

SUNNINGHILL & ASCOT PARISH COUNCIL
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Minutes of a meeting of Sunninghill & Ascot Parish Council held at the Ascot Day Centre, Bagshot Road, Sunninghill, Ascot on Tuesday 6 December 2011 at 7pm.

Members Present: Councillors J Yong (Chairman), B Hilton (Vice-Chairman), P Deason, R Ellison, S Humphrey, S Jones, C Lester, L Roberts, A Sharpe, B Story, M Turton

In attendance: Elizabeth Yates (Clerk to the Council)

3447 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Margaret Duffield, David Hilton and Daniel Whittall.

3448 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman asked to receive any Declarations of Interest in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct. None were given.

3449 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council Meeting, held on 25 October, were approved as a correct record and signed as such.

3450 FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were given.

3451 PUBLIC ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was not adjourned for a maximum of 15 minutes to allow Members of the Public, if present, to address the Council about matters of local concern, as none were present.

3452 PRESENTATION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES

Planning Committee minutes of 8 and 29 November were presented by Councillor Barbara Hilton.

Leisure Committee minutes of 22 November were presented by Councillor Robert Ellison.

Finance and Personnel Committee minutes of 22 November were presented by Councillor Jeffrey Yong.

Victorian Street Fayre Committee minutes of 7, 14 and 28 November were presented by Councillor Barbara Hilton.

Councillor Hilton expressed her thanks to the Parish Councillors who had helped with the Fayre.

3453 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING AND THE BOROUGH'S LOCAL PLAN

Mr. Peter Hitchen, the Planning Policy Manager from the Borough, gave an informative presentation on the Neighbourhood Planning initiative; its rationale, processes and timescales. The drive behind Neighbourhood Planning was the desire to devolve the power of decision making to local communities and Parish Council's in particular. The Localism Bill set out the statutory requirements needed and had been passed as an Act of Parliament. Mr. Hitchen defined the scope of the Act and explained the need for the Royal Borough to determine a Local Borough Plan which would provide the framework for the Parish Neighbourhood Plans. This Local Plan was being drafted, with an estimated first draft by July/ August 2012, and for completion by spring 2013, subject to public consultation. He went on to detail the process of drawing up a Neighbourhood Plan, from the initial launch to the work of the Steering and Topic Groups, through to the Draft Plan and public referendum. The Borough had mapped out five Parish areas and all within these had expressed an interest in developing a Neighbourhood Plan. He went on to explain the National Planning Policy Framework, which was due to be adopted by April 2012, and which provided a national approach to planning. Transitional arrangements were being put in place to assist Borough Council's in complying with this Framework.

The Chairman asked how the difference in timescale between the Localism Act coming into force and the completion of the Borough Plan and Neighbourhood Plan would impact on planning policy. Mr. Hitchen thought that the Borough's existing Local Plan would be taken into account as material consideration. Councillor Peter Deason expressed concern that the timescale differences could leave the Borough and the Parish vulnerable to unwanted development.

Councillor Ajay Nehra asked if any areas of Green Belt identified for development would be incorporated within the Neighbourhood Plan. Mr. Hitchen confirmed that this would be the case and that alternative Green Belt sites could also be considered.

Councillor Deason went on to update the meeting on progress regarding the Neighbourhood Plan, following the Launch Event. Charters School pupils had been involved in the consultation, a consultation report was due to be published imminently and Topic Groups set up.

He asked Mr. Hitchen's advice on a definition of statistically relevant for the consultation and explained that the Steering Group were looking in detail as to the meaning of sustainability. Councillor Deason also asked Mr. Hitchen for examples of a 'Vision Statement' for the Neighbourhood Plan, which could inform the Steering Group's thinking.

Mr. Hitchen stated that he and his team would assist with this, although Councillor Allison Sharpe expressed her concerns about the resource and time implications of the Neighbourhood Planning process on the volunteers involved. She was also concerned about the visibility of the process and the representation from the public as a whole within it. Councillor Deason shared her concerns and explained measures which could alleviate these.

Councillor Spike Humphrey asked Mr. Hitchen about the inspection process and Mr. Hitchen stated that this was not clear as yet.

Councillor Deason asked when the housing target would be known as this would have a significant impact on the Neighbourhood Plan and timescales involved. Mr. Hitchen was hopeful that this target would be defined by spring 2012.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Hitchen for his most useful presentation and suggested that if any Parish Councillor had further questions, they direct them through the Steering Group.

3454 THE BUDGET FOR 2012/13

The budget for 2012/13, as recommended by the Finance and Personnel Committee, was discussed. After lengthy consideration it was agreed that the precept be raised by £1 per year per household to reflect the inflationary rise in fuel, electricity and insurance, as the precept had been held for a number of years. The Chairman was asked by Councillor Christine Lester to explain the reason for this increase in the Parish Council letter sent out to residents with the precept demand.

The need to set monies aside for the Diamond Jubilee was also discussed and the Clerk explained that she and Councillor Barbara Hilton had submitted a bid for funding to keep costs down. The Clerk also informed the meeting that she was going to look for the most competitive insurance for the forthcoming year and would continue to strive for 'best value' whilst ensuring the Council services met statutory requirements. The need and reasoning behind the reserve levels was explained by the Chairman and the budget approved for 2012/13.

3455 THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

The recommendation from the Leisure Committee to hold a community event on Tuesday 5 June, based at the Ascot Locomotive Society (Ascot Racecourse), and in partnership with Ascot United, was approved. Councillor Robert Ellison agreed to arrange a meeting before Christmas, in the Parish Office, to start making arrangements. He was asked by the Chairman to inform all Parish Councillors of this meeting so that anyone interested could attend. The Clerk informed the meeting of planned events at Charters School and Sunningdale Parish Council in which Jane Shanahan (Assistant Parish Clerk) was involved on behalf of the Parish.

3456 CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Applications received from Daisy's Dream, Youth line, Thames Hospicecare and the Ascot Project, for their Retirement Fair, were considered and the following donations approved:

Daisy's Dream	£500
Youth line (Counselling)	£500
Thames Hospicecare	£500
Retirement Fair	£250

The Clerk was asked to write to each of the applicants and inform them of other possible funding sources within the Parish.

3457 HEATHERWOOD HOSPITAL

Councillor Barbara Hilton read out a statement prepared by Councillor David Hilton outlining the developments with the Primary Care Team and Hospital, following the public meeting, held on 21 November.

3458 ITEMS RAISED AND ACTIONED

The Clerk reported on a meeting held with the Borough to consider the possible devolution of services to Parish Councils. The possible involvement of the Parish council in determining the scope and specification of services seemed to be the initial option open to the Parish and further consideration of this would take place with the Borough. She also informed the meeting that the Streetcare department had submitted a capital bid for the refurbishment of the Public Conveniences in Sunninghill. In addition, the Clerk was awaiting Borough approval for the replacement benches at Victory Field.

Councillor Deason informed the meeting of progress regarding the parking review in Sunninghill and speeding within Sunninghill Village. Councillor Peter Comber (Ward Councillor for Sunninghill and South Ascot) had arranged a meeting with the Borough regarding the possibility of constructing 'pinch points' on Sunninghill Road as a means of reducing traffic speeds. This proposal was welcomed by the Parish Council and a formal proposal would be tabled at a future Parish Council meeting. He went on to explain that the changes to parking at Queens Road car park were completed, extensive tree roots at Bowden Road car park had held up the proposed changes and that the resident parking in Queen's Road was under review.

3459 OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Barbara Story informed the meeting that she had been appointed as a Parish Council representative on the Cordes Hall Management Committee. Councillor Sharpe had also expressed interest in becoming such a representative and was asked by the Chairman to meet with Councillor Story to discuss Cordes Hall.

Councillor Nehra asked Councillor Deason if improvements to parking outside the post office in Sunninghill could be looked into.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

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Councillor Jeffrey Yong, Chairman