
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning, Environment and Highways Committee
held on 1st July 2024 in Charvil Village Hall at 8pm**

Present Lee Cripps (Chair), Stephen Lucas, Pat Sutlieff, and Rob Jones

Apologies Katrin Harding

Absent Narinder Ryatt

24/288 OPEN FORUM – Jane Hartley attended as a resident, and Dave Barks and Adrian Larkham of Econet attended.

Dave explained that he is the Chair of Econet, an umbrella group for conservation groups in Berkshire. He explained that the Government had set up the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to cover the whole of England, and that Windsor and Maidenhead Borough Council had been designated the lead for the Berkshire area. Duncan Fisher, of Wokingham Borough Council, is very keen to get the parishes involved, which is why Dave is visiting Parishes to explain the role they could play. There is an interactive map, where residents and groups can add in areas that could have potential for being part of the nature recovery strategy, and Dave advised that it would be a good idea to add in as many as possible, although it must be noted that to be included, they would need landowner agreement. Essentially the plan is about wildlife and habitats. He explained that in Ruscombe, sites have been included in the Neighbourhood Plan, and that potential sites could either be existing sites that need improvement, or new sites.

Councillor Jones explained that sites were included in the draft Neighbourhood Plan as designated green spaces, and Dave Barks recommended including all these on the interactive map. Many of the designated sites in Charvil are owned by Wokingham Borough Council, and they are generally happy for them to be included on the map unless they are earmarked for other use. The main issue for the Borough is having the money to improve sites, so they are open to working with the Parishes to enhance this. In turn, Econet are willing to help parishes with their work where they can.

The other strand that needs to be recognised is the need for developers to prove biodiversity net gain. Generally, this would be accommodated onsite, but if this cannot be done, developers can pay to have this transferred to specific sites that are developed specifically for this purpose. It is possible parishes could benefit from getting involved with this as the developers would have to fund it. The Chair thanked Dave and Adrian for coming and they left at 8.25pm.

24/289 To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd June 2024

These were approved and signed.

24/290 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE CLERK – There were no interests declared.

24/291 Highways

To note the Speed Indicator Device data from Old Bath Road

The clerk had provided data on vehicles travelling at over 50mph. It was notable that much more excessive speeding was evident from the Reading direction. It was also noted that while some of the highest speeds were at night or in the early morning, a worrying number were in the main part of the day.

To hear an update on Speed watch

There was no update and Councillor Sutlieff was worried that she may have to start her training again as she has had computer issues.

To note that the broken barrier near the traffic lights on the A4 have been repaired

This was noted.

To note that the clerk has complained about the quality of the resurfacing on Park View Drive North

The road has been top-dressed, but this has been done very badly, and there are some fresh potholes already visible. In places, the surface has been left very uneven. The Borough Councillors are involved and are trying to help resolve the issue.

To consider how to pursue the topic of the Charvil to Twyford Station Cycle track

Councillor Cripps had a conversation with Stephen Conway recently in his capacity as a resident and he had agreed that this could help alleviate some of the parking problems at Twyford Station. The problem is the issue is much bigger than the Parish Council can deal with; it needs Great Western, the Borough Council, Twyford Parish Council, Woodley Parish Council and possibly other stakeholders to work together. The one positive is that the path is included in the Borough's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, so it may attract funding. It was noted that the most talked about route takes in the Nature Reserve, which would conflict with the Nature Recovery Strategy. It was agreed that Councillor Cripps would be the named person to lead on this, but it was accepted that the plan at the moment would be to keep the idea in the public eye.

24/292

Environment

To note that some of the trees planted last year in the orchard have not survived and to decide whether to replace them

The clerk explained that twelve had been planted, and all looked well in early April, and all looked ok in early May, but by early June, two looked dead, and another four look sick. Although it had been very wet when they were planted, it appeared the main issues were that the mild winter had meant they may not have been fully dormant when planted, and pests and diseases had not taken the usual seasonal knock that would be expected. Each year there has been a problem with aphids and ants on the trees, and this problem came earlier this year, and has contributed to the stress the trees have been under. Because no-one had spotted the trouble early enough, preventative action was not taken this year, hence the problems. It was agreed that they should be replaced, but that a push for more sponsors would be made at the fete, both for replacement trees and for the last batch of six. If not enough come forward, the Council would replace the trees out of its own funds.

To discuss the proposals suggested by Econet regarding the Berkshire Nature Recovery programme

It was agreed that if possible, the designated green sites from the Neighbourhood Plan should be added to the interactive map.

24/293

Planning

a)

241466

To consider the following planning applications (286)

Application for proposed single storey front infill extension, first floor rear infill extension, part garage conversion to create habitable accommodation, plus changes to fenestrations at 36, Old Bath Road – no Parish Council comment

241555

Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed loft conversion into habitable accommodation to include 3no dormers and 3no roof windows at 9, Balme Close – no Parish Council comment

b)

240757

The following Planning approvals were noted

Householder application for proposed garage conversion to create habitable accommodation with changes to the fenestration at 112, The Hawthorns

- 241076 Householder application for proposed erection of a single storey rear extension to include 2no roof lanterns (one in the new part of extension and one in the existing) following demolition of the existing rear canopy at 25, Gingells Farm Road
- 241181 Application for the prior approval of the erection of a single storey rear extension, which would extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by 3.92m, for which the maximum height would be 3.20m and the height of the eaves 3.00m at 94, Old Bath Road (Prior Approval not required)

c) Planning Application refused

- 241039 Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed part garage conversion to create habitable accommodation with 1 no. rear facing dormer and 1 no. front facing rooflight into the existing roof, loft conversion to create habitable accommodation with 3 no. rear facing dormers, insertion of 3 no. rooflights to the front elevation at 9, Balme Close

The meeting closed at 9.08pm