

Twyford Parish Council Minutes of the Meeting of the Council

Meeting held at Stanlake Pavilion on Tuesday 14th December 2021 at 7:45pm.

Present: Mr R Mantel (Chairman), Mr R Abeywardana (Vice Chairman), Mr M Alder, Mr J Bowley, Mr M Bray, Mrs B Ditcham, Mrs L Jarvis, Mr J Jarvis, Mrs T Ramsden, & Mrs S Wisdom.

In attendance: Mr S Conway (Borough Councillor).

Clerk present: Mrs L Moffatt (Clerk).

1. **Public Questions** No questions.
 2. **Apologies** Councillors - Mrs E Ashley, Mrs J Duffield & Mrs A Evans.
Mr P Cassidy – Ruscombe Parish Council
 3. **Declaration of interest in items on the agenda** None.
 4. **Dispensations** None.
 5. **Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 23rd November 2021**
Proposed Mr J Jarvis, seconded Mr M Bray to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record. Motion carried nem con.
 6. **Matters Arising** None.
 7. **Borough Council Matters** Mr S Conway reported on:
 - WBC meeting to plan for the Covid increase – plans made for Council response and planning for staff shortages
 - Draft parking schemes – full details will be released in January
 - Pedestrian crossings – engineers have been working on reports as to whether crossings on Hurst Road and Wargrave Road are viable
 - Library – the financial shortfall is being brought under control
 - Draft local plan – closing date for comments is 24.01.22
- Mr J Jarvis asked, under the permit scheme, how much residents would need to pay to park outside their own properties. Mr Conway responded that a permit cost would be £30-£40 per year.
- There were no reports from Mr Ferris or Mr Smith.
8. **Liaison with Ruscombe Parish Council** – Mrs L Jarvis had attended the meeting by Zoom. There were no items to report.
 9. **Reports and to receive any recommendations from committees**
 - 9.1 Planning and Amenities Committee 02.12.21 Mr C Wickenden reported on the meeting. Plans for the Stanlake mobile phone mast have been refused.
 - 9.2 Neighbourhood Plan sub committee 02.12.21 Mr C Wickenden reported summarising the approved expenditure and resident engagement at the Tree Festival.
 - 9.3 Parish Lands Committee 07.12.21 Mr M Bray reported summarising the meeting minutes.
The committee **RECOMMEND to Full Council** £990 for Tennis Court cleaning. Motion carried unanimously.
The committee **RECOMMEND to Full Council** £1,332.09 for KGVR gate repairs & replacement. Motion carried unanimously.
 - 9.4 Finance and General Purposes Committee 09.12.21 Mr J Bowley reported. The draft budget / precept is looking at a 20% increase which equates to £8 per Council tax paying household per year. Committees are

asked to re-look at their budgeting and capital may be used to reduce the precept.

9.5 Fete Committee – no meeting

10. Other representative reports – no reports.

11. Communication and liaison with other groups in the Parish – no reports.

12. Clerk's report BeeBomb gifts are being distributed to our volunteers and councillors agreed to help distribute the small gifts.

Proposed Mr J Jarvis, seconded Mrs T Ramsden to **RECOMMEND to Full Council** £460 for a Platinum Jubilee Hornbeam. Motion carried unanimously. The cost includes 3-3.5 meter height tree, stake, tie, compost, mulch and a 4ft steel mesh guard. By the Council making a quick decision they save the £120 delivery cost. A plaque will be purchased and unveiled in the summer.

A quote had also been sought for a columnar flowering cherry to be planted in the circular bed by Waitrose. This could be supplied with a stake, tie, compost and mulch at a cost of £355. There were concerns as to the suitability of the earth in this area and so it was agreed to seek advice and consider this as an autumn project.

13. Councillor items to be discussed

13.1 Library – could WBC provide the cost of leasing the community office?

Proposed Mr R Mantel, seconded Mrs B Ditcham to make enquiries as to whether there is a community office included as part of the library plans and if so what would be the cost for the Parish Council to hire the facility. Motion carried nem con.

13.2 Clerk Annual Review (RA)

13.2.1 Ensuring impartiality of decision making and concerns regarding current process - comments of councillors to be provided by email and not via telephone call and evidence to be provided in support

13.2.2 Annual review documentation

13.2.3 Understanding of contractual relationship and terms

Mr R Abeywardana raised concerns over the impartiality, transparency and documentation of the Clerk appraisal process. Discussion took place in view of the recent completion of the Clerk's annual review. Mr Abeywardana stated that Standing Order 19C says *"The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by the Council."*

Mr R Mantel stated that he had expressly asked that the report should not be circulated. The Clerk suggested adopting the same process as is used for the Assistant Clerk – a set protocol needs to be agreed.

A discussion took place on employment law training and outsourcing human resources support. Mr C Wickenden expressed concerns of reputational damage should the Council get things wrong.

Proposed Mr R Mantel, seconded Mr J Jarvis to refer this item to the Finance committee to present the Council with a way of implementing these proposals. Motion carried unanimously.

13.3 The documentation of Part 2 (confidential) discussions (RA)

13.3.1 Minutes to be taken of part 2 discussions

13.3.2 Ensuring decisions are followed through and discussed at Full Council meeting

13.3.3 Any position presented to be substantiated by evidence

Mr R Abeywardana raised concerns over a lack of transparency. Part 2 discussions need to be recorded in a confidential set of minutes. He raised concerns that decisions are sometimes being made on information which is factually incorrect and is being used to sway decisions. Information needs to be substantiated by evidence. Decisions are being made and councillor actions are not followed through. He used the example of the

October Finance meeting recommendations which were withdrawn, by a councillor, from being discussed at the Full Council meeting. Discussion took place on who might note part 2 items in the absence of the clerk.

Proposed Mr R Abeywardana, seconded Mr J Jarvis to refer this item to the Finance committee to present the Council with a way of implementing these proposals. Motion carried unanimously.

13.4 Membership of the Finance Committee and fostering diversity and inclusion (RA)

13.4.1 Ensuring objective decision making

13.4.2 Ensure decisions are made at the meeting- are calls made to councillors to sway decision making?

13.4.3 Ensure that the committee is diverse and inclusive, I.e representative of the council as a whole

Discussion took place. How can the Finance committee membership be more representative of the Council as a whole? How could it become more diverse? Important decisions are made at the Finance committee. Councillors need to make fair, transparent and objective decision making. The committees should be inclusive.

The Council discussed whether a policy is required and how to make diversity part of the Councils core values.

Proposed Mr R Abeywardana, seconded Mr J Jarvis to withdraw this item in order to reword it for the next meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

14 Items to be discussed at the next meeting - Membership of the Finance Committee and fostering diversity and inclusion (RA)

15 List of authorised payments – no list for December.

16 Meet the Public sessions – agreed to review in March.

17 Correspondence – all noted.

17.1 RPC agenda – 3rd November 2021

17.2 Involve newsletter

17.3 Citizens Advice Wokingham – report on Twyford

17.4 BALC AGM 17th November 2021

17.5 Citizens Advice mobile unit & request for locations

17.6 CCB AGM 11.11.21

17.7 CCB AGM (2) 11.11.21

17.8 Action for All E-Bulletin

17.9 BALC Newsletter – October 2021

17.10 Sports Awards Ceremony CANCELLED at Bulmershe Leisure Centre 26 November

17.11 Twyford & District Youth Centre-AGM - Tuesday 9th November - 8pm

17.12 Friendship Alliance Ambassador Forum

17.13 Borough Forum Liaison draft minutes 04.10.21

17.14 LCPD News Autumn-Winter 2021

17.15 BALC AGM powerpoint

17.16 Berkshire Pension Fund employer newsletter - Inscribe - Autumn 2021

17.17 Action for All E-Bulletin

17.18 CCB Trustee & Training Opportunities

17.19 RPC Agenda 1st December 2021

18 Dates of meetings:

All meetings 7:45pm at Stanlake Pavilion unless noted otherwise.

Volunteers for Christmas Tree take down 8am 09.01.22

Mr J Jarvis & Mr M Bray volunteered

Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (Zoom 7:30pm) 10.01.22

Planning and Amenities Committee 04.01.22

Ruscombe Parish Council meeting (LJ) 05.01.22

(Loddon Hall Ruscombe Room)
Parish Lands Committee
Finance & General Purposes Committee
Fete 7pm

11.01.22
18.01.22
22.02.22

19. Part 2 recommendations

The Council agreed that as confidential items were to be discussed the Chairman invoked Standing Order 1C "That in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw". Proposed Mr J Jarvis, seconded Mr M Alder, carried unanimously. The public left the meeting.

The clerk left the meeting.

Mr C Wickenden left the meeting.

The committee discussed the following matters under part 2.

19.1 Clerk annual review & annual increment

The council resolved by 7 to 2 votes, with 1 abstention, to move the clerk one scale point with effect from her employment anniversary (July 2021).

19.2 Covid payment (October FGP committee recommendation)

The committee **RECOMMENDS to the Full Council** to give all staff a spot bonus of 1.95% in recognition of their additional effort because of COVID-19. Motion carried unanimously.

20. Date of next Full Council meeting – Tuesday 25th January 2022.

Meeting closed at 10.10 pm