

# WOODCOTE PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the Parish Council meeting held in the Function Room, Village Hall, Woodcote  
Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at 7.30pm.

**PRESENT**

Chairman	Mr. R. Peirce
Vice Chair	Dr. G. Botting
	Mr. A. Crockett
	Mr. M. Smith
	Mr. B. Williams
	Dr. P. Sudbury
	Mrs. S. McGurk

Parish Clerk	Ms. Jenny Welham
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1. To receive apologies for absence  
Mrs. J. Farmer, Mr. D. Booth

2. To receive Declarations of Interest  
The Chairman expressed interest in Planning Application P18/S1371/O and P18/S1633/HH  
Vice Chairman expressed interest in Planning application P18/S1371/O.

3. **Public Forum:** Opportunity for members of the public to address the Council, the public may also speak about specific items of business as they arise, with the permission of the Chairman.  
32 members of the public present regarding Planning Application P18/S1371/O One member of public asked when the next meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group would take place. The Vice chairman advised that they are not meeting until they hear from SODC on their new Local Plan, and this is unlikely to be before end of July.

Other members of the public will be invited to speak under Agenda Item 6. Planning Applications.

4. To approve Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018.  
Approved as a true record.

5. Matters arising from those Minutes not on the agenda elsewhere.  
None.

**6. Planning Applications**

The Chairman asked for nominations for Chair to take over the meeting at this point as he had expressed interest. Cllr. Williams nominated Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Sudbury.  
The Chairman & Vice Chairman present but removed from and did not participate in the meeting.

**P18/S1371/O (Outline) Major Proposal:** The erection of either up-to 80 dwellings (Class C3) or up-to 66 dwellings (Class C3) with assisted living accommodation with up-to 60 bedroom facility providing assisted living accommodation for elderly people (Class C2) (both options inclusive of affordable housing and up-to 6 plots for self-build homes) together vehicular accesses from South Stoke Road; pedestrian/cycle accesses from Wayside Green and Behoes Lane; children's equipped play area; surface water attenuation; community growing area; open space with footpaths and other related infrastructure Address: Land at South Stoke Road Woodcote.

Cllr. Smith advised that he had reviewed the application and would give a summary of some of the points made by the developer. The developer argued that SODC do not have a 3 or a 5 year land supply, which is incorrect. SODC have announced they have a 5.4 year land supply for new housing development. They have taken a traffic survey but this is not extensive and did not cover peak times and the calculations are incorrect. The site proposed is not in the current Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr. Smith then invited the public to speak and requested that they did not repeat points that had already been raised.

Resident was concerned that SODC had chosen not to defend a planning appeal in another Parish based on land supply argument, and did the PC feel they would defend this one should it reach appeal on this argument. The Chairman advised that the PC cannot answer that it is a matter for SODC.

Resident gave detail of this appeal mentioned and said that the Inspectors comments on the SODC 5.4 year land supply stated it was nebulous and granted approval, however this site was not in the AONB.

Resident was concerned about traffic volumes and felt that the Developers survey was inadequate and did not cover the junction South Stoke Road/Goring and Reading Roads.

Resident asked if it was usual for an application to show two potential versions of numbers and layout, and also if the care home would need commercial land.

The Chairman advised that a change of use for the Care Home would need to be sought and that he was not aware of an application that had been presented proposing two versions.

Resident asked if the NHP Advisory Group were meeting, the reply was as before, that they are not meeting until they hear from SODC on their new Local Plan, and this is unlikely to be before end of July.

Resident, thanked the NHP Group for all their hard work for the village on the NHP. He felt developers are trying to build too much in Woodcote and had particular issue with the two proposed sites for NHP 2 along Greenmore. He stated he does not want any more houses built in Woodcote.

Resident asked if the PC would argue on this application that the site falls outside the built up area in Woodcote, and wasn't this the strongest argument?

The Chairman advised that yes this would be one of the points raised in the PC reply.

The Chairman then summarised his reply points on this application and read them to the meeting. He proposed that the PC recommend Refusal. He asked the members for their views and they all agreed with the recommendation of Refusal.

Full detail of the Pc reply can be seen as Appendix One of these minutes.

Vice Chairman Botting returned to the meeting and took the Chair.

The members of public left the meeting, two remained.

**P18/S1633/HH** (Householder) Other. Proposal: Garage conversion & raising flat roof over proposed garage conversion. The removal of garage door & insertion of window. Insertion of rooflight.

Address: 51 Wayside Green Woodcote RG8 0PR.

The PC support this application and have no objections.

The Chairman returned to the meeting and took the Chair.

#### **6.1 Applications Granted by SODC:**

P18/S0430/O Outline application for demolition of existing buildings and erection of a single storey

dwelling and provision of new access onto Bridle Path with appearance and landscaping reserved (driveway and access width revised as shown on amended plan received 25th April 2018). Site Location : 14 Bridle Path Woodcote RG8 0SE.

P18/S0911/FUL Block existing entrance to Eastfield House and change existing entrance to field to new main entrance to Eastfield House.

Site Location : Eastfield House Pot Kiln Lane Goring Heath RG8 7SR

Members of public left the meeting.

## **6.2 Applications Refused by SODC**

None.

## **6.3 Other Planning Matters**

None.

## **7. Finance** To approve payments, note receipts.

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Detail
29/05/2018	British Telecom	DD	£101.88	Line & BB
01/06/2018	Chiltern Society	763	£30.00	Annual subscription
01/06/2018	Rod d Ayala	764	£3,600.00	Site Mmnt Greenmore Ponds F/M
05/06/2018	HMRC	SO	£253.20	Monthly contributions
06/06/2018	Cash	765	£100.00	For petty cash to buy stamps
06/06//2018	GDPR Info Ltd	766	£600.00	DPO Agreement 1 year
			£4,685.08	

## **APPROVED**

### **Receipts – Noted**

£6000 Grant from Thames Water for work at Greenmore Ponds being carried out by Woodcote Conservation Group.

£31.74 Bank Interest on PC deposit Account.

### **7.1 Quotations/Grants** received for review/approval.

ARD Playground quote to repair the pull board on the Junior Multi Play Unit in the Playground. £500 approximately. The PC agreed this.

## **8. Reports from Other Village Groups**

Traffic Group – A reply has been received from OCC, they telephoned the Clerk regarding the Zebra Crossing advising that OCC Cabinet had approved the expenditure for the resurfacing of the road.

This was well received and the next steps will be that Highways will visit site with their contractors and then return firm costing to the PC so the work can then start on the Zebra Crossing when these costs have been agreed.

## Village Hall Management Committee

Two years ago, in 2016, the PC were confirmed as owners of Woodcote Village Hall (WVH) with the Land Registry registration. At that time the PC

- i. assumed the responsibility for the capital maintenance of the building;
- ii. assumed the responsibility for refurbishment of the building;
- iii. provided insurance cover for the Hall; and
- iv. asked the WVH Charity (WVHC) to assume the responsibility for maintaining the fixtures and fittings recognising that this would be funded from rental income. This, in turn, required the WVHC to:
  - generate a small operating surplus to maintain the current fixtures and fittings; and
  - obtain grants and donations to improve the facilities.

## Operating Income and Expenditure

For several years WVH has been operating at a loss with rental income failing to match operating costs. In 2011-12 the loss was £963. In 2017-18 the loss was £2099. In the absence of operating surpluses there is no prospect of maintaining, let alone improving, the facilities for the residents of Woodcote.

During the 2017–18 financial year WVHC Trustees<sup>1</sup> reviewed all expenses and reduced them where possible with the expectation that the operating deficit for 2018-19 will be less than that for 2017-18. However, with nearly 75% of the costs relating to staff (WVH manager and cleaner) and utilities there is little further scope to eliminate the deficit by reducing expense. An operating surplus must, therefore, come from increased revenue.

In April 2018 the Trustees reviewed the financial position of the WVHC and concluded that:

1. for the current year hiring fees should be maintained at the current level (following increases in 2017 and 2018). This is to keep WVH as accessible to all as possible and to avoid losing current hirers to other locations as WVH competes with other local Halls for hirers.
2. although WVH has an advantage over other halls when local residents and organisations are seeking such space it should recognise that:
  - i. rental fees to local clubs and charities do not cover the cost of the rental – particularly in respect of utility use; and
  - ii. the Hall relies on commercial and private hire fees as these, after usage costs, make a net contribution to the costs of running the Hall.
3. increasing utilisation through better marketing is necessary but noted that current utilisation is, at levels which make it difficult to rely on increased utilisation as the sole means of reducing the deficit;
4. additional income could be generated from a greater use of the Function Room and it should be promoted more widely once the refurbishment is complete;
5. a programme to increase the attractiveness of the Hall to potential renters must continue with, following the upgrade to the Function Room, immediate focus on:
  - i. remodelling the entrance at the western edge of the building and making internal changes to improve access to the Pavilion and Function Room;
  - ii. improving the ambience of the Main Hall; and
  - iii. improving the changing rooms at the eastern end of the building.

## Donations, Grants and other Capital Funding Sources

WVH has benefited greatly from the generosity of the Woodcote Charitable Association and the organisers of the Woodcote Festival and Fete and grants from the Co-op and SODC. Such donations, along with Section 106 and, potentially, money from the Community Infrastructure Levy are significant in two ways:

1. they enable immediate improvements to be made; and

2. they enable, by matching funding, grants to be obtained from, for example, SODC. It is important, therefore, and often a condition of the donation, that such generosity is not used to fund operating deficits.

### **Youth Club**

The west end of the hall referred to as the “Youth Centre” currently comprises three rooms the Function Room, Youth Club room above the Function Room and the “Quiet Room”. During the 2017–18 financial year:

- i. the operating costs (management, utilities, cleaning, maintenance) associated with these rooms is estimated to be £7,900;
- ii. the rental income from these rooms is estimated to be £5,800; but
- iii. because of an agreement made in 2002 between the WVH Management Committee, the then presumed owners of WVH, and the Youth Centre these rooms are occupied and used at no cost to the Youth Centre.

The agreement allowed the WVHC to recover the management, utility, cleaning and opportunity costs arising from the Youth Club’s use of these rooms by hiring out the Function Room at times when the room was not in use by the Youth Club. However, following the change of ownership, a new agreement between the Youth Centre and the PC (as the new owners) is required.

### **Recommendation**

The Trustees are keen to support the Youth Club but, as part of the effort to eliminate the operating deficit we recommend that:

1. the Trustees (or the Parish Council?) terminate the agreement with the Youth Club on 8-Jan-2019 or as soon as the PC has established a new agreement with the Youth Club;
2. a new agreement between the Parish Council and the Youth Club to be established which, from 31-Dec-2018 gives the Youth Centre:
  - i. sole use of the first-floor room subject to it paying £1000/year to cover rent, utilities, maintenance, cleaning and other operational costs associated with that room; and
  - ii. priority use, during agreed Youth Club hours, of the Function Room at the discounted rate of £5 /hr. The Youth Club will need to book the Function Room, as required, via WVH Hallmaster booking system.
3. the Parish Council review the grant to the Youth Club to ensure that the Club can continue to operate successfully whilst paying rental fees.

### **Village Green**

Working party carried out work around the green to trees and did some weed spraying around the village hall.

### **9. Communications** – review current matters.

Cllr. McGurk is working on an article for publication in the July Correspondent and the Facebook page.

### **10. Other Matters for Chairman**

Cllr. Williams is continuing work on a process for CIL funds and has several correspondence with SODC department regarding this. He has also called the first meeting to look at a Community Land Trust.

The Clerk advised that GDPR info Ltd the PC’s appointed Data Protection Officer had visited and carried out a Data Audit and their report was awaited. Cllr. Smith questioned why the audit had not covered Councillors emails and felt that this was not a complete data audit. The Clerk advised that he was likely to cover this matter when he attended a PC meeting to talk to the Councillors, this is likely to be in September, but also took the action to check this point.

**11. Correspondence**

None.

**11. To note date of the next Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018.**

*Meeting closed at 9.40pm*

*Signed .....* *Date.....*