

Minutes of a meeting of
Planning & Highways Committee
Held on Thursday 9th March 2023
At School Green Centre commencing at 19.00

Present: Cllrs N Boyer (19:30), P Emmment, A Grimes, P Jahromi, L James (19:15), N Masseron, D Peer (Chair) and R Tatla

Attending: Bruce Winton (Clerk), Sally Herring (Deputy Clerk)
James Jenkison for Greentech
Cllr I Clarke
3 members of the public

23/PC/22

Presentation on Spencers Wood Solar Farm

22.1 The meeting started at 19.00 to allow time for a presentation by James Jenkison, for Greentech, regarding the Spencers Wood Solar Farm. The main items were:

- Solar farm would be 100% privately owned
- Site is close to the grid connection – behind Shipbridge solar farm
- Land is suitable and available – flat fields and not on a flood plain
- Footpath on Sussex Lane would be maintained
- 5m separation between solar farm and deer fence
- Access would be the same as the existing solar farm via the Basingstoke Road; not during peak periods
- Constructions: vehicles to create the temporary construction, framework delivery and installation, delivery and installation of panels, cables and trenching
- Operation: monthly maintenance checks, annual panel cleaning, remotely monitored
- Community Grant can be applied for parish activities
- Feeds electricity into the grid
- Life span is approximately 40years after which it is dismantled and panels are reused
- Access footpath to Riverbank is not on leased land
- Awaiting planning application

ACTION – Clerk to apply to Greentech for Community Grant

22.2 Committee would review planning application once received.

- 22.3 **ACTION - Greentech to be requested to support SPC in its application to extend the path to access the riverbank**

- *James Jenkison left the meeting*

23/PC/23 Public Questions

23.1 Land adjacent to Bramble Cottage

A member of the public expressed his concerns regarding the owner of a property moving the boundary in 2020 by approximately 3m onto highways land and asked the council any assistance it may be able to offer. The Chairman reiterated that as a Council, we had limited powers and could only respond in relation to the breach of the Tree Protection Order (TPO) on the oak tree. The resident explained that he did not have any objection to the building in principle, it was the fact that highways land had been claimed, the TPO breached and the restricted access to his land and sight lines. Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) had responded that the Planning Officer was aware of the issues. Members suggested that as the SPC Neighbourhood Plan was against losing trees in the parish and the TPO had been breached they could respond accordingly.

ACTION – Clerk to write to WBC regarding the breach of a TPO

20:02 Cllr Clarke and 2 members of the public left the meeting

23/PC/24 Apologies and declarations of Members' Interest

- 24.1 Apologies had been received from Cllrs D Lias

ACTION – Clerk to ask Cllr Jones if he wished to remain on the Committee

- 24.2 There were no declarations of members' interests.

23/PC/25 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 25.1 The minutes of the committee meeting of 9th February 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed as such by Cllr Peer.

Proposed: Cllr P Jahromi
Seconded: Cllr P Emmet
Approved: Unanimously

25.2 **Actions and Matters Arising**

- 23/PC/11.2 Clerk to arrange a meeting with Lindsay Ferris regarding WBC's present stance on building within the DEPZ

The Clerk had been unable to arrange a meeting but has been in correspondence with Cllr Ferris who has provided the following update

"AWE have expressed to us that they have strong concerns regarding the decision and are considering how to proceed with regards to this decision as well as how to engage in potential future planning applications. Following a planning appeal, aggrieved parties have 6 weeks to submit court papers if they wish to challenge the decision. AWE will be taking their decision shortly, with the 6-week period ending on Monday, 13 March. If papers are served, we will be informed by the court.

We will provide you with more information once we know more."

ACTION – Clerk and Chairman to send a formal letter to WBC, AWE and West Berkshire Council and Clerk to circulate a copy of the letter to members of the committee

- 23/PC/7.2 Clerk to enquire from WBC regarding the detailed locations and values of where monies have been spent

The Clerk was slowly trying to piece together the detail and has asked WBC for additional information to ease the process. He was also seeking clarification on the information provided that £63.1m was spent in the parish on S106 projects against £35.2m received. It would appear that the largest item of spend was on the Eastern Relief Road.

The process is being delayed by WBC treating this as a Freedom of Information request rather than an officer to officer discussion.

ACTION – Clerk to report back once the information has been received from WBC

08:13 Member of public left the meeting

- 23/PC/7.3c Clerk to follow up on the issue of transferring ownership of street lamps

The Clerk had been in discussion with Martin Heath but he had since left WBC. He had now received a response from Jay Bailey who is part of the street lighting team.

The first part of the response was a reminder of an email issued by Chris Easton a couple of months ago:

“We have undertaken an assessment and have determined that from the 688 columns identified within the Towns and Parishes, only 494 could be potentially considered for adoption in future. 194 of the 688 columns have been identified as being on unadopted roads or on land not owned by the council, and as such would never be possible for any consideration for adoption in future.

The identified 494 columns would create a financial pressure on the Council’s already stretched budgets to a value of approximately £20k per year, and with growing energy prices this value is expected to rise. On this basis, the Council is not in a position to consider any lamp column adoption as it will apply significant pressure year on year to already stretched budgets.”

The Clerk explained that SPC were not asking WBC to take over street lamps but were enquiring about swapping on an equitable basis as we felt it was more appropriate for WBC to maintain the lights on Hyde End Road. The response to that was:

“If we were to swap any then the ones we (WBC) could give to them would have to meet a “Footway Lighting” standard in accordance with Highways Act otherwise the Parish Council in theory should not be looking after them. I suspect we would have difficulty in finding them sufficient lights from our stock in Shinfield that would fall within this category.”

Members identified that the distance between the streetlights was not correct for a ‘B’ classified road and WBC should be responsible for this category of road. No recent improvements had been made to the streetlighting in recent years.

ACTION – Clerk to seek clear advice from John Russell, Motion

23/PC/8.1 Clerk to chase Mr Karim, WBC for additional information

The Clerk advised that the following response had been received:

“As you may be aware, Martin Heath is no longer with WBC, I am unable to advise on the way forward regarding chicanes. Once I get an update, I will let you know.

With regards to alternative to chicanes, the first question is what are our objectives and what are we trying to achieve. We need to define a problem and consider a solution dependent on the problem, this is why it is difficult to come up with an alternative.

With regards to speed cameras, the criteria was that the site must have at least four Killed or Serious Injury (KSI) accidents. If a speed camera is installed without a valid reason, it may be seen as a money making scheme. Also, we would need TVP (Thames Valley Police) to support it."

ACTION – Clerk to discuss with Paul Fishwick

23/PC/9.2 Clerk to send a letter to BCllr Ferris regarding an article in Wokingham Today

It was agreed that this matter had been overtaken by other more topical issues to be discussed with BCllr Ferris.

23/PC/15.1 Clerk to submit a request for substitute planting of trees on the seven units to be built adjacent for Lidl

This had been done

23/PC/16.2 Clerk to write to WBC Planning Department, AWE Emergency Planning and West Berkshire Council regarding Kingfisher Grove

Previously discussed at 23/PC/25 - 23/PC/11.2

23/PC/16.3 Clerk to request that PA 230122 remains open until after the next planning meeting

The consultation period now closes on 20th March due to issues validating the application. This is on the agenda at Item 5.1

23/PC/18.1 Clerk to keep on the agenda 'Verbal Update on Highways, Street Lighting and Footpath Matters'

On the agenda - item 8.1

- 23/PC/18.2 Clerk to write to WBC to request that the streetlights owned by SPC be switched off between the hours of 00:30 and 05:30

This had not yet been done.

ACTION – Clerk to write to WBC

- 23/PC/19.1 Clerk to respond to the National Planning Policy Consultation

The Clerk had submitted the council's views to the consultation process

- 23/PC/20.1 Cllrs A Grimes and L James to put together a paper for the next meeting

The traffic working party had been developing the response and this was on the agenda at Item 10.1

- 23/PC/20.2 Clerk to circulate the responses of the consultation to members at the end of the consultation period

Also to be covered under Item 10.1

- 23/PC/21.1 Clerk to respond accordingly to consideration for Gypsy and Travellers sites

This had been done

- 23/PC/21.2 Clerk to write to West Berkshire Council regarding the Local Plan Review

This had been done

- 23/PC/21.3 Clerk to invite Maxim-PR to address the committee at a pre-meeting at 19:00 on the 9th March

On the agenda - item 1.1

- 23/PC/21.4 Clerk to respond to a request to divert Footpath 11 & 12 during the Lidl build

This had been done

23/PC/26

Schedule of Deposited Plans

- 26.1 None Received. Specific consideration was given to Planning Application 230122 – Land adjacent to Bramble Cottage at 183 Hyde End Road

On the agenda – item 23.1

23/PC/27

Appeals

- 27.1 Planning Inspectorate Appeals

It was **NOTED** that there was one planning inspectorate appeal in RG2 and three in RG7 currently “in progress” in the parish.

23/PC/28

Enforcement Update

- 28.1 Closed Enforcement Notices

Members noted the contents of the report.

RFS/2023/087924 Foxglade, Brookers Hill, Shinfield
Trees that are cut down need to be replaced.

ACTION – Clerk to add to the agenda in a years time to check the trees had been replaced

- 28.2 Live Enforcement Notices

Members noted the contents of the report.

23/PC/29

Highways, Street Lighting and Footpath Matters

- 29.1 **Verbal Update on Highways, Street Lighting and Footpath Matters**

Cllr N Masseron agreed to look into monitoring footpaths in the parish.

ACTION – Cllr Masseron would look at previous reports to assess the process and talk to a local resident who was knowledgeable in this area

29.2 **Street Lighting**

The Clerk has not been able to progress this action (to turn off SPC lights between 00:30 and 05:30).

ACTION – Clerk to write to WBC to request that the streetlights owed by SPC be switched off between the hours of 00:30 and 05:30

23/PC/30

Follow up from DEPZ presentation at meeting on 9th February

30.1 Members noted the follow up from Harry Williamson who had led the presentation at the previous meeting.

30.2 The Clerk advised that he would like to work with WBC's Emergency Planning team in regards to how SPC could work with them in the event of an major incident. The Clerk reported that had done training on this area with the national Emergency Planning College.

This would include offering facilities to assist, with a reciprocal arrangement with WBC.

ACTION – Clerk to contact Harry Williamson and update the committee in due course regarding Emergency Planning for the parish

23/PC/31

Road Traffic

31.1 Traffic Working Party

Members considered the detailed draft response to the 434 responses that had been received (34 in person and 400 online)

Members agreed to the issuing of the response

Proposed: Cllr P Emment
Seconded: Cllr R Tatla
Approved: Unanimously

ACTION – Clerk to circulate response to consultation

31.2 Hyde End Lane had not been included in the consultation as this had previously taken place extensively in the past. It was agreed at the meeting that further consultation was required on Hyde End Lane was required.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange a meeting in two weeks time to plan ahead

23/PC/32

Correspondence

32.1 Community Trigger

Members NOTED an extract of the response from the Police and Crime Commissioner that had been previously circulated.

32.2 WBC Local Validation List

Members NOTED the Validation of Planning Applications

ACTION – Clerk to make BCllrs aware of the list

32.3 Transport Plan Consultation

The Clerk advised that a link to WBC's consultation on a Local Transport Plan was on our website but he wished to ensure that members were aware that the process was taking place.

ACTION – Clerk to promote work SPC had done to improve the bus routes

32.4 Shinfield Road Crossing

A letter had been received from a resident requesting that SPC supports renewed attempts to have a crossing installed near to the entrance to Crosfields School.

Members highlighted the problems on this road with traffic and the possibility that Reading buses may withdraw the service if there were additional holdups.

ACTION – Clerk to respond to the resident and suggest she contacts Chris Easton at Wokingham Borough Council

The meeting ended at 09:18

The next meeting is Thursday 13th April 2023

List of Actions

23/PC/22.1	Clerk to apply to Greentech for Community Grant	Clerk
23/PC/22.2	Committee to review planning application once received	
23/PC/22.3	Greentech to be requested to support SPC in its application to extend the path to access the riverbank	
23/PC/23.1	Clerk to write to WBC regarding the breach of a TPC	Clerk
23/PC/24.1	Clerk to ask Cllr Jones if he wished to remain on the Committee	Clerk
23/PC/25	23/PC/11.2 Clerk and Chairman to send a formal letter to WBC, AWE and West Berkshire Council and Clerk to circulate a copy of the letter to members of the committee	Clerk
	23/PC/7.2 Clerk to report back once the information had been received from WBC on the spending of S106 monies	Clerk
	23/PC/7.3c Clerk to seek clear advice from John Russell, Motion about street lighting on a 'B' road	Clerk
	23/PC/8.1 Clerk to discuss traffic calming measures with Paul Fishwick	Clerk
23/PC/28.1	Clerk to add to the agenda in a years time to check the trees had been replaced at Foxglade, Brookers Hill, Shinfield	Clerk
23/PC/29.1	Cllr Masseron to look at previous reports to assess the process for monitoring footpaths and to talk to a knowledgeable local resident	Cllr Masseron
23/PC/29.2	Clerk to write to WBC to request that streetlights be switched off between the hours of 00:30 and 05:30	Clerk
23/PC/30.2	Clerk to contact Harry Williamson and update the committee on major incident planning	Clerk
23/PC/31.1	Clerk to circulate response to the traffic consultation	Clerk
23/PC/31.2	Clerk to arrange a meeting in two weeks time to plan ahead for a consultation on Hyde End Lane	Clerk

23/PC/32.2	Clerk to make BCllrs aware of the Validation of Planning applications list	Clerk
23/PC/32.3	Clerk to promote work SPC had done to improve the buses in the parish	Clerk
23/PC/32.4	Clerk to respond to the resident and suggest she contacts Chris Easton at Wokingham Borough Council in relation to a crossing on Shinfield Road	Clerk