
Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 24th May at Charvil Village Hall

Present Jim Gillett, Paul Mundy, Pat Sutcliffe, Claire Andersen, Mike Heath, Narinder Ryatt, and Jane Hartley

Apologies for Absence Neil Jackson and Hilary Jones

Absent

21/7631 Open Forum

Seven residents attended, representing others who were all concerned about Planning Application 211195, outline Planning Permission for four three- and four-bedroom houses in the rear garden of 6, Old Bath Road. The resident from the next-door property expressed particular concern about the proposed driveway, which would be within a metre of his property, bringing potential damage, noise, and air pollution to his home. The sloping nature of the plot would mean the new homes would have an overbearing effect on his garden, with loss of privacy and light. He was also concerned about light pollution, as well as fumes reaching straight into his children's bedrooms when the dustcart was attending the property. He is already suffering loss of light to his home due to the fence to the side of his property, and feels this proposal is pushing the limit of planning guidance to the limit. Other neighbours were concerned about loss of light to their amenity space, road safety, as this proposal would lead to five junctions onto the Old Bath Road dangerously close to a bend with extremely limited visibility, the need to relocate the bus stop, and the lack of a footway into the new development. Concern was also raised that if this passed, the existing house could be sold, and a fresh plan put in to redevelop the whole site with even more homes.

21/7632 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Gillett expressed an interest in 6b, as he knows the person who is requesting a reduced rate for a charitable event in the hall.

21/7633 Minutes of the Council Meeting of the 19th of April held via Zoom

The minutes were approved by the Council.

Finance

21/7634 Finance Reports – It was resolved to approve these which was done unanimously.

21/7635 Authorisation of Payments – It was resolved to approve the following payments, which was done unanimously:

£93.44 to Grundon Waste Management Ltd
£2325.25 to Came and Company
£37.34 to British Gas Services Ltd
£38.99 to Cathedral Leasing
£968.94 to Berkshire Pension Fund
£156.44 to Bowak Ltd

£390.50 to HTC
 £660 to Alder Glass
 £61.94 to Aquacare
 £124.67 to Dual Energy (Smartest Energy)
 £32.86 to SSE
 £169.33 to Clerk
 £1757.88 to Sunshine Commercial Services Ltd
 £220.70 to Tivoli Group Ltd
 £132.83 to Assistant Clerk
 £707.42 to Hampshire Association of Local Councils
 £89.09 to JJ Plumbing and Heating
 £246.60 to Playsafety Ltd
 £111.02 to A1 Locksmiths (Berkshire) Ltd
 £78 to Loddon Doors
 £107.66 to Viking Payments
 ££50.34 to WEL medical
 £2838.68 in Payroll

21/7636 To note the internal auditor's report – This was noted

21/7637 To complete and sign the Annual Governance Statement – This was completed and signed

21/7638 To complete and sign the Annual Accounting Statement – This was completed and signed

21/7639 To Approve the insurance – this was approved but Council would like a more comprehensive review in 2022

21/7640 Planning, Environment and Highways Committee (PEH)

The minutes of the PEH meeting on 26th April were noted. The Chairman noted that Councillor Andersen, the Clerk, and she had met with Emma Pilgrim of Wokingham Borough Council regarding the Community Orchard, who was positive about the project.

The following Planning Applications were considered

211195 Outline application with some matters reserved for the proposed erection of 4 no. dwellings with new access road and associated parking and landscaping. Access and layout to be considered on land to the rear of 6, Old Bath Road – the clerk was asked to object as follows:

1. *Unacceptable" Backland" development. The north side of Old Bath Road in Charvil is characterised by low density homes with long gardens. The gardens of 6, Old Bath Road and neighbouring properties are of special visual importance as the gardens slope gently uphill to a public park, bordered by mature trees. The garden of 6, Old Bath Road stretches up to the west of the park and complements the verdant street view of the area. The proposed development would erode the character of the area, contrary to TB06 of the Borough Design Guide, as the new dwellings would be clearly visible from the Old Bath Road and will harm the street scene. This proposal will also appear cramped in relation to the homes on the Old Bath Road, Lime Tree Close and The Hawthorns development at the top of the slope. Moreover, there must be concerns that new dwellings so close to a public amenity will lead to conflict and demands to remove some mature trees in the park. A similar proposal for 42-44, Old Bath Road was refused with an appeal upheld (F/2010/0105 and appeal No. App/X0360/A/10/2126110) because this, too, was considered out of character.*

2. *Loss of privacy and security concerns for neighbouring properties. Because of the sloping nature of the site, the proposed semi-detached dwellings will appear more than two storey to the residents of 8, Old Bath Road, and will overlook the garden of this property, which currently enjoys a great degree of privacy. Of greater*

concern is the proposed access road which will run alongside this property. Because of the slope, when vehicles leave the proposed dwellings, there would be a clear line of sight into the bedrooms of 8, Old Bath Road, which is unacceptable, and there would be security issues as the rear garden would suddenly become much more accessible to intruders. No. 8 is already suffering from loss of light, due to a fence that has been erected outside their side windows, and this would be made worse by this proposal. There are also privacy and loss of light concerns for the properties of Lime Tree Close due to the sloping nature of the site. This is contrary to CP09.

3. *Highways concerns.* The proposed access to the dwellings is to run between 6 and 8, Old Bath Road. There is approximately 45 cm between the property at 8, Old Bath Road and the boundary. The proposed roadway would have to be a similar distance away from No. 6 to reach the minimum width, with no footway. The construction of such an access is likely to harm both properties, and use by heavy vehicles, such as refuse and construction traffic, could also damage these properties that will not have been designed with such an access in mind. There would also be increased pollution into the rear of the two houses, particularly No.8. There is no communal parking in the development and given the narrowness of the access road, visitors would have to park on Old Bath Road, which is a busy road – all homes on the Old Bath Road have adequate parking so on-road parking is never an issue. This is contrary to CP6. Other concerns are that the bus stop outside No. 6 will need to be moved, and that another junction onto the Old Bath Road at this point will increase the likelihood of accidents as there are already four busy entrances onto the road within 40 metres of this proposed access.

4. *Landscape.* Policy CC03 demands that proposals should retain existing trees and landscapes. Most of the mature trees were felled before the application was proposed, but there are still some trees on the site, and an old farm hedge. To complete the proposed development, the hedge, at the very least, would have to be removed, and this would be contrary to this policy.

211599 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 5m, for which the maximum height would be 2.92m and the height of the eaves 2.55m at 4, Milestone Crescent – no Parish Council comment

211640 Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension to form conservatory following demolition of existing conservatory at 57, St. Patrick's Avenue – no Parish Council comment

21/7641 Amenities Committee

There was no meeting this month

Two quotations were considered for servicing the boilers at the pavilion, and it was unanimously agreed to accept the Aquacare quotation as they are familiar with them.

The question of when and how to ease restrictions on hall hire was considered, and it was agreed that anyone booking a party after the proposed Step 4 date to ease Covid restrictions, could do so, but on the understanding that they have a contingency plan in place, in case of any change in Government guidance, and that the Parish Council bears no responsibility for these changes.

A request for a reduced rate for a charitable fundraising event was considered, and it was agreed to allow the Amenities manager to use her discretionary powers to offer weekday evening rates rather than weekend evening rates.

A proposal from Ian Gough of WBC was considered, to provide LED lighting in the hall where it has not already been changed over, to install roof insulation, and to provide cavity wall insulation, with the Parish Council paying around £300 per year

for 10 years. The costs of doing this work is considerably more than £3000 and the Parish Council would benefit from the energy savings, so it was agreed unanimously to take up this offer.

The findings of the Playground Safety report were noted, and it was agreed that the Amenities Manager would get quotations for repairs to items identified as medium risk and for other items identified as causing problems for other parishes recently. The Amenities manager will then send round quotes for approval by the clerk and Chair of Amenities.

It was agreed to approve the costs of repairs to toilets and showers in the Pavilion.

21/7642 Report from the Borough Councillor

It was noted that Charvil now has a new Borough Councillor, Sam Akhtar, but unfortunately, he was not able to attend, and there was no report

Items for Consideration

21/7643 To hear an update on the Neighbourhood Plan Progress and to consider the timeframe for the delivery of the survey given the recent delay

It was noted that Council is still waiting to hear about the grant, and everything else is dependent on this. Councillor Heath checked the survey, and the updates are now with the web developer. Councillor Andersen explained that the staffing committee are recommending the temporary employment of someone to work on Council documents to improve their accessibility and to help keep the Neighbourhood Plan website up to date, up to a cost of £2,000. This will be on the next agenda for a decision. There was an article promoting the Neighbourhood Plan in the Henley Standard with the picture of Theresa May. Councillor Hartley has some pictures that can be used on Social Media.

21/7644 To hear an update on the Pavilion project

Councillor Ryatt reported that the first meeting had taken place, and that they had decided on the Charter and Specification for the pavilion. He would work on this more in the coming week and he and Councillor Heath will put together the next steps, with a further meeting arranged for next week. Councillor Gillett is to continue to find a suitable solicitor.

21/7645 To consider any matters arising from the Annual Parish Meeting

The main issue of concern was the Local Plan, and it was decided that there should be a standing item on this topic on the Planning, Environment and Highways agenda

21/7646 To consider a proposal from Wokingham Borough Council to improve the area behind the paly area at Vale View and to re-paint the shelter.

Council agreed this was a good idea, and the clerk was to write a leaflet to consult with Vale View residents

21/7647 To hear an update on the Fete and Village Society

There will be a fete stall for the Parish Council for any Councillors who can attend – Councillors Heath and Andersen will both be away. Posters for the Community Orchard, Pavilion and Neighborhood Plan are needed. Sam Akhtar will be conducting surgeries, and the chairman thought it may be a good idea to do the same, to help people realise the difference between the Borough and the Parish Councils. Councillor Gillett will provide a gazebo.

The Village Society was thanked for planting the daffodils and would like funding for planting wildflowers. It was suggested approaching the Woodland Trust who are currently giving away seeds.

21/7648 To respond to the consultation on remote meetings

It was agreed that everyone preferred face to face meetings, and that hybrid meetings do not work very well.

21/7649 To note the removal of the legislation allowing remote meetings, and to delegate decision making to the Clerk and Amenities Manager, with the

permission of the relevant Chairs and, for bigger decisions, e-mail approval from the rest of the relevant Committee

Council approved the delegation of powers while necessary, and it was agreed that the clerk would keep a list.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10pm

Chairman's Signature

Chairman's Initials.....

Date.....