

Wonersh Parish Council

BLACKHEATH • SHAMLEY GREEN • WONERSH

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF WONERSH PARISH COUNCIL Held Thursday 14th February 2008, at 7.30pm at Wonersh Sports Pavilion

Present:

Cllr R Bawden	Chairman
Cllr M Harding	Vice Chairman
Cllr M Band	Borough Councillor
Cllr N Goodchild	
Cllr L Healy	
Cllr N Morris	
Cllr A Shareef	

Also present were:

Borough Cllr M Goodridge
County Cllr A Povey
Graham Coates

Clerk: Mrs J Cadman

08/16 Apologies were received from Cllrs C Howard and A Powell Evans

08/17 Code of Conduct
No interests were declared

08/18 Open Meeting

1. *Wonersh Common:* The Chairman welcomed Graham Coates to the meeting, and confirmed that he would be asked to speak in Sarah Henderson's place under Item 8.
2. *Traffic Issues in Wonersh:* Cllr Povey confirmed that he had met with David Beevers and colleagues regarding their concerns. He had also attended a meeting of the Accident Working Party (a joint collaboration between SCC and the police). Officers had confirmed that they were looking at what might be done in areas where accidents had occurred. Cllr Povey tabled a copy of a map of accident black spots.

08/19 Minutes of the meeting held 10th January 2008

These were agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman, after the following amendment:

08/09: Wonersh Traffic Group: The road referred to was the A248 not the A281.

08/20 Matters Arising

08/09: Wonersh Traffic Group: PC Paul Soulsby and PCSO Michael Baker had met with David Beevers.

08/13d: Footpath below Chinthurst Hill: Cllr Harding reported that he had spoken to a contact at the Surrey Hills Office who confirmed that, unless a hedge had been listed, it cannot be protected. The Surrey Hills Trust are hoping to set up a society which will be able to take a wider remit, and might be able to deal with issues like this in the future. Cllr Band agreed, but

suggested that the enforcement officer be contacted and asked to take a look.

8/14d: Global Warming: Cllr Powell-Evans had confirmed that she would produce a paper, and she hoped to be able to present this at the April meeting.

08/21 Finance – to approve the current list of receipt and payment vouchers

Members resolved that the list of receipt and payment vouchers tabled this evening be APPROVED. This was PROPOSED by Cllr Healy, SECONDED by Cllr Morris, all in favour.

08/22 Approval of Comments made by Ward Planning sub-committee on planning applications received.

The comments to Waverley Planning department regarding the following 7 planning applications considered since the last meeting were APPROVED unanimously.

WA/2007/2739 Gate House, Chinthurst Hill, Chinthurst Lane, Wonersh

Application for listed building consent for internal alterations

WA/2007/2750 2 Firs Lane, Shamley Green

Erection of extensions and alterations (variation to consent granted under WA/2007/2246)

WA/2008/0020 20 Blackheath Grove, Wonersh

Erection of extensions and alterations following demolition of existing garage (revision of WA/2007/0486)

WA/2008/0082 Great Tangley Manor Farm, Tangley Lane, Wonersh

change of use and alterations to provide 4 dwellings with associated works, including the formation of two passing bays

WA/2008/0083 Great Tangley Manor Farm, Tangley Lane, Wonersh

Application for listed building consent for alterations to provide 4 dwellings with associated works.

WA/2008/0116 4 Flanders Cottages Guildford Road Shamley Green

Erection of extensions

WA/2007/2432 53 New Road, Wonersh

Demolition of rear part of existing garage and erection of a single storey extension

Amendment relating to reduction in roof height

08/23 Wonersh Common Enhancement and Management Plan

The draft circulated prior to the meeting represented the results from the exercise before Christmas when three teams of volunteers surveyed all the common land in Wonersh Village. Costings were needed at some stage, and Sarah Henderson would attend the Annual Meeting to talk about the enhancement plan throughout the parish. The Chairman was encouraged that this parish now had something structured to work with.

Cllr Morris confirmed that he had found the document extremely interesting and he was looking forward to the same exercise being carried out in Blackheath.

Cllr Harding also found the document very worthwhile, but was concerned that a similar exercise in Shamley Green had still not produced a final document. It was confirmed that Sarah was currently having the presentation of this document enhanced and the wish was expressed that it would be ready in time for the Annual Assembly.

Action: Cllr Shareef to check with Sarah Henderson.

Action:

- Remove concrete base of old bus stop at The Platt
 - Bins: replace with same style bin throughout.
- Clerk to obtain quotes so provision can be set aside before the end of the financial year.

Other minor items on list could be dealt with by handyman. The Clerk to progress.

08/24 Quality status - discussion of WPC's preparedness and process for progressing attainment of quality status.

The Chairman recorded thanks to the Clerk for the document which she had produced on this

subject, which he had been able to make use of for the paper circulated to all councillors. He summarised the areas where this Council would currently fail the tests for Quality Status.

He asked Members to reconfirm their commitment to pursuing Quality Status for this Council, which would be a recognition of professionalism and allow the Council to take on services that were currently provided by the Borough Council. It was **agreed** by all present that Quality Status should be pursued.

Action: working party to be set up, consisting of the following members: Cllr Shareef, Cllr Morris, Cllr Goodchild, and Cllr Powell-Evans or Cllr Howard. This party would draw up recommendations to bring to full Council on how to pursue.

08/25 Local Development Framework

This Borough Council briefing document had been circulated prior to the meeting, as Cllr Band considered it a useful paper, giving an idea of what was intended, and time scales, as local communities should have a voice in identifying development sites. He proposed to ask Graham Parrott, the author of the briefing paper, to address a Parish Council meeting, and it was **agreed** that he should be invited to the early April meeting.

Action: Cllr Band to organise.

The consultation was to take place over this current year, with preferred options published in May/June 2009. The examination by the Inspector will take place next year, and implementation in 2010.

08/26 Annual Assembly

- 24th April, 2008. 7pm for 7.30pm.
- Report from Chairman
- Clerk to speak to David Munro, who had not yet committed to attending.
- Sarah Henderson had agreed to talk on the Commons Audit.
- Invite Pat Frere to report on the work of Wonersh United Charities
- Invite someone, probably Paul Enticknap or Roger Taylor, to report on Wonersh Village Stores.
- It was agreed not to be appropriate for the Wonersh Traffic Group to present on Wonersh traffic at the Annual Assembly, as this would necessitate inviting someone from each village to speak on this subject. It was **agreed** that local societies should be invited to have a board at the back of the hall, so that people could read their information before and after the formal proceedings.

08/27 Annual Newsletter

- Produced before the meeting
- Traditionally has been distributed with parish magazines, need to ask if this can still happen.
- 4 sides, same format as before.

08/28 Traffic Issues in Wonersh

1. *Wonersh Traffic Group* Cllr Bawden reported that, having met with the Wonersh Traffic Group, Cllr Povey considered that more consultation was required and had offered £250 from his community fund to aid this. This would have to be channelled through a legal and audited body and Cllr Povey had suggested that this should be the parish council. Cllr Bawden thought that this was a good idea but that the council should have a representative on the group. It was PROPOSED by Cllr Harding, SECONDED by Cllr Shareef, all in favour, that a member of the Council should join this Group, to participate in discussions and act as liaison between them and the Council. Cllr Powell-Evans would be asked if she would take on this role, Cllr Bawden would take it on if she were unable to.

2. *Mill Lane, Shamley Green:* Cllr Harding reported signs at the entrance to Mill Lane which advised that major roadworks were to commence. SCC Highways know nothing about this.
3. *Lostford House:* A redundant BT manhole cover in front of this house was creating a hazard. This had been reported a number of times. Cllr Povey agreed to investigate.

08/29 Confirmation of protocols for publication of Council documents on the web site

Following discussions during the previous month, the Clerk had raised this matter with SCAP&TC, who advised that the publication of unapproved minutes was a matter of choice, with a number of councils publishing them with the narrative "UNAPPROVED".

After discussion, the following actions were PROPOSED by Cllr Morris, SECONDED, by Cllr Healy, with all in favour:

- Minutes to go on web-site as soon as available, with narrative "UNAPPROVED".
- Reports to go on web-site immediately after meeting.
- Matters arising to go on web-site a few days before next meeting.

It was noted that Cllr Harding's report in the Parish Magazine explaining the decision to discontinue the unofficial report also advised that the Council was looking at the issue of communication.

08/30 Potholes: Community Gang and responses from SCC

Members noted that a number of potholes remained unattended to, and that the Community Gang had not been in the area for some time.

The Clerk confirmed that she had received an e-mail from Stuart Copping, confirming that he had received her communications concerning the potholes mentioned, and advising that the Community Gang would be in the area from the 17th March..

The following outstanding issues were noted:

- Longacre School: two holes had been dug, one by Thames Water and one by British Gas. The British Gas hole was poorly filled.
- Floodwater: Highways had been contacted about floodwater and had issued a contract number. The floodwater ran down in front of the Club and down into a gully which had never been cleaned, meaning that it continued down in front of the shop.
- Between Rice's Corner and parish boundary there were a number of small potholes, and the surface was beginning to break up.

Cllr Povey requested that all complaints and requests concerning Highways be channelled through the Clerk. He asked that reports of unsatisfactory work by utility companies be directed to SCC, through the Clerk. He advised that each area was to be designated its own Community Highway Officer, and the one for this area should be in place by March. This officer would be able to help with reporting and liaise with the Parish Council. SCC had agreed to invest a good deal more money into Highways maintenance for the next year.

08/31 Reports from Councillors:

- a) *Future plans for traffic calming in Blackheath:* Cllr Morris: This report was noted. Cllr Morris advised that this group would continue.
- b) *Bramley Parish Council:* Cllr Harding: it was noted that Bramley had also discussed the GBC Development Plan. The problem of the laurels on the Wonersh/Bramley road was being addressed.
- c) *Car parking in Shamley Green:* The conclusion was that there was no instant solution.

Cars parked by the side of the Arbuthnot Hall, also on the grass verge. Laying some grasscrete would minimise the problem of ruts, but Sarah Henderson was not in favour as cars should not be parking on common land. The possibility of 2 or 3 posts near the shop was discussed and it was agreed that they must be robust.

08/32 Correspondence

- a) *Shamley Green Fete*: The Chairman of the SG fete committee has advised that Anne Milton is to open the fete on the 7th June.
- b) *Register of Business Parks and Industrial Estates in Waverley*. WBC have asked for information on any such estates in the Parish. The Clerk was advised that there are none.
- c) *Guildford and Waverley Co-Design meeting*: to be held on 28th February at Godalming Baptist Church.
- d) *Surrey Village of the Year Competition 2008*: simplified entry process, it is now intended that the judges will complete a more detailed form when they visit. This to be passed to village societies.

08/33 Councillors Business

- a) *Wonersh Surgery*: Cllr Harding believed it would be helpful if the surgery produced a notice which advised residents of the best contact times. This could also be put on the web-site.
- b) *Shamley Green Cricket Club*: It was understood that agreement had been reached between Waverley BC and the cricket club, although this was still to be formally endorsed by the Executive.
- c) *Office of Fair Trading*: had issued a communication concerning 'Scams'.
- d) *Community Partnership Group*: next meeting 26th February. Cllr Shareef would attend if Cllr Powell-Evans was unable to.
- e) *LORD*: This had been a good, well run campaign, and it was agreed that this Council should continue to support their endeavours. Cllr Shareef would attend their next meeting. Cllr Morris suggested that roads in the parish be added to their list of inappropriate routes, including Woodhill Lane in Shamley Green, and Blackheath Lane. He asked for input on roads in Wonersh.

08/34 Dates of Future Meetings

Thursday 13th March, 7.30pm

Thursday 10th April, 7.30pm

Thursday 24th April, **Annual Assembly**, 7pm for 7.30pm

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.20pm

Reports

Wonersh Common Enhancement & Management Plan

FIRST DRAFT

This document sets out the long term management objectives and guidelines for Wonersh Common. The plan has been developed with local involvement and it is intended that it should be the first point of reference for all those with an involvement and interest in Wonersh Common.

Background Information

Wonersh Common covers an area of 25.4ha of which 19.5ha is owned by Waverley Borough Council and 5.9ha by Wonersh Parish Council (Appendix I).

Like many of the commons in the area Wonersh Common would have been traditionally managed by grazing. An aerial photograph from 1947 shows the now wooded land to the north to be predominately open and scrub or trees on what is now the cricket ground.

Site Status

The whole area is registered common land (CL 182) covered by the Commons Registration Scheme and bye-laws (Appendix II). The area lies within the Area of Great Landscape Value. The very southern edge of the area, around the Pepperpot is within Wonersh Conservation Area and is also an Area of Archaeological Potential.

The Downs Link (bridleway 301) crosses through the wooded area of common to the north of the site and footpath 304A crosses south of the cricket pitch. In addition footpath 300A joins the common at Little Tangle Lodge and footpath 304 joins the common at Holmefield (Appendix III).

Landownership/Leases

The land under Waverley's ownership was purchased from the Earl of Onslow in 1957 by Hambledon Rural District Council, under the Commons Act 1899 and Local Government Act 1933, for the purpose of providing for open access and recreation for local people.

Parish Council purchase date & power of acquisition – anyone?

PC leases – cricket club + date lease(s) expire ?

As it is illegal to park or drive on common land. Both Waverley and the Parish Council have granted easements to named properties to have vehicular rights to cross but not park on the common.

Landscape Character

In order to understand what makes Wonersh Common special a landscape assessment was carried out by the Enhancement Project Group using a standard methodology developed by the Countryside Agency. The following three areas were identified:

1. Cricket Green – An irregular shaped area that encompasses the more open aspect of the cricket green and tapers down into the heart of the village. The B2128 Guildford to Shamley Green road is situated to the west of the area. Due to the dominant presence of the cricket green and play area the overall character is formal. The area shares characteristics with many other local villages in that this open part of the green is surrounded by properties and fringed by roadside trees.

To the east are views to Barnett Hill whilst to the west the wooded slopes of Chinthurst Hill.

2. The Platt – This central section of the common is predominately linear and dominated by the B2128 which runs north to south through the area. The Platt itself is a roughly square area of grassland, dominated by willows, that is cut annually for hay.

To the west of the Platt are views of Chinthurst Hill.

3. Woodland – The wedge shaped area to the north of the common is dominated by a woodland that is either side of the B2128. The block of secondary woodland to the east of the road is wet secondary woodland, due to the presence of streams and ponds.

Guiding Principals

These are the policies that have been developed to protect and enhance Wonersh Common. They should be used as the guiding principals for any future management decisions.

1. Protect the common land and its historic common pattern

2. Protect the rural character of Wonersh Common

The area is registered common land which offers a great deal of protection from development and despoilment. However, the integrity of the historic common should be protected against minor infringements such as unauthorised planting, inappropriate surfacing on access tracks or lighting. It is important to protect the rural character of the common from creeping urbanisation, including parking. Permanent loss of common through encroachment should be prevented through annual boundary inspections.

3. Conserve and enhance the distinct landscape character of Wonersh Common

The survey identified three character areas. The distinct features and views of these areas should be respected and enhanced whenever possible.

4. Protect and enhance key views

The survey identified three character areas. The distinct features and views should be protected and taken into account when any works or developments are to be considered.

Chinthurst Hill forms the back drop to Wonersh Common but views of the folly are gradually being lost behind trees.

5. Protect and enhance 'treescape' of the area

Trees are an important feature in any landscape. However, they are not a permanent feature and a long term tree management and replacement plan is necessary to ensure continuity of tree cover and to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places.

The planting of new trees will need to take into account the landscape character of each area.

6. Prevent parking and erosion of verges

Parking does not cause the same level of concern in Wonersh as it does for example in Shamley Green. However, vehicles can easily damage the ground leading to unsightly and damaged verges so it is important that vulnerable areas remain protected.

7. Prevent proliferation of access tracks

There are numerous access tracks over the common, allowing residents to gain access to their properties. These tracks have been permitted and in most cases regularised by Waverley Borough Council and Womersley Parish Council through an easement. An easement does not grant a right to park on the common, it only permits access across the common to allow vehicles to be parked within the property boundary.

The tracks should be surveyed regularly and where necessary inform the householder that remedial works need to be carried out

To retain the rural character of the area and to comply with Waverley's specification for access' these tracks should be single vehicle width and of an unbound surface (see Waverley Borough Council Guidelines for Access Tracks on Common Land). The responsibility for maintaining the track lies with the owner of the property that enjoys right of access over the common.

8. Prevent and reduce visual impact of signs and street furniture

The survey revealed that there were a number of rubbish bins on the common but that many of them were in a poor state. In order to improve the visual appearance of the area only one style of bin will be used throughout and careful consideration be given to location of new bins.

Highway signs and unsightly advertising signs, especially clusters of 'For Sale' signs detract from the rural character of Womersley Common. Unfortunately, SCC is not obliged to consult over the installation of new signs or obliged to remove redundant ones.

Advertising is controlled by the planning regulations and the bye-laws. Guidelines for Signs on Common Land are available from the Countryside Ranger. All unauthorised signs will be removed.

9. Provide for formal and informal public recreation and community events

Due to its size and varied nature Womersley Common is used in many different ways. The Downs Link passes through the north of the common taking a larger number of walkers and horse riders through the woodland.

At the other end of the common the pavilion and grounds provide an ideal setting for cricket during the summer and football through the winter. The adjacent play ground is popular throughout the year.

The area is also popular with local dog walkers.

10. Provide opportunities for biodiversity

Where possible management should provide opportunities for biodiversity, but this should be balanced against the necessity for parts of the common to be managed more formally.

There are two areas that lend themselves to being the focus for wildlife. The Platt is managed as a hay meadow and it is believed that it has never been cultivated. It would be worth while undertaking a botanical survey of the grassland.

The area of secondary woodland has the greatest potential for biodiversity. As recent secondary woodland it currently has limited floristic diversity but does support an interesting range of communities and when looked at in a wider context can be regarded as part of the Shalford Common complex which is known to be an important foraging and hibernation habitat for a sizable common toad population.

Management to develop a better woodland structure and prevent further encroachment into the open glade would be of benefit.

Management Issues & Solutions

The Landscape Assessment identified a number of issues. By Applying the Guiding Principals above the following solutions have been identified. These will form the basis of the Womersley Common Enhancement Plan, for which funding will be sought and will also guide the long term management actions.

1. Cricket Green

Unightly rubbish bins	Replace with same style bin throughout. Ensure sited appropriately
Pepperpot	Slightly shabby. Repair damaged seating and remove staples/ drawing pins. Replace missing reflectors
Ditches	Overgrown and unsightly vegetation along edges. Ditches silted
Trees	Tree guards to be removed throughout. Some tree work required and stump grinding to recently felled trees. Develop long term tree management plan
Unightly Highways signs	Remove signs identified as redundant. Replace tatty wooden memorial sign
Posts	Replace dilapidated posts throughout in same style as new posts to Lawnsmead.
Variable standard of access tracks	Ensure owners of properties benefiting from access tracks are aware of maintenance responsibilities
Poor state of benches	Repairs are needed to a number of benches. All benches would benefit from regular maintenance
Footpath 304A	Widen path to original width
Telegraph poles	Sheaths over straining wires need replacing
Unauthorised signs	Ensure all signs comply with guidelines

2. The Platt

Variable standard of access tracks	Ensure owners of properties from access tracks area aware of maintenance responsibilities
Tree guards	Need removing throughout
Unightly Highways signs	Many identified as being unnecessary. Investigate possibility of replacing metal signs with wooden ones, where appropriate
Posts	Replace dilapidated posts with new style throughout
Benches	Require regular maintenance
Unmanaged ditches	Require regular maintenance and clearance of brambles
Trees	Some tree works required. Develop long term tree management plan
Dumped garden waste	Remove and educate neighbours
Concrete base	Remove base of old bus stop and reinstate to grass
Unauthorised signs	Ensure all signs comply with guidelines

3. Woodland

Silted ditches	Clear silt from ditch adjacent to Downs Link.
Unightly road signs	Some in poor condition and redundant. Remove ones no longer necessary
Poor condition of bench	Carry out repairs and include on regular maintenance schedule
Damaged verges	Install posts where verge/common damaged by vehicles
Over grown paths	Clear vegetation, where necessary, along paths

through woodland	
Overgrown verges	Clear brambles and improve management along roadside. Carry out frequent litter pick
Poor waymarking	Improve signage along this section of the Downs Link
Unmanaged woodland	Manage woodland to improve structure diversity. Revise management plan

Quality Parish Council

Paper for Consideration by Wonersh Parish Council

14 February 2008

Richard Bawden

Introduction

Some years ago Wonersh Parish Council expressed an ambition to attain Quality status and set about a programme of improvements to the workings of the council. In the last few years, although the council has continued to seek improvements in the way it conducts its business and serves the community, there has been less focus on the goal of becoming a Quality Council. It seems timely, therefore, to rehearse the benefits of Quality status; to reconfirm the council's desire to attain quality status; and to measure the current standing of the council *vis-à-vis* the tests for Quality status in order to establish an action plan.

What is a Quality Parish Council?

The concept of a Quality Parish Council was introduced in the 2000 Rural White Paper: "Our Countryside: The Future. A Fair Deal for Rural England" (1). Broadly a Quality Parish Council

- is representative of and actively engages all parts of its community, providing vision, identity and a sense of belonging;
- is effectively and properly managed;
- articulates the needs and wishes of its community;
- upholds high standards of conduct;
- is committed to work in partnership with principal local authorities and other public service agencies;
- in proportion to its size and skills, delivers local services on behalf of principal local authorities, when this is the best deal for the local community;
- works closely with voluntary groups in its community;
- provides leadership to the community through its work on parish plans; and
- working with its partners, acts as an information point for local services.

There is further explanation of these qualities in "The Quality Scheme Explained" (2).

Benefits of the Quality Scheme

The scheme is viewed as having three principal beneficiaries (see NALC toolkit (3)):

- the community;
- the parish council itself;
- the principal local authority.

Community benefits

Benefits to the community are deemed to be

- more responsive services – the Quality Council will be capable of solving local problems without recourse to the principal authority;
- real contact and discussions with its Quality Council;
- a local access point providing information and services;
- a council which is more accountable, visible, representative and provides community leadership.

Parish Council Benefits

- greater credibility in the eyes of the local community, voluntary and private sectors, and the principal local authorities;
- greater civic pride;
- more representative of the local community;
- better ability to articulate the needs and wishes of the local community;
- more will be achieved by working in partnership with other organizations;
- ability to demonstrate that it is effectively and properly managed, which will instill greater confidence in the community;
- can deliver more local services – if the council wishes to do so;
- greater involvement by the voluntary and community sector and by principal local authorities;
- a better informed community;
- a well trained clerk.

Principal Authority Benefits

- reassurance that the Quality council has been independently assessed and is capable of working together with the principal authority to deliver services on their behalf or in partnership;
- reliable evidence of the competence of the Quality council through reassessment;
- proof that the Quality council is willing and able to be fully involved in local issues;
- stronger partnership working;
- increased confidence that the Quality council is representative, competent, well managed and thus capable of sustaining an enhanced role.

The Test

For a parish council to attain Quality status it should be able to demonstrate that it

- is representative of, and actively engages with, all parts of its community, providing vision, identity and a sense of belonging;
- is effectively and properly managed; and
- has the ability and capacity to take on the enhanced role and responsibilities that Quality status is likely to bring.

These criteria are measured through seven tests, each one of which must be passed. The tests are outlined below:

1 Electoral Mandate (Mandatory)

Criterion: On first accreditation, 80% of the members of the council must have been elected. On all subsequent reaccreditations, 100% of the members must have been elected.

Wonersh PC would *pass* this test for first accreditation but if it were applying for re-accreditation it would *fail*.

2 A Qualified Clerk (Mandatory)

Criterion: The clerk must hold either

- the Certificate in Local Council Administration, or

- the Certificate of higher Education in Local Policy or Local Council Administration awarded by the University of Gloucestershire.

Our clerk is currently working towards CiL CA so we may be confident that in time we will be in a position to *pass* this test.

3 Council Meetings (Mandatory)

Criterion: The council must demonstrate that

- it meets on at least 6 occasions every year;
- notices of meetings are publically displayed at least 3 clear days before every meeting;
- minutes of each meeting are published within 2 months of the meeting and are available for inspection by any elector of the parish;
- time is allowed at each meeting for public participation; and
- all councilors attend meetings on a regular basis, unless they have good reason for not attending and apologies have been recorded.

Subject to clarification of what, exactly, is meant by 'published' Wonersh PC would *pass* this test.

4 Communication (Part Mandatory, Part Discretionary)

It is a major requirement of Quality status that the council can demonstrate that it communicates, consults and actively involves its electorate, local organizations and members of the public (A communications toolkit has been developed by IDeA to assist councils in developing their communications strategies, see (4)).

Mandatory Section

Criterion: The council must

- produce and publish a regular newsletter at least four times a year;
- include in its newsletter the names of councilors and the clerk and how they may be contacted;
- provide a synopsis of the annual report for local people; and
- make the newsletter readily available at public sites across the parish.

Wonersh PC would *fail* this test.

Discretionary Section

The discretionary section of this test allows for flexibility of approach with the requirement being that nine of the seventeen discretionary communications actions being met. These are

- the annual report (which is mandatory) is sent to every household in the parish area (a discretionary action);
- the annual report includes a summary of council activities during the year;
- the council has a parish plan, or has contributed to a village plan;
- an information or access point is provided for details on local government services and parish council activities;
- the information or access point is linked electronically to the district and county councils;
- information about local government services and council activities is distributed to every household;
- links have been established with voluntary and other community organizations in the area;
- the council has an email address that is publically available;
- the council has a website which provides a list of council members and officers, together with their contact details, and access to the annual report;
- councilors hold regular surgeries for local residents;

- residents are consulted on planning matters;
- relevant principal authorities are informed of parish council activities;
- council activities are publicised in local libraries, shops and/or other public places;
- council activities are publicised in the local press;
- council activities are reported in district council publications;
- consultations or questionnaires are undertaken with the electorate on local issues affecting the parish council area;
- information leaflets or brochures are provided on the work of the parish council.

By my reckoning Wonersh PC would *fail* to demonstrate nine of these requirements are met.

5 Annual Report (Mandatory)

Criterion: The council should produce an annual report that

- is published by 30 June of the following year;
- is available for inspection by any elector in the council area; and
- is made publically available by being placed at the offices of the principal authorities and local libraries;

The report should include

- a list of council members and officers plus their contact details;
- a summary of the council's accounts; and
- an overview by the chairman of the council's achievements.

Wonersh PC would *fail* this test.

6 Accountability (Mandatory)

Criteria: All council statements of accounts must receive an unqualified opinion from the external auditor. It is required that

- the latest available statement of accounts was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations (5);
- the latest available statement of accounts was published within nine months of the end of the accounting period;
- an adequate system of internal control has been maintained, having regard to relevant guidance such as the NALC/SLCC Practitioners' Guide (6); and
- an adequate and effective system of internal control in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations has been in place, having regard to the Practitioners' Guide or CIPFA's Code of Practice on Internal Audit (£60 from (7)).

I believe Wonersh PC should *pass* this test.

7 Code of Conduct (Mandatory)

Criterion: The council must show that it has formally adopted the code of Conduct.

Wonersh PC would *pass* this test.

Recommendations

I recommend that, should the council wish to continue to pursue the goal of Quality status, it sets up a working party to examine the requirements of tests 4 and 5 and how these may best be met by the council. The working party should report back to the council with an action plan designed to achieve Quality status as soon as possible.

References

- (1) <http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/ruralwp/whitepaper/chapter12.htm>
- (2) http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/pdfs/quality_parishes/quality_parishes_guidance.pdf
- (3) http://www.nalc.gov.uk/Toolkits/Quality_Status/Quality_Status.aspx
- (4) <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=7816073>
- (5) <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/SI/si2003/20030533.htm>
- (6) <http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/audit2.pdf>
- (7) <http://secure.cipfa.org.uk/cgi-bin/CIPFA.storefront/>

BRIEFING FOR MEMBERS ON THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF)

23rd JANUARY 2008

BACKGROUND PAPER

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to provide an introduction to the Local Development Framework (LDF) and to provide the background and context to some of the key issues that the Local Development Framework will address and which Members will be considering at the Briefing session on 23rd January.

The intention is to use the session on the 23rd to explain more about the LDF, particularly to those currently unfamiliar with the LDF and its purpose, and to run a workshop session, in which Members will be asked to discuss one of the key issues that the LDF must address, namely how and where to provide for the new housing that Waverley will be expected to accommodate in the next 15 –20 years.

THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new system for the development of planning policy at the regional and local level. At the regional level, the regional planning body (in our case SEERA) is responsible for producing the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The RSS for this area will be the South East Plan. Local authorities such as Waverley will be responsible for producing the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will contain a suite of planning policy documents which, over time, will replace the planning policies in the current Waverley Borough Local Plan. The documents that form the LDF are known as Local Development Documents (LDDs). They will fall into two categories:

- Development Plan Documents (DPDs); and
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

THE CORE STRATEGY

- The Core Strategy DPD is the most important document in the LDF and usually the first DPD to be produced. It sets the overall strategy for the area, including the high level strategic policies, from which other more detailed policy documents will flow. Although the Core Strategy is very much an evolving document, officers have identified the broad scope in terms of the subjects that it is likely to address. These include:-
 - A spatial settlement strategy
 - Housing land provision
 - Affordable housing and other housing and accommodation needs, including the needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople

- Employment issues
- Town centres
- Infrastructure
- Leisure and recreation
- The role of rural areas (including the rural economy)
- Climate change issues
- Sustainable development and design

In addition, there are already some very specific issues that we know will have to be addressed as part of the Core Strategy and other LDF documents. These include the outcome from the Farnham Visioning exercise; the implications for the LDF of development proposals for Dunsfold Aerodrome; and the implications of the A3 scheme at Hindhead and the related work being carried out by “Hindhead Together”.

CORE STRATEGY TIMETABLE

The timetable for the production of the Core Strategy is split into three main stages:-

- The Issues and Options stage;
- The preferred options stage; and
- The Examination stage

We are currently at the **Issues and Options** stage. As the name suggests, this is the stage at which we identify the key issues that Core Strategy should be addressing, together with the options for dealing with these. The current timetable is for the Issues and Options stage to run until October this year.

The **Preferred Options** stage is when the Council identifies the preferred approach to addressing the key issues, such as the preferred strategy for delivering new housing. Work is due to commence on the Preferred Options in the autumn and these will be developed with a view to public consultation on the Preferred Options in May/June next year.

Following the consultation on the Preferred Options, the Council will finalise the Core Strategy prior to submission and formal **Examination** by an Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate. This Examination process commences once the document is submitted and can last for up to a year. The Examination process includes a number of hearings in which key issues are debated and culminates with the Inspector issuing a Binding Report. The Inspector’s brief is to assess the document against various tests of soundness. It is currently proposed that the Core Strategy will be submitted in December 2009 and the anticipated date for adoption is December 2010.

OTHER LDF DOCUMENTS

- The Council’s programme for the production of LDF documents is set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS), which is updated annually. In addition to the Core Strategy, the current LDS provides the timetable for two other documents that are closely linked to the Core Strategy. These are:-
 - a Site Allocations DPD (to identify specific land allocations for housing and other uses that are derived from the Core Strategy); and
 - a Planning Infrastructure Contributions SPD.
- The draft of the proposed Planning Infrastructure Contributions SPD was considered by the Executive on 4th December and approved as the basis for the public consultation. That consultation is currently taking place and is due to end on 15th February.
- The LDS also identifies other LDF documents that are to be produced at some future date:-

- A Development Control Policies DPD
- An Area Action Plan or SPD for Hindhead (linked to the A3 tunnels scheme and the work of “Hindhead Together”)
- Area Action Plans or SPDs for the four main centres
- An SPD relating to Housing Design and Density
- An SPD on Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency
- A possible Joint SPD relating to the Thames Basin Heaths SPA

THE EVIDENCE BASE

It is essential that the new Core Strategy, and other LDF documents, are underpinned by a sound evidence base. In particular, it is important that when the wider public consultation takes place on the options for the Core Strategy, these options are derived from the evidence. There are already a number of sources of evidence available. However, it was considered that to develop the new Core Strategy specific evidence was needed on some of the key issues. As a result a number of studies are underway or will shortly be commencing in respect of the following:

- Housing Land Availability
- A sub-regional Housing Market Assessment (jointly commissioned with Guildford and Woking BCs)
- An Employment Land Review
- A study of town centre retail needs
- An affordable housing viability study.

These studies will be reporting in the spring of this year and, together with other evidence, will be crucial in supporting the development of realistic options on key issues such as the location of new housing or the Council’s planning policies for the delivery of affordable housing.

LINKS BETWEEN THE CORE STRATEGY AND THE NEW COMMUNITY STRATEGY

It is essential that there is a link between the local Community Strategy and the LDF, particularly the Core Strategy. The LDF should provide the spatial application of the issues coming out of the local Community Strategy. We are fortunate that at the same time that we are preparing the new LDF Core Strategy, the Council is also involved with the review/refresh of the Waverley Community Strategy. The timing of this is ideal in terms of linking the work on the Community Strategy with that of the LDF. Officers consider that the opportunity should be taken to develop a shared vision for both the Community Strategy and the Core Strategy. To this end, officers are proposing to hold a joint visioning event, probably in the Spring. This will enable key stakeholders to identify both the key issues as they see them for Waverley and to contribute to developing a vision for Waverley over the next 15 years.

It is also important that the LDF is closely aligned with the plans and strategies of other key service providers in the locality. This involves working with key partners through the LSP and separately.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Another key aspect of the new planning policy system is consultation and community engagement. This can take many forms. For example, during the early stages in developing a document such as the Core Strategy, informal discussions will take place with key stakeholders. This is very much a two-way dialogue. We are anxious to ensure that we are aware of their issues and priorities so that they can be fed in at an early stage. As the document develops, we will want to engage the wider community. In relation to the current LDF, we are still considering the details of how this will be done. At present we envisage a wider public consultation on the issues and options for the Core Strategy in the summer/early

autumn next year. This is after the main evidence documents have been completed and will enable us to develop options on key issues that are informed by the evidence.

However, officers are also very mindful about the public interest in some of the key issues, such as where and how to accommodate housing. Therefore, we will be exploring ways in which the public can start to contribute to this debate earlier in the New Year.

HOUSING DELIVERY AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SOUTH EAST PLAN

As explained above one of the main issues that the Core Strategy must include is the Council's overall strategy for the delivery of new housing. There are many factors that will influence the shape of the LDF. One of the most important is the South East Plan, not least because it will set out the housing requirements for each district between 2006 and 2026. Coupled with the new national planning policy on housing in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3, there are some real challenges for the LDF on this issue.

In the past we have relied heavily on the supply of "windfall" sites to deliver the required housing. Windfall sites are those that have not previously been identified and allocated for housing development. PPS3 places greater emphasis on allocated sites and states that windfalls should only be included where they can be justified. In addition, PPS3 requires us to plan for new housing over a 15-year period, including maintaining a five-year supply of "deliverable" sites. We will have to plan for housing delivery in this way, in the context of the higher housing allocation that is likely to come through the South East Plan.

The draft South East Plan includes a housing requirement for Waverley of 230 dwellings per annum. The report from the South East Plan EiP Panel recommends that this be increased to 250 per annum and we are currently awaiting the Government's response to this. By comparison, the current Structure Plan housing requirement requires an average of 187 dwellings per annum and this has been met largely through the contribution from windfalls.

A key piece of work in relation to this will be the Housing Land Availability Assessment that is currently being prepared by Baker Associates. This will provide evidence on the availability of housing land both within and outside settlements and will be crucial in enabling the Council to identify realistic options for housing delivery. The likelihood is that the Council will have some difficult decisions to make on this issue. We are already aware of concerns that have been raised locally about the impact that new housing has on the character of our settlements. People are already raising concerns about "Garden Grabbing" and asking for greater protection for existing residential areas. However, housing has to go somewhere. Development in existing residential areas has made a major contribution to the delivery of new housing. If the Council were to seek to tighten controls in residential areas, then it is inevitable that consideration will have to be given to releasing Greenfield sites outside settlements as there are few other options for delivering housing.

Given the importance of this issue, it is intended that the Members be given the opportunity at the Briefing Session to debate some of the issues and options relating to housing delivery.

This is not just an issue for the LDF. The Council is required to demonstrate that it has at least a five-year supply of deliverable housing land. As a result, there is already evidence that housing land supply issues are becoming more of an issue in planning decisions/appeals. To date this has not presented too much of a challenge, as we consider that we can meet the existing Structure Plan housing requirement. However, when the South East Plan is finally agreed (probably later this year), it will be necessary to assess our housing supply against the new, higher housing allocation. Depending on whether we can include an allowance for windfalls, it is likely to be much more of a challenge to demonstrate that we have a five-year supply of deliverable sites. If we cannot demonstrate this, then we are likely to be under pressure from developers to grant planning permission for housing on greenfield sites.

Blackheath Traffic Calming Project

Cllr Nick Morris

Blackheath Ward

7th February 2008

As advised at the PC meeting on 8th January, the 2003 & 2007 comparison data on vehicle speeds was circulated to residents for the Village Society AGM on 17th January. At the meeting, residents welcomed the outcomes of the data analysis and a vote of thanks for the efforts of the joint working-party was supported enthusiastically. Residents also gave unanimous support to a request that the project work should continue and it was agreed that the next phase should look at the problems of traffic speeds in Littleford Lane.

Peter Barlow has had to stand down from the working-party due to business commitments and Colin Hayward volunteered to replace him.

Report on attendance at the first half of the Bramley Parish Council (BPC) meeting, chaired by Mr P Wadham, held on Thursday 24th January 2008

Cllr Michael Harding

1. *Minutes:* Prior to approval at next meeting, minutes are displayed on notice boards and published on their web-site.
2. *Highways:* They have the same difficulties as we have with poor responses and delays, want another flashing speed light but risk loss of funding if it is not installed before April, unless the funding can be transferred.
3. *Guildford Borough Council Development Plan:* The main cause of concern were 3 site proposals on the GBC Development plan, all located close to the Bramley/Shalford boundary in close proximity to A281, between Links Road and Stonebridge. These are 118, 119 and 150. Maps evidently contained an error as part of Waverley's common land is involved.

Concerns were expressed about all 3. Every individual proposal had to be published without filtering out the unreasonable. That filtering is still to come during 08, to select options. A bio-mass plan proposal (119) may come to nothing as an extension of the Shere site has been approved. No details of what was intended was given. Such a plant has to be large to be economic, many structures would be required to prepare and store the drying woodchips. Transport by lorry bringing in wood/timber and then distributing bags to users would clog roads. As an industrial site it would be out of place in Green Belt and machinery would cause noise. It appears contrary to Government policy to retain the Green Belt.

On the (150) site, high density affordable housing was proposed. This ignored the mobile phone mast and the toxicity of the site, which had formerly been used as a dump for household waste.

Though there was a legal obligation to propose a Gipsy site, (118) had already been rejected three times, probably because people should not live on contaminated land that would be costly to clean up.

Various electors made comments, including one representing a local group: STAG. Then the Council members discussed a draft response. They wanted a covering letter suggesting that the process is too speculative and liable to cause unnecessary anxiety. The impact on infrastructure Greenbelt, AGLB etc should be stressed. As required, they would submit separate responses

for each site specified. They valued the green gap that marked the fringe of Shalford from Bramley. The proposed developments would impinge on this.

Two alternative possible uses for the site were put forward. One was to use the area for a park and ride base, though it appears that Artington now has found room to expand. Another was for a Wey Arun Canal Trust marina and depot, though this would involve constructing a bridge to give access under the road to Godalming and might more appropriately be between that road and the river. The Trust would make submissions asking for the Canal corridor to be protected from inappropriate development.

Submissions of other ideas are still acceptable. A copy of the BPC response would be sent to Waverley BC as well as the reply to Guildford BC.

Other topics from the Public session included:

- a) A request for Bramley to have village gates (like Wonersh)! This is not easy as A281 is not under Bramley's control. The key issue is to persuade drivers to comply with speed limits.
- b) Comments about the Waverley refurbishment of the Coombs Playground and a failure to look after the football pitch – Waverley Youth Officer would be approached.

I left after Item 5 had been considered by BPC.

The Waverley Mayor, Cllr M Byham, followed me out to ask if we could check if the footpath on the Green Place side of the Wonersh Bramley road goes any further than is visible, as sight lines for anyone crossing are poor. There was a near fatal accident last week. I told him about our application to SW Surrey Highways to fund an extension but he does not rate our chances. I went to site with my spade. Because the bank is so steep it is not really possible to clear more than a one foot wide strip for one yard; even the kerb stones run out after 3 yards. The best immediate answer is to prune back the laurel – not a big job – to improve sight line for pedestrians. The gully beyond the present crossing point, with lowered kerb, becomes pot holed, which creates another hazard for pedestrians who go on further.

Car Parking in Shamley Green

Cllr Athar Shareef, in discussion with Cllrs Michael Harding and Mike Band

8 Feb 2008

Car parking facilities, or the lack thereof, are a problem in Shamley Green, as in many of the villages in our part of the country. The greens in the village are public open spaces owned mainly by Waverley BC, and many are in highly sensitive conservation areas.

Parking in the village is used by:

- Shoppers and visitors to pubs, particularly in evenings and weekends
- Ramblers, particularly over weekend afternoons
- Visitors to Arbuthnot Hall, both for evening functions and activities such as Tumble Tots
- Visitors to special events such as the fete and cricket matches
- School traffic on days when 'walking bus' operates for the local school and Longacre

Parking that is currently utilised is on:

- Private land, e.g. that owned by the local Red Lion and Bricklayers Arms pubs
- Paved common land, e.g. by the village stores and Arbuthnot Hall

- Easements across common land, e.g. the access way leading to the Cook Shop, and neighbouring properties
- Local roads and lanes, e.g. Woodhill lane by the duck green and the Hullmead estate access road

Problems that have been identified include:

- Vehicles parked 'unofficially' on common land, such as on the green by Arbuthnot Hall leading to damage to verges
- Vehicles (including horse boxes on occasions) parked on Woodhill Lane, where posts have been placed to safeguard the verges, leading to difficulty in passing for the larger vehicles
- Vehicles parked around the green, leading to passing vehicles infringing on the opposite verges and causing damage when ground is wet
- Potholes and overflowing drains around the Forge, hairdresser and sub-station

There are no easy answers to the parking problem in Shamley Green. Vehicles can legally park on the B2128 through the village. But few do so, presumably through concern for their cars. A one-way system around the green has been proposed by a resident. On closer examination, this would be complex to implement; much detailed evaluation would be needed.

Measures that can be implemented in the short term include:

- Putting 'grasscrete' on the verge of the green by Arbuthnot Hall as was previously proposed by SCC Highways. The Countryside Ranger is not in favour because parking on common land is strictly speaking not legal. However, it would ease a problem that exists, recognise something that is happening anyway and avoid unsightly rutting of the ground that now occurs.
- Putting 2, or at most 3, posts at the edge of the cricket green across from the village stores to avoid the damage caused by vehicles driving over.
- Ensuring vehicles delivering to the village stores do not stop in front of the shop but park by the side and use the rear entrance.

The subject should be kept under continuing review.