

BASILDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Basildon Parish Council held on the 13th March at the Village Hall in Upper Basildon.

Present: Ms Barnes, Mrs Greasley , Mr Chadwyck-Healey, Mr Parsons (Chair), Ms Cox, Ms L Coyle (District Councillor), Mr Greasley (clerk)

Apologies: Mr Couchman

The following members of public attended:

Mr Goosey, Mr Noble

OPEN FORUM

Mr Noble and Mr Goosey attended the meeting as trustees of Emery Down Wood and presented an update on the charities latest work. Last year saw important tree surgery carried out following various storms and 2024 is set to see a biodiversity survey carried out over three seasons to establish the types of animals living in the space along with details of the trees, wild flowers etc. The cost of this will be £3,367 including VAT and the results will be used to drive future projects and initiatives. The Trustees asked for the Parish Council to consider a grant to help with the cost; the Chairman confirmed that this will be discussed and the trustees informed.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were raised.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 14th February having been circulated to members were declared correct and signed by the Chairman.

PLANNING

The Parish Council considered the following new applications:

24/00226 Knappswood Farm – two detached double garages (plots 1 and 2)

The Parish Council reviewed and voted to object on the following grounds:

The additional buildings are outside the settlement boundary and part of the proposal (gates) appear out of keeping with the rural area in which they'll reside.

The Council noted that previous applications for this site have contained garages (16/02407) which were removed as part of the scaling down of the site only to re-appear in this latest request.

Should West Berkshire Council approve the application, the Parish Council requests that a condition around lighting that meets dark skies requirements is added.

24/00382 Collabrack, Pangbourne Road – extension

The Parish Council reviewed the application and had no objections subject to the views of neighbours.

Confirmed Decisions

23/02692 Beale Park – New Gatehouse – WBC Approved, PC No Objections

23/01976 Church Farm, Lower Basildon – Interior alterations – WBC Approved, PC No Objections

23/02901 4 Teneplas Drive – extensions – WBC Approved, PC No Objections

23/03891 Watergate House – Certificate Of Lawfulness (fence) – WBC Approved, PC No View

GENERAL ITEMS

The Council remains keen to support any initiative locally that supports a healthy and active lifestyle. The Clerk asked for permission to approach Beale Park to see if the Parkrun concept had been considered in a bid to introduce more visitors and engage more with the local community. The Parish Council fully supported this, including the potential financial backing of such a venture should Beale Park or another site be found. The Clerk will kick off proceedings by contacting the relevant trustees.

The Chairman confirmed that following the sharing of quotes and an out of meeting vote by Councillors the grass cutting contract has been awarded to Tactical FM. The Clerk has written to the company to confirm the appointment.

The performance of the Clerk was discussed with the Chairman set to circulate various pay options to Councillors for discussion outside of the meeting.

Councillor Chadwyck-Healey updated the meeting on streetlighting. He will write to the Country Neighbour to outline the Council's plan to reduce operating hours during the period midnight to five am. A notice will be put on the website and at the relevant bus stop by Wakemans to advise those residents local to the lights of the proposal.

The clerk will follow up the potential website upgrade with Vision ICT and report back.

Councillor Greasley agreed to look into online banking for the Parish Council and will report back at either the April or May meeting.

The clerk requested declaration of interest forms be returned at the earliest convenience following a request from West Berkshire Council.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATES

An accident was reported on the Hook End Lane crossroads, the third in a matter of months. The district councillor has driven the road section from Kiln Hill to the Crossroads and has shared her concerns with West Berkshire highways.

FOOTPATHS, HIGHWAYS AND OPEN SPACES

No issues were reported other than a number of muddy sections.

FINANCE

The following cheques were presented to the meeting:

Cheque No	Payee	Purpose	Nett	VAT	Total
103620	R Greasley	Salary + claim back grant to Pangbourne Toilets (£520)	919.87	0.00	919.87
103621	HMRC	Tax on salary	266.80	0.00	266.80
103622	Vision ICT	Website hosting	258.00	0.00	258.00
103623	West Berkshire Council	Bus Service Contribution	1335.60	0.00	1335.60

The Council accepted cheque numbers 103620 – 23 and the clerk confirmed the direct debit for SSE. The Clerk confirmed that cheque to bank balance checks have been completed without issue.

It was noted that 103619 was issued outside of the meeting to Volker Highways. This was required as the cheque signed at the February meeting failed to arrive with the Volker accounts team. The Clerk also confirmed that the grant of £520 to Pangbourne Toilets was made in person by him due to the donation requirements of the 'Good Exchange' who act on behalf of the Pangbourne based charity. This was claimed back via cheque 103620 with the Chairman included in correspondence to Pangbourne Toilets to ensure transparency.

CORRESPONDENCES

No correspondence has been received this month.

OTHER BUSINESS

The meeting concluded at 8:40pm. The next meeting will be on the 10th April from 7:30pm.