



SPEEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ONLINE ON MONDAY 10TH AUGUST 2020 AT 7PM

Present	Parish Councillors	Cllr Amirtharaj, Cllr Dudman, Cllr Phillips, Cllr Booth, Cllr Black, Cllr Newell-Hart, Cllr Butter, Cllr Gourley
	WBDC Councillor/Employee	
	Members of the Public	
	Clerk & RFO	Jean Lindsell

Meeting started at 7.26pm

Resolution	Item	Action
Resolved	<p>1. Apologies: Cllr Doherty & Cllr Masters</p> <p>2. Declaration of Interests</p> <p>Cllr Phillips declared an interest in Items 11 12 & 13 – Cllr Phillips lives adjacent to Stockcross Recreation Ground</p> <p>Cllr Newell-Hart declared an interest in Item 13 – Cllr Newell-Hart’s wife is a member of Sutton Hall Committee</p> <p>3. Open Session – no members of the public present</p> <p>4. Minutes – to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on Saturday 04-07-20 (draft). Minutes to be signed at a later date.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Phillips All In Favour</p> <p>5. Financial Report Clerk as RFO</p> <p>5.1 Balance in bank as at 31-07-20 £83,186.66</p> <p>The Clerk advised the balance was higher than expected due to a payment of £7390 having been received from The Good Exchange in respect of the Stockcross Footpath project fundraising. The Clerk further advised that the intention had been to hold these monies in a separate account but until recently Lloyds bank were not accepting any requests for new accounts even from existing customers due to low staffing levels and dedicating their time to supporting customers during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>5.2 To retrospectively note invoice payments made for July 2020</p> <p>No queries raised. All Councillors noted payments made.</p> <p>5.3 Proposal: To accept Finance Report to 31-07-20</p> <p>Cllr Black asked why SPC had received monies in respect of the Stockcross Footpath project if the project was being carried out by the PTFA.</p> <p>The Clerk advised that although the PTFA were raising the funds required the Council was responsible for the management of the project including engaging with the contractor already appointed by the Council and payment of any invoices. The Clerk further advised The Good Exchange did not hold funds until the conclusion of a fund raising effort and their policy was to make interim payments. As previously advised to the Council the PTFA who initially received this interim payment had requested that they be transferred to SPC as it was outside the terms of reference</p>	
Resolved		

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<p>Resolved</p>	<p>for a PTFA bank account to hold these funds.</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj queried why the amount was showing as income but had not been a considering during the budget setting process.</p> <p>The Clerk agreed these monies were not income but in order to accurately report the bank balance they had to appear on the reports and had she been able to open a separate account then these monies would not have appeared at all. The Clerk confirmed it was still her intention to move these funds to a separate account.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Newell-Hart Seconder: Cllr Phillips All in Favour</p> <p>6. District Ward Report</p> <p>Cllr Dudman asked Councillors if there were any queries regarding the previously circulated report. No questions raised. Cllr Dudman thanked Cllr Doherty for a comprehensive report.</p> <p>7. Finance & General Purposes Committee</p> <p>7.1 Insurance Renewal</p> <p>The Clerk advised she had hoped to have renewal quotes available for the meeting but due to some complexities requiring further work these would now be reviewed by the F&GP Committee prior to recommendation being made to Full Council at the September meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>Resolved</p>	<p>7.2 Connecting Communities in Berkshire</p> <p>Proposal: To approve SPC annual membership at a cost of £35</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj asked if the Council currently subscribed to any other charities.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed SPC did not.</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj recognised the excellent work CCB carried out however could not see any real benefits particularly for parishioners.</p> <p>Cllrs Black, Newell-Hart and Phillips all echoed Cllr Amirtharaj's comments.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman agreed but added this matter could have been decided via email as it had already been raised by the Clerk however insufficient responses had been received so it had to be an Agenda item. Cllr Dudman asked that all Councillors try to respond to emails in order to reduce Agenda items where some matters can be decided outside of a meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk advised she already received CCB newsletter/updates.</p> <p>All members of the Council resolved not to approve the proposal.</p> <p>8. Communications</p> <p>8.1 Councillors Monthly Website Articles</p> <p>The Clerk thanked Cllr Black for his article which had been uploaded to the website. Cllr Butter confirmed she would forward her article for August to the Clerk.</p> <p>Cllr Gourley offered to write an article and asked for guidance on subject matter. The Clerk advised September was being written by Cllr Booth and October by Cllr Newell-Hart and suggested November for Cllr Gourley.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman thanked Cllr Gourley and suggested articles could be anything about the Parish, a pastime of particular interest but added this was an opportunity for creative writing.</p> <p>9. Development</p> <p>9.1 Parish Improvement Plan</p>	



9.1.1. Speen Pavilion - to review planned upgrades and quotations received to date and agree way forward.

The Clerk advised that whilst costs were based on quotes received to date they were being presented simply as an indication as further quotes would need to be obtained and at this stage the question was just to discuss how the Council would like to move forward.

Cllr Dudman suggested as it had been some considerable time since the upgrade plan had been compiled that the Council might wish to form a Working Party to either look at the entire Improvement Plan or just Speen Pavilion and asked Councillors for their views.

Cllr Amirtharaj stated his agreement to the formation of a WP.

Cllr Black offered to work alongside the Clerk on the Improvement Plan as he had been involved from the start.

Cllr Booth joined the meeting at 8.30pm

Cllr Booth suggested a WP should consider the new windows being aluminium rather than uPVC but added that as the windows were never opened for security reasons were opening windows really required.

Cllr Butter supported the use of aluminium for environmental reasons.

Cllr Dudman suggested that the WP should be made up of more than one Councillor and asked if anyone would be willing to take this on.

Cllrs Gourley and Booth both offered to join the WP.

Cllr Dudman asked the Clerk to confirm that the WP would concentrate initially on the Speen Pavilion upgrade and subsequently make recommendations to Full Council.

The Clerk suggested the WP should meet online to discuss the plan but asked if this should be restricted to Speen Pavilion or encompass the entire Improvement Plan due to the number of projects.

Cllr Gourley felt it should be an Improvement Plan WP as there were projects that could be achieved relatively quickly.

Cllr Butter suggested that a number of projects could be decided quite quickly and therefore not need to be part of the WP.

It was agreed the decision be deferred until after discussion of the other items on the Agenda relating to the Improvement Plan.

9.1.2 Dog Bins

Speen Lane

The Clerk advised whilst not needing formal approval from WBC to install new dog bins there were guidance notes from WBC. The original location suggested for Speen Lane was the old railway cutting but WBC had commented that might be too close to the bin already at the Church car park and had suggested either on the crossroads sign or at the end of the footpath however the area was very small and in close proximity to residents properties.

Cllr Dudman agreed the space at the end of the footpath was too small and was happy with the crossroads sign as a site.

Cllr Booth suggested the railway cutting due to the wide verge.



The Clerk advised bins could not be attached to any post containing electrical cables or PROW signs and added that if a bin were to be free standing information regarding underground services would need to be obtained first.

Cllr Booth offered to investigate the existence of underground plant at the railway cutting.

Cllr Phillips advised although not relating to Speen he had received a complaint from a Stockcross resident concerning the level of dog waste around the village and asked that consideration be given to additional bins in Stockcross.

The Clerk advised due to the question of underground services at the railway cutting this would have to be taken up with WBC. The Clerk added on the subject of Stockcross that the litter bin on Stockcross Green was being used for dog waste.

Cllr Butter felt this was an issue of dog owners taking responsibility rather than vastly increasing the number of bins and suggested raising the matter with WBC regarding awareness campaigns.

The Clerk advised this had already been raised with WBC who had simply sent posters which the Clerk had put up around the area.

Cllr Gourley advised that it appeared the crossroads sign was on the widest part of the verge and felt this would be the best site.

Cllr Dudman suggested the location be the crossroads sign which was agreed by all Councillors unanimously.

Brummel Road

Cllr Dudman asked for clarification that the suggested locations were not within the parish boundary.

The Clerk confirmed there were no suitable sites on the Parish side of Brummel Road and the potential location of the cycleway sign had previously been discussed with the parishioner who had complained. In addition WBC had made a further suggestion of nearer to the Co-Op car park.

Cllr Booth suggested the issue be passed to Newbury Town Council as the potential locations were within their boundary.

The Clerk suggested the verge where the Parish noticeboard is situated.

Cllr Amirtharaj suggested the grass area on the corner of Brummel Road but added that no matter how many dog bins are available the behaviour of dog owners was unlikely to change.

Cllr Dudman agreed and felt that the presence of a dog bin in the area would not make any difference.

The Clerk suggested she contact Newbury Town Council as the issue was within their boundary and report back to the next meeting on their response.

Clerk

9.1.3 Woodspeen Noticeboard

The Clerk advised a location needed to be identified and parishioners input taken into account.

Cllr Booth asked if this referred to Woodspeen East or Woodspeen West. Cllr Booth suggested the crossroads at Woodspeen West as a possible location but residents should be asked first.



<p>Cllr Butter added the crossroads was by a well-used footpath and therefore an ideal location.</p> <p>All Councillors agreed this would a perfect location. Clerk to check accessibility.</p> <p>9.1.4 Stockcross Telephone Box</p> <p>Cllr Phillips confirmed the telephone box was in urgent need of re-painting and the surrounding area cleared of the weeds. Cllr Phillips suggested quotes be obtained for the re-painting and tidying. Clerk to obtain quotes. All Councillors agreed.</p> <p>9.1.5 Tree Planting</p> <p>The Clerk advised applications were currently being accepted by The Woodland Trust Tree Charter for delivery of tree packs in November and a second round of applications would be available for delivery in March 2021. The Clerk added the question of locations was still open and suggested one location might be the rough area in the corner of Speen Recreation Ground on the right when entering via the pedestrian gate from Winterton Drive for a 30 tree pack.</p> <p>Cllr Phillips thought 30 trees might be too many and that ideas for locations be presented at the next meeting. Cllr Phillips would like to get input from Stockcross residents but suggested the grass area where there is a bench and bus stop at the entrance to the village.</p> <p>Cllr Newell-Hart suggested Marsh Benham Recreation Ground and the river frontage in Bagnor as he felt the Council should pay particular attention to these areas which had not been the case to date.</p> <p>Cllr Butter advised that a hedge tree pack would be most appropriate for Marsh Benham to improve the hedgerow species.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman suggested that the various locations and appropriate tree packs be investigated further and offered to look at Speen Recreation Ground and asked Cllr Butter to review Marsh Benham, Cllr Newell-Hart to discuss with the owner of the land in Bagor and Cllr Phillips to look out Stockcross. All agreed.</p> <p>Cllr Phillips advised he would post on the Stockcross Facebook page to get input from residents.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman asked that input be received via email within the next two weeks in order to submit an application as soon as possible.</p> <p>9.2 War Memorial Project</p> <p>The Clerk advised the Members Bid funding had timed out and was therefore no longer available for the project although Cllr Doherty had advised she might be able to re-apply however this was dependent upon the Council agreeing the project was still a priority and that match funding was available. The Clerk added there was no provision with the 2020/21 budget for the project but was awaiting a response from WBC as to whether CIL/s106 monies could be used.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman suggested this might be an opportunity to tie the project in with WBC cycling initiatives following an injection of Government funds.</p> <p>Cllr Gourley advised there were tentative plans regarding an A4 cycle route but these would not go as far as the War Memorial and had to be approved prior to the funds being made available to WBC.</p> <p>Cllr Booth apologised for not having progressed the project to date but felt it was still a worthwhile project and integrate it with cycling. Cllr Booth added the location was a pinch point as the carriage way became much narrower and the footpath</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Dudman/Cllr Butter/Cllr Newell- Hart/Cllr Phillips</p>
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	<p>above extremely narrow however an area of land to the south side might be a possibility to use to widen the footpath and/or use as a cycleway.</p> <p>Cllr Newell-Hart advised that if development of the land going down towards Lambourn Road went ahead the access was opposite the War Memorial and plans indicated configuration of footpaths and cycleways for the area.</p> <p>The Clerk suggested this project might be an item for the WP to take on as it now might link into other projects such as WBC Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and Sutton Estates development.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman asked if the WP would be willing to take this on due to the complexities and level of work involved in this project.</p> <p>Cllr Black suggested the WP meet initially to discuss the project and report back to Full Council to confirm if they were happy to take it on or not which was agreed by all members.</p>	
Resolved	<p>10. Maintenance</p> <p>10.1 Stockcross Recreation Ground Play Equipment</p> <p>Proposal: To agree works to be carried out and approve quotation</p> <p>The Clerk advised that the risk level against each repair had been noted on the document previously circulated and asked if the Council was happy for all works to be carried out.</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj felt all works should be carried out and was happy with the contractor as he well known to the Council.</p> <p>Cllr Newell-Hart agreed.</p> <p>Cllr Booth also agreed but requested that the replacement nuts on the toddler swing be specified as stainless steel to avoid future corrosion.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Phillips Seconder: Cllr Black All in Favour</p>	Clerk
Resolved	<p>10.2 Speen Recreation Ground Play Equipment</p> <p>Proposal: To agree works to be carried out and approve quotation</p> <p>The Clerk advised that CIL monies were available for these works but raised the question of whether the Council wished to repair the existing bench seat or purchase a new one.</p> <p>All Councillors agreed there should be a new bench rather than repair the old one and requested the Clerk obtain a quote for a Marmax picnic bench.</p> <p>It was unanimously agreed all other works should be carried out and the quote amended to exclude repairs to the old bench but to include removal of the remaining bench support and making good the ground.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Amirtharaj All in Favour</p> <p>10.3 Speen Pavilion</p> <p>Proposal: To agree works to be carried and approve quotation</p> <p>The Clerk advised the quote for £880 was for the roof, guttering, downpipes and air vents and a separate quote for £500 for the re-pointing but added she had just received a further quote for all works for £1265 where the re-pointing costs were £275. The Clerk suggested it might be possible to split the works between the two contractors.</p>	Clerk Clerk



Cllr Booth advised over the years there had been regular issues with damage to the downpipes and asked if the contractors had given assurances that the new ones would be vandal proof.

The Clerk advised the question had not been asked.

Cllr Dudman felt the Council was not in a position to vote on the proposal until there was further detail regarding the various quotes and asked if all Councillors were happy to deal with this via email in order to make a decision which was unanimously agreed.

Clerk to obtain clarification on costs including costs for vandal proof guttering and downpipes and email all Councillors with the information.

Clerk

10.4 Environmental Maintenance Contract

The Clerk advised invitations to tender had been sent out and was awaiting responses by the deadline of 14th August which would then be presented to the F&GP Committee for review and recommendation to Full Council in September.

10.5 Marsh Benham Trees

Cllr Butter confirmed the Ash tree had been taken down and the canopy of the Lime had been raised but the BT cable running from the road to the electricity pole still ran through the branches of the Lime however the electricity cable was now clear of the tree canopy. Cllr Butter suggested the Council may wish to budget for tree works in the future particularly relating to re-pollarding the Lime.

Cllr Dudman confirmed that the Clerk had noted tree maintenance to be included for consideration in the 2021/22 budget.

Cllr Booth suggested that if the Council considers the BT cable is at risk BT/Open Reach should be notified.

Clerk to advise BT.

Clerk

11. Stockcross Recreation Ground Footpath Project

The Clerk advised fund raising was progressing with a target completion date of end September however the amount to be reached has increased due to the contractor costs only having been held until end August. The revised quote had increased by £1225 due to increases from all suppliers. The Clerk advised the revised costs would be held only until end December as tarmac suppliers had stated there would be further increases in January 2021. The construction work had been pencilled in for October weather permitting and assuming full funding achieved by that time.

The Clerk further advised the contractor would need to clarify with Sutton Estates regarding their offer of removal of excavated material to ensure his machinery was suitable for the height of the sides of their trailers. If this was not the case there could be additional costs due to him having to hire different machinery.

Cllr Newell-Hart asked if the additional costs that might be incurred relating to the removal of excavated material were known.

The Clerk advised the contractor was going to speak to Sutton Estates and advise her of the outcome of those discussions at which time any additional costs would be known.

12. Tennis Club Lease – update from Clerk and to agree invoice amount to be raised for Stockcross Tennis Club in respect of legal fees

The Clerk advised the lease had been signed by all parties and was completed. The application to register the lease with the Land Registry was in progress the cost of which had been paid for by the tenant.

The Clerk advised the invoice from solicitors was for £768+VAT and written confirmation had been received from the tennis club to pay in the region of



£700+VAT in respect of the legal fees. She added that VAT had been included at that time as it was unclear if this could be reclaimed but had subsequently received confirmation that SPC could reclaim the VAT.

Cllr Amirtharaj thanked the Clerk for her efforts in bringing this matter to a conclusion but asked for clarification that it had been agreed to pass on the legal fees to the tennis club.

The Clerk confirmed this had been agreed by the Council at a meeting in 2019 but added that there was also the question of the Fields in Trust fees of £300+VAT which had not been discussed with the tennis club and suggested Council might wish to consider passing on the full amount of the solicitors fees but bear the cost of the FIT fees. The Clerk advised there were sufficient funds available under the Miscellaneous budget category to meet these costs.

Cllr Newell-Hart felt that £700 should be passed on to the tennis club and SPC should pay the remaining £68.

Cllr Phillips commented that by SPC being able to reclaim the VAT the tennis club had a saving of £150.

Cllr Black felt that the full costs of £768 should be passed on.

Cllr Dudman advised that as the Council were absorbing the FiT fees it was not unreasonable to pass on the full amount of £768.

Cllr Newell-Hart advised he felt uncomfortable about passing on any more than £700 as this was a community activity to be supported.

The Clerk advised there should be a vote in light of Councillors views on the matter.

Cllr Dudman proposed that £768 be invoiced to the tennis club but also noting that the Council would not be passing on the FiT fees

Proposer: Cllr Dudman

Seconder: Cllr Booth

Against: 1

In Favour: 7

Resolved

13. Stockcross Recreation Ground

Proposal: To approve request from Sutton Hall to hold 'Pop Inn event at Stockcross Recreation Ground on Monday 31st August 2020 from midday onwards

Cllr Dudman stated the Clerk has previously emailed all Councillors regarding this matter which he felt could have been dealt with via email in order to reduce the number of Agenda items.

Cllr Phillips advised the event had subsequently been cancelled therefore no approval was required.

14. Correspondence: To receive & consider correspondence (all relevant correspondence is circulated electronically on receipt and where possible dealt with by the Clerk) None to report

15. Matters for consideration and information arising after the preparation of this Agenda which the Chair agrees to take as urgent (all Councillors) None Raised

16. Date of Next Meeting – Monday 14th September 2020

17. Exclusion of the Press and Public

No resolution required as no PART II Items to consider

The meeting closed at 21.50pm



Signed:	Name (print): Position:	Date:
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Abbreviations Used:

- SPC = Speen Parish Council
- WBC = West Berkshire Council
- PTFA = Parent Teacher and Friends Association
- WP = Working Party
- FiT = Fields in Trust

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