



Winnersh Parish Council
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**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 16th MAY 2023 AT 7.30 PM
AT THE WINNERSH COMMUNITY CENTRE**

COUNCILLORS:

Cllrs D Green (Chairman), J Boadu, P Bray, L Doyle, P Giacon, G Harper, M Kak, F Obileye, R Shepherd-Dubey, J Southgate

WPC OFFICERS:

M Milsom (Parish Clerk), K Simpson (Assistant Parish Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr Caroline Smith (WBC Mayor), Clare Randell (LINK Visiting Scheme), Camilla (First Days Charity), Jadon Sanders and Anne (WBC ASB Team)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs P Fishwick, N Kilby, R Nicholson and from Marjie Walker (LINK Visiting Scheme).

2. ANNUAL REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

Cllr Green gave a report as set out in Appendix 1.

3. ADDRESS BY THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF WBC

Cllr Caroline Smith gave an outline of her work as Mayor over the past 12 months, serving 177,000 residents, noting that this was her last official engagement.

Key highlights included Queen's Jubilee celebrations, Winnersh fete, new library and swimming pool opening, Queen's funeral, Remembrance Day and Ukraine war, Cantley fireworks, half marathon, Eurovision Song Contest party and the King's Proclamation.

She reported that her chosen charity had been the Foodbank and that the Mayor's Award had been given out to 8 worthy winners.

4. UPDATES FROM GRANT RECIPIENTS

First Days Charity: Camilla gave a report highlighting the work of the charity. The charity was formed in 2013 and worked to support families in financial difficulty. She advised that over 10,000 children had been helped and 250,000 tonnes of equipment had been shared.

The aim of the charity was to provide everyday essentials and empower families, working to lift them out of poverty.

Approximately 296 children in Winnersh had been supported.

LINK Visiting Scheme: Clare Randell gave a report highlighting the work of the charity. The charity was formed 25 years ago and works across Wokingham borough to confront the impact of loneliness and improve both mental and physical health.

The services include 1:1 befriending and activities including community kitchen, pub lunches and sing-a-longs.

There are 400 volunteers, 28 from the Winnersh area and in 2023, 32 clients in Winnersh had received support.

5. PRESENTATION FROM WBC ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR OFFICERS

Jadon Sanders and his colleague Anne gave a report on the services provided by the Anti-Social Behaviour team. The team had been brought in from Public Protection Partnership and covered mainly environmental issues such as fly-tipping, working to find evidence to prosecute and fine.

Other issues included noise nuisance, public nuisance including anti-social youths, fly-posting, graffiti, abandoned vehicles and stray animals. The team were working to educate residents on the damage caused by anti-social behaviour.

6. REPORT FROM BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

Cllr Bray gave a report from Borough Councillors which is attached at Appendix 2.

7. REPORT ON THE WINNERSH FUEL ALLOTMENT TRUST

Cllr Bray gave a brief update on the Winnersh Fuel Allotment Trust which is attached at Appendix 3.

8. PUBLIC SESSION

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Cllr Green thanked everyone for attending and there being no further business the meeting closed at 8.18pm.

**Winnersh Parish Council Chairman's Report
to the Annual Parish Meeting held on 16th May 2023**

Introduction

Firstly, I would like to thank all my fellow councillors and the staff at the Parish Council for their support and assistance given over the past 12 months in what has been a year of many changes, but we managed our way through this with a great team effort.

We started the year under new leadership of Linda Wooldrich, sadly her time as Chair was cut short due to ill health, so I must thank her for her time as a Councillor and her leadership. Paul Fishwick kindly took the reins before I was voted in to take over the chairmanship.

In addition to losing Linda from the council, this year has seen both Clinton Taylor and Kanagarajah Bradeepan (Brad) step down during the year and Shaun Hanna who left at the last elections. I must thank them all for their efforts and involvement in the Parish over the years.

We welcomed our new Parish Clerk earlier this year, we convinced Marcia Milsom to return to the Parish, having previously been Assistant Clerk a few years previous. I must at this point thank both Kerry Simpson and Joanne Yeomans for their sterling work to plug the gap between the previous clerks departure and Marcia's arrival.

I will now highlight some of the work that the councillors and staff have put into running the services provided by the Parish Council.

Full Council (all 13 councillors)

Chair Cllr David Green, Vice Chair Cllr Paul Fishwick

Full Council including the Annual Meeting of the Council has met 11 times during the municipal year and has a number of Working Groups and Standing Committees that provide reports to Full Council.

Climate Change Emergency working group

The Climate Change Working Group under the lead of Cllr Fishwick has continued to work on the Action Plan key achievements include the following:
Wildflower sowing on the Hatch Farm bund line.

Enhancing the usage of the existing solar power generation by adding battery storage and Immersion diverter, to use spare energy to heat the stored water.
Additionally, we connected the Allnatt pavilion to the community centre, to utilise the solar power generation and save costs on standing charges.

We have recently overhauled the solar panels to ensure that we can maximise on its generation potential.

Winnersh Summer Fete

The Summer fete continues to be a great success, the June weather was mostly kind to us, and the “Winnersh Games” in the arena proved a great success and I must thank Cllr Paul Fishwick for his great ability to herd cats. As always this event would never happen without the effort of Cllr John Southgate and his band of volunteers, so big thanks to all involved.

Winnersh Sustainable Transport Group

Following on from the Parish Council adoption of Winnersh and Winnersh Triangle Stations on the Winnersh Sustainable Transport Group has continued to work in partnership with South Western Railway and The Community Rail partnership to better the facilities.

The installation of artwork on the platforms at both stations has been seen as a welcome addition to the waiting shelters. Additional projects have been put forward by the Parish Council which are being considered by the Community Rail partnership and South Western Railway/Network Rail.

The Winnersh Community Speed watch has been fully approved, members of the speed watch team have been trained and several checks have been carried out. So, I must thank the active members for their efforts to improve speed awareness and observation in the Parish.

Planning Committee (6 councillors)

Chairman Cllr Taylor, Vice Chairman Cllr Fishwick

Planning Committee moved back to face-to-face meetings this year and has met 12 times over the year. In addition to the normal planning requests the committee deal with and submitted comments on:

- Studio developments on Winnersh Triangle
- Aldi Supermarket
- Telecoms Mast deployment on Hatchfarm Road
- Winnersh Farm outline plans for 260+ houses

Additionally, Cllr Geoff Harper attended a WBC planning meeting to represent our concerns over a specific planning amendment that was having a negative effect on some Winnersh home owners.

Recreation and Amenities (Councillors)

Chair Cllr Harper, Vice Chair Cllr Hanna

The Recreation and Amenities Committee has met 10 times over the year. The committee underwent some chairmanship changes throughout the year, Cllr Wooldridge stepping down after 3 years of Chairman. Cllr Hanna took over the lead until Cllr Harper kindly offered to step into the role.

The committee has been busy planning and working through the project for the financial year. Key activities and achievements include:

- Installation of new blinds throughout the buildings Community Centre yet to be installed
- Continues management and maintenance of the play facilities
- Planning the toilet facilities upgrades in the Community Centre
- Path refurbishment

Additionally, the committee has continued to work with Berkshire Youth to implement a successful youth club facility at Rainbow Park Community Centre.

R&A continue to oversee the Winnersh Allotments, building on previous years success since the move to the new location.

Finance and General Purposes Committee (6 Councillors)

Chair Cllr John Southgate, Vice Chair Cllr David Green.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee has met quarterly throughout the year. The main role of this committee is to oversee the finance of the council, make grant donations to local charities that assist Winnersh residents and review policies and procedures.

The committee has supported grant requests for the following.

- Wokingham CAB
- Community transport
- Wokingham Job Support Club
- Link Visiting Scheme

The committee also ensures that the parish finances are in order, carrying out detailed reviews quarterly.

To turn all of the committee discussions and agreements into action we have a great team in place. Led by Marcia, Joanne Yeomans manages the community engagement and bookings along with many other tasks and Kerry Simpson has taken over the general management of the Parish finances. I must thank both Kerry and Joanne for getting the Parish through our annual audit, which was a great success.

Now as we enter a new year, I wish a warm welcome to the new parish councillors and congratulate those who returned to council after a very rare parish election.

So, once again thank you for your support over the past 12 months and I look forward to working with you all over the next municipal year.

Councillor David Green, Chair of Winnersh Parish Council

REPORT FROM WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCILLORS – 16th May 2023

The local elections have taken place. Paul Fishwick has been re-elected as a borough councillor for Winnersh.

Overall, the results for the 18 seats contested were:

	Seats	Change
Conservatives	4	- 4
Lib Dems	11	+3
Labour	3	+2
Independent	0	- 1

The make-up of the council is now:

Conservatives	22
Lib Dems	26
Labour	5
Independent	1

This means that no party has a majority of councillors, and it therefore remains officially a No Overall Control council. For the past year, the Liberal Democrats formed the administration with the support of Labour and Independent councillors in a partnership. The Liberal Democrats have replaced the Conservatives as the largest party. We will not know for certain until the Annual Meeting of the Council on 18th May who will form the administration for this year, but we currently expect the Liberal Democrats to remain in power.

Next May, there will be all-up elections for the Borough Council, following a Periodic Electoral Review, which looked at creating a pattern of 3-member wards where councillors across the borough would all represent roughly the same number of councillors. The final version of proposals has been consulted on and we are awaiting the outcome. We do not expect any changes to the ward boundaries in Winnersh.

During the 2022/23 municipal year, the Borough Council has attempted to re-set its relationship with town and parish councils and to reinvigorate the Borough/Parish Liaison Forum. We hope that town and parish councils are seeing some benefits from this.

The borough council has seen some severe financial challenges in the past year, like all local authorities. Some tough decisions have had to have been made, in order to stabilise the finances and enable us to continue to deliver our services. We understand that some of those may not be popular, and they have not been made lightly, but we hope that people understand they were necessary. We are pleased to say that the council's finances do now appear to be on a more stable footing, although money is still very tight.

We have been very aware of the cost of living crisis and how it is affecting residents and despite the other financial pressures, managed to find an additional £250,000 to help

those who were struggling. We have worked with the Hardship Alliance to try to provide help to those residents who have most needed it.

We have also been working hard to overhaul the council's internal processes and to create more long-term strategic thinking, particularly in the areas of active travel and highways, and school places and special educational needs. We have also been engaged in overhauling the council's communications and IT, and the council will be getting a new website and other software systems later this year, which will enable the council to be far more accessible and responsive for residents.

A high number of large and complex planning applications has continued to be submitted, including one for Taylor Wimpey for over 200 houses in Winnersh, which is currently in the system awaiting a decision. Work on the Local Plan Update continues. We know people are anxious to know whether particular sites will be taken out or altered following the consultation on the draft new Local Plan before the Lib Dem administration took over. We can tell you that work is going on, not just on housing sites and housing numbers but also on other aspects of the Local Plan, such as flooding and climate change. We hope you will understand that we cannot give any details yet about any possible new draft, as we need to make sure all aspects of planning regulations have been fully taken into account and that the new Local Plan is not vulnerable to developers who wish to promote their own interests.

Cllrs Prue Bray, Paul Fishwick and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

**Winnersh Fuel Allotment Trust
Report to Annual Parish Meeting 2023**

Winnersh Fuel Allotment Trust (WFAT) was formally registered as a charity in 1892, although the practice of local landowners of allowing the poor of the parish of Winnersh onto their land at Christmas to gather fuel (firewood) dates back to 1814, over 200 years.

The trust is in good financial health, having invested the income from the sale of part of our land to Wokingham Borough Council in 2019 for the route of the North Wokingham Distributor Road.

At Christmas we made donations to local foodbanks, and to our remaining individual beneficiary, in accordance with our charitable purposes.

The long term vision of the Trust has always been to develop the land it owns to provide social housing, of which there is a scarcity in Winnersh and Wokingham Borough generally. Negotiations continue with WBC's wholly-owned housing association about developing the remaining WFAT land for high quality social housing. Initial plans have been drawn up and are currently being assessed. WFAT has engaged a solicitor and surveyor to assist us in progressing the project, and we have progressed to the point of having received a draft report from the surveyor.

The trust may have up to 9 trustees. We currently have one vacancy, and would welcome applications from anyone interested.

**Prue Bray
Chair of WFAT**