



Winnersh Parish Council

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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 13 MAY 2014 IN THE JOHN GROBLER ROOM

PRESENT: Cllrs D Green (Chairman), P Bray, F Breedlove, L Gordon-Walker, G Harper, R Holdstock, D Hunt, J Leask, F Obileye, R Shepherd-Dubey, J Southgate, C Taylor, R Tilbe.

IN ATTENDANCE: 9 members of the public; Mr C Hudson (WPC Clerk), Miss A Lambourne (WPC FAO).

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs E Cooke, I Shepherd-Dubey, P Houldsworth (WBC), Ullakarin Clark (WBC); Also from Calvin Julian-Jones – Sindlesham Baptist Church; Claire Connell; Kirsten Shakiri - Berks MS Therapy Centre; Pat Rowell – NAG; Lindsay Browne – Home Start Wokingham; Rose Green – Rainbow Centre.

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2013 were agreed and the meeting **RESOLVED** to sign them as a true record.

3 ADDRESS BY MR KEITH QUINE – HEADTEACHER, FOREST SCHOOL

The Chairman presented the apologies of Cllr UllaKarin Clark, who was unable to attend. The Chairman invited Mr Quine to speak.

Mr Quine reported that he was leaving Forest School in the summer after 35 years as a teacher, including 12 years as Headteacher. He spoke of the future for the school, presenting to the meeting plans for a 6th form centre to house 320 students. The centre would also include a café, changing facilities and a multi-purpose room. An all-weather multi use games area would also be created and the swimming pool refurbished. Mr Quine spoke of the potential benefits of these facilities to the school and, importantly, to the local community, which would be given increased access to them.

He spoke of the improved academic achievements of pupils at the school in recent years. He will leave the school in the capable hands of Mary Sandell, who will take over from him as Headteacher.

Cllr Green thanked Mr Quine and wished him well in his retirement.

4 ANNUAL REPORT BY CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

Cllr Green gave a report as per Appendix 1.

5 REPORT OF THE BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

The Clerk read WBC Cllr Houldsworth's report as per Appendix 3.

WBC Cllr Bray gave a report as per Appendix 2.

WBC Cllr R Shepherd-Dubey gave a report as per Appendix 4.

6 REPORT ON THE WINNERSH FUEL ALLOTMENT TRUST

6.1 Mr G Harper, Chairman of WFAT, gave a report:

The Winnersh Fuel Allotment Trust (WFAT) was founded at the end of the 19th Century by a local landowner who left 10 acres of land in Winnersh, the proceeds from which were to provide fuel at Christmas to the poor of the parish of Winnersh. The Board of Governors have carried on that good work to the current day. It is becoming harder to identify beneficiaries, but at Christmas 2013 WFAT was able to provide gifts of money to four beneficiaries who lived within the parish of Winnersh. WFAT now has 7 trustees, with vacancies for 2 more.

Mr Harper spoke of the long term options for the trust to continue to provide support for the needy of the parish.

7 PUBLIC SESSION

7.1 Peter Dennis reported on the activities of the 1st Winnersh Scouts and spoke of their desire to relocate to within the parish.

7.2 Sam Denyer, Rector of Winnersh Parish, introduced himself. He gave a summary the progress of the amalgamation of the two parishes over the previous 2 years. He reported on the preparations and refurbishment planned for the 50th anniversary of St Mary's church in Winnersh.

7.3 John Andrews spoke on behalf of Readibus. He summarised the number of journeys supplied by Readibus both within and without of Winnersh. Readibus has now introduced an online booking system. He thanked the Council for its continued support.

7.4 Cathy Whittington of Winnersh Brownies spoke on behalf of the Guiding organisations within Winnersh, which together provide places for 120 children in the area.

7.5 Steven Polak of Wokingham Job Support Centre summarised the work done by the organisation and the huge social impact of being unemployed. He thanked the Council for its continued support.

7.6 Tom Conlin of Berkshire County Blind Society thanked the Council for its continued support. The BCBS continues to provide its core home visiting service, but has recently broadened the scope of its sports for the blind activities.

7.7 Fred Rule of Keep Mobile thanked the Council for its support last year. The organisation had supplied over 200 day excursions last year, thereby providing valuable support to vulnerable people in the community.

There being no further information from the floor, Cllr Green thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting closed at 8.23 p.m.

APPENDIX 1

Winnersh Parish Council Chairman's Report to the Annual Parish Meeting held on 13 May 2014

Cllr Green reported that he had served 3 years as Chairman of Winnersh Parish Council and was due to stand down from the post. He reflected on the progress made in recent years in bringing the community together. Council community events include:

- The Christmas Lights - this develops more interest each year.
- Summer Fete - an opportunity for the community to come together, with many local charities, church and other interests represented.
- Civic Awards - presented at the Fete; an opportunity to acknowledge those people who do excellent work in the community.
- The Parish litter pick is now growing into a regular event within the community.

The Recreation & Amenities Committee, ably led by Cllr Breedlove and assisted by Cllr Cooke, has administered the allotments - itself a focal point for the Winnersh community - and the community centre facilities which benefit local organisations. He reported on the upgrade to the community centre alarm systems and thanked the caretaker for his patience whilst repairs were made to his house on the site.

The Finance & General Purposes Committee, under Cllr John Southgate and his team, has monitored the finances of the Council.

This year has seen the death of Cllr John Grimson, who had acted as Chairman of the Planning Committee. He thanked Cllr Leask for taking over this role in recent months.

Cllr Green thanked the staff for their efforts during the previous year.

With the co-option of Cllrs Gordon-Walker, Harper and Obileye the Council now has a full complement of councillors.

David Green

APPENDIX 2

Report of Borough Councillors to the Winnersh Annual Parish Meeting

Annual Parish Meeting: Borough Councillor report from Prue Bray

Prue Bray Annual Report as a Borough Councillor 2013/2014

This has been another busy year.

On the planning front, I fought hard and successfully alongside residents to prevent the inclusion of land behind Maidensfield in the list of approved housing sites, thus thwarting a bid to build 150 houses there.

Three sites in the parish were, however, included in the list of approved sites, despite our efforts:

- land behind 40 Arbor Lane, currently the subject of a planning application for 29 houses, where I have started asking questions about highways issues
- land next to Wheatsheaf Close, which is a reserve site, so not likely to come forward for development in the near future

- the Hatch Farm Dairies site, already granted outline permission for 433 dwellings in November 2011; the developer is in intermittent discussions with the council; the latest information is that there is a possibility that they will submit a reserved matters planning application at the end of this calendar year.

Following the flooding at Christmas, I am involved with a group of residents who are collecting information about the extent of flooding on the Hatch Farm Dairies site, a group with which David Hunt is also involved.

The other major planning issue has been the approval of a dementia care home at Woodward Close. I attended the Planning Committee on 30th April - as did Rachele, as a member of the committee - and spoke mainly on highways and landscaping issues. I got agreement that local members will be involved in the Travel Plan for the home.

The crossroads traffic lights have been a worse problem than usual. Work was done in October which was supposed to reconfigure them as intelligent traffic lights, but was not completed. We have been told that a new controller is required, and that the council hopes to install it in June. Meanwhile, the lights have been manually phased, which accounts for the long queues off peak in Robin Hood Lane and coming from Wokingham. I do not understand why the manual phasing could not have been improved during the last 6 months. There are also problems with the functioning of the pedestrian lights. Last week officers apologised for failing to switch the lights over to British Summer Time, which compounded the queuing problems. Rachele pursued this issue vigorously for several months, and I am now also pursuing it, as the delay in sorting it out is unacceptable, and I am not at all happy at the poor level of service. There was a serious accident at the lights involving a pedestrian last week, but as yet we do not have any details of the likely cause.

There are a very large number of pot holes this year, and the council has secured some additional funding from the government in order to be able to fix them. I have reported well over 50 since the New Year. Most have been fixed, but not all.

There continue to be parking problems around schools and related to Winnersh's two railway stations. The new restrictions in Watmore Lane and Greenwood Grove, and in Cavendish Gardens, do appear to have had some beneficial effect, but in Greenwood Grove there continue to be problems. There are also problems in Baslow Road, on which both the NAG and I have engaged with the police, and in Reynards Close, possibly caused by knock-on effects of the measures in Danywern Drive.

I have engaged with highways officers during the year over the proposals for dealing with traffic and parking for the new Wheatfield Primary School. There has been little progress because the school did not open last September, as too few pupils applied. I have been assured it will open in September, for the Reception class. The school is not yet completely finished, but will be ready for September.

Apart from a wide range of casework relating to individuals, I have been involved in the following areas which can affect Winnersh:

- the affordable housing implementation group
- council housing through the Tenant & Landlord Improvement Panel
- the sustainable communities and infrastructure working group
- the Health & Wellbeing Board, which is now responsible for public health in the borough
- the Community Safety Partnership
- the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee

My other roles include being a governor at Forest School, and a trustee of the Winnersh Fuel Allotment Trust.

During this year I have also spent a lot of time opposing the council's regeneration proposals for Wokingham town centre, and coming up with alternative ideas, which I would be happy to discuss over drinks and nibbles at the end of the meeting, but is not really pertinent to the Parish Council.

Prue Bray 13th May 2014

APPENDIX 3

Report of Borough Councillors to the Winnersh Annual Parish Meeting

Annual Parish Meeting: Borough Councillor report from Philip Houldsworth

Election Time. My own preference is for an all in all out system. I find running an election 3 out of 4 years is a distraction. I can't really see the argument for it. Some say it leads to continuity which is preferable to an all change, but given that even in an all out system there will be many existing councillors elected anyway. It seems to me that instead of getting on with the job too much time is spent worrying about how it will play with the electors at the end of the year. That is not to say that the needs of our electors should be neglected.

I think the last year has been a good year for Winnersh. Ok we've had flooding but that's almost been the norm everywhere else and it has brought home that we have to dredge the Loddon more and keep the ditches free. A priority for the forthcoming years.

The cross roads! I think we have to accept that the volume of traffic is simply too much for any junction to carry at peak times. The road people have played around with it and I have asked whether all the sensors are in place and is this the best we can expect until the relief road is built? I am informed however that the sensors are not operational and the Balfour Beatty are being pursued with some vigour.

We do need a yellow box at the Winnersh Farm junction and it's a priority for me in the coming year. It is a time consuming process to get clearance for a yellow box but in the meantime I have arranged for a Keep Clear sign to be in place a.s.a.p

The really good news is that the Development plan is in place and already we have seen building proposals turned down especially the Taylor Wimpey proposal off Watmore Lane.

Our affordable housing strategy is working really well and with the funds already accumulated we can start to consider larger schemes to expand social housing and improve existing stock.

Whilst you have heard a lot about the cost of the regeneration of Wokingham Town but very little about the substantial profits that will come to the Borough when it's up and running. The shop premises will be owned by the Council who will have much more control. The difference between capital spending and revenue spending seems to be lost on some.

We can look forward to the revised plans which I am sure will receive much scrutiny.

May I wish the Parish a good year.

Philip Houldsworth
May 2014

APPENDIX 3

Report of Borough Councillors to the Winnersh Annual Parish Meeting

Annual Parish Meeting: Borough Councillor report from Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey

Cllr R Shepherd-Dubey reported on the progress of the Hatch Farm Dairies development. She reported that there are now no plans to build a school there, but a MUGA will be provided. There is also no further news on the development of the Relief Road. News of further progress on the site may come thru this winter.

The traffic lights at the crossroads continue to need re-adjustments.

The traffic lights at the Showcase roundabout may be upgraded to include lights with an adjustable cycle.

Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey, May 2014