

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9th January 2023 at 7.30 pm in Council Chambers, Abbots Langley Parish Council, Council Office, Langley Road, Abbots Langley, WD5 0EJ.

Those Present:

Chairman: Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Councillors: Councillor Jon Andrews
Councillor Liz Burns
Councillor Sara Bedford
Councillor Ruth Clark
Councillor Jane Lay
Councillor David Major
Councillor Robin Powell
Councillor Owen Roe
Councillor Simon Stanley
Councillor John Swallow
Councillor Jon Tankard
Councillor John Wyatt
Councillor Roxanne Yau

Officers: Isabel Montesdeoca - Chief Officer & Clerk to the Council
Jayshree Patel - Finance Officer & Deputy Clerk

Others: Mr Peter Warman - Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Mr Andrew Stanley - Chair - The Henderson Hub

Those Not Present:

Councillors: Councillor Mo Rattab

The meeting opened at 7:30 pm.

The Chairman proposed to vary the order of the agenda to move agenda item 10 (Henderson Hub Financial Grant 2023-2024) to be taken after the discussion of the agenda item 19 (Henderson Hub Annual Report 2022) under Part II.

290. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received, accepted and recorded from Councillor Mo Rattab (unavailable due to ill health).

291. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Jane Lay declared an interest in agenda item 8 as a committee member of the Gardening Society and an allotment holder.

292. Public Participation

None.

293. To confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings

It was proposed by Councillor Jane Lay, seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2022, copies of which had been sent to all members of the Parish Council prior to the meeting, be taken as read and were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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294. Minutes for adoption

It was proposed by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and RESOLVED that the following committee minutes be adopted, approved for publication on the Council’s website, and passed to the committees for resolution:

- i. Planning & Highways Committee – 2nd & 30th November, 7th & 21st December 2022
- ii. Finance & Administration Committee – 28th November, 19th December 2022
- iii. Leisure Committee – 7th December 2022
- iv. Staffing Committee – 14th December 2022

295. Chairman’s Report

Chairman’s engagements, 8th November 2022 to 9th January 2023

- Remembrance Day wreath laying ceremonies at St Lawrence Church and Bedmond Tin Church – 13th November 2022
- Primrose Hill Planting Day, Queen’s Green Canopy – 23rd November 2022
- Switch On of Christmas Lights – 1st December 2022
- Christmas Eve Donkey Services at St Lawrence Church – 24th December 2022

Upcoming engagements

- 25th March 2023 – 2023 Chairman’s Reception at Manor House

Vice Chairman’s engagements, 8th November 2022 to 9th January 2023

- Frank Rouse (retired ALPC Works Manager) Funeral – 5th December 2022
- Primrose Hill Planting Day, Queen’s Green Canopy – 23rd November 2022
- Remembrance Day parade and wreath laying ceremonies at St Lawrence Church and Bedmond Tin Church – 13th November 2022

296. Hertfordshire Police

(update provided in advance via email by PS 488 Jon Brown)



Crime figures 1st – 30th November

Offence	2021	2022
Burglary Dwelling **	4	4
Burglary Other *	1	5
Theft Of Motor Vehicle	7	8
Theft From Motor Vehicle	0	10

Crime Figures 1st – 28th December

Offence	2021	2022
Burglary Dwelling **	5	6
Burglary Other *	1	1
Theft of motor vehicle	3	3
Theft from Motor Vehicle	2	6

*Burglary Other – includes sheds/out buildings/ garages and business.

** Burglary Dwelling – this includes Attempt burglary

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Figures

We have seen a reduction in ASB incidents across the whole of Three Rivers compared to the previous year (4.05% reduction overall).

The Chairman shared the crime figures provided by Sgt Jon Brown ahead of the meeting. Members requested the Chief Officer & Clerk forward the following questions to Sgt Jon Brown:

- Cllr Robin Powell requested a breakdown of the ‘Burglary Dwelling’ category to understand what percentage of these are linked to forceable entry vs entry through insecure windows and doors.

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- Cllr Sara Bedford noted the 'theft from motor vehicles' category and asked if the police have any plans to run additional education programs focused on the importance of properly securing vehicles.
- Cllr Jane Lay requested the police patrol Langley Road and have a word with the owners of cars that regularly parking with 2 wheels on the pavement. It is understood this is not a priority for the police but it is felt that even the occasional patrol and word with these drivers would go a long way to reducing the frequency. Cars parking with two wheels on the pavement severely affects disabled residents with mobility scooters.

297. Fees & Charges 2023-2024

(Referred from Leisure Committee min. 272i)

It was proposed by Councillor Jane Lay, seconded by Councillor John Wyatt and RESOLVED that the schedule of Fees and Charges (v1.2) for Halls, Open Spaces and Sports Facilities, as recommended by the Leisure Committee (min. 272i), be approved.

It was proposed by Councillor Liz Burns, seconded by Councillor Simon Stanley and RESOLVED that the schedule of Fees and Charges (v1.2) specifically for Allotments and Garden Society facility charges, as recommended by the Leisure Committee (min. 272i), be approved.

298. Budget & Precept 2023-2024

(Referred from the Finance & Administration Committee min. 278 i & ii)

- i. It was proposed by Councillor Liz Burns, seconded by Councillor John Swallow and RESOLVED that the Parish Council's budget for 2023-2024 be set at £947,311. (Expenditure = £1,077,218 and Income = £129,907) as recommended by the Finance & Administration Committee min. 278 i. A vote was taken and was unanimous.
- ii. It was proposed by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor John Swallow and RESOLVED that the Precept for 2023-2024 be set at £944,590.19 as recommended by the Finance & Administration Committee min. 278 ii. This is based on the Band D Base figure from Three Rivers of 8671.10 with a Band D household paying £2.09 per week (£108.94 per annum). This represents an increase of £0.19 per week. A vote was taken and was unanimous.

Members instructed the Chief Officer & Clerk to draft a press release to be published on the Council's website detailing 2022-2023 projects funded by and 2023-2024 projects to be funded through the precept. The draft release will be shared with members for comment prior to publication.

Members requested the press release also note provisions made previously by Three Rivers District Council to cover the Council Tax bills of the poorest residents.

299. Internal Audit Report (Final Report 2022-2023)

(Referred from the Finance & Administration Committee, min. 242.)

Members noted the Final Internal Audit Report for 2022-2023 has been reviewed by the Finance & Administration Committee and that no significant matters were raised.

300. External Audit Arrangements for 2022-2023 to 2026-2027

(Referred from the Finance & Administration Committee, min. 282.)

It was proposed by Councillor Liz Burns, seconded by Councillor Jane Lay and

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RESOLVED that PFK Littlejohn, reappointed as External Auditor to smaller authorities in Hertfordshire for a period of five years effective from 2022-2023 to 2026-2027, be accepted as Abbots Langley Parish Council's external auditor for this same period.

301. Annual Report 2022-2023

It was proposed by Councillor Jane Lay and seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and RESOLVED that the draft Annual Report be approved with the following changes:

- i. Numbering changes, formatting changes, spelling changes, corrections to place names
- ii. Section 1 – Paragraph to be inserted regarding eco-audit and annual eco-report
- iii. Section 2 – Amendment to be made to next steps for Neighbourhood Plan to remove words 'confirmation and implementation'

The Chief Officer & Clerk was also granted delegated authority to make these changes and any additional minor corrections as required.

302. Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Report

Members noted the report from the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Cllr Stephen Giles-Medhurst thanked Peter Warman for the work he and his team have done on the Neighbourhood Plan shared updates regarding a consultation launched by the Government on 23rd December 2022 which has the potential to impact the current mandatory housing figures and approach to greenbelt. Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) has voted unanimously to put forth a new local plan based on local housing figures rather than the government mandated housing figures for the district. TRDC also agreed a further consultation will be held in January 2023 on additional sites submitted for consideration as part of the local plan deemed to be suitable. Five of these sites are in Abbots Langley Parish. Two of the previously submitted sites located in Bedmond will be removed as part of this process. The consultation will go on for a six week period. The work required to reconsider sites and figures will result in a delay of TRDC Local Plan.

Given the potential changes arising from these above, members felt it prudent to extend the planned timeline for progressing the ALPC Neighbourhood Plan to Consultation 14. Members therefore agreed not to approve a move to Consultation 14.

Cllr Sara Bedford stated it is important for all councillors sit down and discuss the Neighbourhood Plan as the document will help govern what gets built and how it gets built within Abbots Langley Parish for the next ten years. Members requested a meeting be scheduled to review the final version of the plan and all supporting documents in depth, as well as consider any informal feedback received from TRDC. Mr. Warman was asked to lead this meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Simon Stanley and RESOLVED that a new timeline be published outlining the steps required to progress the Abbots Langley Parish Neighbourhood Plan through to referendum in May 2024.

Cllr Jane Lay, Cllr Jon Tankard, and Cllr Liz Burns thanked Mr Warman for the work put into creating the Bedmond Aspirations document. Members requested Mr. Warman briefly summarise the aspirations of each area of the Parish into the Neighbourhood Plan rather than cover it a separate appendix.

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303. District and County Council Member's Reports

Councillor David Major
No updates.

Councillor Jon Tankard
Cllr Tankard shared the Net Zero baseline report is now available for Three Rivers District. Figures within the report currently include emissions linked to pass-through M25 traffic. Officers have requested the report be amended to exclude these emissions to provide a clearer picture of emissions that can be tackled within the District.

Councillor Ruth Clark
Cllr Clark shared the Warner Brothers planning application has been approved by TRDC. The application is now with Secretary of State who has six weeks to call it in for review.

Councillor Sara Bedford
Cllr Bedford shared an Abbots Langley bus user group has been established to pull together more comprehensive information regarding the issues bus users are experiencing.

Cllr Bedford highlighted there are ongoing problems with flooding and blocked drains, most recently in Manor House Gardens, due to the ongoing volume of rain. The appearance of mould in some Housing Association Properties has been investigated and found to be predominately surface mould due to air vents and air bricks being blocked by residents during the winter.

Cllr Bedford also shared information regarding tree planting in the Horses Field, installation of concrete bricks along Chequers Lane in February to help address recurring flooding in that stretch of road. Waterdale Waste Site (Commercial, not Public site) is expanding its shredding capacity. This will cut back on the queues to get in to the Commercial site.

Cllr Bedford noted that Bedmond Motor Company has put itself forward for consideration as a housing development site under the TRDC Local Plan. Additionally, the Highways report for the World of Water site is now available and highlights a number of issues with the proposed Lidl Supermarket development plans. Cllr Bedford also note the proposed plans conflict with enhancement of an existing cycle route proposed within the Warner Brothers development.

Cllr Bedford reminded members that the school applications deadline for Primary Schools is 15 January 2023. Cllr Bedford also shared Leavesden Park Run organisers are seeking additional volunteers to help steward the Saturday morning runs.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst
Cllr Giles-Medhurst stated an order for double yellow lines has been requested outside the West Herts Crematorium and Francis Coombe School.

A site on High Elm Lane submitted for consideration as part of the TRDC Local Plan has now been removed as a pre-existing covenant prohibits development on the site.

Bus service issues continue within the Parish. A meeting of all five major bus operators was proposed by at Hertfordshire County Council to discuss the issues however this was voted down.

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304. Chief Officer & Clerk's Report

i. Small Grants Awarded

Members noted the following small grants have been awarded:

- a. Abbots Langley Art Group - £250 to help run demonstrations and tutorials by established artists for existing and prospective members.
- b. Abbots Langley Legionnaires - £250 to help cover the cost of transport, hall hire, and entertainment at the annual June event.
- c. Centralian Players - £120 towards the cost of hiring Henderson Hall for an evening fund raising event to support the group's annual performances at Henderson Hall.

ii. Members Attendance - Six Month Rule

The Chief Officer & Clerk advised that no members were at risk of breaching the "six month rule" until May 2023.

305. Monthly Statement of Accounts

It was proposed by Councillor Liz Burns and seconded by Councillor Jane Lay and RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts for October and November 2022 as notified to the Council be approved and published on the Parish Council's website.

306. Exclusion of the Press and Public (Part II)

It was proposed by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst and seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and RESOLVED that as the following matters will consider the early stages of a business plan which may impact future contract discussions into which the Parish Council may enter, the press and public be excluded from the discussion, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972, s100.

307. Henderson Hub Annual Report 2022

(Referred from the Finance & Administration Committee, min. 277)

Members noted the reports referred by the Finance & Administration Committee. Councillors thanked Mr. Stanley for attending to responding to Members questions regarding the reports.

Mr. Stanley left the room.

It was proposed by Councillor Liz Burns and seconded by Councillor Sara Bedford and RESOLVED that the proposed changes to the services provided by the Henderson Hub and supported by ALPC grant funding be approved as stipulated by the Abbots Langley Parish Council's Financial Grant policy.

Members asked the Chief Officer & Clerk to follow-up with Henderson Hub trustees regarding the reserved tickets concept. Cllr Sara Bedford suggested the same aims could be achieved by encouraging event organisers to apply for a small grant from the Council to cover the costs. Members agreed to follow-up with the Henderson Hub trustees regarding introduction to potential donors.

Exiting Exclusion of the Press and Public (Part II)

Mr. Stanley re-entered the room.

308. Henderson Hub Financial Grant 2023-2024

(Referred from the Finance & Administration Committee, min. 277)

It was proposed by Councillor SGM and seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and RESOLVED that the third and final year of the Henderson Hub grant be awarded in

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the financial year 2023 – 2024 under The General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011. Section 1(1) in accordance with the Service Level Agreement and Abbots Langley Parish Council's Financial Grant policy. A vote was taken and was unanimous.

The meeting closed at 9:33 pm.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____