

MINUTES OF THEALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 6th November 2017 in the Peter Gooch Room, The Pavilion, Englefield Road, Theale.

Present: Councillors B. Williams (chair), D. Wood, J. Richardson, A. Clark, P. Clifford, D. Baker, A. Macro, I. Hopcroft & D. Lye.

Apologies received: Cllr Z. Fenwick.

Present: Jo Friend (Clerk) in attendance. One member of the public was present.

Declarations of Interest: None declared.

The chairman asked if any members of the council or members of the public were intending to record or film the meeting. The answer was negative.

130/17/18 Open Forum for Members of the Public

The member of the public wished only to observe the meeting.

The chairman closed the public open forum.

Notifications of Chairman's remarks – The chairman reminded councillors of the purpose of this agenda item. Both Cllrs Clifford and Hopcroft had one item to raise.

SECTION A

131/17/18 MINUTES OF MEETING OF 9TH OCTOBER 2017.

Amendment: after '108/17/18 Open Forum for Members of the Public' add: '*Cllr Fenwick arrived at the meeting.*'

Members adopted the Minutes of the Meeting of 9th October 2017. Proposed Cllr Richardson; seconded Cllr Clifford. Approved nem con.

John Herring (Newbury Weekly News) arrived at the meeting.

132/17/18 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 9TH OCTOBER 2017.

117/17/18 Cllr Clifford confirmed he was available to assist with the road closures on Remembrance Sunday.

120/17/18 The clerk confirmed that she was still awaiting details of the path project from Holy Trinity Church before she could update Cllr Macro on suggested ideas for Members' Bids.

SECTION B

133/17/18 District Council Report

Cllr Macro read out his report. This contained updates on the District Boundary Review, Scrutiny at WBC and the new District Plan currently being drawn up.

134/17/18 Clerk's Report

Noted.

135/17/18 Planning Applications

The chairman suggested the first planning item, 17/02808/CLASSD, be discussed under agenda item 136/17/18 Theale Library & the Gateway Centre. Members agreed.

17/02808/CLASSD	Change of Use: Proposal to use less than 150m ² of floor space as Class B1 (Business)	The Gateway Centre, Theale Library, Church Street, Theale RG7 5DA	West Berkshire Council	OBJECT: Item discussed under 136/17/18 – see below
16/01239/FUL 16/01237/FUL 16/01235/FUL 16/01238/FUL <i>Adjacent parish Additional documents</i>	Construction of culverts under highway re flood alleviation in connection with development of Burghfield Park	Burghfield Sailing Club, Hangar Road, Sulhamstead		No further comments to be submitted
17/02896/FUL	Two storey extension to main entrance (frontage). One storey side extension to eastern return.	1320 Arlington Business Park, Theale RG7 4SU	Patron Arlington Sarl	No objection

Cllr D. Lye arrived at the meeting.

136/17/18 Theale Library & the Gateway Centre

Cllr Richardson provided Members with a recap on the parish council's proposal to use the Gateway rooms for the provision of health services during the day, and for community use in the evenings and weekends. WBC has rejected this proposal in favour of changing the use to business use and installing its own officers from the Public Protection Partnership in there. Members also discussed WBC's suggested plans to convert part of the library itself into spaces for community use.

Members were of the belief that health service and community use of the Gateway rooms would be of greater benefit and would benefit a far larger number of West Berkshire residents than the planned business use. Comments included:

Change of use: 1. WBC had asked TPC to take over responsibility for the Gateway rooms, this latest decision has wasted TPC's time and effort; 2. it's contrary to Red Quadrant's Needs Assessment; 3. to attempt to get the change of use agreed under Permitted Development Rights is a contrivance designed to avoid WBC having to seek planning permission – they have only been able to get the floor space under the 150m² limit by retaining the moveable divider across the mirrored dance studio and suggesting that part of the room will not be used by the PPP 4. Other half of this third room cannot be used by anyone else because of the moveable divider (no security for office area) and no light switches; 5. Who is paying for the rates, electric etc for this void space; 6. 150m² does not take into account the PPP's use of the corridors, toilets nor lockers; 7. If WBC applied for planning permission then the decision becomes more public and likely to attract more criticism; 8. how would car parking requirements for 19 office desks plus a meeting room be catered for in such a small library car park; 9. what effect would this have on potential library users being able to park; 10. Gateway was built as a community facility (originally for adult education purposes) should not now be converted into business as there is still a community need; 11. do the toilet facilities satisfy HSE requirements for PPP staff + library staff + library volunteers;

Conversion of library space: 1. Room sizes in plans provided are too small to be of any use; 2. Rooms not suitable for use by NHS and no sinks provided; 3. Concern that, with the offices being converted into business use and other rooms being built within the library itself, that library is being 'pushed out'; 4. WBC has suggested the parish council could

pay for the conversion of the library space into community rooms using its CIL monies – could TPC justify the use of CIL to provide a questionable community facility by removing part of another one.

Other comments: 1. WBC asked TPC for its assistance in generating income for the library building, WBC has not done well with their part of this relationship; 2. TPC's project was bringing new money into the equation, WBC's is using one budget heading to pay another; 3. it would appear that it is difficult to have a working relationship with WBC; 4. what is the distribution of running costs – library should foot less than 50% as it's opening hours do not equal the hours the offices would be used.

Members discussed producing a statement for the media and writing a further letter to Nick Carter, CEO at WBC.

137/17/18 Code of Conduct

Members discussed WBC's suggestion regarding the reviewing of TPC's Code of Conduct in relation to the interests of councillors' friends and/or relatives. There was a difference of opinion amongst Members as to whether the non pecuniary interests of friends and/or relatives of councillors should be covered by the Code. Clerk to obtain the NALC view and the matter to be deferred to a later meeting.

138/17/18 Beansheaf Community Centre

Members discussed the actions of WBC and agreed that the parish council needed information on how WBC had managed to change the ownership of the parish council's asset. Evidence of this would need to be retained for future reference so the parish council of the future would have access to accurate records. Clerk to seek advice from solicitor as to what actions he recommends.

The member of the public left the meeting.

139/17/18 WBC Review of Weight Limit Restrictions

Members noted the comments submitted by Cllr Macro and agreed there were no further comments to be submitted prior to the consultation starting in January 2018.

140/17/18 Remembrance Sunday

Ten volunteers have been recruited as road closure marshals for the morning but a few more are required. The response from 'Scouts' volunteers has been disappointing compared to last year. Cllr Hopcroft will check with scout parents who have expressed a willingness to help but not yet come forward.

141/17/18 Cricket

Members agreed a working party should do some research on a possible 'Licence to Occupy' for TTCC. Clerk to provide them with a copy of the old cricket contract for reference. Cllrs Clark, Hopcroft and Clifford will form the working party and report back to council at the December meeting.

142/17/18 Financial Update

The clerk had provided a financial update up to 30th September 2017 which was noted by Members.

143/17/18 Parking Complaint – Meadow Way

Members discussed the complaint and agreed that, whilst parking issues were not within the parish council's remit, it could send a letter of support regarding the issue to WBC. Clerk to action and to inform complainant.

The chairman indicated that the time was approaching 10pm and there were still several agenda items to be dealt with. Members unanimously agreed to extend the meeting past 10pm.

144/17/18 Englefield Primary School Admissions Policy

There were no comments to be submitted.

145/17/18 Theale Christmas Event – Saturday 2nd December 2017

An update was provided by the clerk. Councillors were asked if they could volunteer to help at this parish council event, volunteers are required from approximately 11am until 9pm on the day. Members to inform the working group of their availability during this time period in order that roles can be assigned.

146/17/18 Authorisation of Payments

It was RESOLVED that items on sheet no.502 and dated 6th November 2017 be approved for payment. Proposed Cllr Macro; seconded Cllr Wood. Approved nem con.

Members noted the September Direct Debit sheet.

SECTION C

147/17/18 Items for Information

Noted.

SECTION D

148/17/18 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The chairman reminded Members of the purpose of this agenda item - to bring village issues to the attention of their colleagues, and requested that councillors state whether or not they had matters to raise during the relevant agenda item at the beginning of the meeting.

Cllr Clifford said he understood that there was a clash of dates concerning Theale Tigers football tournament and Tilehurst Panthers football tournament. The clerk confirmed that there wasn't a problem, Tilehurst Panthers will be holding their 2018 tournament during their usual weekend and Theale Tigers are holding theirs the following weekend.

Cllr Hopcroft said he was concerned that there appeared to have been a spike in crime figures for Theale. The clerk will report the Council's concerns to the Neighbourhood Action Group and to the Neighbourhood Sergeant.

149/17/18 Part II

In view of the confidential nature of business to be conducted it is in the public interest that the public and press be excluded and are instructed to withdraw.

There were no members of the public present.

Staff Leave & Lieu Time

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 10.25pm.

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Chairman to the Council