

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 15th November 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 Kristina Allison
Councillor Susie Arbon
Councillor Ruth Clark
Councillor Kareen Hastrick
Councillor Jane Lay
Councillor David Major
Councillor John Swallow
Councillor Jon Tankard
Councillor Marianne Tankard
Councillor Kate Turner
Councillor Vince Watts
Councillor Roxanne Yau

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

Police: Sgt Jon Brown (488)

Others: Mr Peter Warman - Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The meeting opened at 7:30 pm.

222. Apologies for absence

- i. Apologies were received, recorded, and accepted: Councillor Elinor Gazzard (unavailable).
- ii. Apologies were received, recorded but not accepted: none.
- iii. Other absences: none.

223. Declarations of Interest

None.

224. Public Participation

None.

225. To confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings

It was proposed by Councillor John Swallow, seconded by Councillor Jane Lay and RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2023, 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.

226. Minutes for adoption

The following committee minutes were adopted, approved for publication on the Council's website and passed to the committees for resolution.

- i. Planning & Highways Committee - 4th October and 1st November 2023
- ii. Leisure Committee - 18th October 2023
- iii. Finance & Administration Committee - 25th October 2023

227. Chairman's Report

The Chairman attended the Fireworks display in Abbots Langley on 3rd Nov organised by the Watford Lions and sponsored by ALPC and WBOS to present the raffle winner with a prize and kick-off fireworks off. The Chairman reported the fireworks display was very impressive, running to 20 mins, and thanked Watford Lions for the event.

Abbots Langley Parish Council

On 12th Nov the Chairman attended the St. Lawrence Church Remembrance Sunday procession, service and laid a wreath on behalf on the Parish. He also attended the Remembrance Service at the Tin Church in Bedmond.

The Vice Chairman also took part in the Abbots Langley Remembrance Sunday procession on 12th Nov. Additionally, she attended the Abbots Langley Tough Ten event on 1st Oct and handed out awards. The Vice Chairman also attended the Watford Lions Charter evening on 13th Oct and delivered a speech at the event.

228. Hertfordshire Police

Sgt Jon Brown (488) shared the following updates:

Crime figures for the past 3 months (Aug-Oct) 2022 to 2023 YoY Comparisons:

- Burglary dwellings - 10, up by 2
This includes building sites not yet lived in and some domestic related burglaries.
- Theft of Motor Vehicle - 11, down 2 from last year
- Theft from Motor Vehicle - 9, down 1 from last year

Staffing

- New PC joined the team on 6-month attachment.
- Team now has 3 PCs, and 4 PCSOs. This is still short 1 PC and 1 PCSO. Plans are in hand to try to address this shortfall.

Priorities

- *Violence against women and girls (VAWG)* - KL train station is a hot spot of concern. Police are working with British Transport staff to tackle this. Police are also hosting a "Walk with a Cop" on Nov 21st @ 6pm on the High Street to encourage all residents and especially women and young girls to join them and help identify areas where they feel unsafe.
- *Speeding* - Still focused on reduction of speeding and dealing with illegal use of eScooters on roads and pavements. Have seen a decrease in eScooters.
- *Anti-Social Behaviour* - New priority due to an increase of ASB incidents. A Section 60 authorisation was put in place for Fireworks night giving the Police the power to stop and search anyone within a specific location / specific period that evening. This was approved based on intelligence received by the Police. Violence has also been directed towards Police and Police property, including a Police car windscreen being smashed, veiled threats to a PCSO, and a private car having the tyres let down. Officers lone working at night are able to work out of Rickmansworth but this is not currently being enforced. The Chairman requested an update from Police on the situation in 1 month, to be shared with Councillors at that time.

229. Budget 2024-2025

Members noted the current version of the budget (v1.8) and agreed it is consistent with what is expected for this stage of the budget planning process.

The Chief Officer & Clerk provided a summary of the assumptions built into the 2024-2025 and next steps.

230. External Audit Report 2022-2023

(Finance & Administration Committee 25thOct 2023 min 197)

It was proposed by Councillor John Swallow, seconded by Councillor Ruth Clark RESOLVED that the Parish Council accept the External Auditor's Report and Certificate as recommended by the Finance and Administration Committee.

Councillors thanked all ALPC Staff for this successful result and specifically thanked the RFO & Deputy Clerk for her efforts. Councillors also congratulated the RFO & Deputy Clerk on successfully achieving the CiLCA qualification.

Abbots Langley Parish Council

231. Calendar of Meeting 2024-2025

Members noted the calendar of meetings for 2024-2025 with the following checks. Members asked the Chief Officer & Clerk to contact HAPTC to get clarification on whether the Annual Parish Meeting could be held at Manor House.

232. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Report

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

Councillor Bedford summarised the output of a July 2023 meeting of Members to review the draft plan where it was unanimously agreed Members did not feel comfortable going forward with the plan due to changes in the TRDC Local Plan.

It was proposed by Councillor Sara Bedford, seconded by Councillor Roxanne Yau and RESOLVED that the Chief Officer & Clerk be instructed to engage Alison Eardley Consulting to work with Members to make amendments to the draft AL Neighbourhood Plan prior to putting it to a vote by the full Council. A vote was taken by show of hands and the vote was unanimous.

The Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan stated he would contact TRDC to advise the earliest the AL Neighbourhood Plan was likely to be put forward for approval by the full Council is March 2024.

233. District and County Council Member's Reports

Councillor David Major

No update.

Councillor Jon Tankard

Councillor Tankard summarised TRDCs ongoing work on sustainability. TRDC are still looking for volunteers to be a part of the Transition Streets initiative. They are specifically looking for owners of terraced houses to join the scheme. Participants could be neighbours or near neighbours.

Councillor Tankard said TRDC is also participating in research into the pollution of local rivers. Reports have identified some pollution linked to landfill sites upstream, before sewage works. Strategies to halt pollution of local rivers are being researched with TRDC being one of the lead districts being asked to provide input.

Strategies to reduce the carbon footprint of TRDC are also being researched and costed.

Councillor Ruth Clark

Councillor Clark reported TRDC are considering the addition of 22 car parking spaces in School Mead. She also shared that due to a very low response to the Primrose Hill parking consultation, it was likely TRDC would seek to put double yellow lines down one side of Station Road / Railway Terrace instead of the proposed residents permit parking scheme.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Councillor Giles-Medhurst provided an update on the TRDC Local Plan and the current consultation on the Local Plan. The current Local Plan is based on a greenfield restraint policy rather than attempting to meet the current government housing figures (11400 housing units). The Council has taken up all brownfield sites (988 housing units) in TRDC plus the already approved schemes (1000 housing units), and a windfall assumption (circa 400 housing units) equalling 2000+ housing units. The Council have then reviewed all proposed greenfield sites, rated these from high harm to low harm, and decided to include only those rated low to moderate harm sites (circa 2000 dwelling units).

Councillor Giles-Medhurst urged residents to take part in the Local Plan consultation and express support for TRDC's approach as this could help when the plan goes to the independent inspector. Councillor Giles-Medhurst shared the plan

Abbots Langley Parish Council

has support from the Three Rivers Joint Residents Association which is comprised of 22 residents associations. The Local Plan consultation closes 10th Dec 2023.

Councillor Sara Bedford

Councillor Bedford reported issues with the lighting in the Causeway car park due to a cable being cut during the installation of solar lights. Replacing the feed to the lights is the responsibility of HCC rather than TRDC.

Councillor Bedford provided an update of the bus schedule changes that start on 20th Nov 2023 and directly impact bus routes covering Abbots Langley. There is now just 1 bus that stops on Abbots Langley High Street and 1 bus that stops on Tibbs Hill. These changes further impacts residents that cannot afford to have a car or cannot drive.

The Lidl supermarket application is being reviewed by TRDC this week. Councillors have serious concerns regarding traffic management at the proposed site given its location but HCC Highways' report has said the proposal would have no detrimental impact on the Highways network.

In other updates, Councillor Bedford shared there is no progress to report on both the Langleybury Film Hub planning application and the Data Centre planning application; HCC have announced plans to close the Children's (Family) Centres run at Tanners Wood and Leavesden; Anchor Housing has published plans to remove a number of trees at their Hannover Gardens site.

Councillor Bedford shared the findings of a report from OFSTED to HCC which state HCC have a failing service for SEN children in the county. HCC is substantially underfunded per capita for SENs by comparison to neighbouring county councils.

9:12pm Councillor Marianne Tankard left

234. Chief Officer & Clerk's Report

i. Formal Complaint

Members noted the withdrawal of the formal complaint by the complainant.

ii. Office Hours over Christmas Period

Members noted the arrangements.

iii. Member's Attendance

The Chief Officer & Clerk advised that no members were at risk of breaching the "six month rule" until March 2024.

235. Monthly Statement of Accounts

It was proposed by Councillor Roxanne Yau, seconded by Councillor Jane Lay and RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts for August and September 2023 as notified to the Council be approved and published on the Parish Council's website. Members also approved signature of the above bank reconciliation statements by the Chairman.

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

It was proposed by Councillor Jane Lay, seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst and RESOLVED that as the following matters will consider early stages of contractual matter into which the Parish Council may be entering, 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.

237. Bedmond Sports Pavilion

(Parish Council Sep 2023 min 163; Finance & Admin Committee Oct 2023 min 202)

Members noted the verbal updates on expressions of interest in leasing Bedmond Sports Pavilion and the tender process for the works required at Bedmond Sports

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Pavilion. The Chief Officer & Clerk confirmed that quotes received were in the ballpark of the spend approved by the Council for this work.

It was proposed by Councillor Jane Lay, seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst and RESOLVED that the draft blank General Service Agreement letter prepared by the Chief Officer & Clerk, be used as the basis for contracting the works at Bedmond Sports Pavilion. It was also agreed that the Chief Officer & Clerk be given delegated authority to sign the agreement on behalf of the Council.

The meeting closed at 9:25 pm.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____