



Clerk of the Council

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10 September 2009

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREENHAM PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD IN ST MARY'S CHURCH HALL, GREENHAM  
ON 9 SEPTEMBER 2009 AT 8.00 pm**

PRESENT: Mr P Planterose (Vice-Chairman)  
Mr A Agutter  
Mr C Austin  
Mr P Barnett  
Mr A Beal  
Mr B Drummond  
Mr D Hale  
Mrs P Hay (from 8.15 pm)  
Mrs S Huxtable  
Mrs D Smith

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr J Boston (Clerk)  
1 member of the Public

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr T Forward, the Meeting was chaired by the GPC Vice-Chairman Mr P Planterose.

1. Apologies for Absence. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr T Forward (Chairman), Mrs T King and Mr J Swift-Hook

2. Declarations of Interest.

Mr Barnett 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 Newbury Town 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**".

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting. Mr Beal stated that he had tendered his apologies for absence from the last meeting to the Chairman, unfortunately these had not

been passed on. Otherwise the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 August 2009 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising. The S.106 meeting with WBC has now been scheduled for 21 September at 2.00pm. The Clerk asked Councillors to advise him if they were available to attend. At the last meeting it was agreed that a small sub-group should meet with Mr Leahy at WBC Licensing together with representatives from NTC to discuss the McDonald's licence, although the constitution of the sub-group was not decided. The Clerk has been in touch with Mr Leahy who is happy to meet. Mr Agutter said he would like to attend but he would not be available until after 1 October. It was thought Mr Forward should attend and the Clerk would also be available. The Clerk will ask Mr Leahy which dates are suitable for him before contacting NTC.

5. Abbotswood/Pinchington Lane. The Clerk had written again to WBC regarding the fencing alongside the A339 but had not had a reply. He will follow this up. At this point Mrs Hay joined the meeting

6. Nationwide Data Centre. The data centre is now under construction. It appears to be higher and more intrusive than suggested by the plans and there is doubt that cutting and filling was undertaken to the extent promised.

7. Racecourse Development The Clerk has received an email from WBC outlining the progress made with the traffic element of the application. The text is appended below:

'All base traffic models that provide representative models of the junctions as existing have now been completed satisfactorily except the A4 / Faraday Road junction that should be completed within the coming days. The developers highway consultants now need to submit models for 2018 without the development and with the development. From these models the impact of the proposal can be measured to highlight potential mitigation measures. Once the base models are agreed, the provision of 2018 models is relatively straightforward, as the only difference is greater traffic flows to account for traffic growth from now to 2018 including committed developments. Further 2018 traffic models are then produced with mitigation measures included to measure their effectiveness. Again this is quite straightforward, as only proposed geometric or traffic signal alterations are altered within the models. All 2018 models should be submitted by the end of next week. It is already known that mitigation measures to the A339 / Bear Lane, A339 / A4 Robin Hood gyratory, A4 / Hambridge Road will be required and the consultants are devising proposed alterations to those junctions. Other areas to be focused on will be the phasing of the proposal that will take place over 15 years and how traffic flows would alter, highway works options for Boundary Road and Hambridge Road, Travel Plan details, Section 106 contributions and phasing of mitigation works.'

It was agreed that the Clerk will ask WBC if independent modelling will be undertaken to confirm the applicant's figures and to ensure that traffic figures from the Wincanton operation are taken into account.

8. A34 Works Site. Members of GPC attended a site meeting at the Lafarge plant at NGP on 24 August. Subsequently the Clerk has received a letter from the operator's agent

responding to various matters of concern. The agent states that the temporary planning application was to 31 December to allow for unforeseen contingencies; the site is expected to be clear by mid-November. As part of the pre-development works, Lafarge undertook a survey of the drainage system and drains were found to be in sound condition but have also been cleaned. Drains discharge in to a regulated drainage point. Observations of uncollected drainage have confirmed that no water reaches the eastern perimeter of the site and so cannot therefore run off into the SSSI. Nevertheless, Lafarge wishes to reassure GPC that it is in regular contact with Natural England and the Environment Agency to ensure that there is no threat to the SSSI. The plant has operated at a number of sites across the UK with no adverse noise issues arising and it was not anticipated that any would occur at NGP. However, following the WBC enforcement action Lafarge has undertaken a number of mitigation measures and WBC Environmental Health is now satisfied although a full impact assessment is being prepared. Lafarge has now put in place a reporting system allowing local residents direct contact in case of any further issues arising. All oil and lubricant storage facilities are subject to the Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England and Wales) Regulations 2001. As such all tanks have to be double-bunded with a secondary capacity of 110%. Additionally, a number of spill kits are maintained on site. Lafarge is keen to ensure that open means of communications continue with GPC and local residents and is most grateful for the constructive approach of GPC at the site meeting on 24 August.

Mrs Huxtable said that noise from the plant had initially been very loud and had led to complaints from outside the Parish. WBC Environmental Health (EH) had been called. They had been very responsive and provided an excellent service. Lafarge had worked hard to rectify the problem. Mrs Smith said that she had recently been at NGP and had witnessed a small water leak. Within a very short time Lafarge employees were on site taking remedial action. The Clerk will write to EH thanking them for their prompt action.

9 Wincanton Container Storage at NGP. The Clerk has been in extended correspondence with WBC regarding the containers stored at the Wincanton site. The site was leased to Sainsbury on a long lease, which was assigned to ProLogis who are attempting to get a return on their investment. The planning permission (152079) which is being used to empower the operation was originally granted to Walon for car storage and sets no limits on height. WBC is unhappy but they have no power to require the operator to reduce the height of stacked containers, although both WBC and NGP have made requests to this effect to the operator.

Mrs Smith asked if there had been any complaints regarding noise. Mrs Huxtable said that noise was an issue, particularly in view of the amphitheatre effect of the Common but that local residents were waiting to see how the operation unfolded. Mrs Huxtable said that reversing beepers were particularly intrusive and recalled that ProLogis had given an undertaking that their vehicles would not be fitted with them. Mr Barnett thought that warning beepers in addition to a banksman were an essential safety feature but Mr Agutter said that modern 'white noise' warnings were effective and far less intrusive. Mr Barnett also said that the size of the containers was an issue as some were too large to go by rail. He was of the opinion that Wincanton must have a method statement and a business plan for the site.

It was agreed that the Clerk would write to Wincanton drawing attention to the noise and environmental health implications of the operation and expressing the hope that they would enter into a dialogue with the local community. In particular the business plan for the site must anticipate the number of vehicle movements, which are needed to inform the Racecourse traffic projections. Mr Barnett recalled that he had once been a member of the Western Area Planning Committee and he thought that a limit may have been set on the overall number of movements.

#### 10. Planning.

An appeal has been lodged against the refusal of planning permission at land known as The Sanctuary, Basingstoke Road. The Informal Hearing will take place on 24 September at the WBC Council Offices at 10.00 am. Mr Austin recalled that even before the purchase of the land by the 'peace women' there had been a caravan on the site.

##### (a) Applications

<u>No.</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
09/01590/HOUSE	Trees, Water Lane RG19 8SH Rear and Side single storey extension Mr A Doyle	No Objection
09/01694/FUL	Land SE of Venture West, NGP Formation of earth embankment at eastern side of permitted test centre. Driving Standards Agency	No Objection but concern over water run- off implications and noise attenuation. Must be within site limits.

##### (b) Decisions

<u>No.</u>	<u>Proposal.</u>	<u>Decision.</u>
09/00582/HOUSE	20 Burys Bank Road Erection of Conservatory	Granted
09/00918/COMIND	Marshalls Mono Ltd NGP S.73 variation	Granted
09/01162/FUL	Newbury Racecourse Use for car boot sales	Granted

Mr Beal said it was essential that the vehicle movements generated be included in the overall traffic projections for the housing development.

09/01282/HOUSE	11 The Cedars RG14 7AA Double garage with games room above	Granted
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11. Finance & Accounts for Payment.

The following cheques were presented for payment:

Mr J Boston – Clerk's salary & expenses	£973.65
HM Revenue & Customs – Tax & NI	£415.15

It was proposed by Mr Agutter, seconded by Mr Austin and carried unanimously that the cheques be approved for payment.

The Finance Working Group met on 4 September. The Clerk presented a comparison of the 09/10 Budget with anticipated expenditure to year end. The only significant overspend was in respect of Clerk's salary. This was because although the Clerk had built an element for inflation into the Budget the salary increase recommended by arbitration and agreed by GPC was backdated to 1 April 08 (no agreement having been previously reached on the previous year's National award) and this had not been budgeted. Conversely, spend on grants was less than expected. Although no money had been spent on Newsletter/Publicity, the FWG considered that this item should be retained as it was possible that the Racecourse and possibly the Sandleford developments would generate a requirement to contact parishioners. Overall, anticipated spend was £70 less than budget. Mrs Huxtable queried the absence of an entry for further funding of the Parish Plan. The Clerk explained that at the time the budget was drawn up last November the timing of any eventual application for Lottery funding was still uncertain. It had also been agreed previously that the line entry for Newsletter/Publicity could also be used for Parish Plan spending. Finally, there was a contingency figure; this was not sacrosanct and was intended to be used for unbudgeted eventualities.

Mr Forward had suggested the purchase of 2 items of office equipment. The first was a sheet feeder scanner with a capability to scan 2 sides of a sheet at once. The Chairman and Clerk frequently scanned documents and letters in order to email them to Councillors. This was done on a domestic printer with scanning facility and was restricted to one page at a time. This was time consuming and resulted in a lot of individual email attachments. The FWG recommends that a suitable sheet feeder scanner be purchased, subject to evaluation and cost. After discussion the purchase of a suitable scanner was agreed in principal. The Clerk will investigate costs and suitability. The other item was a toner-based colour printer which the Chairman thought would be beneficial for producing large-scale documents, such as Newsletters and the Parish Plan. The FWG was unsure if such an item would prove cost-effective and resolved to leave a decision to discussion by the full Council. In discussion there was a strong feeling that such a printer might not be cost-effective. They were thought to be expensive and high-maintenance and would get limited use unless GPC went into the print business; they were also physically too large to be kept conveniently in a domestic dwelling. It was agreed that such a printer should not be purchased.

12. Parish Plan. Mrs Huxtable said that the Steering Group had not met since the last Council meeting. She said that the Plan must be evidence-based and derive from clear community needs as reported by the questionnaires. There had been a 32% response rate which she found disappointing although it was clear that many people had declined to

complete the questionnaire on the grounds that WBC would ignore it anyway. Mr Austin said that in fact 32% was a very creditable rate. Earlier in the evening Mr Planterose, Mr Hale and Mrs Smith had attended the District/Parish Conference where it had been stated that Parishes should ensure that Parish Plans include a priority list for S.106 expenditure and this seemed to imply that the Parish Council could include its own wishes in the Plan. It seemed clear that the advice given to Mrs Huxtable on the creation of the Plan was that it must be informed by responses to the questionnaire. However, Mr Planterose was firmly of the view that advice from WBC, both at the earlier Conference and at a recent Planning Awareness Course that he had attended, was that Parish Councillors, as representatives of the public, should produce the list of spending priorities. Mrs Huxtable went on to say that since the Plan is approved by WBC then it should take account of what was included. Mrs Huxtable said that she would be attending the Greater Greenham Partnership Project on 17<sup>th</sup> September followed by a West Berks Partnership Plan visit.

13. Web Site & Contract. No Discussion

14. Allotments. The Clerk reported that efforts to identify a suitable site and to reach agreement with the landowner continue. Mr Austin said that he had written to Rivar asking about the availability of suitable land for rent and had received a holding reply.

15. Newbury Town Council – Conservation Area. The Clerk has been advised by NTC that as a result of a requirement to document Conservation Areas it has been reviewing local sites. The aim is to increase protection future development of such sites. There are some locations which fall within GPC that abut onto NTC areas and NTC has therefore undertaken to include these locations within its formal Conservation area Report. These locations are centred on Stroud Green and include Pound Cottages and the line of period houses north of Racecourse Road between Boundary Road and the Racecourse entrance. NTC will consult GPC as the Report develops.

16. WBC ASB Data Base. The Chairman and Clerk have been briefed by WBC on the new ASB Database. The Clerk reported that when fully developed the database will provide an excellent picture of ASB across the WBC area. The Chairman and Clerk will have a facility to enter incidents of ASB and the Clerk asked Councillors to report any instances to him for logging. Councillors will have the ability to view data which should be particularly beneficial for planning and licensing applications and for the Parish Plan. The program for extracting data is presently limited and the Chairman and Clerk made a number of suggestions to WBC to improve the facility of extracting information. Several members asked of how much practical use the database would be. Mr Austin said that more police on the ground would solve ASB problems. Mr Planterose said there was a clear need to report all instances as police would only take action when levels reached a predetermined threshold. The Clerk will provide Councillors with a list of ASB classifications. Mr Barnett said that there seemed to be an increase in drug-related issues recently, particularly on the Bridleway and he had reported these to the PCSO. It appeared that the dealer(s) came via New Road or Lamtarra Way to keep pre-arranged rendezvous. Mr Beal said that instances had been reported to neighbours who were policemen but these may not have been formally logged.

17. Sustainable Communities Act. The Clerk has received an email from a pressure group 'Local Works – promoting the Sustainable Communities Act'. The Act as originally drafted had the potential to devolve powers to local level; however when the final draft was passed into Law, Local Councils were omitted. It is this omission that the pressure group seeks to reverse. It is requested that GPC writes to its local MP asking him to support the Sustainable Communities Act Amendment Bill which would enable a Local Council, if it wishes, to require Principal Councils to include representatives of Local Councils on the citizens' panels required by the Act. Mr Beal saw the proposal as dangerous as it would lead to a lack of uniformity. Mr Barnett agreed and said that to devolve power to too low a level opened the way for radical elements. Mr Austin also agreed and said that at the moment parish councils were largely advisory and to give them too much power might mean that they became too parochial and lost sight of the interests of the wider community. It was agreed that GPC would not seek amendment of the Bill.

18. Exchange of Information. Mr Beal referred to the previous decision to provide members with ID cards which had not been progressed. This was still seen as worthwhile; Mr Barnett undertook to ask the Chief Executive of NTC if it could produce them. Mrs Hay has become aware of a damaged manhole cover; it was confirmed that this could be dealt with by emailing Streetcare. Mrs Hay continues as a Trustee of the Almshouses. She also drew attention to the long grass in the methane field. It appears that WBC cuts the verges but much of the rest of the field is untended. The land is privately owned and some Councillors thought leaving it to grow naturally was of benefit to wildlife. The Clerk has received notice that the AGM of Relate Berkshire will be held at the Hilton Hotel Reading on 17 September 2009. Full details are available from the Clerk for anyone wishing to attend.

19. Date of Next Meeting. The Meeting closed at 9.50 pm. The date of the next meeting is on 14 October 2009 at St Mary's Church Hall at 7.30pm.

A J Forward  
Chairman  
14 October 2009

Abbreviations:

GPC - Greenham Parish Council  
WBC - West Berks Council  
NTC - Newbury Town Council