

Minutes of a meeting of Sunninghill & Ascot Parish Council
Held in the King Edward VII Meeting Room, Ascot Racecourse SL5 7JX
On Tuesday 09 January 2024 at 7.00pm

Members present: A Sharpe (Chairman), B Hilton (Vice Chairman), P Carter, L Davison West, C Herring, J Gripton, D Hilton, M Turton, C Richardson, C Roberts, D Sanders, B Story, R Tavoletti, S Verma and R Wood.

In attendance: Helen Goodwin, Clerk to the Parish Council.

8656 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received. Cllr C Revilla was absent.

8657 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The chairman asked to receive any Declarations of Interest in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct. None were received.

8658 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 December were presented. Minute 8646, final sentence, should read 'Cllr Hill' instead of 'Cllr Biggs'. With this amendment the minutes were approved as a correct record and signed as such.

8659 FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The chairman made the following formal announcements:

1. Solicitors are moving on with the Coombe Lane application paperwork with a deadline of the middle of next week to have it ready for submission. This has taken a considerable amount of their time but, to keep the costs down, they have used their junior solicitors and have given us a large discount.
2. A meeting was held earlier today with Project Centre who reported on the first phase of the Feasibility Study for Victory Field.

8660 PUBLIC ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was not adjourned.

8661 PRESENTATION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES, EXTERNAL AUDIT, INVOICES & PAYMENTS LISTS

- The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 20 December were presented by Cllr R Wood who highlighted the application for the Swinley pub in South Ascot, to install a car wash in their car park. The committee objected due to it being an inappropriate development in a residential area. Representatives of the Arora Group had attended the meeting to speak about the development being planned for the old site of Hurst Lodge school. This may be a housing development or, potentially, a hospitality development. The group will advise the committee when they have a better idea of what they would like to do with the site. A large part of the site is in Sunningdale with a small area in our parish.
- The invoices to be paid this month were presented by the clerk.

8662 PRECEPT 2024/25

Cllr R Wood presented the proposed precept for 2024/25 and explained how the figure proposed had come about. The borough is asking us to base our calculations on a multiple of 6626 of Band D properties, which is lower than the previous year, as the borough is making an allowance to cover for 1% more expected non-payers/bad debts. It was also noted that an additional reason for the fall is that more households are

becoming eligible for the discounts related to items such as empty, single occupancy and income support. The increase proposed is 31.3% on 2023/24. It was noted that the budget is covering considerable expenses that are not to be repeated (eg Coombe Lane) and also to build up funds towards large expenditures such as replacing play equipment.

The proposal to increase the precept to £338,267, which equates to £51.05 for a band D property, was approved unanimously by show of hands.

8663 SOUTH ASCOT LEASE

The draft lease is currently being studied by our solicitor who will carry out necessary searches etc. A two-month extension has been secured to the notice to leave the land, which now expires on 04 March 2024.

The following points were made:

- The importance of having a record of the condition of the land, and the assets on it, when signing the lease so that it is clear if any works are required, or assets removed/repaired, when the new lease comes to an end.
- The draft lease states that permission must be sought before adding/changing anything on the site. The landlord should be made aware from the beginning that the parish council intends to spend significant funds updating equipment etc.
- Reference is made to maintaining appropriate fencing along the strip of land opposite the recreation ground; there is currently no fence there and this fencing should therefore be funded by the landlord.
- There appear to be no draconian demands on maintenance, which is positive.

The clerk and chairman will be liaising with the solicitor; members were asked to email the clerk with any comments they have.

On that basis the council agreed unanimously that the chairman and the clerk were authorised to sign the new lease when all necessary changes have been made.

8664 POLICIES FOR APPROVAL – COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Various questions were asked and the clerk requested they be addressed to her by email. The clerk will check whether the policy is in line with the model NALC policy and an amended policy will be brought to the next meeting.

8665 ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING

The agenda for last year's meeting was presented; the chairman commented that SAPC members speaking at the meeting should attempt to keep things concise this year as there have been issues with timing overrun in the past. Members were consulted for ideas of different people to invite to speak at the meeting.

The following suggestions were made:

- There are a lot of parish council projects currently underway and these should be promoted, with less emphasis on outside groups.
- To invite a representative to speak from an organization that has received a grant from SAPC during the last year such, for example the Cordes Hall.
- Speeches/presentations should be shorter, with a maximum total time of, for example, 20 minutes to allow time for Q&A to be reinstated.
- To make the meeting more informal - possibly at a different venue or with the seating set out in a more informal way.
- To invite the new leader of the borough council and ask him to present on plans RBWM has for our parish.
- A representative of Thames Valley Police should be invited again.
- A meet-and-greet session before the meeting starts, perhaps with a drink.
- Questions to be invited ahead of time via social media.
- Be aware of issues with the sound system as last year some people were unable to hear all that was said – ensure speakers are close to microphones and sound is at a sufficient level.

8666 UPDATE ON OUTSIDE MEETINGS ATTENDED

Cllr R Wood reported on the Ascot Reference Group meeting that he and Cllr C Richardson attended recently. This was arranged to give an update on the progress of the Ascot SPD and was led by RBWM officers Chris Joyce and Ian Motuel. It was reported at the meeting that RBWM has stopped using Project Centre and will be bring this activity in-house. It is expected there will be further discussion with the reference group in March, with a view to developing a draft SPD in August to put out to public consultation after that. No dates for further meetings were proposed and the suggestion was made that the PC send a prompting email.

8667 PARTY IN THE PARK

The clerk's office has begun planning for the forthcoming Party in the Park, which has been scheduled to be part of the national D-Day celebrations on 06 June. However, Council members expressed their concern regarding holding the event on a day that is not a public holiday. The clerk's office was asked to check whether the day is to be made a public holiday. If not, it was suggested that the date of the event should be moved to Saturday 8th June, with or without a beacon.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Cllr A Sharpe, Chairman