between the settlements of Swallowfield and Spencers Wood as a wildlife corridor – solar farms are fenced to keep deer etc. out. Grounds maintenance such as strimming impacts biodiversity (e.g. ground nesting birds).c) The impact on the amenity of the Loddon Valley given WBC’s aim for a riverside path along the length of the Loddon.d) The impact on the routes of Shinfield Footpath 22 and Swallowfield Footpath 18 which pass through the site of the proposed solar farm and the visual impact for walkers.
----------	--------	---	---

2504.1.5	221302	Land Adjacent to Dukes Field Cottage, Norton Road, Riseley RG7 1SH	<p>Consultation from Hart District Council for the erection of 3 four bed dwellings with associated access, landscaping and hardstanding.</p> <p>The council discussed the comments circulated by Cllr. Wheelwright. It was PROPOSED and seconded that the council comments as follows:</p> <p>Swallowfield Parish Council objects to this application for the following reasons:</p> <p>Riseley has few facilities and those that exist are hugely stretched by the development already undertaken on the Hart side of the border. Public transport is minimal; the no. 7 bus service no longer operates in Hampshire and has been severely cut back in Berkshire. The nearest local shop is a significant walk to the next village, there is no doctor's surgery, and the village is not in the catchment area for the nearest schools which means that children are allocated to several different schools miles away from the village with no means of access via public transport.</p> <p>Riseley has more than doubled in size in the last 10 years despite the lack of facilities described above, through permitted development and development across the borough/county boundary. This cannot continue.</p> <p>Services would need to be consumed from Hart and there are NO Hart services available in this location.</p> <p>This small sliver of land represents almost the last significant green space for wildlife within Riseley.</p> <p>The proposal would seriously harm the important ancient monument of the Devil's Highway for ever.</p> <p>We emphasise the importance of the TPOs in place on this site.</p> <p>Although technically in the Parish of Heckfield and therefore, Hart District, this application is effectively an extension of the village of Riseley which is within Wokingham borough. Hart must consult Wokingham Borough Council's planning policies when considering this</p>
----------	--------	--	--

			<p>application. There is no doubt that this application is contrary to Wokingham’s major planning polies.</p> <p>In the unlikely event that Hart District Council approves this application Swallowfield Parish Council would expect s106 monies to be allocated to it so that it can enhance the facilities it provides in Riseley to cater for the increase in population.</p> <p>Swallowfield Parish Council urges Wokingham Borough Council to object to this application in the strongest terms.</p>
--	--	--	---

2504.2 Results

Agenda Ref	App No	Address	Application	Result
2504.2.1 & 2504.2.2	220350 & 220351	5 Farley Court Church Road Farley Hill RG7 1TT	<p>Application for Listed Building consent for the proposed demolition of a section of basement wall and insertion of a new structural lintel, plus tanking of an area of basement and insertion of ventilation system.</p> <p>Summary of reasons for refusal: Result in a negative impact on the historical significance of the listed building for which no adequate and robust justification has been provided. Cannot be certain that the proposed ventilation system would be adversely harm the significance and appearance of the listed building and its setting.</p>	Refused

NOTES

2503.2.1 Farley Hill

School

The Parish Council is trying to establish what WBC intends to do with the school, but no decision has been made yet, the school doesn't officially close until Sept 2022. It is the council's understanding that there is a covenant on the school which means that it must be used for educational purposes, but we don't know whether that is enforceable. The parish council is not in any negotiations about the school, it is just an interested party.

Playing Field

The King George V Playing Fields were given to the nation in 1936 for the "use and enjoyment of the people". There are 471 across Britain and are all legally protected by Fields in Trust. Ownership & management was passed to Berkshire County Council in 1965 and subsequently to Wokingham Borough Council (WBC). There are covenants and conditions which ensure that the public will continue to benefit from these open play areas.

WBC own the land but leased it Farley Hill School (they have now ended the lease) Farley Hill School is the Trustee - WBC have been asked what the situation is now that the school no longer lease the land.

The Parish Council have been chasing WBC for nearly 2 years regarding the fencing, the last time was 2 weeks ago, the issue has now been assigned to a specific officer who has informed us that the estate management team are aware that the fencing needs to be repaired.

WBC are now arranging for its contractor to cut the grass, arrangements are being made for the key to the bollards to be handed over to WBC, it is currently held by a resident who has kindly been cutting the grass for the last few years.

The responsibility for maintenance is:

- Fencing and gates – Wokingham Borough Council
- Grass cutting – Farley Hill School – WBC are now taking responsibility
- Play Equipment – Swallowfield Parish Council, we carryout regular inspections and maintenance of the play equipment – the annual inspection took place on 3rd May, the report has not yet been issued but the inspector verbally reported that there were no high priority concerns
- Soft boundaries (trees/hedges) – Farley Hill School – WBC has now taken responsibility and will carry out work after the nesting season.