



Chairman: Rob Jones

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Clerk to the Council
Miranda Parker
Charvil Village Hall
The Hawthorns
Charvil, Reading
Berks RG10 9TT

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 20th January 2025 in Charvil Village Hall at 8pm

Present Rob Jones, Pat Sutlieff, Jane Hartley, Isabelle Bray, Katrin Harding, Matt Walker, Stephen Lucas, and Lee Cripps. Borough Councillor Wayne Smith (arrived at 8.35), the media assistant, the amenities manager and a journalist also attended.

Apologies for Absence Narinder Ryatt and Richard Bennett

Absent

25/8503 Open Forum

One resident attended who was interested in Speedy Fuels.

25/8504 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

25/8505 To approve the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of 16th December 2024

These were approved and signed.

25/8506 To note the Clerk's report

This was noted.

Finance

25/8507 To receive and approve the financial reports

. It was resolved to approve these which was passed unanimously.

25/8508 Authorisation of Payments

It was resolved to recommend approval of the payments of invoices, which was carried unanimously.

£8 to A1 Locksmiths

£69.15 to the Assistant Clerk

£1387.08 to Andrea Pellegram Ltd

£180.91 to Aquacare

£2040 to Arborfield Tree Care

£1702.04 to Berkshire Pension Fund

£945 to Blue Moose

£100.50 to Bowak

£207.11 to British Gas

£324 to Drain and Able

£104.77 to Everflow

£165 to Gardner Mechanical Service Ltd

£63.62 to Grundon

£205.50 to JMVA Ltd

£79.59 to the clerk

£5184 to MRM Commercial Ltd
£36 to the Media Assistant
£3222 to Nick Robins
£418.49 to Smartest Energy
£15.12 to SSE Contracting Ltd
£1203.86 to Sunshine Commercial Services Ltd
£180.12 to Tactical Facilities Management Ltd
£24 to Taurus Elite Security
£51.69 to Yu Energy
£4933.09 in Payroll

25/8509 To note the Minutes of the Finance Committee on 13th January 2025

These were noted, and it was noted that Councillor Bray had reviewed the Bank Statements, and all was well.

25/8510 To approve the budget recommendation from the Finance Committee and the altered Finance Categories

The Council had no comment to make on the changes to the budget categories. On the budget itself, Councillor Lucas introduced the budget discussions, explaining that there are several big-ticket items planned for the next year; refurbishing the playground at East Park Farm, resurfacing the Village Hall car park, and possible expenditure relating to the pre-school if it goes ahead. As far as the pre-school is concerned, whether it comes in or not, does not affect the budget that much, so this is not a material issue. The choice was made to keep price increases relatively low, as the main aim is to increase community use. It was resolved to approve the budget, which was approved unanimously

25/8511 To approve the precept for 2025-26

It was resolved to increase the precept by 10.8%, which was approved unanimously.

Planning, Environment and Highways Committee (PEH)

25/8512 To approve a date for the Annual Litter Pick on either 22nd or 23rd March 2025

It was agreed that the litter pick would take place on Sunday 23rd March at 2pm, starting from the Pavilion.

25/8513 To consider the following planning application: 243124 – Application for the approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline planning consent 212720 for the erection of 200 dwellings with associated infrastructure, open space, biodiversity enhancements, landscaping and green infrastructure (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be considered) at Bridge Farm, Twyford

The clerk was asked to comment as follows:

Charvil Parish Council has concerns about the long-term maintenance of the flood prevention mechanisms and would like to see the maintenance of this adopted by the Local Authority so there can be some confidence that the proposed measures will continue to happen in the longer term. The Council also agree with Twyford Parish Council that it would be preferable to have the infrastructure within the development adopted by the Local Authority.

25/8514 To consider the Bus Service Improvement Plan and to decide whether the Council wants to be involved

The clerk explained that this was a proposal in its infancy, and the idea was to see whether parishes were supportive in principle. While most councillors liked the idea, there was some scepticism about how useful it would be without funding. Councillor Harding said there is some funding and there could be pressure

brought to bear to improve the 127/128/129 service. The Chair would be happy to attend any meetings if the plan gets off the ground.

25/8515 To hear an update on the position with the Speedy Fuels Goods Vehicle Licence Application and other matters

There had been some confusion over the closing date for comments, and who could comment. Essentially, there were two closing dates – one relating to the date the application appeared in the Maidenhead Advertiser as the law requires, and one for the statutory authorities. The application appeared in the Maidenhead Advertiser on 29th November, so the closing date for any interested party was 19th December – these interested parties needed to own or have interest in land very close to the site to be considered. The closing date for statutory bodies, which included the Borough Council, was 2nd January, and the Borough did indeed put in an objection, as a statutory consultee and as the closest landowner.

The Traffic Commissioner has told the Parish Council that it is looking into this case carefully as it is clear there is much local opposition, but that its powers are very limited.

Meanwhile, there has been an enforcement investigation, first closed, then re-opened in the light of photographs showing what is happening on-site, and the oil transport has been halted from the site pending a planning application. Activity is still happening in terms of installing interceptor tanks, but this is at the landowner's own risk until the planning application is received and determined.

Amenities Committee

The Minutes of a meeting on 9th December were noted.

25/8516 To consider the quotations for cleaning and re-lining the tennis courts and approve one of them for completion early in the next financial year

It was resolved to approve the quotation from Chiltern Sports which was approved unanimously.

25/8517 Borough Councillor's Report

Ward Councillor Harding reported that the Old Bath Road had been included in the 2025-26 programme for full resurfacing. The clerk asked whether something could be done to improve safety at the zebra crossing because of the number of near misses there.

Ward Councillor Smith reported that the Council are waiting for the planning application on the old Prince Brothers site but also said that Environmental Health has informed him that there was no need for a new licence for the fuel business to operate from the site because it was the same business class as the previous business. He also said that Simon Bartlam of the Countryside service had been in touch with the Environment Agency over his concerns about pollution into the Country Park.

Another issue in the ward was around the behaviour of Piggott parents on the Twyford Road, queuing to access the school at pick-up time. The police were now issuing tickets to parents for this because it is preventing emergency services from using the road safely.

Ward Councillor Akhtar apologised for being unable to attend, but reported that he was asking a question regarding Speedy Fuels at the Borough Council meeting later in the week.

Items for Consideration

25/8518 To hear an update on the Neighbourhood Plan

Councillor Jones reported he was still waiting to hear back from James McCabe on the revised plan and the Screening opinion but would chase if he heard nothing this week.

Stephen Hicks had responded to his question of timing to say that they are unlikely to be able to start work on the site in 2025.

25/8519 To note the digital media report

This was noted, and the media assistant was congratulated on overtaking the number of followers of the previous social media channels within two years of launching the new channels, and the Chair repeated the Ward Councillor's assertion that Charvil's social media presence is on of the best in the Borough.

25/8520 To consider a proposal for Community Heroes and to approve if agreed

Councillor Hartley presented the plan, and the proposal was welcomed by the rest of the Council. The proposal was approved, and it was agreed it would be an annual event. The proposal had suggested timelines that seem workable, and it was agreed that in the first instance, the Council would be the decision panel. The main outstanding question was how to reach out to the Community to get nominations, and who was going to take responsibility for ensuring the initiative succeeds. It was agreed this would be discussed by Councillors at an informal meeting.

25/8521 To consider how to progress the Playground renovations at East Park Farm with a view to enable expenditure of the remaining Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) by the October deadline for commitment to expenditure

The first step is to clear the trees near the park, so that the proposed site can be properly assessed, and potential providers can see the potential for the site. The aim is to have this part complete before the bird nesting season.

Councillor Sutlieff reported that she had been in touch with Ricky Josey at WBC, to see if he had any updates on funding; at this stage, there was little to report.

The group previously tasked with moving this project along were Councillors Sutlieff, Bray and Walker, with the support of the clerk and assistant clerk. It was agreed that this group would continue and would try to get a plan in place as soon as is practicable, even if it must be a multiple phase plan if funding sources cannot be found. Providing a clear plan is in place and the project is clearly in place, then it is unlikely the CIL would be claimed back.

25/8522 To hear an update on the possibility of a pre-school

The Clerk, assistant clerk, Councillor Bray met with the potential pre-school provider, who explained that she was now looking to provide a facility for two-year-olds upwards, as the building would be better suited to this age group. Much of the discussion revolved around the viability of the project, so once the provider had the hire costs, and the rates for government provided places for 2025-26, she would be able to calculate what her minimum numbers needed to be. She thought that realistically, she would not make money until the third year because of the initial outgoings, and getting a name for herself, but clearly needs a minimum level of commitment from parents before making the decision to try to start either in September or January. The clerk agreed to provide her with the hire charges as soon as possible, and she would try to come up with a basic business plan as soon as possible, so that the Council can take a view on what length of lease to offer, whether they think it will work etc. Councillor Bray raised her concerns that it is very difficult to get suitable staff currently, and she would like to know the rate of top-up fees to be charged, as this would affect the demand for the setting. There followed a debate around whether the Council is trying to dictate terms, but the

issue is more around justifying giving notice to existing groups if the new incumbent is not there to primarily serve the Charvil community. The clerk will keep lines of communication open and will try to get a firmer proposal to put before the Council in February.

25/8523 To hear an update on the solar panels for the pavilion

The clerk had received the proposal and had forwarded it to the Borough Council's property services for their approval and is still waiting to hear back. Various views were expressed as to whether the Council should do this at all, or postpone, or just get on with it, but currently there is no decision to be made until the Borough have given their verdict. Once the clerk has heard back from the Borough, the decision as to whether to progress can be put on the agenda.

25/8524 To consider whether to run a desk top test of the Parish's emergency plan, and if so, to name a date

It was agreed that this would be a good idea, and that it should be done before the next Annual Meeting of the Council. It was suggested that the clerk get in touch with the emergency planning team in Wokingham to see if they could facilitate this, and the suggested dates were to replace either the March or April Amenities meeting with this.

25/8525 To note any agenda items for the next meeting

Items include progress on Community Heroes, Events for the coming year, the pre-school, solar panels, the possible changes to the magazine.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.20pm

Chairman's Signature