

ST MARTHA PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of St Martha Parish Council held on 20th February 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in Chilworth Village Hall

24/17 Present:

Councillors:

Cllr Mrs. P Allen (Vice Chairman) Cllr J Peake, Cllr Mrs. Price (Chairman), Cllr Jean-Pierre Pugh

Shalford Peasmarsh and Chilworth Community Councillor Adrian Cansell

Guildford Borough Councillors – Robert Hughes and Danielle Newson

Surrey County Councillor – Robert Hughes

In attendance: Parish Clerk - Anne Tait

24/18 To accept apologies and reason for absence in accordance with the LGA 1972, Sch 1 para 40.

None – all Cllrs were present.

24/19 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) - by Councillors on any of the agenda items below in accordance with The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012. (SI 2012 No. 1464)

No declarations were made.

24/20 Declaration of Non-Pecuniary Interests

No declarations were made.

24/21 Register of Interests – Cllr Mrs Allen submitted a revised Register to the clerk for uploading onto the website and forwarding onto John Armstong Democratic Services and Elections Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer.

24/22 Co-option of a Parish Councillor – On the proposition of Cllr Mrs Allen and seconded by Cllr Peake, Graham Brown was co-opted to fill a vacancy for a Parish Councillor. Cllr Brown signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined other Councillors at the table.

24/23 Minutes of the previous meeting:

It was proposed by Cllr Peake, seconded by Cllr Pugh, and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 10th January 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

24/24 Public Participation Session

It was noted that there was an increase of litter on the Sample Oak Lane footpath. It was also noted that the hedge trimmings had been cleared from behind the bus shelter opposite Lockner Farm.

Cllr Mrs Allen welcomed Simon Harrold to the meeting and thanked him for his interest in being considered for the Tree Warden position in St Martha Parish. It was agreed that an item be included on future

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Agendas for Simon to give an update the Council. The Clerk agreed to forward further information about training events via Zoom in 2024.

24/25 Reports, Communications and Updates:

Parish Clerk:

The Clerk's report had previously been circulated giving an update on the following items:

- Dates of meetings in 2024
- The format and date of the St Martha Annual Assembly
- Information and advice on Budget setting taken from the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners' Guide (JPAG) – March 2022.
- Information and advice on General and Earmarked Reserves taken from the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners' Guide – March 2022.

Parish Councillors

Cllr Mrs Price AGREED to attend the Licensing Sub-Committee Agenda on Friday 15th March 2024 at 12 noon in the GBC Council Chamber to consider the street trading consent application for a mobile coffee van at St Martha's Hill, Halfpenny Lane, Chilworth.

Borough Councillor's Report

Cllrs Robert Hughes and Danielle Newson reported on the following items:

- **Three-year budget approved**
The 3-year budget has now been approved, which shows that Guildford Borough Council will avoid issuing a S114 bankruptcy notice but requires the selling of £50m of assets to achieve this. The budget includes a 100% increase in some parking charges which will impact on the viability of the shops in Guildford.
- **Ongoing investigation into irregularities within the Housing Maintenance Contracts**
This has now been referred, by the Police, to the Southeast Regional Organised Crime Unit. Additionally, two strategic directors, acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Annie Righton and Transformation and Governance Director, Ian Doyle, have agreed to step aside, on a temporary basis, to allow the investigations to proceed smoothly. This left Guildford Borough Council with only one of four senior directors. The CEO elect, Pedro Wrobel, has agreed to start earlier than previously planned.
- **Garden Waste subscription refunds** – supply chain issues meant a delay in delivering garden waste bins to residents. Subscriptions for 2023/24 will be refunded to those who applied for a new subscription part way through the year. Those who wish to rejoin the garden waste collection service from the 2024/2025 period before 28 February, will receive priority delivery of a new bin for the new service starting on 25 March 2024.
- **Crowdfund Guildford** – free workshop for residents with ideas for community projects.
- **Stray dogs or pets** - please contact GBC's appointed contractor SDK – tel: 03444 828320.
- **GWR Customer and Community Improvement Fund** – this will open on 26/02/24 and is designed to support small and medium rail related projects that can be completed over the course of the 2024/25

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financial year. GBC are especially interested in schemes that benefit customers, increase rail travel encourage carbon reduction, connect communities, people and places, support economic growth, promote inclusion and diversity and educational programmes that support careers in rail or increase awareness and experience of public transport and rail safety.

- **Thames Water** – Correspondence has been sent to residents who may be affected by vegetation clearance work for the Guildford Transfer Mains pipeline project.

County Councillor’s Report

Cllr Robert Hughes reported on the following items:

- **County Council finances**

The County has strong finances, but this is set against significant increases in demand for Adult Social Care and for Children with special educational needs, and significant extra spending on our roads. Because the County delivers social care it was able to increase the Council Tax by 2% for Social Care plus 2.99% for inflation - a total increase of 4.99%. The whole budget process was transparent with all Councillors able to contribute to forming the budget and being able to suggest changes to the Cabinet through the 4 Scrutiny Committees and a Budget Task Force chaired by the Leader of the Opposition. Prudently the Council has free reserves of c£150 million.

- **Local issues**

Whilst I am pleased with the speed reductions announced for a number of local roads, it is disappointing that Dorking Road was not included. I am sure this view will be held by both St Martha and Albury Parish Councils. The battle to control speeding in Dorking Road goes on. The suggestion that St Martha will purchase a speed indicator sign to be placed in the stretch of Dorking Road near to Lockner Farm is a very good move forward.

The Highways Engineer for Guildford (who attended a site meeting last year) has confirmed that this could be placed near the bus stops where there are existing signposts which could host the VAS sign. I have objected to the licensing application for a coffee truck to be allowed to operate in the car park near St Martha Church as has the Parish Council. I am a member of the Licensing Committee and will oppose the application.

I have raised the issue of a caravan parked on common land outside Lockner Cottage with Guildford Borough Council.

24/26 Chilworth Village

Cllr Cansell reported that the Shalford Community Council are currently researching into electric car charging points. The track leading to Brookwood Playing field has been re-surfaced.

Cllr Mrs Allen will attend the Shalford meeting on 22nd February 2024.

24/27 Policies, Financial and Regulation Approvals

(a) Proposed list of payments and transfers to be tabled at the meeting for approval:

The payment list was presented to the meeting a copy of which had been issued to all Members via email in advance of the meeting – ref Table 1. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs Allen, seconded by Cllr Peake and unanimously **RESOLVED** the payments to the value of £598.29 be approved. The payment list was duly signed by the Chairman, Cllr Mrs Price, during the meeting.

Table 1: Proposed list of payments 20th February 2024

Budget Head	Date	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
Clerk’s Expenses	20/02/24	Staff mileage	Ms A Tait	17.55	0	17.55

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Zoom	20/02/24	Meetings on line - Jan & Feb	Zoom	25.98	5.20	31.18
IT expenses	31/12/23	8 x Licences from Microsoft	BN Information Security Ltd	52.68	10.54	63.22
IT expenses	31/01/24	8 x Licences from Microsoft	BN Information Security Ltd	52.68	10.54	63.22
IT Expenses	20/02/24	1 x Black HP 302XL ink cartridge	Viking Direct	28.01	5.60	33.61
Postage	22/01/24	VAT return	HMRC	0.75	0	0.75
Training	01/02/24	Training 1-1 for the Clerk	Mulberry & Co	127.30	25.46	152.76
Training	14/02/24	On-line training for the Clerk on AGAR	Mulberry & Co	45.00	9.00	54.00
War Memorial	31/12/03	Maintenance Oct/Nov/Dec 2023	H. Wakeford	140.00	0	140.00
Annual Subs	18/01/24	Annual Membership	Surrey Wildlife Trust	42.00	0	42.00
Totals				531.95	66.34	598.29

- (b) The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) had prepared the bank reconciliation for period ended 31st January 2024 in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, a copy of which had been issued to all Members via email in advance of the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Pugh, seconded by Cllr Peake and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the bank reconciliation be approved and signed by the Chairman, Cllr Mrs Price during the meeting.
- (c) **The Budget 2024/2025 v5**
Following the meeting with A. Beams on 26/01/24 The Clerk reported on how to show that the final figure would be taken from reserves.
- (d) The Clerk reported that a request had been received from Chilworth PCC for an annual donation to help with the printing costs of the Chilworth Village Magazine.
RESOLVED: Before a sum was AGreed the Clerk was asked to enquire the costs for printing the Magazine, in order for the sum to be determined. For further discussion at the March meeting.
- (e) The Clerk reported that a VAT refund of £981.14 had been received from HMRC for the period 17/04/22 to 31/12/23.

24/28 Planning

(a) **To discuss and agree** the recommendation to Guildford Borough Council on the following application(s):

1. Planning application: **24/P/00051 - Inglenook, 22 Roseacre Gardens, Chilworth GU4 8RQ**

Proposal: Single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory

RESOLVED: The Parish Council has no recommendation – leave to planners.

2. Planning application: **24/P/00119 - 31 Halfpenny Close, Chilworth GU4 8NH**

Proposal: Single storey rear extension and changes to fenestration following demolition of chimney stacks.

It was noted that this is a **Retrospective application**.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council has no recommendation – leave to planners

3. Planning application: **24/P/00201 - Alder Lodge, Blacksmith Lane, Chilworth, GU4 8NQ**

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Proposal: Application under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for a variation of condition 2 (drawing numbers to increase the ridge heights of application 23/P/00759, approved on 12/02/2024 for the proposed erection of a new two-storey detached dwelling with re-use of existing brick store incorporated and proposed dismantling and re-erection of the existing garden shed, realignment of wall and removal of metal framed structure and associated works (Amended drawings received 25/08/2023)

RESOLVED: The Parish Council recommend to planners to APPROVE this application as submitted.

EN/18/00238 - To note the Enforcement of an **Unauthorised dwelling and non-compliance with an enforcement notice at:** - **Blackheath Cottage, Blackheath, Guildford, GU4 8RD**

(b) To receive and note any outcomes from GBC on applications previously reported: None.

24/29 Climate Change

Cllr Mrs Allen to report on the Council's Bio Diversity Duty. The Government guidance published on 17 May 2023 clarifies that, as a public authority, Town and Parish Councils must **(a)** consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity **(b)** agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration and **(c)** act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives.

RESOLVED: deferred for discussion at the March meeting, to consider what the PC may decide to action in the short / medium term.

Cllr Mrs Allen circulated the notes and reported on the Bio Diversity Meeting arranged by Surrey ALC (on Zoom) that morning.

Cllr Pugh remarked that this is a topic for St Martha PC to work closely with Shalford, Albury and Wonersh Parish Councils.

24/30 Highways and Rights of Way

SCC Consultation on Rights of Way, Surrey Rights of Way Improvement Plan – survey to be completed by 10th March 2024 (ref e-mail 23/01/24). Cllr Mrs Price to complete a DRAFT submission and circulate for information.

It was noted that Sample Oak Lane is to be resurfaced.

24/31 The Gunpowder Mills and West Lodge

RESOLVED: The Clerk to email to Hendryk Jurk and John Andrews to ask if we can meet on site to open a dialogue on how this Parish Council could link with GBC on Bio Diversity issues in the Estate.

24/32 Items for the next meeting

- The format of the 2024 Annual Assembly
- Bio Diversity Duty
- Bio-diversity in the Gunpowder Mills
- Highways
- Chilworth Station
- Update from the St Martha PC tree Warden

24/33 Date of next full Council meeting: Tuesday 19th March 2024