

Minutes of a meeting of Full Council
Held on Wednesday, 23th October 2024
At School Green Centre commencing at 19:30

Present: Cllrs Clarke, Grimes (Chair), Fernandes, Hoyle, James, Johnson, Jones, Masseron, Matic, Montgomery, and Peer

Attending: BCllr Glover
B Winton (Clerk), S Herring (Deputy Clerk)

4 members of the public

24/111 Public Questions

- 111.1 A member of public, representing residents of Shinfield Meadows, expressed concerns over the increase in anti-social behaviour particularly the theft at the Co-op. This is happening mainly by known drug addicts who are stealing on an industrial scale. The Police have lots of evidence but are not doing anything to address this. The behaviour is attracting similar individuals into the area as it is known that there will be no action taken.

A second member of the public endorsed the concerns, and he himself had personally witnessed the theft and felt it would be relevant to see a police presence in the vicinity. He also reported that there was strong inappropriate language directed to the staff of the Co-op and felt that the Co-op should be taking more responsibility for members of their staff. The problems were similar at Budgens in Three Mile Cross and the Esso garage in Shinfield.

Members of the public requested that Shinfield Parish Council assist with resolving this issue.

The Clerk reported that he had receive another three comments that day regarding this issue.

BCllr Glover had spoken to the PCSOs about a month ago and followed up with an email. Cllr Hoyle suggested that SPC should write to the Co-op outlining SPCs concerns.

Cllr Johnson believed that there were 50 DVD's of CCTV evidence, however, he had been informed that the Co-op were operating on an expected loss of £4,000 per week. This was a huge concern as young people were witnessing these crimes with no retribution and this was giving the wrong message. A lot of people in the community were upset by this behaviour.

Cllr Montgomery reported that the Co-op in Whitley have a security guard that had improved the situation, and he would investigate this further.

Many people felt vulnerable going into the Co-op and frustrated that they were paying for goods when others were blatantly just walking out without paying.

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC), Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) team had been approached. They had not received reports from residents. This behaviour related to shoplifting that should be reported to the police either on 101 or online at www.thamesvalley.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/. Many residents complain on Facebook and other social media sites, but the police do not monitor these. They reported that this was a wider issue covering many areas in the borough and not just pinpointed in Shinfield.

ACTION –

- Problem to be raised at the Fields Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG)
- Shinfield Parish Council to write to the Co-op stating their concerns and suggesting that they revise the layout of the shop, have a security guard and set up a 'shop watch'
- Shinfield Parish Council to write to the Chief Constable and Crime Commissioner
- Shinfield Parish Council to facilitate a meeting between the Police, Co-op and other affected retail outlets experiencing similar problems

- 111.2 Members noted the resignation of BCllr Bell and that an election had been arranged for 5th December 2024.

24/112 Apologies and declarations of Members' Interest

- 112.1 Apologies had been received from Cllrs Boyer, Jahromi, Lias and Tatla
- 112.2 There were no declarations of interest
- 112.3 There were no changes to members' declarations of pecuniary interests

24/113 Minutes of the Meetings held on 25th September 2024

- 113.1 The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25th September 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record

Proposed: Cllr Clarke
Seconded: Cllr Johnson
Approved: 9 approvals, 2 abstentions

114.2 The following matters arising were discussed:

24/87.3

- 41.7 Cllr Fernandes to contact Oakbank School regarding ideas for the Natural History Museum

Cllr Fernandes reported that this was still ongoing

ACTION - Cllr Fernandes to contact Oakbank School regarding ideas for the Natural History Museum

- 78.8 Deputy Clerk to request options for dates and arrange the training for 'Communicating with your Council'

A training session had been arranged for Thursday, 21st November 2024 at 18:30 at the School Green Centre. All Councillors are encouraged to attend to make this a worthwhile training course.

- 82.2 Clerk to add to the agenda once a proposal had been drawn up for recognising significant contributions to the parish

This will be done in due course

- 91.6 Clerk to advise applicants of the outcome of the annual grants process

This would done this week.

- 24/100.2** Clerk to discuss the reutilisation of SIDS with the Facilities Manager, once appointed

The Facilities Manager started on 4th November, and this was on the list of items to be discussed with him.

- 24/100.2** Clerk to invite the WBC waste officer to discuss the process at the next meeting

The Clerk had not followed this item up

ACTION – The Clerk would follow this up for a further meeting.

- 24/101.6** Committees to apply the Terms of Reference to their respective committee

The Committee Terms of Reference had been circulated for implementation

- 24/103.1** Clerk to find out how SPC can make a submission to the LPU

This was on the agenda

- 24/103.1** Clerk to add the LPU to the agenda of the Planning and Highways Committee meeting

This had been done.

- 24/104.1** BCIlr Bell to take up with WBC and the volunteer group the tidying of war graves at the detached cemetery on Deardon Way for VE80 celebrations

BCIlr Bell had now resigned as a Borough Councillor. However the Clerk advised that he would be tasking his team to tidy around the war graves in advance of Remembrance Sunday and a wooden cross would be placed on each of the six graves recorded in the parish.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange the tidying of war graves in the parish

- 24/107.1** Clerk to add to the next agenda ‘Theft from the Co-op and drug dealing’

This was on the agenda

24/115

Reports from Borough Councillors

- 115.1 Members **NOTED** the written reports from BCIIrs Gray and Glover

- 115.2 The following matters were raised:

Lailey Path – there had been no further movement from WBC. A question was raised as to whether SPC would pay for the path.

ACTION – Clerk to contact Richard Curtis, WBC to see what was required

Deep Leap play park – this was not suitable for children to play football and it had been suggested that the environmental field at Hayes Drive becomes an orchard. Concern was expressed that there was a lack of space for this kind of activity in this area.

ACTION –

- CIIr Glover would feedback that it would be preferable to not have an orchard in this area but an open space where people could kick a football around with a few picnic tables.
- Clerk to write to Ray Barry and request that trees are not planted until feedback from the next Facilities Committee meeting.

CIIr Glover reported that she had received several complaints about speeding on Hyde End Lane. There was too much traffic coming from Fullbrook Avenue onto Hyde End Lane and it was recognised that once the new football pitches were operational there would be more traffic. As stated earlier it was intended to resume the use of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDS).

- 20:53 *1 member of the public left the meeting*

24/116

Reports from Committees and associated Working Parties

116.1

Facilities Committee

Cllr Clarke reported on the following:-

- High Copse Pavilion would be taken over by SPC on 15th November 2024
- The planning application for Millworth Lane Sports Park was due to be submitted to WBC

Members **NOTED** the minutes of Facilities Committee held on 2nd October 2024

Sports Working Party

There was nothing further to report.

School Green Working Party

There was nothing further to report.

116.2

Arts, Culture and Events Committee

Cllr Matic reported on the following:-

- The cinema would be operational from 1st November 2024
- Working on the Art Exhibition for February half-term 2025
- 80th Anniversary of VE Day event

Members **NOTED** the minutes of Arts, Culture and Events Committee held on 3rd October 2024

116.3

Minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee

It was noted that the 'Village Gates' project would be followed up after the new Facilities Manager was in post.

The plot of land adjacent to the potential site of the proposed Spencers Wood Primary School had now been sold. SPC had applied for this to be registered as an 'asset of community value', however, WBC had not had time to expedite this prior to the sale.

Members **NOTED** the minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee meetings held on 9th October 2024

Traffic Working Party

There was nothing further to report.

116.4 **Minutes of the Finance Committee**

The following points were raised:-

- Income and expenditure was on track, there had been some savings on salaries and increased interest income.
- Consideration was required for future CIL expenditure.
- An ongoing analysis of S106 showed £110 raised in respect of developments within the parish but only approximately £50m had been associated with work in the parish.
- Budget training session had been held for Councillors.

Members **NOTED** the minutes of the Finance Committee held on 16th October 2024

116.5 **Corporate Governance Working Party**

Terms of Reference were approved at last month's meeting and work had started on reviewing and updating the Standing Orders. The timetable is for three meetings of the working party before the December Finance and General Purposes meeting and then in turn to Full Council in December.

116.6 **Chairman's Report**

Cllr Grimes reported that he had:-

- drafted a response on the WBC Local Plan Update (LPU)
- drafted the SPC Education Policy
- attended a meeting driven by Arborfield and Newland Parish Council regarding the southern development project, as a result of the WBC LPU
- attended the official opening of the cinema
- progressed SPC's representation on the board of governors at St Mary's Junior School

116.7 **Reports from Outside Bodies**

BALC

Cllr Peer reported that she had been unable to attend the last meeting

Borough and Parish Liaison Group

Cllrs Grimes and Peer had attended the most recent meeting which discussed:-

- EV charging points
- Lack of response from WBC officers
- 'Department of Communications' – partnership working was now 'Customer Services'

21:15 *1 member of the public left the meeting*

24/117

School Green Centre

117.1 Screening Facility

The official opening of the Shinfield Cinema took place on 4th October and was well attended by members of the public with lots of interest in the Ghostbusters props and Ecto-1 car. The Ghostbusters film was shown in the cinema as this was the first film produced at the Shinfield Studios.

The screen selection panel had selected a variety of films to show on Fridays from 1st November to the end of December. There would be no screening on 6th December as the Christmas Fayre and Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree was taking place.

117.2 Lease between Shinfield Parish Council and Crumbs Café

The quarterly meeting with the working party had been intended to take place on 21st October but had been cancelled due to the Clerk being ill. The meeting would be rescheduled for after the half-term holiday and the lease and other matters will be discussed in more detail.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange the next meeting between Crumbs Café and SPC

24/118

Local Plan Update (LPU)

(this item was discussed earlier in the meeting after 'Public Questions')

118.1 Cllr Grimes had prepared a draft response to the WBC LPC with input from Cllr Lias and the Clerk. Submission of the response was due on 12th November 2024.

Members **AGREED** to the proposed response that had been previously circulated.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Lias for his detailed input into the draft response on the WBC LPU.

ACTION – Clerk to submit the SPC response to the WBC LPU by 12th November 2024.

118.2 Arborfield and Newland Parish Council – request for joint funding for a planning consultant

A request had been received from Arborfield and Newland Parish Council for £2,026 plus VAT for a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. It was felt that this was important as SPC was concerned about the risk of flooding should the proposed Hall Farm development proceed. The Clerk reported that there was money set aside for consultancy.

Cllr Matic would make enquiries with the Department for the Environment Agency and report back before any decision was taken to engage specialist advice.

24/119

Education Matters

- 119.1 Cllr Grimes had drafted a statement on education provision in Shinfield Parish for Yuan Yang, MP. Cllr Lias had also contributed comments on this draft.

It was recognised that there were now many stakeholders and institutions in the parish including Thames Valley Science Park, British Museum, Natural History Museum, Kew Botanical Gardens and the Shinfield Studios. Educational needs had not grown in parallel with the increased population. Cllr Hoyle agreed to supply an additional paragraph to supplement the proposed draft.

Members **APPROVED** the statement on education provision in Shinfield Parish with the suggested amendments

Proposed - Cllr Peer
Seconded - Cllr Jones
Agreed - Unanimously

ACTION –

- Cllr Hoyle to provide an additional paragraph for inclusion in the draft
- Clerk to send statement on education provision in Shinfield Parish to Yuan Yang, MP once additional information had been included and approved by members

24/120

Joint meeting with the University of Reading and Shinfield Parish Council

- 120.1 A meeting had been held on 16th October 2024 and the following was discussed:-

- Terms of reference were agreed
- Natural History Museum were pushing for the University of Reading (UoR) to sign the lease
- Hospital – UoR given until August 2025
- Cllr James requested longer leases from the UoR
- Proposed Hall Farm development – opportunity to influence phasing
- Aldergrove land – this would revert to UoR if no extension to the school
- SPC requested to buy the freehold of the new part of the School Green Centre building
- SPC would ideally like to own all areas around SPC
- SANG charges - Bellway to provide money for the SANGS
- Residents' lease – 2-7 hectares of The Ridge, no formal agreement, index linked, service charge attached to the Deeds. Nigel Frankland, UoR to look at contracts; tenants have documents. Solicitors were recommended by Bellway and were Bellway solicitors. Charges had started this year.

24/121

Anti-Social Behaviour

- 121.1 This had been addressed under public questions

24/122

Correspondence

- 122.1 Footpath from the end of Lailey Path/Hyde End Road to Shinfield Infant and Nursery School

Members considered an update on the progression of the path from BCllr Glover

- 122.2 **WBC's Community Governance Review**
(this was discussed at the beginning of the meeting)

The Clerk advised that WBC had indicated that they would be conducting a Community Governance Review of Town & Parish Councils which would run through 2025 starting with setting the Terms of Reference for the review. This would be included as an agenda item for November's Full Council meeting to allow adequate time for discussion. The government guidance suggests that such reviews should be conducted every 10-15 years and it has been over 20 years since one was carried out by WBC.

ACTION –

- Clerk to put on the agenda of the next Full Council meeting.

- 122.3 **WBC's Standards Committee report for 2023-24**

The Annual report of the Standards Committee for 2023/24 had been circulated with the papers.

Members **NOTED** the report

- 122.4 **Councils Underspend on Social Housing**

The Clerk drew attention to an article in the Times on Monday regarding the sums of money councils were "sitting on" for social housing and schools. The headline figure was £8bn but there was a specific mention of Wokingham "where the council is holding £41 million paid for by developers to support the delivery of affordable housing in the borough (the second-highest of any council), local house prices are more than ten times local wages.

Data released by WBC showed that in 2022-23 the council spent £680,000 on emergency accommodation for homeless households and a further £200,00 on temporary accommodation."

24/122

Invoices for Payment

- 122.1 **Payments made within the Clerk's financial delegation**

Members **NOTED** the payments made within the Clerk's financial delegation

- 122.2 **Payments made on Barclaycard within the Clerk's financial delegation**

Members **NOTED** the payments made on Barclaycard within the Clerk's financial delegation

122.3 Payments outside the Clerk's financial delegation

There were no payments outside the Clerk's delegation.

Proposed: Cllr Lias
Seconded: Cllr Boyer
Approved: Unanimously

24/110 Date of Next Meeting

110.1 The date of the next meeting was Wednesday, 20th November 2024

Meeting ended at 21:47

DRAFT

List of Actions

24/111.1	Antisocial Behaviour	
	Problem to be raised at the Fields Neighbourhood Action Group	CLlr Peer
	Shinfield Parish Council to write to the Co-op stating their concerns and suggesting that they revise the layout of the shop, have a security guard and set up a 'shop watch'	Clerk
	Shinfield Parish Council to write to the Chief constable and Crime Commissioner	Clerk
	Shinfield Parish Council to facilitate a meeting between the Police, Co-op and other affected retail outlets experiencing similar problems	Clerk
24/87.3		
41.7	CLlr Fernandes to contact Oakbank School regarding ideas for the Natural History Museum	Clerk
24/100.2	The Clerk to invite the WBC waste officer to discuss the process at a further meeting	Clerk
24/104.1	Clerk to arrange the tidying of war graves in the parish	Clerk
24/115.2	Clerk to contact Richard Curtis, WBC to see what was required	Clerk
24/115.2	CLlr Glover would feed back that it would be preferable to not have an orchard on the environmental field but an open space where people could kick a football around with a few picnic tables	CLlr Glover
24/115.2	Clerk to write to Ray Barry and request that trees are not planted until feedback from the next Facilities Committee meeting.	Clerk
24/117.2	Clerk to arrange the next meeting between Crumbs Café and SPC	Clerk
24/118.1	Clerk to submit the SPC response to the WBC LPU by 12 th November 2024	Clerk
24/119.1	CLlr Hoyle to provide and additional paragraph for inclusion in the draft statement on education	CLlr Hoyle
24/119.1	Clerk to send statement on education provision in Shinfield Parish to Yuan Yang, MP once additional information had been included and approved by members	Clerk
24/122.2	Clerk to put on the agenda of the next Full Council meeting	Clerk

Borough Councillor Reports

Councillor Edmonds

Councillor Gray

Meetings have been ongoing with Children's Services, and Overview and Scrutiny Management committee.

Of interest in the Children's services committee coming up in the new year will be the schools place planning strategy, which will hopefully have more information on the progress of the Spencer's Wood Primary School. Prue gave an update at the latest meeting; the difficulty of places (as I'm sure SPC is aware from many discussions) is that primary places across the borough are projected to fall, due to falling birthrates etc., but demand in Shinfield is still high, therefore there may not be the need for extra places in the borough even if there is need in Shinfield. There are similar challenges with secondary places although it is a bit more complex.

Sarah and I attended a successful residents meeting at the School Green Centre regarding the Shinfield Garden's and Longacre development with SANG charges. Residents led the meeting and over 80 people turned up. We and they will be challenging Reading University on these charges, there are lots of inconsistencies in contracts.

I attended the LPU consultation event at the school green centre on 29th October. I talked with a few officers raising the issue of roads; particularly congestion on Lower Earley Way (which I think could be a disaster with the bridge).

I attended the Community Engagement event in Shinfield North on 30th October in the Shinfield Park area. I met the SHARE team from Shinfield as well as the organisers of the Shinfield Pantry and community engagement teams. Lots of positive work going on in these areas.

On 31st October I visited Alexander Divine Children's Hospice in Maidenhead- many children from the borough are referred here and use the facilities; it is the only facility of it's kind in Berkshire. It is an incredibly impressive facility; the tour was very interesting and very moving. I will be raising the issue of funding with Yuan as there are questions about the security of future funding arrangements on the Berkshire side of the area they provide for.

Apologies for missing another SPC meeting- I have a school concert followed by a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board.

Casework

- SANG charges and management fees are ongoing in new developments. Still holding regular meetings with residents, Reading University and Bellway homes.
- Junction of Bolton Drive and Deardon still an issue. I have raised this once again with highways to try and find out what can be done to make the markings clearer.
- Some ongoing ASB issues across the area.
- Supporting with some housing need requests.

Councillor Glover

Councillor Srinivasan

Councillor Munro

Minutes of a meeting of
The Facilities Committee
held on Wednesday 30th October 2024
at School Green Centre commencing at 19:30

Present: Cllrs Clarke (Chair), Jahromi, James, Johnson and Peer

Attending: B Winton (Clerk)

24/FC/104 Public Questions

104.1 There were no public questions

24/FC/105 Apologies and declarations of Members' Interest

105.1 There were apologies for absence from Cllrs Boyer and Masseron and Sally Herring (Deputy Clerk)

105.2 There were no declarations of Members' interests

24/FC/106 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

106.1 The minutes of the Facilities Committee meeting held on 2nd October 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed as such by Cllr Clarke

Proposed: Cllr Peer
Seconded: Cllr Johnson
Approved: Unanimously

106.2 The following matters arising from the meeting held on 2nd October were discussed:

24/FC/82 Clerk to chase AOC regarding the hatch in the café kitchen

24/FC/71.2

The Clerk had now received confirmation from AOC that a hatch was possible in the desired location and confirmed the arrangement with Crumbs. A detailed specification had been commissioned to ensure the hatch linked into the fire alarm system.

ACTION – Facilities Manager to arrange installation of the hatch

24/FC/83.4 Clerk to write to Sport England and Football Foundation to clarify the situation regarding football pitches at Millworth Lane

This was on the Action list twice and Item 95.4 refers.

24/FC/84.3 Clerk to add to the agenda of the Planning and Highways Committee meeting the issue of Lailey Path

This had been done.

24/FC/89.1 Clerk to progress moving of bin from Fullbrook Avenue to Hyde End Road

This had not yet been done. The Clerk would task the Facilities Manager to move this item on.

ACTION – Facilities Manager to progress moving of bin from Fullbrook Avenue to Hyde End Road

24/FC/89.2 Clerk to add to the agenda 'use of drugs and theft' at the Full Council meeting

This had been done.

24/FC/95.2 Questions to be submitted for the meeting to be held between SPC and UoR on 16th October

This had been done.

24/FC/95.4 Clerk to write to Sport England and Football Foundation to clarify the situation regarding football pitches at Millworth Lane

This was on the agenda at Item 4.4

24/FC/95.6 Clerk to send Cllr Johnson details of temporary matting for cricket

The Clerk apologised for not sending this to Cllr Johnson. However a discussion with Cllr Clarke and a representative of Shinfield Cricket Club on Friday 25th October had indicated that the club would prefer not to use such a system and indeed already had similar equipment that was unused.

24/FC/96.3 Clerk to obtain quotes for the cost of a path from Shinfield Infant School to the crossing on Hyde End Road

This was on the agenda.

24/FC/97.1 Clerk to arrange for the upgrade to the Community Room at the Spencers Wood Pavilion

This was on the agenda.

24/FC/98.1 Clerk to check with the Shinfield Cricket Club as to the plans for the roller

This was on the agenda at Item 7.1

24/FC/98.1 Clerk to check the insurance conditions for the roller at the Manor Pavilion

The Clerk suggested that this was also taken at Item 7.1

24/FC/98.2 Clerk to chase the Head Partnership regarding access to the Ryeish Green Pavilion

This was on the agenda at Item 7.2

24/FC/98.4 Clerk to draw up a list of equipment required for High Copse Pavilion and submit to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for approval

This had been done and approved by the Finance & General Purposes Committee for up to £30,000 from CIL funds. This was to equip the pavilion internally and sports equipment would be the subject of a future request. The order will be submitted shortly.

24/FC/98.5 Clerk to set up a working party to progress a process for the usage of the pitches at High Copse

This has not been done yet.

ACTION – Clerk to set up a working party to progress a process for the usage of the pitches at High Copse

24/FC/98.6 Cllr Johnson be requested to take a drone picture of the High Copse area

This had been done.

24/FC/107

Sports Provision

107.1 Toilets for Millworth Lane

There was no change to the previously reported delivery date of early December. The Facilities Manager would be overseeing the installation.

107.2 Sports Working Party

High Copse

Members were not minded to accept a 50-year lease for High Copse and felt a longer period should be secured.

ACTION – Clerk to confirm how long the lease would be offered for

The Clerk was also asked to establish the grounds maintenance costs for the site

ACTION – Clerk to establish the ongoing grounds maintenance costs for the site

Millworth Sport Park

The planning application was with WBC and would hopefully be live on their planning portal in the next few days.

107.3 Assets of Community Value

There was a discussion on whether both the above locations should be included on a potential list of Assets of Community Value. Other potential buildings or sites included; School Green Centre, Spencers Wood Pavilion, Allotments, Deardon Field, Manor Ground Pavilion and playing field, area along Beke Avenue and Shinfield Players Theatre.

It was proposed and agreed that this matter be referred to the Planning & Highways Committee for further consideration of the list of buildings and sites that should be considered.

Proposed: Cllr James
Seconded: Cllr Johnson
Approved: Unanimously

ACTION – Clerk to add Assets of Community Value to the agenda for the Planning & Highways Committee meeting on 6th November 2024

107.4 Hyde End Lane Football Pitches

The Chair advised that these pitches were doing well, and the expectation was that they would be ready to play on from September 2025.

107.5 Environmental Field

There was a discussion on the condition of the environmental field that lies to the Southeast of J11 of the M4. Cllr Johnson agree to take images of the area.

ACTION – Cllr Johnson to take images of the Environmental Field that lies to the Southeast of J11 of the M4

107.6 Deer Leap Park

There was also discussion on the area that lies adjacent to the playground in the Deer Leap Park development (to the south of Coronation Drive in Three Mile Cross). There were proposals to plant the area as an orchard, but members felt that there was more value to the community in keeping the area relatively open with some limited planting of trees and some benches.

ACTION - The Clerk to raise with Wokingham Borough Council

107.7 Millworth Sports Park – Football Grants

The Clerk had not yet been able to action this item.

ACTION - Clerk to write to Sport England and Football Foundation to clarify the situation regarding football pitches at Millworth Lane

107.8 Temporary Options for Shinfield Cricket Club Junior Teams

At the meeting on 25th October there had been a discussion regarding the provision of a temporary “roll out” cricket strip which would have allowed junior cricket to have been played at Spencers Wood recreation Ground when Millworth Lane was no longer available.

The cricket club did not wish to play on a roll out strip and instead had suggested that a more viable option for them would be to provide one extra grass strip for their older junior teams to one side of the Square at the Manor Ground and an artificial strip on the other side of the Square.

There was a concern that the junior strip would encroach on to the required run off space for the football pitch and the view was that any decision on additional cricket must not be at the expense of the football requirements at the ground.

ACTION – Clerk to verify this with Shinfield Cricket Club

107.9 Drainage at the Manor Ground

There were concerns that Manor Ground was suffering from drainage issues. This has an impact on clubs and parents when the ground is not available for scheduled matches. The Clerk was asked to write to the University of Reading to ascertain their views with respect to drainage at the site.

ACTION – Clerk was asked to write to the University of Reading to ascertain their views with respect to drainage at the site

24/FC/108**School Green Centre and School Green**

108.1 School Green Cinema Facility

The Clerk advised that the final elements of work on the Shinfield Cinema had been taking place this week.

108.2 School Green Centre

The new Facilities Manager will be asked to look at the following:

- Long term maintenance schedule
- Reviewing and retendering the cleaning contract

Cllr Peer asked if it the car park bay used by the council van during the day could be made available at the weekend and in the evenings.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange the Facilities Manager to consider options for this item

108.3 School Green Working Party – Footpath across School Green

The Clerk advised this will be a task for the new Facilities Manager to identify options and associated costs to bring to a future Facilities Committee Meeting for a formal decision on the matter. Cllr Johnson advised that in an online poll he had arranged on a personal basis there had been no opposition to a permanent footpath.

ACTION – Facilities Manager to be tasked with identifying potential options for a footpath across the School Green and submit these to a future committee meeting

108.4 Options for providing meeting audio and video

The Deputy Clerk was still obtaining quotes for the necessary equipment to allow meetings to be streamed from either Tower Room or Grazeley Room. These installations would also support the introduction of AI into preparing digests of meetings.

ACTION – Deputy Clerk to develop options and costs for the provision of the necessary equipment in the Tower and Grazeley rooms for streaming and recording council meetings

24/FC/109**Spencers Wood Pavilion**

109.1 Upgrade to the Community Room

The Deputy Clerk was leading on this parcel of work and would be picking up again when she returned from leave.

ACTION – Deputy Clerk to progress the upgrade to the Community Room at the Spencers Wood Pavilion

Other Council buildings

110.1 Manor Ground including storage of equipment

Following the meeting on 25th October, the cricket club had been requested to ensure the battery had been removed from the roller while not required over the winter. At the meeting, there had been a discussion about the possibility of providing a shed on site that would allow the roller and other equipment to be protected from the elements and add an additional level of security.

The Clerk advised that the insurance cover requires that we “must take reasonable steps to prevent accident or injury and to protect your property against loss or damage.” It is likely that the provision of a shed or similar would be seen as a reasonable step.

ACTION – Facilities Manager to prepare a formal bid for the installation of a shed at the Manor Ground including checking if any planning permission is required.

110.2 Ryeish Green Pavilion

The Clerk had spoken to the solicitor on Monday and pressed the need to resolve this matter by providing a formal position to the council on the subject.

ACTION – Clerk to chase the Head Partnership regarding access to Ryeish Green Pavilion

110.3 High Copse Pavilion

The Chair advised that a provisional date for handover to Shinfield Parish Council from the University of Reading was the 15th November.

A draft Lease based on that for the Manor Ground had been received from the University and this had been referred to the council’s solicitors.

Would be looking to “move in” as soon as furniture was available although this may not be until early January.

Flooding on footpath had been addressed by the installation of a French Drain along its length.

110.4 High Copse Pavilion – Use of Facilities

At the last meeting it was discussed that the Clerk would set up a working party to consider the process of deciding usage at High Copse.

ACTION – Clerk to set up a working party to progress a process for the usage of the pitches at High Copse

110.5 **High Copse – Grass Seeding and Community Garden**

The Chair advised on additional work and lawn seeding that would be carried out by the contractors. However the concern was that the ground was still very stony.

24/FC/111 Microgeneration

111.1 The Clerk advised that he had not been able to identify a potential consultant who could advise on the entire council estate. However following a suggestion from Cllr Matic he had arranged a meeting with WBC's energy officer (Wednesday 20th November at 1.30) which Cllr James would also attend.

The Clerk was also going to contact the relevant institute for further information

ACTION – Clerk to report back to the committee following the meeting with WBC Energy Officer

24/FC/112 Allotments

112.1 The Allotments AGM had been held in Spencers Wood Pavilion on Monday 21st October with 18 allotment holders attending. The discussions had been very positive with regards to matters such as charging deposits for new allotment holders and the arrangements for out of parish allotment holders.

24/FC/113 Parish Wide Items

113.1 Wokingham Borough Council Proposal regarding Spencers Wood Library

The Clerk advised members of an approach from WBC regarding support for Spencers Wood library. The request was for financial support (potentially up to £13k) but the Clerk had suggested that a wider of consideration of options may offer up other potential options.

The Clerk was asked to gain more information on current usage levels to allow a more informed consideration of the request.

ACTION – Clerk to gain more information on current usage of Spencers Wood Library to allow further consideration at the next meeting.

24/FC/114 Correspondence

114.1 There were no items of correspondence.

24/FC/115 Date of Next Meeting

115.1 The next meeting would be held on Wednesday, 27th November 2024

The meeting ended at 21:05

List of Actions

24/FC/82

24/FC/71.2	Facilities Manager to arrange installation of the hatch in the café kitchen	Facilities Manager
24/FC/89.1	Facilities Manager to progress moving a bin from Fullbrook Avenue to Hyde End Road	Facilities Manager
24/FC/98.5	Clerk to set up a working party to progress a process for the usage of the pitches at High Copse	Clerk

24/FC/107.2	Clerk to confirm how long the lease would be offered for High Copse	Clerk
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24/FC/107.2	Clerk to establish the ongoing grounds maintenance costs for the High Copse site	Clerk
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24/FC/107.3	Clerk to add Assets of Community Value to the agenda for the Planning and Highways Committee meeting on 6 th November 2024	Clerk
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24/FC/107.5	Cllr Johnson to take images of the Environmental Field that lies to the Southeast of J11 of the M4	Cllr Johnson
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24/FC/107.6	The Clerk to raise with Wokingham Borough Council the area that lies adjacent to Der Leap Park where it was proposed to plant an orchard	Clerk
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24/FC/107.7	Clerk to write to Sport England and Football Foundation to clarify the situation regarding football pitches at Millworth Lane	Clerk
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24/FC/107.8	Clerk to verify with Shinfield Cricket Club the requirements for the junior cricket teams	Clerk
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24/FC/107.9	Clerk to write to the University of Reading to ascertain their views with respect to drainage at the Manor Ground site	Clerk
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24/FC/108.2	Clerk to arrange for the Facilities Manager to consider options for a long term maintenance schedule and to review and retender the cleaning contract for the School Green Centre	Clerk
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24/FC/108.3	Facilities Manager to be tasked with identifying potential options for a footpath across the School Green and submit these to a future committee meeting	Facilities Manager
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24/FC/108.4	Deputy Clerk to develop options and costs for the provision of the necessary equipment in the Tower and Grazeley Rooms for streaming and recording council meetings	Deputy Clerk
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24/FC/109.1	Deputy Clerk to progress the upgrade to the Community room at the Spencers Wood Pavilion	Deputy Clerk
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24/FC/110.1	Facilities Manager to prepare a formal bid for the installation of a shed at the Manor Ground including checking if any planning permission is required.	Facilities Manager
24/FC/110.2	Clerk to chase the Head Partnership regarding access to Ryeish Green Pavilion	Clerk
24/FC/110.4	Clerk to set up a working party to progress a process for the usage of the pitches at High Copse	Clerk
24/FC/111.1	Clerk to report back to the committee following the meeting with WBC Energy Officer	Clerk
24/FC/113.1	Clerk to gain more information on current usage of Spencers Wood Library to allow further consideration at the next meeting	Clerk

Minutes of a meeting of
the Arts, Culture and Events Committee
Held on Thursday 31st October 2024
at School Green Centre commencing at 19.30

Present: Cllrs Jahromi (Vice-Chair), James, Jones and Peer

Attending: B Winton (Clerk)

24/ACE/80 Public Questions

80.1 There were no public questions

24/ACE/81 Apologies and declarations of Members' Interest

81.1 There were apologies from Cllrs Matic & Montgomery for this meeting

81.2 There were no declarations of members' interests

24/ACE/82 Minutes of the previous meeting

82.1 The minutes of the committee meeting of 3rd October 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed as such by Cllr Jahromi

Proposed: Cllr Peer
Seconded: Cllr James
Approved: Unanimously

82.2 Actions and Matters Arising

60.2 Clerk to ascertain the time frame for work on the plaza

The Clerk had been advised that Wokingham Borough Council were expecting the initial work on the plaza to start for Christmas. The Clerk had made WBC aware of SPC's wish to provide for the public art installation and requested that the developer's contractor be asked to contact him. Following the Facilities Meeting on 30th October the Clerk would also be contacting Phil Milburn at WBC with the same the questions.

ACTION – Clerk confirm timetable of work for the public plaza and request consideration of the needs of the public art installation

- 63.1 Clerk to ask other parish councils to promote the art exhibition in their newsletters

The Clerk advised that he would make a request nearer the date.

ACTION – Clerk to ask other parish councils to promote the art exhibition in their newsletters

- 63.2 Cllr Montgomery to arrange for Cllr James to be second signatory on the Shinfield North Community Fund account

There was no update on this matter.

ACTION – Cllr Montgomery to arrange for Cllr James to be second signatory on the Shinfield North Community Fund account

- 63.4 Clerk to obtain costs for lighting on the decorative screens on the School Green to coincide with the period of the Christmas tree

The Clerk had requested a quote for the additional lighting required which would be the same as installed on the Christmas tree on the School Green. The lights would be installed at the same time as the tree.

ACTION – Clerk to obtain costs for lighting on the decorative screens on the School Green to coincide with the period of the Christmas tree

- 63.4 Clerk to investigate options for providing a community Christmas tree in Grazeley

The Chair of GVMH had advised that they would be delighted to receive support from the council. They arrange a Christmas tree from a company in Newbury and would welcome a financial contribution.

ACTION – Clerk to establish level of costs involved in providing a Christmas tree for Grazeley Village Memorial Hall

- 64.3 Clerk and Cllr Matic to follow up with University of Reading and Activate Learning regarding their possible involvement

The University have reconfirmed their desire to work with the council and will be writing to the Clerk shortly with more information regarding that particular strand of work.

In the meantime they have also asked to work with us on another project. UoR students are working with community participants. While they have the editing facilities, they would like to support workshops at SCG and eventually show the finished film there. They would also like to engage with interested residents to participate.

It was agreed that SPC would support this project.

- 74.2 Clerk to amend the pricing for cinema tickets for the screenings in November & December 2024

This would be put in place. The initial pricing would be Adult £5, Concessions £4, Children £3 and a Family ticket £12 (one adult and three children or 2 adults and 2 children)

However the ticketing system was not yet ready to be used and so the Clerk was offering the scheduled films for free on a first come first served basis. Despicable Me 4 has been very popular (189 tickets requested in total) but A Quiet Place Day One much less so (14).

- 76.1 Clerk to discuss with Arts4Wokingham and develop an initial Gannt chart for the project

This is on the agenda.

- 77.1 Clerk to arrange purchase of a beacon for the VE 80th Anniversary event and develop the overall plan for the event

This was in hand.

- 77.2 Clerk to speak to the University of Reading regarding the use of the ridge SANG for the VE80th Anniversary Event

The University had agreed in principle for the ridge to be used for this event and the Clerk would liaise with Jules Shaw (Land management Surveyor for the University) regarding the details.

- 78.1 Clerk to arrange SPC involvement in the St Mary's Church Christmas Tree Festival

This was being arranged and Francesca Lane was going to lead on delivery for SPC.

24/ACE/83

Developing Arts & Culture in the parish

- 83.1 **Art Exhibition**

Now that the cinema was operational this would be the next focus of work.

- 83.2 **Possible Events for Shinfield North**

The Christmas Tree will be installed on Frensham Green again this year. The Clerk was asked to see if there was any appetite for a larger scale "switch on" of these lights.

ACTION – Clerk to establish if there was any appetite for a larger scale "switch on" of the Frensham Green Christmas tree lights

83.3 **Christmas Activities**

The Christmas Fayre and Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree was confirmed for Friday 6th December and rooms booked accordingly. Pound Green and Grazeley rooms would be used for the Fayre and the cinema would be set up to play a montage of Christmas movies.

24/ACE/84

School Green Centre Cinema

84.1 The opening event went well and set a standard for future council led events.

Staff are being trained up on the use of the cinema and an illustrated step by step guide has been written and tested on staff

This week will be the first true test of a full house (Friday @ 4.00).

24/ACE/85

Public Art

85.1 Arts4Wokingham had provided a draft agreement covering their involvement in the Public Art project. Members were concerned about some of the terms of the agreement e.g. that all the responsibility lay with SPC and asked that the matter be referred to Full Council for their consideration.

ACTION – Clerk to add the Arts4Wokingham Agreement to the agenda for the next Full Council meeting

85.2 Public Art Working Party

Cllrs Matic, Peer and James had agreed to be on the Working Party and would be joined by the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Facilities Manager. It was suggested that the Allotments Officer who had a strong interest in art. The Working Party would be convened once the decision had been made on the agreement with Arts4Wokingham.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange the first meeting of the Public Art Working Party

24/ACE/86

VE Day 80th Anniversary Event

86.1 This event, to take place on Thursday 8th May 2025, had been approved at Full Council on 25th September 2024.

It was suggested that a food offering could be included in the event and the Clerk advised that part of the national celebration was fish & chips as this had not been put on the ration during the Second World War.

ACTION – Clerk to investigate a possible fish & chip element to the VE 80th Anniversary Event

24/ACE/87

Correspondence

87.1 There was no correspondence.

24/ACE/88

Date of Next Meeting

88.1 The next meeting of the Arts, Culture and Events Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, 28th November 2024 at 19:30

The meeting ended at 20.05

DRAFT

List of Actions

60.2	Clerk confirm timetable of work for the public plaza and request consideration of the needs of the public art installation	Clerk
63.1	Clerk to ask other parish councils to promote the art exhibition in their newsletters	Clerk
63.2	Cllr Montgomery to arrange for Cllr James to be second signatory on the Shinfield North Community Fund account	Cllr Montgomery
63.4	Clerk to obtain costs for lighting on the decorative screens on the School Green to coincide with the period of the Christmas tree	Clerk
63.4	Clerk to establish level of costs involved in providing a Christmas tree for Grazeley Village Memorial Hall	Clerk
83.2	Clerk to establish if there was any appetite for a larger scale "switch on" of the Frensham Green Christmas tree lights	Clerk
85.1	Clerk to add the Arts4Wokingham Agreement to the agenda for the next Full Council meeting	Clerk
85.2	Clerk to arrange the first meeting of the Public Art Working Party	Clerk
86.1	Clerk to investigate a possible fish & chip element to the VE 80 th Anniversary Event	Clerk

Minutes of a meeting of
Children and Young Adults Committee
Held on Tuesday 5th November 2024
At School Green Centre commencing at 19:30

Present: Cllrs Fernandes, Grimes and Montgomery (Chair)

Attending: B Winton (Chief Executive and Clerk to the Parish Council)

24/CYA/49

Public Questions

49.1 There were no public questions

24/CYA/50

Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

50.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Johnson, Matic & Tatla

50.2 There were no declarations of members' interests

It was **NOTED** that Councillors Fernandes, Johnson and Matic had children of school age

24/CYA/51

Minutes of the previous meeting

51.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 10th September 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record

Proposed: Cllr Grimes
Seconded: Cllr Fernandes
Approved: Unanimously

51.2 Matters arising from the minutes

24/CYA/35.2 Clerk to invite a representative of Oakbank School to the Education Working Party

There has not been an Education Working Party meeting since the last meeting.

ACTION - Clerk to invite representatives of Oakbank School and Swallowfield Parish Council to the next Education Working Party meeting

- 24/CYA/37.2 Clerk to contact the Army Cadet Force (ACF) to see if they would be interested in participating in an event in 2025

The Clerk intended to raise this on Sunday after the Remembrance Parade.

ACTION - Clerk to contact the Army Cadet Force (ACF) to see if they would be interested in participating in an event in 2025

- 24/CYA/37.3 Clerk to arrange for increased signage around the Parish with QR codes to direct Youths to local groups

This had not yet been done.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange signage around the Parish with QR codes to direct Youths to local groups

- 24/CYA/38.1 Clerk to prepare options and quotes for displaying activities in the café area for the next meeting

This would be assigned to the Facilities Manager

ACTION - Clerk to task Facilities Manager with arranging options for displaying activities within the café area

- 24/CYA/38.1 Clerk to arrange for the ‘user-friendly’ agenda to be displayed

This has not been done as yet.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange introduction of “user-friendly” agendas to be displayed on noticeboards

- 24/CYA/39.1 Cllr Grimes to write to the governors prior to the meeting to request that SPC be represented on the new trust

This had been done and Cllr Fernandes would represent SPC on the board of governors for St Mary’s Church of England Junior School.

- 24/CYA/44.1 Clerk to follow up with Yuan Yang, MP for an update from the DfE on secondary education in the parish

This was on the agenda.

- 24/CYA/44.2 Clerk to request WBC to state on planning application 241861/2 that they had no intention of selling the land to the north of the site or not expanding the school in the future

This land had since been sold at auction.

24/CYA/44.2 Clerk to arrange a meeting of the Education Working Party

This was on the agenda.

24/CYA/45.2 Cllr Johnson to speak to the Chief Inspector at the Lower Earley Police Station regarding theft at the Co-op

This had been discussed at Full Council.

24/CYA/45.2 Cllr Johnson to write to the Co-op to ask how they were dealing with the situation

This had been discussed at Full Council.

24/CYA/45.2 Clerk to draft a letter for Cllr Grimes to send to the Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Inspector, Chief Constable, Borough Commander, Press and Yuan Yang, MP requesting that more resource was needed, specifically a visible police presence in the community

The Clerk had not yet drafted this letter.

ACTION – Clerk to draft the letter

24/CYA/47.1 Clerk to liaise with Earley Town Council on promoting Youth Events being held in both areas

This had been done and we would look for opportunities to work together.

24/CYA/52

Education

52.1 Oakbank School

The committee considered the response received from the Regional Director of the Department for Education (DfE) dated 31st October 2024. There was disappointment at the lack of detail provided in that response and that it did not address the specific issues relating to the parish or indeed recognise that the local area (including South of Reading) has three schools that are not performing at the required standard.

ACTION – Clerk to draft a response asking for more specific information relating to the parish of Shinfield and not Wokingham as a whole

ACTION – Clerk to arrange the required meeting with South Reading Borough Councillors

52.2 **Draft Education Policy for the Council**

Further amendments were discussed and made to the draft document which was then formally adopted.

Proposed: Cllr Grimes
Seconded: Cllr Fernandes
Approved: Unanimously

ACTION – Clerk to send the adopted policy to Yuan Yuan, MP for Earley & Woodley

52.3 **Mobile Free School**

There was support for the concept, but members wished to be certain that the students would “buy into” such a proposal as without their general compliance it was felt the scheme would be unlikely to achieve the overall desired results. Members would like to see some form of vote by the student body. If this had a positive outcome, then members agreed in principle to match fund up to 50% of the cost.

Proposed: Cllr Montgomery
Seconded: Cllr Fernandes
Approved: Unanimously

ACTION – Clerk to inform the school accordingly

52.4 **Education Matters in the Parish**

Following the previous item there was a discussion regarding mobile phones in primary schools and the Clerk was asked to ascertain the current policies of schools in the parish with regards to mobile phones and if there were any thoughts on how best to manage the issue.

ACTION – Clerk to write to primary schools within the parish to confirm their current policy towards mobile phones and ask their views on how best to manage the issue

52.5 **Education Working Party**

The Clerk was asked to arrange the next meeting of the Working Party

ACTION – Clerk to arrange the next Education Working Party meeting

52.6 **Assets of Community Value**

It was noted that the site on Hyde End Lane earmarked for a second phase of any new primary school for Spencers Wood had been sold. The Clerk had requested that Wokingham still conclude the application to have the land considered as an Asset of Community Value. The Clerk was also asked to include the land adjacent to Alder Grove school on the list of locations to be covered as Asset of Community Value.

24/CYA/53 Anti-Social Behaviour

53.1 Update on anti-social behaviour issues within the Parish

There was nothing to add to the discussion held at Full Council on 23rd October 2024.

24/CYA/54 Youth Matters

54.1 **Youth Event**

It was noted that High Copse was expected to be handed over to SPC in mid-November.

54.2 **Young Councillors Working Party**

The Clerk had not yet been able to progress this item.

ACTION – Clerk to progress ideas for the creation of a Young Councillors Working Party

54.3 **Engagement with children and young adults**

The Shinfield Cinema was now operating and once this element had bedded in the Clerk would then start to explore opportunities for other activities with children and young adults e.g. Gaming evenings or film screenings specifically for the youth club.

ACTION – Clerk to develop proposals for the use of the cinema equipment for youth club film evenings and gaming sessions

24/CYA/55 Correspondence

55.1 There was no correspondence for discussion

24/CYA/56 Date of Next Meeting

56.1 The date of the next Children and Young Adults Committee meeting will be 13th January 2025

The meeting ended at _____

List of Actions

35.2	Clerk to invite representatives of Oakbank School and Swallowfield Parish Council to the next Education Working Party meeting	Clerk
37.2	Clerk to contact the Army Cadet Force (ACF) to see if they would be interested in participating in an event in 2025	Clerk
37.3	Clerk to arrange signage around the Parish with QR codes to direct Youths to local groups	Clerk
38.1	Clerk to task Facilities Manager with arranging options for displaying activities within the café area	Clerk
38.1	Clerk to arrange introduction of “user-friendly” agendas to be displayed on noticeboards	Clerk
45.2	Clerk to draft a letter for Cllr Grimes to send to the Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Inspector, Chief Constable, Borough Commander, Press and Yuan Yang, MP requesting that more resource was needed, specifically a visible police presence in the community	Clerk
52.1	Clerk to draft a response asking for more specific information relating to the parish of Shinfield and not Wokingham as a whole	Clerk
52.1	Clerk to arrange the required meeting with South Reading Borough Councillors	Clerk
52.2	Clerk to send the adopted policy to Yuan Yuan, MP for Earley & Woodley	Clerk
52.3	Clerk to inform Oakbank School of the committee’s decision regarding mobile phone pouches	Clerk
52.4	Clerk to write to primary schools within the parish to confirm their current policy towards mobile phones and ask their views on how best to manage the issue	Clerk
52.5	Clerk to arrange the next Education Working Party meeting	Clerk
54.2	Clerk to progress ideas for the creation of a Young Councillors Working Party	Clerk
54.3	Clerk to develop proposals for the use of the cinema equipment for youth club film evenings and gaming sessions	Clerk

Minutes of a meeting of
Planning & Highways Committee
Held on Wednesday 6th November 2024
At School Green Centre commencing at 20.00

Present: Cllrs Boyer, Fernandes, Grimes, Hoyle, James, Jahromi, Lias, Masseron and Peer (Chair)

Attending: B Winton (Chief Executive and Clerk)
S Herring (Deputy Clerk)
1 member of the public

24/PC/104 Public Questions

104.1 There were no public questions.

24/PC/105 Apologies and declarations of Members' Interest

105.1 There were no apologies for absence.

105.2 There were no declarations of members' interests

24/PC/106 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

106.1 The minutes of the committee meeting of 9th October 2024 were approved and signed as such by Cllr Peer

Proposed: Cllr Boyer
Seconded: Cllr Grimes
Approved: Unanimously

106.2 **Actions and Matters Arising from the meeting held on 9th October 2024**

24/PC/94 Clerk to chase WBC for a response to the question "when did Woodcock
24/PC/85.2 Lane ceased being a bridle way and to request that motor vehicles are
restricted."

The Clerk had not been able to follow this up

ACTION – Clerk to chase WBC for a response to the question "when did Woodcock Lane ceased being a bridle way and to request that motor vehicles are restricted."

- 24/PC/90.1 Clerk to add the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan to the agenda of the next meeting
- This was on the agenda see minute 24/PC/112.1
- 24/PC/91.6 Clerk to circulate the website address of Richborough to committee members
- This had been done.
- 24/PC/99.1** Cllr Grimes to raise awareness of the issue with his contract at the consortium
- Cllr Grimes would follow this up.
- ACTION - Cllr Grimes to raise awareness of the issue with his contract at the consortium**
- 24/PC/99.2** Clerk to make enquiries to AOC to ascertain if a plan had previously been drawn up
- The Clerk reported that he had checked the files but had been unable to trace anything that related to a 'Spencers Wood Village Centre'.
- 24/PC/99.2** Clerk to add Traffic Working Party to the agenda for the next meeting
- The Clerk had nothing further to report in relation to the 'Spencers Wood Village Centre'.
- The Traffic Working Party was on the agenda, see minute 24/PC/110.2
- 24/PC/99.2** Cllrs Peer and Grimes to discuss at the next parish liaison group meeting
- Cllr Peer had raised the 'Spencers Wood Village Centre' at the parish liaison group and there was nothing further to report.
- 24/PC/99.3** Clerk to write to WBC with details of the agreement made at the meeting, and ask WBC to confirm the action in relation to the path at the end of Lailey Path / Hyde End Road and the Shinfield Infant and Nursery School
- This was on the agenda, see minute 24/PC/110.3
- 24/PC/99.3** Clerk to request that WBC install the barrier at the end of Lailey Path as soon as possible and not wait for the other issues to be resolved
- The Clerk had made this request but it was likely that this would be dealt with as part of the larger project.

24/PC/100.1 Clerk to make enquiries to see if there was a resident with expertise in climate change impacts

This had been included in the Newsletter but there had been no approaches made to the council.

24/PC/100.1 Cllr Grimes to write up an objection for approval at Full Council regarding WBC's LPU

This had been done.

24/PC/100.1 Clerk to add to the agenda of Full Council SPC's objections to the WBC LPU for approval

This had been done.

24/PC/100.1 Clerk to add to the agenda of Full Council a proposal to assist Arborfield and Newland Parish Council with the funding of a planning consultant

This had been done.

24/PC/101.1 Clerk to add the proposed 'Spencers Wood Centre' into the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan (SPNP)

This will be done when available. The SPNP was on the agenda, see minute 24/PC/112.1

24/PC/101.2 Clerk to add the Local Active Travel Plan (LATP) into the SPNP

This had been done.

24/PC/102.2 Clerk to circulate the invite from Grupotec to a public consultation to members of the committee

This had been done.

24/PC/103.3 Clerk to submit a request of 'Community Interest' in the land north of the proposed Spencers Wood Primary School

The request for the land to be regarded as an Asset of Community Value had been submitted but had not been decided. In the meantime, the land had been sold at auction. A request to complete consideration of the application had been made to Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) in case the land came up for sale again in the future.

Further discussion took place on requests for 'Assets of Community Value', see minute 24/PC/112.2

24/PC/103.4 Clerk to inform WBC of the views of SPC relating to the former Shire Hall site

The Clerk had written to Chris Howard, WBC, to make him aware of the views of Shinfield Parish Council (SPC) and had also shared this with the developers of the site.

24/PC/107

Schedule of Deposited Plans

107.1 Planning applications were circulated to members weekly and comments noted on the WBC planning portal.

107.2 Planning Application 232333 – Land East of Croft House, Croft Road, Shinfield, RG2 9EY

After further discussion, members agreed that they had nothing further to add to the comments previously made.

ACTION – Clerk to circulate the letter from AWE if this was available

107.3 Planning application 242484 – Land North of Arborfield Road

It was agreed that this application would be sent to members with the weekly batch of planning applications so it could be fully considered.

ACTION – Deputy Clerk to circulate PA242484 with weekly batch of planning applications

24/PC/108

Appeals

108.1 The Clerk advised that there was one change to the list provided last month and no new appeals.

Members **NOTED** the report.

24/PC/109

Enforcement Notices

109.1 Closed Enforcement Notices

Seven items had been deemed “No Breach” and one had seen an application submitted (“not built in accordance with approved plans”). Two were closed marked as “Other”

- Gravelly Bridge Farm (bunds created without permission)
- Amersham, Basingstoke Road (breach of condition regarding operating hours)

There was a query as to why RFS/2024/089803 (Shinfield Infant and Nursery School) had been added to the list as the ‘brick wall’ had not yet been removed.

ACTION – Clerk to request the report relating to RFS/2024/089803 (Shinfield Infant and Nursery School) from WBC

Members **NOTED** the report

109.2 Live Enforcement Notices

Two items were marked as “New”

- Mortimer Road Grazeley (change of use of agricultural land to residential garden)
- 4 Loxwood Close, Three Mile Cross (unauthorized building works)

Members **NOTED** the report

24/PC/110

Highways, Street Lighting and Footpath Matters

110.1 Footpath matters

Cllr Masseron referred members to the video footage circulated by Cllr Johnson showing the new path linking Ryeish Lane and Hyde End Lane, and to the Ramblers report.

110.2 Traffic Working Party

There had been no further meeting held. Cllr James and the Clerk were due to meet with Paul Fishwick, WBC, to discuss whether the Executive could support the progress of SPC’s requests.

ACTION – Cllr James and the Clerk to meet with Paul Fishwick, WBC regarding progress of SPC’s requested actions

110.3 Lailey Path / Hyde End Road footpath

SPC had received a request for a CIL contribution of £20,000 towards the creation of a footpath from the end of Lailey Path/Hyde End Road to the Shinfield Infant School.

Members **AGREED** to make available a maximum of £20,000 from the funds reserved for improving highways for the creation of a footpath from the end of Lailey Path/Hyde End Road to the Shinfield Infant School as this was important for the safety of the residents. They requested that WBC should be informed that SPC felt that this should have been originally considered as part of the west of Shinfield development.

Proposed: Cllr Lias
Seconded: Cllr Jahromi
Agreed: Unanimously

ACTION – Clerk to send the proposed response to Cllr Grimes for approval prior to responding to WBC

24/PC/111**Wokingham Borough Council's Local Plan Update (LPU)**

- 111.1 A response to the WBC LPU had been discussed and agreed at the previous Full Council meeting. Members did not feel there was anything else to add to the response and requested the Clerk to submit it accordingly.

ACTION – Clerk to submit SPC's response to WBC's LPU as agreed at Full Council in October 2024

24/PC/112**Renewal of Neighbourhood Plan**

- 112.1 Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan (SPNP)

No movement had taken place in the last month while considering the impact of the WBC LPU. The initial draft had been circulated to members of the committee on 9th September for consideration. A further meeting to proceed with the SPNP would be set up in due course.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange a meeting of the Working Party to proceed with the SPNP

- 112.2 Assets of Community Value

Following the sale of the land north of the proposed Spencers Wood Primary School, where it had been too late to register the land as an 'asset of community value', it was felt that SPC needed to consider other facilities in the parish in order to protect them from potential future sale.

Many sites were mentioned, however, it was felt that priority should be given to:-

- Manor Ground Pavilion and land
- High Copse Pavilion and land
- Land adjacent to Alder Grove School (to allow for future enlargement of the school if required)

Other sites identified to follow were:-

- School Green Centre (second phase)
- Spencers Wood Pavilion and Recreation Ground
- Millworth Lane Pavilion and Recreation Ground
- Deardon Field
- Ryeish Playing Fields
- Poundland
- Shinfield Players
- Green space west of Deer Leap Park
- SANGS
- School Green Car Park
- Spencers Wood Village Hall
- Spencers Wood Library
- Common and pond in Spencers Wood
- Nullis Farm
- Grazeley Village Hall

Proposed: Cllr James
Seconded: Cllr Grimes
Agreed: Unanimously

ACTION – Clerk to apply to register

- Manor Ground Pavilion and land
- High Copse Pavilion and land
- Land adjacent to Alder Grove School (to allow for future enlargement of the school if required)

as 'Assets of Community Value' with WBC

112.3 Spencers Wood Village Centre

Cllr Grimes would contact Tom Howard, AOC to request if there was any information available to share that was part of the student study.

ACTION – Cllr Grimes to contact Tom Howard, AOC for any information in relation to a proposed 'Spencers Wood Village Centre'.

24/PC/113

Correspondence

113.1 Letter of thanks from Deer Leap Park Residents Association

Members **NOTED** the letter

113.2 Tree Protection Order for Grovelands Road, Spencers Wood

Members **NOTED** the Tree Protection Order

24/PC/114

Date of the next meeting

114.1 The date of the next meeting will be Wednesday, 4th December 2024

The meeting ended at 21:10

List of Actions

24/PC/94 24/PC/85.2	Clerk to chase WBC for a response to the question “when did Woodcock Lane ceased being a bridle way and to request that motor vehicles are restricted”.	Clerk
24/PC/99.1	Cllr Grimes to raise awareness of the issue, concerning the area to the north of the Lidl site where the land slopes down towards the loading bay, with his contact at the consortium	Cllr Grimes
24/PC/107.2	Clerk to circulate the letter from AWE in relation to PA232333 – Land East of Croft House, Croft Road, Shinfield, RG2 9EY, if this was available	Clerk
24/PC/107.3	Deputy Clerk to circulate PA242484 with weekly batch of planning applications	Deputy Clerk
24/PC/109.1	Clerk to request the report relating to RFS/2004/089803 (Shinfield Infant and Nursery School) from WBC	Clerk
24/PC/110.2	Cllr James and the Clerk to meet with Paul Fishwick, WBC regarding progress of SPC’s requested actions	Cllr James and the Clerk
24/PC/110.3	Clerk to send the proposed response to Cllr Grimes for approval prior to responding to WBC relating to a CIL contribution of £20,000 for the footpath on Hyde End Road	Clerk
24/PC/111.1	Clerk to submit SPC’s response to WBC’s LPU as agreed at Full Council in October 2024	Clerk
24/PC/112.1	Clerk to arrange a meeting of the Working Party to proceed with the SPNP	Clerk
24/PC/112.2	Clerk to apply to register • Manor Ground Pavilion and land • High Copse Pavilion and land • Land adjacent to Alder Grove School (to allow for future enlargement of the school if required) As ‘Assets of Community Value’ with WBC	Clerk
24/PC/112.3	Cllr Grimes to contact Tom Howard, AOC for any information in relation to a proposed ‘Spencers Wood Village Centre’.	Cllr Grimes

Minutes of a meeting of
Staffing Committee
Held on Wednesday 13th November 2024
At School Green Centre commencing at 19.30

Present: Cllrs James (Chair), Montgomery, Peer & Tatla

Attending: B Winton (Clerk)

24/SC/47 Public Questions

47.1 There were no public questions.

24/SC/48 Apologies and declarations of Members' Interests

48.1 There were no apologies received for this meeting.

48.2 There were no declarations of members' interests.

24/SC/49 Minutes of Previous Meetings

49.1 The minutes of the committee meetings on 19th September 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed as such by the Chairman.

Proposed: Cllr Montgomery
Seconded: Cllr Peer
Approved: Unanimously

24/SC/50 Actions and Matters Arising

50.1 There were the following matters arising:

36.3 Clerk or Deputy Clerk to contact both training providers

This was on the agenda.

- 43.1 Clerk to confirm the appointment of the Grounds Maintenance Officer

This had been done.

- 43.3 Clerk to circulate the CVs for candidates and the role description for the Facilities Manager

This had been done

24/SC/51

Staffing Update

Staffing Matters Update

- 51.1 The Clerk provided a verbal report on staffing matters not otherwise covered on the agenda. Members **NOTED** the report.

- 51.2 The Clerk advised that the pay award had been settled nationally since the last meeting and this would mean that staff would receive an increase of £1,290 or 2.5% whichever was the greater. This increase was within the provisions made in the budget. The increase is back dated to 1st April and will be paid in November.

There has also been confirmation that Town and Parish Councils will NOT be exempt from the impacts of the increase in employers National Insurance from 13.8% to 15.0%. These contributions also started at a lower rate due to the changes. Initial calculations were that this could add around £11k to our payroll bill for 2025/26 (£31.1k to £42.5k)

- 51.3 The Clerk advised that the process of recruiting a new Customer Care Team Supervisor and Team member was nearing completion.

There had been 32 expressions of interest for the Supervisor role of which 10 had submitted a completed application form and 4 would be attending interview on 14th November (a fifth had declined the offer of an interview). The standard of those selected for interview seemed high

There had been 45 expressions of interest for the Customer Care Team Member role of which 8 had submitted a completed application form and 3 would be attending interview on 15th November. There was not as much work experience from the candidates for this role reflecting that they were either new to the workplace or actually still completing their university studies. Accordingly we will be looking more at aptitude and potential when selecting this role.

24/SC/52**Training & Development****52.1 Training since last meeting**

- Nine councillors had attended the in-house Budget Process Training – 17-10-24
- Democracy in Action – 13/11/24 – Cllr Peer

52.2 Future Training

- Making Effective Planning Applications – 19/11/24 – Cllr Peer
- Communicating with the Community – 21/11/24 – Open to all councillors
- Empowering the young councillors of tomorrow – 13/12/24 – Cllr Peer

52.3 Clerk Qualifications

Deputy Clerk had requested and received an extension of three months to facilitate the completion of her CiLCA qualification.

Clerk was Scheduled to receive his final assessments for the first year of his Level 4 Community Governance qualification. Assuming the required grades have been reached then training resumes in February 2025. The Clerk felt that while, hard work and with a significant time requirement, there was a definite benefit to the council for the process.

52.4 Future succession planning

As discussed at the previous meeting once the new recruits were bedded in attention would turn to succession planning. One option to be explored would be apprenticeships both for Grounds Maintenance and also for office-based roles.

24/SC/53**Staff Security Matters**

- 53.1** The Clerk advised that there had been no recent incidents at the School Green Centre or elsewhere in the parish directly involving staff. Similarly there were no reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) affecting staff. There had been on instance of ASB affecting a client at Spencers Wood Pavilion.

- 53.2 There was discussion about the general level of anti-social behaviour in the parish and the Clerk was asked to add a paper for a security presence to be added to the agenda for Finance & General Purposes on 11th December.

ACTION – Clerk to add Anti-Social Behaviour paper to the F&GP agenda for December meeting

24/SC/54

Date of Next meeting

- 54.1 The date of the next meeting was the Wednesday 22nd January 2025

The Meeting ended at 20.35

Wokingham Borough Council Community Governance Review

Attached is a summary of the Community Governance Review from WBC.

At this stage members are only asked to consider if there is anything they feel should be included or excluded from the terms of reference. The criteria are shown on the second page and the scope of the review is on the third page.

As the process carries through there will be consultation on matters such as:

- Boundaries
 - WBC has identified an “anomaly” in that part of Ryhill Way lies within Sinfield Parish but is in an Earley ward for Wokingham Borough elections
- Number of councillors
 - The number of councillors for Shinfield Parish Council has not increased since the developments started. NALC guidance would suggest that for an electorate 13,500 (the nearest equivalent for SPC) their recommendation was for 19 councillors.

A Community Governance Review is a way for councils to make sure that, at the parish level, governance arrangements are working as efficiently and effectively as they should be. This is achieved by asking the public, parish councils and any interested parties whether they feel their communities are suitably represented and whether parish councils would like to see any changes made to their current governance arrangements.

Wokingham Borough Council have the power to undertake such reviews under Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the relevant national guidance document.



It is good practice to undertake a community governance review every 10-15 years. Wokingham has not completed one in the last 20 years. The Boundary Review by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England as well as resolving some issues, also created some anomalies with parish boundaries. Wokingham Town Council wrote to the Council requesting a community governance review in 2023. We postponed this due to the LGBCE review.

Project Objectives:

To ensure that town and parish arrangements meets the needs of their community.

Criteria:

- reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area and
- effective and convenient

The scope of a Community Governance Review is:

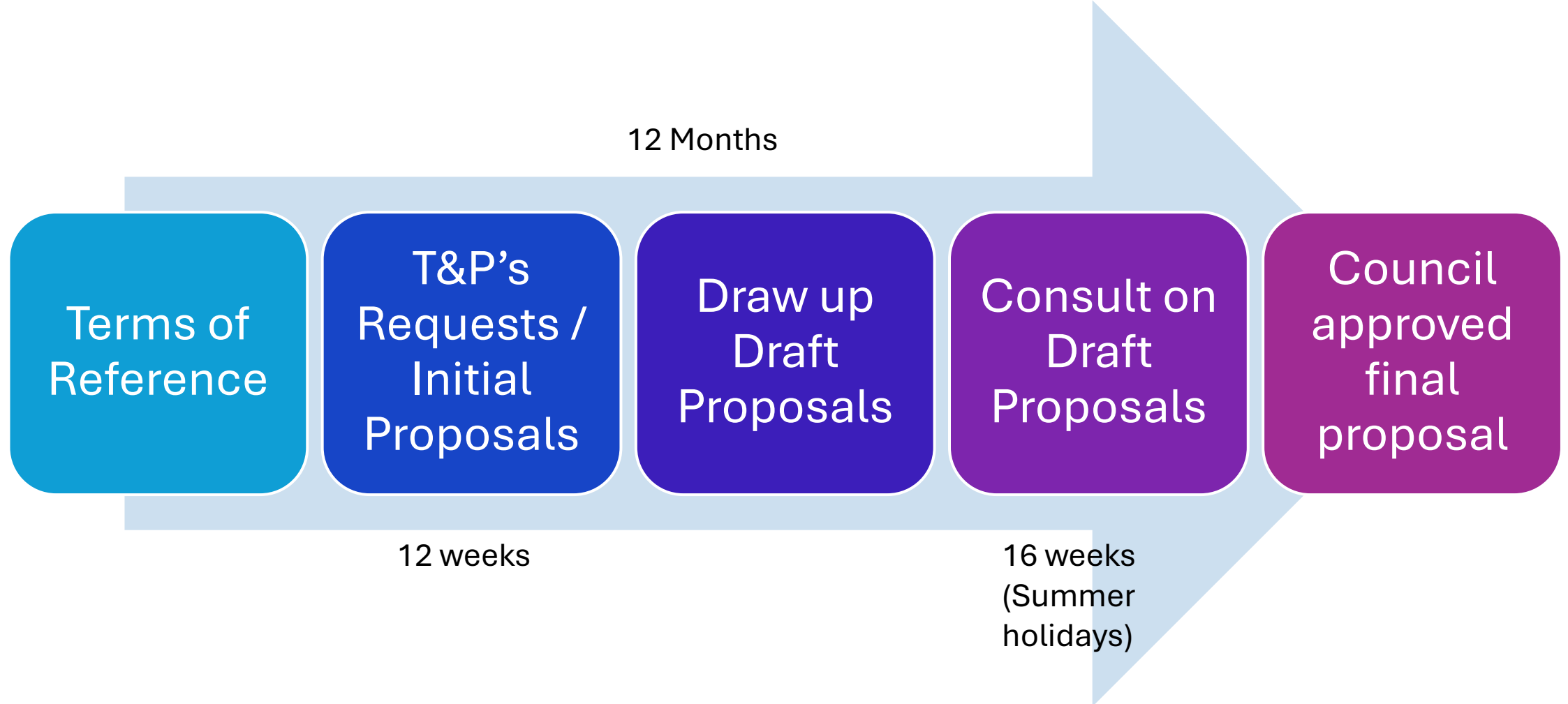
- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes
- The naming of parishes and the style of new parishes
- The electoral arrangements for parishes (the ordinary year of election, council size (the number of councillors to be elected to council), and parish warding); and
- Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes
- Other types of local arrangements, including parish meetings



The Community Governance Review **cannot** change:

- Change the number of borough councillors
- External boundaries of the Council area i.e. extending the parish into a neighbouring local authority such as Reading or Bracknell
- The Ward Boundaries for the Borough
- The level of precept





The review will formally commence in January 2025 but the Borough Council is keen to liaise informally with Towns and Parish Council's prior to then on the scope of the review and any revision to the terms of reference.

Things to think about ahead of the review:

- Towns and Parish Council's should consider what information will help them in making decisions about their submission.
- Timings of Town and Parish Council meetings to enable them to respond to the consultations.
- How to engage residents and other stakeholders in the review.
- The help and support that you would want from the review team.





Art Installation Advisory Agreement

between

Shinfield Parish Council and Arts4Wokingham

Shinfield Parish Council (SPC) requires that a new Art installation shall be provided for a chosen locale and Arts4Wokingham (A4W) has expertise in assisting artistic installations, and the parties have therefore agreed to work together, on the basis of the terms set out in this agreement.

SPC commissions A4W to provide advisory services for the purpose of the art's selection, and installation of a piece of artwork at site adjacent to the Shinfield Parish Hall (see Appendix1), in consideration of the payment of £5,000 commission from the projected SPC budget of £50,000.

1	Shinfield Parish Council (SPC)	School Green Centre, School Green, Shinfield, Reading, RG2 9EH
2	Arts4Wokingham (A4W)	1, Peach Street, Wokingham, RG40 1XJ
3	Ownership and control	It is expressly recognised that SPC is the sole owner of this project and that all responsibilities relating to the artist selection, build and maintenance are in its sole control and that SPC shall take full responsibility for all aspects not covered by this agreement.
4	A4W Responsibilities	SPC commissions A4W to assist with the following elements of the project: a) Advice and guidance regarding roles and responsibilities for the whole of the art project b) Advice and guidance regarding the choice of an artist c) How to structure a realistic project delivery timetable d) Advice and guidance on how to structure the competition to find such artist e) Advice and guidance regarding site allocation, preliminary maintenance and insurance f) The provision of judging criteria documents to choose an artist

		g) Advice and guidance on selecting a project theme for the entries to the completion h) Assignment of copyright documents i) Recommendation of sources in which to advertise to locate such artists j) Provision of an existing database of known artist talent for consideration k) Provision of lists of potential fundraising sources l) Advice as to the PR and Media that would complement the ongoing project m) Provision of Trustee(s) to sit on the judging panel
5	SPC Responsibilities	Shinfield have agreed that the following will be their areas of expertise and responsibilities: a) Provision of all monies in relation to this project b) Management of the project timeline c) Responsibility for any additional fundraising that Shinfield deem necessary d) Appointment of a team, including officers and councilors, to run and manage the project with the necessary expertise and skill set e) Provision of insurance and maintenance for the site, the artwork and to cover anyone working on the site in relation to this project f) All requirements for planning permission g) Selecting the theme for the competition entries h) Providing an agreed advertising budget for advertising and promoting the project competition i) Provision of an online micro-site in relation to the competition for the project j) Provision of financial parameters to which the artist must work, including setting out who will be responsible for installation, lighting, planning permission costs k) Planning, hosting and financing events in relation to the competition, launch of the sculpture or any other part of the project l) Community engagement in relation to this project m) Discussions with Wokingham Borough Council on installation requirements, including pre-application advice n) Responsibility for taking up artists references, this may include more than one artist o) Any contract into which the artist is requested to enter with SPC.
6	Indemnities	As A4W is a small charity, whose role in this project is solely to provide advice and guidance, SPC will ensure that A4W are not required to take liability for matters that are outside of their control, and will, if required provide an indemnity to that effect, including but not limited to: a) Overspend b) No artists applying to the competition c) Unsuitable artists applying to the competition d) The commissioned artist failing to deliver a piece of art that meets the specification and outline proposals

		e) The artist goes bankrupt mid-project f) The commissioned artist, either initiates or takes part in something that may be deemed as disreputable by either party, after signing their contract g) That the commissioned artist's references are not accurate or sufficient in guaranteeing the commissioned artist's artistic competence, ability to execute a project of this scale or management of budgetary requirements h) Poor PR i) Objections from the community regarding the project and/or choice of artwork or artist j) Health and safety issues regarding the artwork, its installation or the site thereafter k) planning permission not being granted by Wokingham Borough Council l) Alleged insufficiency of documentation
7	Unavailable Site	The site for the art installation is adjacent to the SPC building in School Green, please see map in Appendix A. a) In the event that the site ceases to be available or planning permission fails to be granted, the parties shall endeavor to seek an alternative site. b) If this is not a viable prospect, the parties shall agree the termination of the project. c) If monies have already been expended by A4W in relation to any aspect of the project, no reimbursement of such funds shall be required by SPC.
8	Public Relations and Communications:	a) Each party shall propose a Lead Spokesperson for public communications in relation to the project, and as far as possible, these persons shall agree the contents of all publicity material emanating to the public. b) The parties will work together to devise a joint strategy for the launch of the project. c) Sponsorship Plaque – the parties agree that A4W will be specifically credited on the display plaque that will be situated alongside the final artwork.
9	Payment to A4W:	a) The payment of £5,000 commission will be made to A4W at the start of the project. The date of the start of the project is determined upon the signing of this agreement.
10	Termination	This agreement shall terminate in the following circumstances: a) There is a material breach of this agreement, such breach being non-remedial after notice of such breach has been given to the offending party and such breach is not remedied within 30 days b) Either party shall become insolvent, an administrator become appointed over their assets or a party be unable to pay their debt c) Upon 3 months prior notice in writing being given by either party

		d) In the event that the activities of the other party are likely to bring the other into disrepute
11	General	a) This agreement cannot be enforced by a third party. b) This agreement shall be construed in accordance with and governed by the laws of England and Wales and the parties submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of England and Wales.

Signed for on behalf of Shinfield Parish Council:

.....

Print Name:.....

Title:.....Date:...../...../2024

Signed for on behalf of Arts4Wokingham:

.....

Print Name:.....

Title:.....Date:...../...../2024



Department
for Education

Dame Kate Dethridge
Regional Director, South East Regions Group
34 Clarendon Road
Watford
WD17 1JJ
RG.SE@education.gov.uk

Bruce Winton
Chief Executive Officer and Clerk
Shinfield Parish Council
School Green
Shinfield
RG2 9EH

31 October 2024

By email: bruce.winton@shinfieldparish.gov.uk

Dear Mr Winton,

Thank you for your letter of 28 July concerning Oakbank School and the broader issues around secondary provision in Shinfield Parish. I apologise for the delay in replying which was due to the formation of a new government and subsequent work to agree its programme of delivery.

We note your concerns regarding Oakbank's recent Ofsted judgment and the ongoing staffing concerns. As mentioned in my previous letter, the Department for Education continues to work closely with Anthem Schools Trust to support Oakbank's improvement journey. You will be aware that The Secretary of State for Education recently announced reforms to the Ofsted framework, including ending the use of single headline judgements for schools. For schools like Oakbank, the department will focus on providing support from high-performing schools to address the key issues. We are working closely with Anthem Schools Trust to ensure the necessary improvements are made as soon as possible.

Regarding the concerns about home to school transport the department's school travel policy aims to ensure that no child is prevented from accessing education due to a lack of transport. Local authorities are required to provide free home-to-school travel for children of compulsory school age (5-16) who attend their nearest school and would not be able to walk there because of distance, their special educational needs, disability, or mobility problem, or because the nature of the route means it would be unsafe for them to do so. There are also extended rights to free travel for children from low-income families. Further information on school travel eligibility for parents can be found here: <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/11/03/free-school-transport-explained-eligible-free-travel/>.

Where a parent has applied for their child to attend their nearest suitable school but was refused a place, the next nearest suitable school will be considered when assessing free school travel eligibility. Wokingham Borough Council's school travel policy, here: [Travel assistance for children aged 5 to 16 \(wokingham.gov.uk\)](https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/transport/travel-assistance-for-children-aged-5-to-16), sets out the process on a child's eligibility for free school travel and I encourage parents to refer to the council's guidelines for further clarity.

On the issue of secondary school capacity and place provision for residents of Shinfield Parish, local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure sufficient places are available. Departmental officials, including Pupil Place Planning Advisers, work closely with local authority officers to support them to meet their statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. In 2024, 94.8% of applicants in Wokingham received an offer at one of their top three preferred secondary schools (the average rate across England is 94.6%. For September 2024 admissions intake, the local authority agreed additional capacity at a number of secondary schools. Wokingham Borough Council officers have also worked proactively with local schools to increase capacity. We will continue to engage with the LA on their longer-term strategy for school places in Shinfield and the wider area.

We are committed to ensuring that all children have access to a high-quality school place where they can achieve and thrive. We will continue to engage with the local authority, the school and Academy Trust to ensure that improvements are made and sustained at Oakbank.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'K. Dethridge'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large 'K' and a long, sweeping underline.

Dame Kate Dethridge
Regional Director, South East Regions Group

CC: Yuan Yang, MP for Earley & Woodley

Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings

Scope of this consultation

Topic of this consultation

This short consultation seeks views on the detail and practical implications of allowing remote and hybrid attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings in England.

Scope of this consultation

Government is consulting on introducing powers for local authority members to apply to the relevant authority for a dispensation to attend formal council meetings remotely and vote by proxy in certain circumstances.

If any changes to legislation are made as a result of this consultation would apply to England only local authorities meaning:

- a parish council
- a full list of which bodies is available from the Clerk

Geographical scope

The questions in this consultation apply to all relevant local authorities in England as defined above.

Basic information

This is an open consultation. We particularly seek the views of individual members of the public; prospective and current local authority members/representatives; all relevant local authorities defined above; and those bodies that represent the interests of local members/representatives at all levels.

Duration

This consultation will last for 8 weeks from 24 October 2024.

Enquiries

For any enquiries about the consultation please contact: remoteattendanceconsultation@communities.gov.uk

How to respond

You can only respond to this consultation through our online consultation platform, Citizen Space. [Respond via Citizen Space.](#)

Ministerial foreword

The government has set out its intention to reset the relationship between central and local government as partners in delivering better outcomes for the communities we collectively represent. Key to this is supporting the sector to modernise democratic engagement, raise standards and widen the range of candidates standing for council by removing unnecessary barriers.

The attendance of elected members at local authority meetings is a core part of the democratic process at the local level and is integral to members carrying out their functions effectively. In addition to the value of members coming together to debate and discuss the issues which impact the lives of the people they represent; it is also important that local residents have the opportunity to engage directly with the people they have elected to take key decisions on their behalf.

At the same time, the government recognises that there are circumstances in which it may not always be possible for members to attend council meetings in person. It is with this in mind that the government intends to amend the law to introduce provisions for remote attendance at local authority meetings.

The intent is that this increased flexibility will strike the balance between the principle that significant in-person engagement remains vitally important, and a recognition that there will sometimes be a need to accommodate members' requirements to attend council meetings remotely. We hope it will encourage a wider diversity of people willing and able to stand and actively participate in local democracy by creating improved conditions where meetings are accessible and inclusive.

In addition, we are seeking views on the possible introduction of proxy voting for those occasions when an elected member, due to personal circumstances, may be unable to attend even remotely, for example during maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

In line with the government's commitment to working with local government to establish partnerships built on mutual respect, genuine collaboration, and meaningful engagement, this short consultation seeks your views on the detail and practical implications of this proposition to inform our ongoing policy development.

Who we would like to hear from

Responses are invited from local authority elected members, all types and tiers of authorities, and local authority sector representative organisations. We are also particularly keen to hear from those members of the public who have point of view based on their interest in accessing local democracy in their area or standing as a candidate for local government at any tier to represent their local community at some future point.

Question 1

Please tick all that apply - are you responding to this consultation as:

a) an elected member – if so please indicate which local authority type(s) you serve on

- Town or Parish Council

b) a council body – if so please indicate which local authority type

- Town or Parish Council

c) a member of the public

d) a local government sector body – please state

The proposal for remote attendance

The government intends to legislate to give local authorities the flexibility to allow elected members to attend formal council meetings remotely. We believe that this modernising measure of providing broad flexibility to enable remote attendance will have the dual positive impacts of diversifying the representation of those willing and able to stand for elected office and enhance the resilience of local authorities in the face of local or national emergencies.

The intent is that this legislative change would give local authorities the flexibility to allow members to attend remotely.

Question 2

Do you agree with the broad principle of granting local authorities powers to allow remote attendance at formal meetings?

Yes/No

If you answered No to the above question please go directly to question 4.

Question 3

If you answered Yes to the above question, do you think that there should be specific limitations on remote attendance?

Please tick all the options below that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

a) Any formal meeting allowing remote attendance should have at least two thirds of members in physical attendance.

b) Members should only be able to attend council meetings remotely in exceptional circumstances, such as those who are medically or physically unable to attend, or for reasons of local or national emergencies.

c) There should be no limitations placed upon councils with regard to setting arrangements for remote attendance of council meetings, up to and including full remote attendance.

d) [Free text box]

Question 4

If you are an elected member can you anticipate that you personally may seek to attend some of your council meetings remotely?

- yes
- no
- I am not an elected member

Question 4a

If you answered No please use the free text below

[Free text box]

Question 4b

If you answered Yes, could you indicate below which of the following options best describes your likely pattern of attending meetings remotely

- very occasionally
- from time to time
- regularly but not always
- all the time

Question 5

If you are responding to this consultation on behalf of a council as a whole, what proportion of the council's current elected members are likely to seek to attend council meetings remotely over the course of a year?

- less than 10%
- more than 10% but less than 50%
- more than 50% but less than 90%
- most of them 90% to 100%

Question 6

The government recognises that there may be cases in which it is necessary for councils to hold meetings fully remotely. Do you think there should be limitations placed on the number of fully remote meetings councils should be able to hold?

- a) Councils should be able to allow full remote attendance at up to half of council meetings within a twelve-month calendar period.
- b) Councils should only have the flexibility to change a meeting from in-person to online, or vice versa, due to unforeseen and exceptional circumstances.
- c) Councils should not have the flexibility to conduct fully remote meetings to ensure there is always an in-person presence.
- d) [Free text box]

Question 7

Do you think there are there any necessary procedural measures that would help to ensure a remote or hybrid attendance policy is workable and efficient?

Please tick all the options that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

- a) Councils should be required to publish a list of attendees joining the meeting remotely and give notice if a meeting is being held with full remote attendance.
- b) Councils should be required to ensure that standard constitutional arrangements are followed for hybrid and fully remote meetings.
- c) Councils should be required to make arrangements to ensure restricted items (where a council decision is taken in private to protect confidentiality) are managed appropriately and to require remotely attending members to join from a private location.
- d) Other [Free text box]

Question 8

Do you think legislative change to allow councillors to attend local authority meetings remotely should or should not be considered for the following reasons?

Tick all the statements below that apply to your point of view.

Should be considered because**Should not be considered because**

It is a positive modernising measure.

Councillors should be physically present at all formal meetings.

It would likely increase the diversity of people willing and able to stand for election in their local area, making councils more representative of the communities they serve.

It could lead to a significant number of councillors habitually attending remotely and ultimately reduce the effectiveness of councils.

Councils would be more resilient in the event of local or national emergencies which prevent in-person attendance.

It would be more difficult for councillors to build personal working relationships with colleagues, and engage with members of the public in attendance at meetings.

Free text box – please state any other reasons

Free text box – please state any other reasons

Question 9

In your view, would allowing councillors to attend formal local authority meetings remotely according to their needs particularly benefit or disadvantage individuals with protected characteristics, for example those with disabilities or caring responsibilities?

Please tick an option below:

- it would benefit members
- it would disadvantage members
- neither

Please use the text box below to make any further comment on this question.

[Free text box]

Proxy voting

Proxy voting is a form of voting whereby a member of a decision-making body may delegate their voting power to another representative to enable a vote in their absence.

It is possible some members may find that, due to their personal circumstances, they are temporarily unable to participate in meetings even if remote attendance provisions are in place. Provisions for proxy voting could provide additional flexibility to those who really need it on a time-limited basis, allowing affected members to indirectly exercise their democratic duty, participate in their local authority's governance, and ensure that their views are taken into consideration. In the context of local authorities, the representative would have to be another elected member of the local authority.

Question 10

In addition to provisions allowing for remote attendance, do you consider that it would be helpful to introduce proxy voting?

- yes
- no
- unsure

Question 11

If yes, for which of the following reasons which may prohibit a member's participation in council meetings do you consider it would be appropriate?

Please select all that apply:

- physical or medical conditions
- caring responsibilities
- parental leave or other responsibilities
- other [Free text box]

Question 12

Are there circumstances in which you feel proxy voting would not be appropriate?

[Free text box]

Question 13

If you think proxy voting is appropriate, are there any limitations you think should be placed upon it?

[Free text box]

About this consultation

This consultation has been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), the UK General Data Protection Regulation, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the Freedom of Information Act and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will process your personal data in accordance with the law and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included at Annex A.

Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact us via the [complaints procedure](#).

Communication from resident in Shinfield North

Received 8th November

I think the Parish council needs to look at ways to involve Shinfield North much more in activities that seem to all be centre around the South area. People in Shinfield North always seem to be left out. How many people from Shinfiel North are actively involved with the Parish Council?

Followed later the same day

Thank you for your reply. I am the Neighbourhood Watch organiser for part of the old military estate, just the other side of the motorway. Certainly our local community has very good relationships and have held parties including Jubilee events with a band and barbecues before and after covid. However until I received the Shinfield newsletter. I had no idea about most of what was going on in Shinfield and I'm sure most of my neighbours either. It seems we always get missed out over here.

I will have a chat with my neighbours to see if we can come up with ways forward to help locals feel included somehow.

Would be happy to meet up for a chat to try to discuss this.

Ref	Date Paid	Supplier	Amount Paid Description (Inc VAT)
1	07/10/2024	Alphabet (GB) Ltd	14.40 Admin Fee Penalty Charge Notice - Council Van
3	10/10/2024	Lloyds Bank plc	11.56 Fee £7, Charges £4.56 Sept
4	11/10/2024	Planning Portal	1,337.50 Planning Portal - Application Millworth Sports Ground
5	15/10/2024	Go Cardless Fuel Card	7.85 Fee for Fuel Card
6	16/10/2024	Alphabet (GB) Ltd	468.85 Van Rental - October 2024
7	17/10/2024	Nest Pension Contributions	1,419.98 September Ee's & Er's
8	18/10/2024	Telefonika UK Ltd	257.51 October - (5)Mobiles
10	21/10/2024	Everflow Utilities	183.73 Water - 1 mth Estimated (All sites)
11	28/10/2024	Breakthrough Communications Ltd	1,074.00 Training - Officers and Councillors
12	28/10/2024	Filmbankmedia	109.20 Purchase Film - Ghost Busters 4th October
13	28/10/2024	M & D Services	300.00 Re-erect Screen on School Green after SSE Works
14	28/10/2024	Gartec Limited	271.20 Call Out Lift October - SGC
15	28/10/2024	Thames Valley Signs (berkshire	52.54 Acrylic Poster Notices
16	28/10/2024	Adcock Refridgeration	438.00 Service AC School Green Centre
17	28/10/2024	Reading Borough Council	1,248.00 Hexagon Tickets - Community Event North Shinfield
18	28/10/2024	Reed Specialist Recruitment	8,137.80 Transfer Fee M Collins
19	28/10/2024	Berkshire Sound Hire	564.50 Remembrance Day - Hire Sound System
20	28/10/2024	Absolute Brilliance Cleaning Ltd	5,091.70 Cleaning - SGC September
21	28/10/2024	Absolute Brilliance Cleaning Ltd	1,784.80 Cleaning - Spencers Wood Pavilion September
22	28/10/2024	Absolute Brilliance Cleaning Ltd	250.68 Cleaning - The Manor September
23	28/10/2024	Arthur J Gallagher Insurance B	466.44 Additional Premium - Cinema
24	28/10/2024	BDS Surveyors	1,260.00 Attending Project Meeting 14/8
25	28/10/2024	Royal Electrics	2,700.00 Replace Facia Lights SGC
26	28/10/2024	Fcc Recycling (UK) Ltd	119.10 Green Waste 30th September
27	28/10/2024	A1 Locksmiths (Berkshire) Ltd	5.00 Cylinder Key - Manor
28	28/10/2024	Air It Limited	300.00 Wipe Lap Top
29	28/10/2024	Air It Limited	1,352.65 Microsoft 365 October
30	28/10/2024	Air It Limited	1,067.04 Co-Pilot - Licence 1 Yr (3)
31	28/10/2024	Air It Limited	53.03 Internet SGC - October
32	28/10/2024	Air It Limited	1,355.74 Managed IT Support October
33	28/10/2024	Air It Limited	53.03 Internet SWP - October
34	28/10/2024	Air It Limited	200.24 Datto Cloud Back Up - October
35	28/10/2024	Air It Limited	300.50 Telephones September - School Green Centre
36	28/10/2024	Air It Limited	38.74 Telephones September - Spencers Wood Pavilion
37	28/10/2024	Select Environmental Services	63.20 Manor Ground Waste - August
38	28/10/2024	Select Environmental Services	1,928.78 Litter Bins (43) - September
39	28/10/2024	Select Environmental Services	70.38 Waste - Spencers Wood Pavilion - September
40	28/10/2024	Select Environmental Services	9.52 Female Hygiene Bins - SWP - September
41	28/10/2024	Select Environmental Services	86.18 Waste- Millworth Lane Pavilion - September
42	28/10/2024	Select Environmental Services	62.07 Manor Ground Waste - September
43	28/10/2024	Nigel Jeffries Landscaping Ltd	4,257.60 Grass Cutting - August & September
44	28/10/2024	The Society of Local Council C	50.00 Cilca Extension SH
45	28/10/2024	British Gas Lite	56.75 Electricity - Millworth Lane Pavilion Sept/Oct
46	28/10/2024	British Gas Lite	28.07 Electricity External Meter - School Green (Sept/Oct)
47	28/10/2024	British Gas Lite	637.66 Electricity SGC (Sth) Sept/Oct
48	28/10/2024	British Gas Lite	439.12 Electricity - Spencers Wood Pavilion - Sept / Oct
49	30/10/2024	Wokingham Job Support	500.00 Grant Grant 2024
50	30/10/2024	Feeling Fruity	1,000.00 Freely Fruity Grant 2024
51	30/10/2024	Bright Hope Church	500.00 Bright Hope Church Grant 2024
52	30/10/2024	Shinfield Volunteers	480.00 Spencers Wood Luncheon Club
53	30/10/2024	Keep Mobile	1,600.00 Keep Mobile Grant 2024
54	30/10/2024	Home Start	1,000.00 Home Start Grant 2024
55	30/10/2024	Link Visiting	1,250.00 Link Visiting Grant 2024
56	30/10/2024	Shinfield Rangers FC	1,000.00 Shinfield Rangers FC Grant 2024
57	30/10/2024	Reading Gateway Church	2,500.00 Reading Gateway Church Grant 2024
58	30/10/2024	Berkshire MS Treatment Centre	1,000.00 Berkshire MS Treatment Centre Grant 2024
59	30/10/2024	S Bakshi	100.00 Return Deposit Bakshi
60	30/10/2024	Employees	17,086.67 Net Pay October
61	31/10/2024	British Gas Lite	783.60 Sept/Oct North
62	31/10/2024	IRIS Software Limited	48.00 Payroll October
63	01/11/2024	Wokingham Borough Council	1,223.00 Business Rates 1/10th November - SGC
64	01/11/2024	Wokingham Borough Council	216.00 Business Rates 1/10th November - The Manor
65	01/11/2024	Wokingham Borough Council	157.00 Business Rates 1/10th November - SWP
66	01/11/2024	Wokingham Borough Council	89.00 Business Rates 1/10th November - Ryeish Pavilion
67	01/11/2024	Wokingham Borough Council	42.00 Business Rates 1/10th November - Millworth Pavilion
68	04/11/2024	British Gas Lite	202.09 Electricity - The Manor Sept/Oct (1 mth)
69	06/11/2024	DORMAKABA UK Limited	264.60 Service - Front Door School Green Centre
70	06/11/2024	Air It Limited	48.65 Phones Car Scheme 1 month
71	06/11/2024	Thames Valley Signs (berkshire	230.83 Wifi Information Plaques
72	06/11/2024	SSE Energy Solutions	450.47 Street Lighting - September
73	06/11/2024	Kompan UK	624.52 Quarterly Playground Inspections (4 sites)
74	06/11/2024	Urban Planet Communications	2,268.00 8,198 Copies of Annual Council Printed Newsletter
75	06/11/2024	SPY Alarms	156.00 Call Out Intruder Alarm
76	06/11/2024	The National Allotment Society	66.00 Renewal Corporate Subscription.
77	06/11/2024	Lister Wilder	67.99 Fuel for Mower & Weed Killer
78	07/11/2024	Fibrenext	37.00 Broadband - The Manor November
80	08/11/2024	HMRC paye	4,980.96 September NI & PAYE
81	08/11/2024	Wokingham Borough Council	165.59 Attachment of Earnings
82	08/11/2024	Reed Specialist Recruitment	2,780.87 M Collins w/e 6/9/2024
83	08/11/2024	Arthur J Gallagher Insurance B	528.19 Engineering Insurance
84	08/11/2024	BDS Surveyors	2,250.00 Professional Support Millworth Lane Sports Grd
85	08/11/2024	Air It Limited	61.82 Car Scheme Phones - July
86	12/11/2024	Shinfield Infants	660.00 Pupil Award Grants Scheme
87	12/11/2024	Alder Grove	660.00 Pupil Award Grants Scheme
88	12/11/2024	Grazeley School	420.00 Pupil Award Grants Scheme
89	12/11/2024	Shinfield St Marys	720.00 Pupil Award Grants Scheme
90	12/11/2024	Whiteknights Primary School	720.00 Pupil Award Grants Scheme
91	12/11/2024	Lamb's Lane Primary	420.00 Pupil Award Grants Scheme

89,343.49

Ref	Date Purchase	Supplier	Amount Paid (Inc VAT) £	Description of Purchase
1	03/10/2024	Costco	192.84	Cinema Opening
2	06/10/2024	Adobe	56.98	Adobe
3	09/10/2024	Mailchimp	41.58	Mailing Monthly Newsletters
4	15/10/2024	Text Magic	60.00	Pre paid Texts - October (Allotment Holders)
5	16/10/2024	Coop	18.25	Tuck Shop Purchases
6	17/10/2024	Poppy Shop	119.94	Remembrance Poppy Wreaths
7	17/10/2024	RBL Poppy Appeal	372.50	Remembrance Poppy Wreaths
8	21/10/2024	Coop	25.80	Refreshments - AGM
9	21/10/2024	Amazon EU	18.53	Crafts for Youth Club
10	23/10/2024	Coop	24.70	Tuck Shop Purchases
11	23/10/2024	Post Office	10.05	Postage - Allotments
12	24/10/2024	Tactical World Store	152.82	Protective Clothing - Groundsman
13	25/10/2024	The Works	36.00	Crafts Youth Club
14	28/10/2024	Nisbets Catering Suppliers	68.92	Water Tumblers for Hirers' Kitchen
15	28/10/2024	Amazon EU	37.77	Glass Juice Tumblers for SGC - Hirers' Kitchen
16	29/10/2024	Henry Street Garden Centre	22.99	Autumn Crafts - Youth Club
17	29/10/2024	Amazon EU	65.94	Craft Materials - Youth Club
18	29/10/2024	Amazon EU	14.99	Film For Cinema - Despicable Me
19	30/10/2024	Currys	249.97	Hand Held Vacuum for
20	30/10/2024	Sainsburys	50.55	Tuck Shop and Food for Youth Club
21	31/10/2024	Tekled Uk Ltd	33.80	Replacement LED Ceiling Lights - School Green Centre
Total Paid			1,674.92	

Payments Due to be Made Outside of the Clerk's Financial Delegation

There are no payments due to be made under this heading.