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12 March 2009

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREENHAM PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN ST MARY'S CHURCH HALL, GREENHAM
ON 11 MARCH 2009 AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT:

Mr T Forward (Chairman)
Mr P Planterose (Vice Chairman from Item 2)
Mr A Agutter (from 7.40 pm)
Mr C Austin (from 8.30 pm)
Mr P Barnett (from Item 5)
Mr B Drummond
Mr D Hale
Mrs S Huxtable
Mrs T King
Mrs D Smith (from Item 5)
Mr J Swift-Hook (from 8.00 pm)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr J Boston (Clerk)
4 members of the Public (2 from Item 5 onwards)

1. Apologies for Absence. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr A Beal and Mrs P Hay. Additionally, Mr C Austin, had tendered in advance apologies for a late arrival.

2. Election of Vice-Chairman Following the resignation from the Council of Mrs Appleby, it was necessary to elect a Vice-Chairman. It was proposed by Mr Drummond, seconded by Mr Hale and carried unanimously that Mr Planterose be appointed Vice-Chairman.

3. Declarations of Interest.

Mr Drummond stated that:

"Any views that I may express about planning matters and other business before this Council tonight are in my capacity as a member of *this* Council (Greenham Parish) and are based on the limited information before me tonight. If and when I consider any of the items at any future time in my capacity as a member of West Berkshire District Council, I

will consider each item on its merits at that time, taking full account of all the facts and information which are put before me at that time, as a result of which **I may well form a different view from any view I may express tonight**".

The Clerk explained that GPC is required to maintain a register of hospitality or gifts received by individual Members above the value of £25.00 on any one occasion. This was separate to the Register of Members' Individual Interests. GPC did not have such a Register because no declarations had been made. There has been a suggestion that where Councillors, in their positions as Chairman of other bodies or organisers of activities were given, for example, free use of buildings for which a charge would normally be levied, they should declare this. The Clerk said that there was some doubt as to whether this properly constituted a gift to an individual as in such cases they were not acting as an individual but as a representative of the body concerned. However, for the avoidance of doubt he had produced a Register which he invited Councillors to complete if they thought it applicable.

Mrs Huxtable and Mrs King declared interests as members of the Parish Plan Steering Group, which was provided with facilities by the Racecourse at no cost. Additionally, Mrs Huxtable declared an interest as a Governor of The Willows School

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting. The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2009 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Co-option of Parish Councillors. The vacancies on the Council had both been advertised as required and as there were no applications for an election to be held GPC was authorised to fill the vacancies by co-option. It was proposed by Mrs King and seconded by Mrs Huxtable that Mr P Barnett be co-opted as a member of the Council. It was proposed by Mr Drummond and seconded by Mr Planterose that Mrs D Smith be co-opted as a member of the Council. The 2 candidates having given a resumé of their qualifications and backgrounds, both resolutions were carried unanimously. Mr Barnett declared an interest in that as Major of Newbury he was frequently in receipt of complementary tickets to the Racecourse although he did not personally use them.

At this point Mr Swift-Hook joined the meeting. Mr Swift-Hook stated that:

"Any views that I may express about planning matters and other business before this Council tonight are in my capacity as a member of *this* Council (Greenham Parish) and are based on the limited information before me tonight. If and when I consider any of the items at any future time in my capacity as a member of West Berkshire District Council, I will consider each item on its merits at that time, taking full account of all the facts and information which are put before me at that time, as a result of which **I may well form a different view from any view I may express tonight**".

6. Matters Arising. The Chairman explained that the previous Minutes were an accurate reflection of what had been said and were therefore correct. However, some of the statements made at the last meeting concerning Deadman's Lane required clarification. The Ombudsman had in fact only addressed the complaint of mal-administration against WBC in respect of the planning process for the HWRC. No complaint had yet been made

about the granting of permission to build the estate.

The Clerk has been in touch with WBC regarding the poor surface including potholes of a number of local roads. WBC has advised that potholes have now been filled and has provided a copy of the highways works programme for local roads over the next few years. Correspondence regarding bollarding of Stroud Green is ongoing.

7. ProLogis. Nothing further to report. This Item will be removed from future agenda.

8. Abbotswood/Pinchington Lane. Mr Swift-Hook said that the Ombudsman had not exonerated WBC but rather had said that there was insufficient proof of mal-administration which was somewhat different. There was also a misleading statement in the Ombudsman's letter which suggested that the Ombudsman's involvement was ended whereas it now transpired that there was scope for an appeal. Strictly this had to be entered within 3 month's and as the letter was dated 1 December 2008 the appeal would be out of time although it was hoped that it would be considered due to the misleading statement by the Ombudsman. Additionally, although the resident's group had not yet entered an appeal a single individual householder had done so. The Chairman said that he had urged the residents to focus on specific matters in any appeal: the failure of the planning committee to refer the application to the full Council on the grounds that it would be contrary to WBC's interests, thereby proving that WBC had an interest in the outcome (it was also noted that the option to refer up had now been withdrawn); the statement by WBC that GPC had failed to attend an agreed meeting with WBC when in fact it was WBC which cancelled the meeting without replacement (WBC has confirmed this to GPC in writing); and the fact that WBC accepted untested the developer's acoustics report, even though 5 of the 6 signatories were not qualified acousticians, and had ignored reports submitted by objectors. The Chairman thanked both Mr Drummond and Mr Swift-Hook for their work within WBC and Mr Hale for his tenacity, hard work and commitment on behalf of the residents.

9. Racecourse Development. The Racecourse Development had been discussed in detail by the Planning Working Group. With regard to the recommendations of the Working Group, it was agreed that objections should also be made in respect of the move of the golf club, access to the nursery and the redevelopment of the station. While some details, particularly in respect of traffic, were still awaited it was agreed that an interim objection be entered on the grounds listed in Item 10 below. In the course of the discussions, Mr Barnett declared an interest as a Governor of Fir Tree School, Mrs Smith declared an interest as a member of the Parish Plan Steering Group. Mr Swift-Hook declared that he had an open mind on the application and would abstain from voting, forming his conclusions when the application is presented to the Planning Committee. In view of WBC's stated concern regarding the additional traffic generated by the Stryker application, which GPC considers to be minimal, the Clerk will write to WBC expressing the view that this application will generate considerably more traffic and seeking a meeting with Highways to discuss the traffic implications. With the abstention of Mr Swift-Hook, it was agreed that GPC would object to the application on the grounds stated in Item 10.

10. Planning.

Additional drawings/plans have been received advising minor alterations to applications 08/02267/COMIND (Newbury Racecourse – renewal of approved consent for all-weather track) and 08/02354/COMIND (Nationwide Building Society – NGP).

(a) Applications

<u>No.</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
08/02201/OUTMAJ	Newbury Racecourse Redevelopment to provide new and enhanced leisure facilities, hotel and hostel, Racecourse dwellings and buildings, remodelled golf course, up to 1500 new homes. Newbury Racecourse Ltd	Object. See below

a. GPC is concerned that the application has been made and may be considered before the completion of the LDF. It is premature and should only be considered when the LDF has been finalised in order to integrate it with, and take account of, other possible developments in Greenham. While GPC appreciates that applicants may make applications at any time of their choosing, the fact that so much is outside the existing settlement boundary, and the scale of the development is such that it would be unwise to proceed without taking consideration of the effects of and relationship with other development that might result from the LDF. GPC therefore objects on the basis that the application is outside of the settlement boundary and thus contrary to the local plan.

b. No development should be permitted until the necessary infrastructure, and especially the bridge, is in place. A Government department, CABE, advises that developments should only take place once the supporting infrastructure has been provided. Local roads lack the capacity to absorb the construction traffic and subsequent residential traffic that will be generated before, on current plans, the bridge is built

c. Robust and up to date traffic figures and analysis are required. This should include the Robin Hood roundabout, the proposed new road from the SCATS spur, Police accessibility, the Sainsbury extension. WBC Highways has expressed concern about the limited additional traffic generated by the proposed move of Stryker from the opposite side of Hambridge Road. This is minimal compared to the much larger additional traffic generated by the application which is therefore untenable. GPC wishes to be involved in further discussions on traffic matters and the Clerk will write to WBC accordingly

d. GPC strongly objects to the proposal that Boundary Road should be southbound only. If it is to be one-way, then it should be northbound only. The Burger King roundabout already lacks the capacity to accommodate the existing northbound Boundary Road traffic, even without adding in the additional traffic generated by the Racecourse development. There would be a knock-on effect on

northbound traffic on the A339 from the Tesco roundabout and the Andover Road leading to gridlock in the area and increased rat-running through Greenham. There has been no direct consultation with the residents of Greenham and that undertaken with the limited number of Boundary Road residents should not be allowed to unduly influence traffic flows affecting a far wider community. GPC notes that air pollution at the Burger King roundabout is already in excess of European guidelines and every effort should be made to reduce traffic here rather than add to it.

e. Dividing 2 significant communities within the same development is wrong in principal.

f. With limited exceptions, racegoers will all be routed over the new bridge in Hambridge Road. However, GPC does not believe that those coming from the south will be prepared to drive via the A339, the Sainsbury's and Robin Hood roundabouts and the A4 to access the bridge. Instead they will park in residential streets near the existing entrance and enter on foot leading to unacceptable congestion in local streets.

g. The existing school catchment areas cause significant problems for those living in the eastern end of the development. Although Fir Tree School is much nearer and therefore liable to generate less traffic, residents will only be able to send children to this school if places are available. As the eastern end of the development is outside the Settlement Boundary it is strongly recommended that the catchment areas be re-drawn. The existing school catchment area for the whole of the site causes problems for children going to both The Willows and Park House due to the distance and the difficulty of access from the Racecourse, particularly from the eastern end of the development. The amount of traffic generated will add to the already problematic infrastructure. Providing a free bus for the whole site to take children of all ages to school would alleviate the problems. The bus to Park House could also pick up children from the rest of Greenham which would benefit the whole community. It is recognised that every school has a set number for admissions and can take children from outside their catchment area up to that number but allowing children from the eastern end to go to Fir Tree Lane and providing adequate resources there would do much to relieve unnecessary travel as this school would be a 10 minute walk as opposed to a 2½ mile journey. However, Mrs Huxtable noted that having children from one development going to 2 different schools would divide the community; possibly more than having no direct through road.

h. The high rise developments at the western end will dominate the attractive rural setting of Stroud Green, are out of keeping with the area and will have an adverse impact on the local street scene. This perception has been confirmed by comments by CABE. The illustrations provided by the developer play down the visual impact, are incomplete and appear to be designed to be misleading. For example, only the gable end of the large block is shown, the curved frontage of the building is identified only by thin lines that are barely perceptible so that the bulk and impact are not apparent. Also, 2 rows of houses are shown in the plan but the impact of those that would be visible beyond and between the nearer row is minimised on the elevation.

i. Play areas are insufficient and should be identified for specific purposes and age groups. This will prevent abuse of open spaces which can lead to loss of amenity for residents. They should also be preserved in perpetuity to prevent future in-filling. There has been recent experience in several local estates of grassed areas that were shown in plans as open space but not specifically conditioned as such being later built over. GPC is

most anxious to avoid a repetition of this. There should also be an indoor facility for sporting activities and use as a meeting room and for 'chilling' which would benefit the whole community

j. The spend of S.106 monies within the local community must be rigorously enforced. There is some confusion over the ring-fencing of S.106 contributions. At the recent public Racecourse meeting Mr Jackson gave a public undertaking that all S.106 monies would be spent in Greenham, However, GPC has previously been advised by other officers that spend can be made more widely, eg at Northcroft.

k. There is concern that improvement plans for the Racecourse Station are aimed primarily at providing a resource for the development rather than for the community as a whole, which would thereby reduce the pressure on and travelling to Newbury Station. Parking facilities are inadequate for the potential usage of an improved station and the lack of a through route across the Racecourse will discourage usage, particularly in inclement weather.

l. There is strong objection to the proposal for the relocation of the golf club and the Racecourse maintenance facility, which would be to an area in close proximity to the protected area. It is understood that grounds maintenance could start as early as 04.30, to the detriment of wildlife. There is also concern that these relocations will lead to rat-running along the track at the eastern end of the Racecourse.

m. Insufficient attention has been paid to sustainability and natural energy sources. There has been little regard for Policy EN8. Greater provision should be made in the design for solar heating, ground/air heat sources and wind power. Targets should be set by condition to ensure adoption of sustainable resources

n. There is a lack of access to the nursery from both ends of the development. It was deemed impractical for a parent, possibly with small children and without the use of a car, to access the nursery in safety particularly in the winter months.

o. There have been persistent complaints by residents about offensive odours from the drains in New Road and Westwood Road. If the application were to be approved, GPC would request a form undertaking that the drains to which the development were connected have the capacity to meet the additional demands.

08/00242/OUTMAJ	1 Dalby Cres RG14 7JR Demolish existing building and erect 14 flats Renaissance Habitat	Object. See below
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a. Over development of the site

b. Gross alteration of and out of keeping with the existing street scene

c. The plot occupies the highest point in the area. The current street scene is designed so that the highest properties are low-rise. The proposed development would dominate the street scene and adjacent properties.

d. The majority of flats would be accessed from Greenham Road on an adverse bend and close to Willows School

- e. There is insufficient visibility to the left for exiting traffic turning right
- f. There is insufficient resident's parking and no provision for visitor parking. As 12 of 14 flats are accessed from Greenham Road it is considered that the danger of visitor and possibly resident parking on Greenham Road is unacceptable.
- g. There is no provision for play areas
- h. Given the necessity to remove the existing bank and shrubbery in order to provide a sight line it is clear that there can be no fencing to prevent children running on to the busy Greenham Road.
- i. No traffic survey or projections have been provided
- j. The open view necessary to provide a clear sight line will encourage faster traffic on Greenham Road.
- k. The reference in the application to the flats built by David Wilson Homes in The Chase is both misleading and irrelevant. These are in a totally different environment and are a considerable distance away.
- l. While existing properties fronting Greenham Road are set back and well screened the proposed flats will be open to the road with no screening and will be detrimental to the area.

At this point Mr Austin joined the meeting.

09/00271/HOUSE	62 New Road RG14 7RU Replace flat garage roof with pitched roof Mr & Mrs A Chambers	No objection but requires condition to remove permitted development rights.
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Mr Barnet declared an interest as a neighbour.

09/00398/HOUSE	13 Pyle Hill RG14 7JJ First floor rear extension Mr & Mrs F E Rowbottom	No objection provided neighbours are content
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09/00311/TELE56	Land at The Triangle Mast and cabinets Vodafone Ltd	No objection provided there are no safety implications with the nearby filling station
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GPC remains committed to mast sharing but notes that this application is essentially for the re-location of the existing mast situated at the old HWRC.

09/00324/OOD <i>Adjacent Parish</i>	Childrens' Action Farm Headley RG19 8JY Change of use from farm park to farm park zoo Childrens Action Farm	Object. Requires an improvement to junction where local knowledge confirms frequent minor accidents. Application increases number of parking spaces from 80 to 230 and so will result in increased traffic thus increasing road safety concerns, particularly given proximity to Garden Centre and camping site. Confirmation required of the well being, safety and security of animals.
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Mr Austin declared an interest as he had assisted in the development of the application.

09/00215/FUL	MC Autos Deadman's Lane	No objection
	Construct new workshop for light vehicle repairs. MC Autos	

Mr Swift-Hook declared an interest as a customer.

09/00227/FUL	Drake House, Bishops Green RG20 4HT Engineering works to reinstate subsidised ground levels Mr Ben Drake	Object. Plans show height datum on building which is to be demolished rather than AOD. Original plans available to GPC should be used for reference. No evidence of subsidence, rather the existing pond is silted up.
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(b) Decisions

<u>No.</u>	<u>Proposal.</u>	<u>Decision.</u>
08/02189/RESMAJ	Reserved Matters. Land south of Pinchington Lane	Approved

(Clerk's Note: Although the adjacent pond is outside the application area, the applicant has agreed to provide warning signs and lifebuoys in agreement with WBC).

Mr Drummond and Mr Swift-Hook abstained from voting because of their position as Ward members. Mr Austin abstained from voting due to his late arrival.

10. Finance & Accounts for Payment.

The Clerk reported that Mr Weir had completed the Internal Audit,. He found that the Council's systems were robust and effective and he had no issues to bring to the Council's attention. Due to the unavailability of members on the same day it had been impossible to achieve a meeting of the Finance Working Group in March and this would now be held in April. The Clerk proposed that in future this FWG meeting be held in April on a regular basis as it would then be possible to review annual expenditure against budget. This was agreed. Other quarterly FWG meetings would be held as before as they coincided with receipt of precept. The Chairman said that he had asked Mrs Appleby to remain a member of the Finance Working Group for the time being, despite her resignation form the Council and this was agreed. Membership of advisory or working groups is not restricted to Councillors; this restriction only applies to sub-committees.

The following cheques were presented for payment:

Mr J Boston – Clerk's salary & expenses	£882.90
HM Revenue & Customs – Tax & NI	£410.76
Mr G Weir – Internal Audit	£46.60
WBC – dog bin emptying	£87.88

involved in the distribution and collection of questionnaires reported a common theme amongst the non-returns.. This was that 'since WBC took no notice of anyone, there was no point in completing the questionnaire'. Mrs Huxtable gave her grateful thanks to all those who had helped.

15. Web Site. Mr Burgess is now available and the Chairman will have an early meeting with him in order to resolve the issues surrounding the web site.

16. Newsletter There was discussion about whether there is a statutory requirement to publish a newsletter, and if so how often. The Clerk will make enquires.

17. Exchange of Information. Mr Austin reported that he had made a sound recording at the time the Peace Women were at Greenham Common. He had been approached by an author for permission to reproduce some content in a new book, which he had given.

Mr Drummond advised that the final top dressing had now been applied to the footpaths on School Green.

The Chairman reported that there had been more instances of flooding to houses on the southern side of Sedgefield Road (backing on to West Wood). Mr Barnett said that this problem goes back to the construction of The Chase, when a culvert was blocked and diverted.

18. Date of Next Meeting. The Meeting closed at 10.05pm The date of the next meeting is on 8 April 2009 at St Mary's Church Hall at 7.30pm.

A J Forward
Chairman
8 April 2009

Abbreviations:

GPC - Greenham Parish Council
WBC - West Berks Council
LDF - Local Development Framework