



Holybrook Parish Council

Serving the communities of Beansheaf Farm and Fords Farm

Council Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting	22 nd March 2021
Location	Zoom Virtual Meeting
Present	Clrs. Bedwell (Chair), Baker, Collard, Croal, Lenaghan, Littlewood, H. Mistry, S. Mistry, Oloko, Somner and Tull. Also present: Pam Kirkpatrick (Clerk) and Caroline Lenaghan (Administration Assistant),
Circulation	All Council and Ward Members

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panels Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 ("the Regulations") came into force on the 4 April 2020. The Regulations remove the legal obligation to hold local authority meetings at a specified physical location, by permitting members and others attending the meeting to do so by way of 'remote attendance'. The obligation to hold an Annual Meeting was also removed.

All virtual meetings held by the Parish Council before 7th May 2021 (NOTE: the date could be brought forward if the Government rules are relaxed) are enabled by this legislative change. This Protocol applies to meetings of the Council and/or its Committees, that would, but for the coronavirus pandemic and the Regulations, be held in public. All other Standing Orders remain in place.

No.	Notes	Action
165/20/21	Open forum for members of the public None.	
166/20/21	Apologies for absence None. Acknowledged: Cllr Somner, due to District Council commitments, will be late to the meeting.	
167/20/21	Declarations of Interest relevant to the Agenda None. See also item 171/20/21.	
168/20/21	Approval and adoption of the minutes of: a) Full Council meeting on Monday 15 th February 2021. APPROVED . Proposed by Cllr Lenaghan and seconded by Cllr Littlewood; b) Finance Committee on Monday 1 st March 2021 (Finance Committee members only). APPROVED . Proposed by Cllr Tull and seconded by Cllr S. Mistry. (Please note that the minutes will be issued by post to the appropriate Chairman following the meeting for signing).	
169/20/21	Matters arising from the Minutes 146/20/21 – Clerk's Report (ownership of old Bus Terminus). AGREED , investigate who is responsible for the land as the registered company is dissolved. 155/20/21 – District Councillors' Report (3 Albury Gardens) . This property has been registered with WBC's Enforcement Team.	

No.	Notes	Action
169/20/21 cont.	<p>Matters arising from the Minutes Continued</p> <p>155/20/21 – District Councillors’ Report (fly-tipping at Holybrook Centre). WBCs waste team contacted the offending parties. No fines were issued.</p> <p>Clerk to investigate the possibility of moving the Beansheaf Centre external bins under the view of the CCTV cameras.</p> <p>160/20/21 – Clerk’s Report (felled tree, Low Lane): WBC was aware of the works and will remove the debris`.</p> <p>162/20/21 – Zoom Meetings – Members acknowledged the response from Alok Sharma, MP and a decision is awaited on whether remote meetings can continue after 7th May 2021.</p>	PK
170/20/21	<p>District Councillors’ report</p> <p>Cllr Somner not present at this point. Report will be accepted when Cllr Somner arrives (see item 172/20/21).</p>	
171/20/21	<p>West Berkshire Emergency Active Travel Scheme Consultations (e-mailed to Councillors on 24th February 2021)</p> <p>Members particularly focussed on the following sections of the Emergency Active Travel Scheme consultation as they are most likely to impact Holybrook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Calcot School Streets; ii) West Berkshire Active Streets: a) Parking Restrictions, b) Theale (Deadman’s Lane, c) West Berkshire Active Travel Heat Map; iii) LCWIP. <p>AGREED: Carters Rise, Dorking Way and Charrington Road to be added to the Active Travel Heat Map with regard to inconsiderate parking and, in particular, the blocking of cycle lanes.</p> <p>Cllr Collard advised members that residents who live close to the Bellway development did not feel that the Parish or District Councils had provided enough support with the problems caused in Dorking Way and neighbouring roads by Bellway. Cllr Collard declined to provide any detail on what the specific complaints or request for change were.</p> <p>Following a lengthy discussion Cllr Tull proposed that an Extraordinary Planning Committee meeting be held to review all documents that the Parish Council has been copied into with regard residential issues with the current Bellway Development.</p> <p>20:04 ENTER CLLR SOMNER</p> <p>Cllr H. Mistry proposed that, in addition to the above proposal, the residents that live on the roads nearest to the (Dorking Way) Bellway Development site are consulted, via a leaflet drop, asking what problems they are experiencing and what resolutions they would like to see. This should take place prior to the Extraordinary Planning Committee Meeting as proposed by Cllr Tull. Seconded by Cllr Lenaghan. AGREED by majority vote.</p> <p>Declarations of Interest relevant to the Agenda (Cllr Somner)</p> <p>Non-pecuniary</p> <p>6 (District Councillors’ Report), 7 (WBC’s Emergency Active Travel Scheme Consultation), 8, 9 and 10 (Planning items) and 12 (Community Infrastructure – start of public consultation).</p>	

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172/20/21	<p>District Councillors' report</p> <p>A brief verbal report was provided which members acknowledged (APPENDIX 1)</p> <p>Questions raised:</p> <p>Street parking is increasing in the Parish what can be done? Updated legislation is awaited from Central Government. Currently District Councils do not have enforcement powers and on-pavement parking is, therefore, a police matter. Cllr Somner is seeking to have the 'Considerate Parking' leaflets updated. Also, members can advise Cllr Somner if they are aware of any particular 'repeat offenders'.</p> <p>Cllr Somner to report back on whether WBC received any of The Contain Outbreak Management Fund and, if so, where was it spent.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>RS</p>																																
173/20/21	<p>New Planning Applications</p> <p>Members RATIFIED the following recommendations of the Planning Committee:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="252 719 1474 1317"> <thead> <tr> <th>Planning no.</th> <th>Applicant</th> <th>Address</th> <th>Proposal</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>21/00515/HOUSE</td> <td>Mr & Mrs Syrad</td> <td>4 Blackwater Rise, Calcot</td> <td>Demolition of front garage and porch canopy. Construction of a single storey front extension to form a new living room, cloakroom and porch.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">NO OBJECTIONS.</td> </tr> <tr> <th>Planning no.</th> <th>Applicant</th> <th>Address</th> <th>Proposal</th> </tr> <tr> <td>21/00531/HOUSE</td> <td>Tarun Chandna</td> <td>21 Latimer Drive, Calcot</td> <td>Proposed single storey rear extension to existing dwelling.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">NO OBJECTIONS.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21/00488/FUL</td> <td>Hannah's Little Cherubs</td> <td>3 Goodwin Close, Calcot</td> <td>Proposed change of use of dwellinghouse (C3) to residential care accommodation (C2).</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">OBJECT.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Planning no.	Applicant	Address	Proposal	21/00515/HOUSE	Mr & Mrs Syrad	4 Blackwater Rise, Calcot	Demolition of front garage and porch canopy. Construction of a single storey front extension to form a new living room, cloakroom and porch.	NO OBJECTIONS.				Planning no.	Applicant	Address	Proposal	21/00531/HOUSE	Tarun Chandna	21 Latimer Drive, Calcot	Proposed single storey rear extension to existing dwelling.	NO OBJECTIONS.				21/00488/FUL	Hannah's Little Cherubs	3 Goodwin Close, Calcot	Proposed change of use of dwellinghouse (C3) to residential care accommodation (C2).	OBJECT.				
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174/20/21	<p>Other Planning</p> <p>Members acknowledged the following:</p> <p>a) West Berkshire Council Planning Decisions:</p> <p>20/02946/HOUSE – 14 Hanbury Drive, Calcot: Remove existing conservatory and add a single storey rear extension, part garage conversion to habitable accommodation. GRANTED.</p> <p>20/02958/HOUSE – 10 Ballamoore Close, Calcot: Erection of part single and part two storey side extension and porch. GRANTED.</p> <p>20/02674/CERTP – 12 Piercefield, Calcot: Erection of new proposed single garage located in rear garden, accessed from existing block paved driveway entrance. APPROVED.</p> <p>20/02268/HOUSE – 22 Bath Road, Calcot: Alteration to roof to provide habitable space. GRANTED.</p> <p>20/02979/HOUSE – 3 Sandown Avenue *as adjacent Parish: To erect a prefabricated concrete garage with brick effect cladding which will be the same/nearest colour of existing house. The garage will have a Pent style roof with white up and over door/windows/facias/gutters and downpipes as per the existing house. APPROVED.</p>																																	

No.	Notes	Action
174/20/21 cont.	<p>Other Planning Continued</p> <p>20/02861/.FUL – 18 Sandhills Way, Calcot: Demolition of existing two storey extension and garage and erection of two-storey building to form 1 x 3-bedroom dwelling with associated car parking, access, hard and soft landscaping, refuse and cycle stores. REFUSED.</p> <p>For reasons of expedience item 10: Eastern Area (EA) Planning Committee Meeting report, was provided here. Cllr Somner was thanked for his contribution at the EA Planning meeting and it was acknowledged that a lot of work was put into the Parish's submission regarding this application. The refusal by the EA Planning Committee was welcomed.</p> <p>21/00048/HOUSE – 6 Invergordon Close, Calcot: Single storey front porch and rear extensions. GRANTED.</p> <p>b) AGREED. No comments on the WBC Settlement Boundary Review (SBR).</p>	
175/20/21	<p>Eastern Area Planning Committee Meeting – feedback Cllr Claire Tull</p> <p>See item 174/20/21 a).</p>	
176/20/21	<p>Financial Information</p> <p>a) Payments – Members APPROVED the payment of items listed on payment sheet 11-2020/21</p> <p>(Please note that the payment sheet will be issued by post to the Finance Committee Chairman following the meeting for signing).</p> <p>b) All Members were provided with a copy of the Finance Committee meeting minutes and it was acknowledged that, considering the year (Covid), the Council's finances were in a good position.</p> <p>Members RATIFIED the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The EMRs for 2021/22 (see finance meeting minutes item F12-20/21); ii) The Internal Auditor for the financial year 2021/22 (Claire Connell) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii a) the scope of the Internal Audit (see Finance Minutes) ii b) the accountant for the year ending 2021 (Alan Harland); iii) Debt of £30.00 to be written-off if the Clerk is unsuccessful in obtaining funds (see F14-20/21); iv) Refurbishment of Beansheaf Centre disabled toilet hardware with a budget of not more than £10,000; v) The Parish Office to be refurbished to a cost of not more than £15,000 with the refurbishment focussing on improved lighting, and Covid-19 health and safety; vi) Refusal of a grant application from 95th Reading Scout Group to the sum of £1,000 to enable the group to subsidise the cost of an International Residential Trip for the Explorer Scout Unity; vii) Insurance renewal for a five-year fixed term at a cost of £4,815.87 (noting that this price will increase with the ownership of The Garage); viii) Annual Risk Assessment and Management document; ix) Assets Register; x) Current reduced rate (of 25%) on regular hire charges in the Beansheaf Centre to continue. This will end not before two months after the date that formal confirmation has been made that 'lockdown' has finished; xi) Honorarium for Mr Prior £400 (see F19-20/21); xii) Contract renewal with Sunshine Commercial Services at an increased rate of 1.96%. 	

No.	Notes	Action
177/20/21	<p>Community Infrastructure – Start of public consultation</p> <p>Members acknowledged that Residents have been requested, in the April newsletter, to contact the Parish Council, via the admin e-mail address, to recommend projects for potential CIL money spending. In addition, residents have been asked to assist with the footpath survey. All feedback has been requested by Friday 7th May 2021 which should allow enough time for the Council to collate the requests and begin research into the feasibility and costs of each suggestion.</p> <p>i) Members REJECTED consultation with key stakeholders at the present time. Cllr Littlewood proposed that stakeholders are not consulted until, at least, residential feedback has been received. In the meantime the Clerk to provide members with the exact wording regarding CIL spending.</p> <p>21:14 CLLR COLLARD EXITED</p> <p>Seconded by Cllr Tull.</p> <p>AGREED by majority vote.</p> <p>21:16 RE-ENTER CLLR COLLARD</p> <p>Cllr Collard was informed of the proposal and subsequent agreement.</p> <p>Members AGREED:</p> <p>ii) Potentially Cllrs Bedwell, Lenaghan, Littlewood and Tull would join the Clerk to meet with Andrew Reynolds, WBC Asset Manager, to discuss potential projects and ideas for CIL spending and devolution.</p> <p>iii) Aim for the October newsletter to be used as a 'CIL Special' questionnaire for the collated CIL projects following the first round of public consultation in April/May.</p>	<p>PK</p> <p>PK</p>
178/20/21	<p>Clerk's Report</p> <p>Members acknowledged a verbal report from the Clerk. The main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beansheaf Centre: information on bookings moving forward including summer holiday and party bookings for July/August; - Linear Park: installation of 'Christmas Tree', resolution of drainage issue (near Burbidge Close), mini motorbikes causing a nuisance and further report of 'trip wire'. - Footpaths: report of the top end of Low Lane flooding; - Litter: Aldi and Lidl have been contacted and requested to improve the litter in and around their sites. Reported potentially homeless people within the Parish. Litter has trebled since Christmas. <p>a) Members APPROVED the disposal of low value assets (fax machine, telephone, camera, desk and printer). Preferably these should be donated but, otherwise, disposed of sensibly. Clerk to write an official policy for asset disposal to be approved by the Finance Committee;</p> <p>b) Members APPROVED the quotation provided by Sunshine Commercial Services for the Underwood Road playground fence repair to the sum of £531.70 plus VAT.</p>	<p>PK</p>
179/20/21	<p>NHS & Frontline Workers Day – 5th July 2021</p> <p>Members acknowledged that WBC has confirmed that the flagpole in Linear Park can be used to erect the flag for this event.</p> <p>Members APPROVED the purchase of the NHS & Frontline Workers Day flag (150cm (w) x 90cm (h)) at a cost of £34.98.</p>	

No.	Notes	Action
180/20/21	<p>District Parish Conference</p> <p>Feedback was provided by Cllrs Oloko, Croal and Bedwell. Main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enforcement is not statutory and seeks to resolve and not punish. Their role is as 'peacemakers'; - Work regarding Covid and the setup of a Local Government Authority (Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire) Group to tackle pandemic issues such as inequalities and future proofing. <p>All Members will be forwarded the slides from the event and are encouraged to read these and, in particular, the information on enforcement.</p>	
181/20/21	<p>Chairman's Remarks</p> <p>The Parish 20th Anniversary trees were planted (close to the Hawkesbury Drive entrance) in the Linear Park approximately two weeks ago. The flowering fruit trees are about 5ft tall at present and include: cherry, plum, pear, quince, gage, apple, damson and medlar. The Friends of Linear Park worked hard to plant these trees on behalf of the Council and did a very good job.</p> <p>AGREED: the new tree area will be called 'Anniversary Orchard'. Ideally a plaque will be installed in the near future – to be agreed.</p>	
	<p>There being no other business, the meeting closed at 21:43</p>	

Signed: Dated:

Minutes prepared by	Pam Kirkpatrick, Clerk
Minutes dated	24 th March 2021

APPENDIX 1



Parish Council Report for February 2021

Cllrs Argyle and Somner

(West Berkshire Council, Tilehurst South & Holybrook Ward)

West Berkshire Council

Meetings

Council

Council met on 2 March to consider a number of things, but principally the Revenue Budget (and thus level of council tax), and the Capital Strategy and Programme, for the financial year 2021/22.

There is more about both below, but the headline news is that (excluding parish, Fire and Police precepts) council tax will increase by 1.99% and there will be no Adult Social Care precept in 21/22. According to the Daily Mirror, this makes WBC one of only five councils in England limiting rises next year to less than 2%. So far as the other unitary authorities in Berkshire are concerned, one is increasing council tax by 3.49% and the remaining four by 4.99%

Executive

At its meeting on 11 February, as well as considering the budget papers on their way to the council meeting referred to above, the Executive considered and approved a (cost neutral) restructure in the Strategy and Governance Service which will see 7.5 posts added to the staffing complement (21.5 posts are being created with 14 deleted).

The next meeting of the Executive will be on 25 March.

Remote Meetings

Links to all agendas and public meeting papers are here, and all WBC public meetings are broadcast live on YouTube and recorded so that they can be viewed at leisure - [West Berkshire Council YouTube Channel](#). Guidance for anyone attending a remote public meeting (eg a parish representative at a planning committee) is here.

With regard to remote meetings generally, The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 cease to have effect on 7 May. There is a debate in local government legal circles about what “place” means in respect of place of meeting in Schedule 12, LGA 1972. There has been (or will be?) an application to court for a declaration that the existing legislation (ie once the meetings regulations fall by the wayside) allows for remote meetings without further primary legislation. WBC is currently looking at how hybrid meetings might be held.

The Budget

The WBC Revenue Budget and Capital Strategy for 2021-22, passed at the council meeting on 2 March, sets out the planned investment in the district within the context of the current pandemic.

As detailed above, the council tax increase has been limited to 1.99% without any increase in the Adult Social Care precept, and also without any cuts to essential services.

The budget treads a careful path between affordability, core infrastructure, and new investment to support our council strategies - the decreased (immediate) demand for adult social care services, due to Covid-19, alongside the extensive financial support from central government and the continued strong financial control of the council, means that we are able to support our residents' finances as well as investing in vital services.

WBC has received significant Government support during the pandemic, meaning that there can be continued investment in services, promoting the priorities set out in the Council Strategy, with key investments outlined in the budget including:

- £12.5m investment in the WBC Environment Strategy;
- £900k to introduce separate food waste collections;
- £40m investment in the People Directorate with a focus on Education projects;
- £11.9m for the Highways improvement programme;
- £500k allocated from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to fund 16 community bids for improvements, including a new Multi Use Community Hub in Calcot, a pond restoration in East Ilsley and several new and enhanced community halls.

The Roadmap Out Of Lockdown

With the early signs of spring beginning to show, residents are no doubt heartened by the Government announcement setting out the roadmap for the easing of lockdown, and the prospect of a summer with greater freedoms.

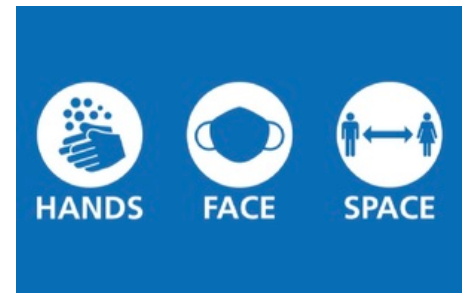
Whilst it is natural for us to wish to see normality returning with eagerness we must never the less continue to observe the current rules until the gradual relaxation commences which starts with our schools from 8 March. Meanwhile, and until a larger number of the adult population has been vaccinated we must all continue with Hands, Face, Space, to help protect others. Better days are coming...

The Government has outlined the four tests of Pace, Efficacy, Pressure on the NHS, and Risk of Variants - further information about the easing of lockdown can be found in the Four Step Plan.

Local Infection Rates

West Berkshire is seeing a sharp decline in infection rates although there remain a number of new cases being reported daily. The current rolling weekly rate is now down to just over 60 per 100,000 but is hoped to continue to decrease significantly over time.

As previously referred to, Berkshire local Covid information about the daily reported cases in the district (and across Berkshire), and the weekly per 100,000 rate (one of the principal factors in any decision making) can be accessed from Berkshire Public Health website.



Vaccinations – Local Position



The Covid vaccination rollout is now being handled in two tranches – cohort 6 (those aged 16-64 with underlying health conditions) are being called to the PCN (Primary Care Network) hubs at Newbury Racecourse and Pangbourne, with cohorts 5 and 7 receiving NHS letters to go to the mass vaccination centres, such as the one that opened at the Madejski Stadium on 22 February.

It is anticipated that all over 50s will have been offered their first vaccine by the end of April, alongside the delivery of second doses within twelve weeks of the first.

If the pace and supply can be maintained the remaining adult population will have been offered vaccinations by the end of July. Further information regarding vaccination can be found on the Berkshire Public Health website here.

Vaccinations – National Position

Weekly reports on the vaccine rollout are being published by NHS here, giving data at an Integrated Care System (ICS) level – in our case at the level of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (“BOB”) ICS. Additionally, Government data can be found here.

Community Testing

Rapid widespread testing – also known as lateral flow testing or community testing - is a key tool in the fight against Coronavirus. Lateral flow testing can identify people who don't have any Covid-19 symptoms (referred to as asymptomatic) and may be spreading the virus without knowing it.

During February the district has opened four sites where tests can be carried out for key workers, these can be found at Highwood Copse Primary School, Thatcham Rugby Club and sites at Hungerford Rugby Club and Burghfield Community Sports Association.

Around one in three people who are infected with Covid-19 have no symptoms and could be spreading the disease without knowing it. Broadening testing to identify people showing no symptoms will mean that positive cases can be found more quickly, helping to break the chain of transmission.

Testing is available to critical and keyworkers and those who have to travel for work or care for others. However the Council is also inviting the self-employed and those in small businesses to get tested as well. Testing is only for those without any symptoms - anyone who does have symptoms should book a test at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus, or by calling 119, or at *Lateral Flow Testing - West Berkshire Council*.

Community Support Hub

Our support hub can still be contacted on 01635 503579 if needed.

Local Outbreak Engagement Board

The Local Outbreak Engagement Board meets on alternate weeks in private and in public. Thus, each fortnight, there is a live broadcast meeting to update residents of the current activities relating to Covid-19 in and around the district (and beyond). Public meetings are available on the Council's YouTube channel and further information about the Board can be found [here](#).



Covid Marshalls

In addition to Marshalls stationed at local testing centres (see above), six WBC Covid Marshalls started work across the district during February.

The Marshalls will undertake a range of duties including advising and supporting members of the public and businesses to follow social distancing rules.

They travel across the district, working in shifts to cover seven days a week, using their local knowledge to cover priority areas such as supermarkets and other shops, markets, parks and open spaces. The cost will be met by Covid-19 funding provided to the Council by central government.

Coronavirus Information On The WBC

Website

The Council keeps up to date information for residents and businesses on the website.

Winter Hardship Grant Scheme

Support continues to be available for residents who are in need of help with food, utility bills and other essentials - for more information and applications, go [here](#).

Financial Support for Businesses

West Berkshire Council is administering a further series of grant schemes to support local businesses that have been affected by the national coronavirus restrictions (and details of the new grant for Early Years Education Providers are set out below).

Information about eligibility, and how businesses who have not received support previously can apply, can be found [here](#).

'Surviving to Thriving' - £200k Covid-19 Mental Health Fund

WBC and Greenham Trust have each pledged £100k to set up a joint fund to enable voluntary and community sector organisations in West Berkshire to apply for grants of between £500 and £30k to fund projects aimed at helping improve the mental health and wellbeing of local residents impacted by Covid-19.

Requests for grants made via The Good Exchange (Greenham Trust's online funding and fundraising platform) will be reviewed weekly so organisations are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

This partnership initiative is designed to enable not-for-profit organisations to carry out small, meaningful projects that can help mitigate the impact that Covid-19 has had on mental health and wellbeing in the district. It also means that smaller organisations will also have the opportunity to apply for funds to carry out their activities (possibly online), one-off purchases or new initiatives.

Education

Back To School

In line with the Government's recent announcements regarding the first stage of easing lockdown, schools will open to all pupils on Monday 8 March. As ever, safety is paramount and WBC is working hard with schools to ensure that appropriate measures and testing facilities are in place (see above on Community Testing).

The reopening of schools will be welcomed by children and parents alike, and a huge tribute needs to be paid to all the parents, grandparents, other carers and teaching staff who have worked tirelessly educating children at home and in school through the variety of teaching methods.

Young People Not In Education, Employment Or Training (NEET)

Young people have been among the hardest hit by the economic impact of Covid-19, but in West Berkshire the number of those counted as NEET remains low - with 97.5% of all of our young people in education, employment or training our figures are not currently only the highest in Berkshire but the highest in the whole of the South East.

Grant for Early Years Education Providers

Grants of up to £3k are available to Early Years education providers to help them with the challenges of the pandemic – all providers will have been contacted by WBC with details of the application process

Adult Social Care

Care Home Visiting Policy

Following the announcement that, from next Monday (8 March) every care home resident will be allowed one regular indoor visitor, permitted (subject to having a negative lateral flow test) to hold hands with the resident, WBC Adult Social care is awaiting publication of the full guidance in order to re-publish its visiting policy and guidance.

Walnut Close Care Home

All the residents from Walnut Close have now moved to their new surrounding (see November's report), with most moving into WBC's Birchwood care home, and Walnut Close has closed.

Leisure and Culture

Newbury Sports Ground

The consultation referred to last month has now closed and there will be a report to the Executive later this month.

A summary of the responses and details of any decision taken will then be posted on the WBC website. If further steps to develop the new sports ground are then to be taken, there will be a need to apply for planning permission, in turn open to scrutiny and comment.



Libraries

West Berkshire Libraries are anticipated to reopen on 12 April subject to the Governments lockdown easing tests being met.

The easiest way to continue to borrow titles is via the apps BorrowBox and Libby, which can be downloaded from the Apple app store and Google Play store, and anyone with a Kindle tablet can download the apps from Amazon. Anyone who has these apps can then search for West Berkshire Libraries and login using their library card number and PIN (members can reset their library PIN here). Customers who need help with this can drop an email to the library, where staff will be happy to help: library@westberks.gov.uk.

Customers who are not already members of the library can join online to get free, instant access to the e-library by registering. Residents are encouraged to check out the extensive programme of activities for children and adults, which will continue online, and follow the library Facebook, Twitter or Instagram pages (@WBerksLibraries).

West Berkshire Lottery's Community Fund Awards Nearly £14k To Twelve Local Charities

WBC has announced that the West Berkshire Community Fund, standing at £13,957 as at January 2021, is being distributed to twelve local charities registered with the West Berkshire Lottery following application bids from these organisations. The awards were determined by an independent panel who meet annually to consider applications from eligible causes.

All of the successful bid applicants to the Fund are undertaking vital work for the community, including young people and the disadvantaged. The independent judging panel was delighted to award the community funding to these deserving organisations to support their services or facilities to improve the lives of others, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The successful applicants in the January 2021 round have been awarded as follows:

- 1st Theale & Calcot Scout Group - £1,500 in running costs, including the national scouts membership fee, to continue to offer participating children a varied programme of events and badges.
- Action for Pangbourne Toilets Charitable Trust - £500 to maintain the building and help towards the cost of the contract cleaners.
- Citizens Advice West Berkshire - £750 to continue providing Spending Diaries and financial capability support to clients who are now faced with a much smaller income due to the pandemic and desperately in need of budgeting advice.
- City Arts Newbury - £500 to offer free-to-access activities for children as part of its developing Community Outreach programme.

- Home-Start West Berkshire - £2,140 towards a new project called Preventing Poverty. This project will help enable a Family Coordinator to support 20-25 volunteers who are helping families to alleviate the stress that come when they can't make ends meet.
- Love Lane Pre-School, Donnington - £2,000 to develop further the school's outside learning area with the installation of an awning to protect the children from sun and rain as they learn and play outside.
- St Mark's Church of England Schools Association - £1,000 to provide the school with laptops to benefit all pupils and support them in reaching their full potential when used in the classroom environment.
- Swings & Smiles, Thatcham - £947 to help fund a tactile wall panel for children with special needs.
- Thatcham Park School Parents and Friends Association - £1,000 to fund a ramp from the school's main playground onto the playing field.
- The Downs School, Compton - £1,500 to create a therapeutic garden for pupils to meet with teachers and support workers in a safe open space, when feelings become too overwhelming and a therapeutic approach is required.
- Time To Talk - £2,000 to use towards a digital transformation project to enable the charity's mental health counselling services for young people to continue to expand and become increasingly more efficient.
- West Berkshire Therapy Centre - £120 towards an annual Pro license for Zoom Conferencing to allow trustees to meet to discuss support the development and executing plans for trust members.

Local, not-for-profit organisations or groups who would like to sign up to raise funds for free through the West Berkshire Lottery are invited to visit West Berkshire Lottery for further information and to register.

Transport and Countryside

Active Travel

WBC has launched a set of draft measures to help the public safely make walking or cycling part of their daily travel choices, and is inviting feedback from the community to help shape these plans. The public consultations can be found at Active Travel Consultation.

Designed to encourage 'active travel' by introducing more walking and cycling opportunities throughout the district, the draft proposals include:

- West Berks Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). This emerging draft transport policy is about making streets work for everyone, thus helping to make West Berkshire a better place to live, work and visit.
- Crown Mead Cycleways. The emerging LCWIP has identified the A4 as a primary route with high potential for increased cycle trips if appropriate infrastructure were to be provided.
- Western Avenue Cycleways. The A4 Western Avenue in Speen, Newbury has been identified as a high priority corridor for cycling and walking routes. The plan proposes permanent measures to create and improve travel routes for cyclists and pedestrians.
- West Berks Active Streets. These are various smaller scheme draft plans to help improve facilities and grow walking and cycling opportunities in West Berkshire including proposals for restricted access on Lawrence's Lane and Deadman's Lane in Thatcham and Theale respectively. In addition, if any resident would like to submit a specific walking and cycling proposal of their own, or comment on a location which falls outside of the currently identified schemes, they can do so via the Active Travel Heat Map within the West Berks Active Streets section of consultation portal.
- Calcot Schools Streets. This pilot School Zone/School Street Scheme is designed to make the streets around the schools safer and suitable for more walking and cycling, as well as improve the air quality.

The Crown Mead Cycleways and Western Avenue Cycleways proposals are each open for consultation until on Friday, 9 April. The remainder are eight week consultations that will finish on Friday 23 April.

With the exception of the LWCIP, the implementation of the Active Travel proposals will be funded through the £495,000 award from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund, following the Council's bid to further develop a lasting, safe environment for walking and cycling.

With their emphasis on promoting health and wellbeing, maintaining a green district and enhancing sustainability, the proposals support the WBC Council Strategy, Environment Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Local Transport Plan and Covid-19 Recovery Strategy.

Communications Channels

As well as Twitter there are also a number of Facebook pages which the Council uses, for example:

- West Berkshire Council;
- West Berkshire Community Support Hub Group;
- West Berkshire Libraries.

The WBC website also contains more about the CSH and useful information for residents and businesses:

Residents <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/coronavirus-residents>
 Business <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/coronavirus-business>
 Community hub <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/coronavirus-communityhub>
 Broadcast meetings [West Berkshire Council YouTube Channel](#)

Linked to all of these initiatives is the WBC Customer Service telephone line: 01635 551111.

Other Matters

AWE Burghfield DEPZ Judicial Review

WBC has won the judicial review in relation to the AWE Burghfield Detailed Emergency Planning Zone mentioned in previous reports.

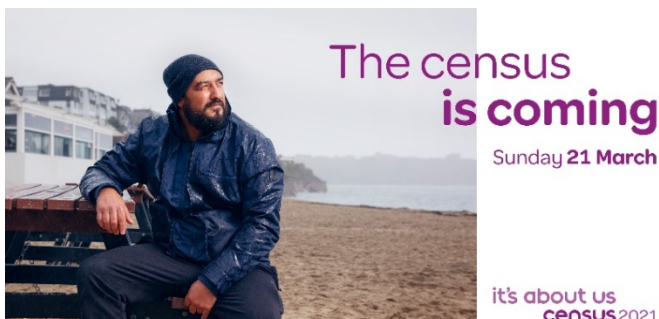
Developers had claimed that the Council hadn't properly overseen the regulatory designation process, but the Judge rejected that argument and gave judgment to the Council.

In also awarding costs to the Council, and refusing the developers leave to appeal, The Hon Mrs Justice Thornton DBE said "*The objective of the rationale is to enable the local authority to set the boundary of the DEPZ. Given the nature of the present challenge it is important to emphasise that the local authority does not have any statutory responsibility for the operator's performance of its duties or a regulatory role in reviewing the operator's work.*" and "*The local authority's role is limited to deciding how to translate the operator's recommendation into a workable emergency plan on the ground.*"

WBC's position all along had been that the determination of the DEPZs for AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield had been undertaken with a great deal of diligence and strictly in accordance with the legislative requirements. The judgment has confirmed this.

Census - March 2021

A reminder that the Census will take place on 21 March and that it is a statutory obligation to complete it.



The Office of National Statistics is leading the planning and delivery of the Census, with local authorities such as WBC being key beneficiaries of the resulting data.

WBC will be supporting the work to ensure that the Census 2021 is a success (defined by achieving a 95% response rate nationally whilst ensuring that no local area achieves a rate below 80% and, for the 2021 Census, to receive 75% of responses on line).

May Elections

Elections for the Thames Valley PCC and for town and parish council vacancies are to be held (delayed due to Covid-19) on 6 May 2021:

- Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner;
- Lambourn Parish Council (one seat in the Lambourn Ward and one seat in the Upper Lambourn Ward);
- Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council (three seats);
- Newbury Town Council Clay Hill Ward (one seat).

Polling Stations will be subject to stringent Government Covid safety measures to ensure electors can vote safely.

However, WBC is aware that many people will prefer to vote by post, particularly if they are vulnerable or shielding. Applications for postal votes must be received at WBC's Market Street office in Newbury by **5pm on Tuesday 20 April**.

If residents haven't registered to vote (eg if they have recently moved to the district) they will need to do so here.

Residents can ensure that their electoral details are up to date by emailing vote@westberks.gov.uk

Neighbouring Parish Matters

Land East of Pincents Hill

The planning application is still under consideration by officers and the huge number of objector representations are being carefully considered and uploaded onto the planning website. There has also been a great deal of press interest, both on the subject of support and objection.

At the moment the potential date for this application to be discussed at committee is on 31st March 2021.

Notification of Prj21-170 Sulham Hill - Footway Improvement

West Berkshire Council's (WBC) term maintenance contractor Volker Highways will be constructing a section of surfaced footway on the north side of Sulham Hill, between its junction with The Ridings and the Highway boundary by the side access to the Recreation Ground. The work is due to start on Monday 15th March and projected to take up to 7 working days, with temporary traffic lights being in operation on Sulham Hill immediately north-west of The Ridings, during working hours.