



Woodley Town Council

Electors residing in the Civil Parish of Woodley
are invited to attend

THE ANNUAL TOWN ELECTORS MEETING

to be held at
The Oakwood Centre
on Tuesday 3 March 2015 at 8 pm

Signed: _____
Councillor Brian Franklin
Town Mayor of Woodley

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the Town Electors' Meeting held on 4 March 2014
3. Matters arising from the Minutes
4. Annual Committee Reports:
 - Leisure Services Committee
 - Community Services Committee
 - Plans Committee
 - Strategy & Resources Committee
5. Correspondence
6. General Parish Affairs

Woodley Town Council

Minutes of the Annual Town Electors Meeting held at the Oakwood Centre on
Tuesday 4 March 2014 at 8 pm

Present: *Councillors B. Franklin; K. Baker; J. Cheng; K. Haines; L. Hayward; M. Holmes;
C. Lawley; R. Neall; S. Outen; D. Smith; M. Storry; M. Walker*

Also present: *Borough Councillor M. Haines*

WTC Officers: *A. Bunn; D. Mander; L. Matthews; K. Murray*

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N. Cox, R. Duncan, K. Gilder and W. Soane.

Apologies were also received from Mrs S. Flower.

2. **MINUTES OF THE TOWN ELECTORS MEETING HELD ON 5 MARCH 2013**

It was proposed and agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5 March 2013 be agreed and signed as a true record.

3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising.

4. **ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Leisure Services Committee

Councillor Brian Franklin, Chairman of the Leisure Services Committee, presented his report as follows:

Councillor Franklin thanked Andrew Bunn, the Leisure Services Manager, Lee Skinner, the Maintenance Manager, and Kevin Weller, the Head Groundsman, for their hard work over the past year.

The following funding had been gained for activities:

- £2,500 from Rounders England to deliver Rounders in Woodley.
- £250 from the Football Association to continue with Just Play, the get back into football initiative.
- £5,000 from Public Health to run free swimming for under 16's during the summer holidays, and for the over 60's free swimming programme from October 2013 to March 2014.
- £3,261 from the Social Inclusion Officer at Wokingham Borough to help get the BME community more active.
- £1,500 Institute of Swimming grant towards apprenticeship costs.
- £939 Sportivate funding from Get Berkshire Active for coaching sessions for the disabled.
- £2,516 from Badminton England to run and coordinate the Wokingham and Reading Community Badminton network.

Active Celebration Week 28 May 2013

In partnership with Bulmershe School and Waingels College the Town Council put together a week-long event for eight local primary and the town's secondary schools. Activities included festivals for dance and multiskills, swimming galas and the kwick cricket tournament. In total 2,200 local children took part in these activities and the whole event was very well received.

Tournaments

The annual Cecil Trembath Kwik Cricket tournament had been included as part of the Active Celebration Week. Beechwood won the boys' tournament and Willowbank won the girls' tournament.

The winner of the annual Sid Hopkins football tournament for boys was Highwood, with the girls' tournament due to take place on Tuesday 24th March.

Bulmershe Leisure Centre - Activities

Swim School numbers had increased during the year, resulting in increased income. The centre continued to run Swim for £1 at weekends and took part in the free swimming offer for 18s and under during the summer holidays and at Christmas. Since October, free swimming for over 60s had been offered. Pool parties continued to be very popular and were booked up well in advance.

Sports holiday camps for kids were well attended and included football, trampolining, multiskills and preschool activities.

The following new bookings had been taken at Bulmershe:

- Woodley Cricket Club.
- 5 a side youth football.
- Training for junior football clubs.
- Roller hockey club.
- Increased booking from the diving club.

The following new course had been launched:

- Boxercise.

Woodford Park Leisure Centre - Activities

The following new courses had taken place at Woodford park Leisure Centre:

- Football and cricket for children.
- An additional circuits class for adults.
- Chinese exercise.
- Essential badminton coaching courses.

The centre provided Racquet Attack for £1 per person over the school holidays and sports holiday camps for kids included badminton, racquet sports, cheer leading and street dance.

Healthy Habits Woodley

Healthy Habits member numbers continued to grow and The Healthy Habits Kids programme was introduced during the year.

Parkrun

Parkrun, which is open to all ages and abilities, continued to be popular on Saturday mornings and the monthly junior Parkrun sessions on Sunday mornings were launched in October.

Woodford Park Leisure Centre

The following works had been carried out:

- The paddling pool drainage system was improved and a new pump fitted
- Repairs to the sports hall roof
- Redecoration of the Function Room
- Refurbishment and decoration of the upstairs committee rooms

The Woodford Park Leisure Centre Entrance Improvements Working Party had overseen:

- The general tidy up of the area – including the planting and trees
- Installation of a large sign on the sports hall
- Installation of new, automatic front doors to the leisure centre

Woodford Park

A feasibility report was received from consultants on the provision of a 3rd generation artificial grass pitch at the back of the leisure centre. The committee recommended that the planning application be prepared and submitted and that funds for the project be identified. The Strategy and Resources Committee agreed to progress to the next stage and would identify funding for the project.

Community Halls

Coronation Hall was redecorated in August.

Chapel Hall has had a deep clean and fencing repairs were carried out after storm damage.

Parks and play areas

Memorial Ground

A community orchard was planted on the Memorial Ground behind Coronation Hall as part of the Transition Towns Reading programme to plant fruit trees in public spaces.

New fencing was installed to the Memorial Ground play area.

Design work commenced on the Woodley War Memorial, which would be funded by the Woodley War Memorial Project group, and the civic space in which it would sit, which would be provided by the Town Council and located in the area between the Oakwood Centre and Coronation Hall.

Malone Park

Work continued at Malone Park to improve the play area. A consultation with local residents and schools was carried out to identify which were the preferred items of new play equipment.

Garden competition

The 2013 winner was Mrs Shirley Latham, who was presented with the Horticultural Society Memorial Cup at the Council meeting on 24 September.

Community Services Committee

Councillor Lesley Hayward, Chairman of the Community Services Committee, said she had enjoyed chairing the Committee and thanked the other Committee members for their support; the Committee had worked well together. She also thanked the Town Clerk and her team for ensuring that all the services ran smoothly.

Councillor Hayward presented her report as follows:

Grants

Annual grants were again awarded to CAB, ARC, Readibus, Keep Mobile, Wokingham Job Support and for the first time a grant was awarded to the Lend and Play Toy Library.

Citizens Awards

Once again this year awards would be presented to citizens who have made a real difference in the community. The chosen recipients would receive their awards from the Town Mayor at a reception on Thursday 3 April.

Highways

One of the items that the committee put forward to Wokingham BC as part of its Highways Capital Programme was the installation of no waiting at any time restrictions at the Haddon Drive and Rowan Drive junction and the Haddon Drive junction with Ravensbourne Drive. These restrictions were implemented during the year.

In November the Committee made representations to Wokingham Borough Council over the recent scheduling of road works and the disruption caused to local road users and asked that their policies and scheduling of works aid the movement of traffic in and out of the town.

Cycleways

The committee reviewed the Borough Council's Cycle Design Guide. They raised issues of confusion over the new cycleway layout along Fairwater Drive and attended a meeting with a Borough Council representative during which further information about the cycleway schemes was provided. The committee remained concerned about the confusion over the markings for cycleways and the proposed reduction of crossing points on Wokingham Road in the new scheme and informed Wokingham Borough Council of these concerns.

Bus shelters

Two bus shelters had been damaged, one on Fairwater Drive and one on Reading Road. Wokingham Borough Council replaced the Reading Road shelter, but there continued to be a dispute over the liability for the Fairwater Drive shelter.

Woodley Adopt A Street Project (WASP)

Woodley Adopt a Street Project (WASP) had proved to be a success with over seventy volunteers now signed up and covering 60 roads in Woodley.

Community refuse vehicle

Over the year the committee discussed changing the venues for this service (at Drovers Way and Southlake Crescent) and agreed to increase the service with an additional site at the Airfield Centre. Unfortunately this could only be provided from Jan to March 2014 and there was no suitable vehicle for this service for the 2014/15 year.

Consultations

The committee had responded to consultations on:
Wokingham Borough Council- Licensing policy review
Wokingham Borough Council – Wokingham car parks strategy

Allotments

The allotments continued to be popular with people wanting to grow their own fruit and vegetables.

The Town Council and the tenants association worked together to improve the site and looked at the procedure for dealing with untended plots.

Youth Working Party

The committee received reports from this working party where representatives from organisations working with young people met with councillors and discussed youth activities in the town. During the year the reduction in funding for universal youth provision meant the closure of the youth club at Bulmershe Youth Centre and the working party and Council investigated what universal provision there was in the town. It also responded to the request from young people to keep the Friday night youth club at Bulmershe open and this was restarted under a joint arrangement between the Network Vineyard Church, whose youth team took over the running of the club, and the Council, which provides the premises.

Just Around the Corner Charity (JAC)

The Council has a service level agreement with JAC to provide outreach youth work in the town and Sam Milligan attended the Community Services Committee meetings to update Members on the work of JAC and provide regular reports. Through the year the committee received updates on JAC's new centre which would be formally opened in the spring.

The committee had recently agreed to a further 3 year service level agreement with JAC, to 2017.

Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative

The Council is a partner to the the Town Centre Management Initiative (WTCMI) along with Wokingham Borough Council and the town traders.

Events through the year, such as the children's fun day and the poster competition, continued to be successful. The Christmas tree and new Christmas lights in the town centre had been well received and the Winter Extravaganza was a success.

WTCMI had received £10,000 Mary Portas Town Team funding and was working on a project to improve the north end of the town centre.

Plans Committee

The report was presented by Councillor Jenny Cheng, Chairman of the Committee, as follows:

The committee had considered a total of 181 planning applications since over the year, with the number of applications varying from 6 to 22 a month.

The committee also received information about tree preservation orders, enforcement issues, planning appeals and decisions and planning policy documents through the year.

Plans of particular concern:

- Land at Sandford Farm – application for 80 residential units with associated parking and access and landscaping. A subsequent application for 73 units was received.
- Former Linpac site – three separate applications:
 - 93 dwellings on one part of the site.
 - 34 dwellings on a second part of the site.
 - Erection of a 3m high boundary wall.
- 15 Ladbrooke Close – 9 residential units and demolition of an existing industrial unit.
- Sandford Farm, Perimeter Way – outline planning permission for 27 residential dwellings with associated access, parking, landscaping and open space. Demolition of existing buildings.
- Land opposite Catalina Close – 16 new dwellings and vehicular access with Mohawk Close.

Other Items

- The Committee added [street names](#) relating to the Miles Aircraft Company to the suggested street names for developments in Woodley.
- The Committee met with the Assistant Head of Management Development at Wokingham Borough Council, Clare Lawrence, to receive an update on the planning process.

Bulmershe Site of Urban Landscape Value

Following receipt of a planning application for the Bulmershe Campus owned by the University of Reading, the Town Council accepted that the housing was appropriate but were opposed to the extension of the development into the Site of Urban Landscape Value. A joint working party was set up by Earley Town Council and Woodley Town Council to work together to protect the Site of Urban Landscape Value between the towns' two settlements.

Earley Town Council made a submission on behalf of the working party to the Inspector during the examination of the MDD DPD that this include a green space policy, but this was not upheld.

Strategy & Resources Committee

Councillor Keith Baker, Chairman of the Committee, made the following statement:

"First of all I would like to thank all the staff who have been involved in the areas covered within the Strategy & Resources area. In particular I would like to thank the Town Clerk who has had to put up with never ending questions about many items following the change of control early last year. For those present who are not familiar with "council speak" the Strategy & Resources is often considered as the committee that not only sets the direction for the council but also holds the "purse strings" and therefore has key financial accountability.

As some of you may be aware the council is now led by a coalition between the Conservative Party and two Independents after 40 years of control by the Liberal Democrats. This has resulted in a totally fresh look at everything within the council which has culminated in some radical changes. The Independents have played a key part in that they have acted as a "brake" on any potential political excesses which is so easy when you are the dominant party.

The Strategic & Resources Committee has had quite a busy year concentrating in the areas of Budgets, how we work, agreement renewal and specific projects. The financial pressure, through things like increased energy costs are proving to be extremely difficult to manage. This has forced the council to move towards the principle of the user pays rather than a blanket subsidy paid by all residents. We have also started looking at charging for the use of credit cards as many other organisations already do.

Even with these pressures, with the help of officers, we managed to reduce the Town Council Tax by 5%, the first reduction for over 10 years and possibly more. It is now the lowest level since 2007. At the same time grants to deserving causes were maintained. Investments for the future repayment of the loans to build the Oakwood Centre are doing well.

On the ways of working a full review of the numerous working parties etc. was carried out with at least one being disbanded. A clear strategy has now been established that working parties will be disbanded when their task has been completed.

New agreements were entered into with Reading Borough Council for the allotments; LTP for running the Inn on the Park, Woodley Bowls Club and the Police for their presence in the Oakwood Centre and a new company to run the cafe in the Oakwood Centre. The Oakwood Centre is now close to breaking even in its operations and the long running saga of the flooring has finally terminated.

Of the specific projects there are 3 worthy of mention. The war memorial project has been fully supported by the town council and there is every expectation that it will be in place for the 100th anniversary of WW1. The final funding for the base area is coming from the Sandford Farm development. The Bulmershe youth club has been rejuvenated through the excellent work of the Vineyard Church and are providing an excellent service for our youth in

that area. The future of the Leisure Centre is now looking secure but still needs to be ratified by the Town Council. It is early days but there is still a lot to do here but there is every chance that Woodley residents will be getting a new facility without all the costs associated with it."

The detailed report on the activities of the Strategy and resources committee is as follows:

Licences/legal/charges

Woodley Bowls Club

A new licence for the club's use of the bowling green was agreed and signed.

Allotments – rents and charges

The committee considered a review of allotment rates and charges and after discussion agreed that the Council engage in discussions with tenants before presenting further proposals on the rents and charges to the committee.

The allotment rent review due in March 2013 under the lease for the site (with Reading Borough Council) was increased by £500 – this was £500 under the proposed increase – following negotiation. The Council will pay £6,500 a year to run the site up to March 2018.

Inn on the Park

The committee oversaw the drawn out negotiations of the mid contract term (3 years of 6 year agreement) in respect of the rent agreement which reduced the annual income to the Council by £20,000 to £40,000 a year.

Following some problems with dogs not being kept properly under control outside the Inn on the Park the decision was taken to not allow dogs in the pub or on the patio area. The Council had received many complaints from leisure centre users about dogs and despite requests that the owners keep appropriate control of their dogs the incidents continued. The Council had received complaints from dog owners about this decision.

Oakwood Centre

A new five year agreement with Thames Valley Police in respect of the police office in the centre was signed. This arrangement of a local base for the neighbourhood team had been of real benefit to the community.

Working arrangements with Just In the Park Community Interest Company were put on a firmer footing with a profit share arrangement in place in respect of rent.

The legal action in respect of the flooring at the Oakwood Centre was brought to a close. A payment from the builders was received and works carried out

Projects

3rd Generation Artificial Grass Pitch

The Committee allocated funds for a feasibility study on proposals for a 3G pitch at Woodford Park Leisure Centre and, later on in the year after the report was received, for the costs of submitting a planning application for the project. The Committee would investigate how to fund the 50% required as joint funding with a potential grant from the Football Foundation.

War Memorial

The Council worked with the Woodley War Memorial Project group, who were raising funds for a public memorial, to make provision for the memorial to be installed on the Memorial Ground. The Committee agreed to allocate funds to commission designs for the civic space in which the war memorial would sit. The committee and the Woodley War Memorial Project group would work together with the aim of installing the memorial in time for the 100th anniversary commemorations of the start of the First World War.

Software management system for bookings

The committee agreed to allocate funds for the production of a detailed specification and the purchase and installation of an appropriate software management system for leisure and facilities bookings.

Bulmershe Youth Centre

The committee considered reports about taking on the management of the youth centre upstairs at the Bulmershe Centre and about plans for a new Friday night youth club at the centre. The Council welcomed the volunteers from the Vineyard Church who had re-opened the club and supported the club in practical ways by providing the space and advice on procedures for the running of the club. Although the Council had agreed in principle to take over the running of the upstairs and in practice was dealing with the bookings and day to day management, no further contact had been made by the Borough Council in response to the terms agreed by the committee for this take over.

Bulmershe Leisure Centre

Committee members had recently discussed the proposals considered at Wokingham Borough Council's Executive about the future of the leisure centre. The Borough Council was willing to accept an early surrender of the lease on Bulmershe from the Town Council (due to expire in March 2015) and intended to transfer the management of the centre to Leisure Connection/C-Salt. The Borough Council was looking at the long-term options for the centre in its leisure strategy, with the main options being either refurbishment or new build. In the meantime the activities at the centre would continue and the Town Council would discuss the proposal of an early termination of the lease at an extraordinary meeting of the committee.

Woodley Community Partnership Forum

The Woodley Community Partnership Forum (a partnership between Wokingham Borough Council and Woodley Town Council) had met 3 or 4 times in the last year.

Consultations

The committee responded to consultations on:

- The Community Infrastructure Levy Preliminary and Draft Charging Schedules from Wokingham Borough Council.
- Department for Communities and Local Government – Community Infrastructure Levy further reforms.
- Department for Communities and Local Government – Protecting the press from unfair competition.
- Wokingham Borough Council – consultation on decision making structure.

Financial

Internal Audit Plan

The 2013/14 Internal Audit Plan had been approved. The report of this year's internal audit was due to be received at the next meeting.

Section 106

The committee regularly reviewed projects that could be suitable for developer contributions funding. Funding was made available to the Council for improvements to children's play equipment at Malone Park. The Borough Council had also agreed to fund a public toilet in the town centre and was considering applications the Town Council had made for a civic space and a 3G artificial grass pitch.

Grants - 16 grants totalling £4,000 were awarded during the year to community groups and organisations.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE**

There had been no correspondence received.

6. **GENERAL PARISH AFFAIRS**

There were no issues raised under this item.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for coming.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm
