



Wokingham Town Council

Town Hall, Market Place, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 1AS
Tel: 0118 978 3185 www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk
Town Clerk: K. Hughes

This Council Meeting is open to the Public and Press
Please notify the Officer or Chairman if you wish to record the meeting

Tuesday, 25 June 2024

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the **Amenities Committee** to be held in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Wokingham** at **7.30pm** on **Tuesday 02nd July 2024** for the purpose of considering and resolving upon the subjects and matters set out in the agenda below.

Yours sincerely

K Hughes
Town Clerk

Contact Officer: F Sleaford, Amenities Officer
Direct line: 0118 974 0886; mobile: 07592 579112; email: amenities@wokingham-tc.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive any declaration of interests from members on the business about to be transacted.

3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC

The Chairman to answer questions raised by members of the council or public.

This is an opportunity for the people of Wokingham to ask questions of, and make comments to, the Town Council. Members of the public are requested to restrict their questions and comments to three minutes. Questions which are not answered at this meeting will be answered in writing to the person asking the question. To ensure an informed response, please send your questions to the Town Clerk at least three working days prior to the meeting.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

To receive and resolve the minutes of the proceedings at the meeting of this committee held on 20th May 2024 (pages 16984 to 16988, copy attached) as a true and correct record.

5 WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) FUNDING REQUEST

To receive the Amenities Officers briefing notes – 01/July 2024, dated 21st June 2024 (copy attached).

6 SPENDING PRIORITIES 2025-2026

- a) For the Committee to note that spending priorities for 2025-2026 will need to be brought forward for consideration, prioritised, and resolved upon at the September meeting.
- b) For the Committee to receive a list of Officer suggested items, discuss potential projects, and to create a focused list, for further investigation by the AO in preparation for the September meeting (copy attached).

7 GRAFFITI UPDATE

To receive an update regarding graffiti removal (photo report attached).

8 MONITORING REPORT

To receive and consider the monitoring report dated 21st June 2024 (copy attached).

9 AMENITIES COMMITTEE INFORMATION

To receive information raised by members for possible inclusion on a subsequent Amenities Committee agenda:

- a) To note the string lights wrapped in the nine trees in Peach Place have been removed for the summer; the lights were too tight on the tree trunks and so they have been removed to enable the trees to grow during the summer; string lights will be replaced around October 2024.
- b) The public right of way over the Tan House Lane bridge remains closed. Network Rail expect the replacement steps to be installed in August, however, this is not confirmed, and no installation date is fixed.
- c) King George V, to receive the Amenities Officers briefing notes – 02/July 2024, dated 24th June 2024 (copy attached).
- d) Update on the grounds team staff, to receive the Amenities Officers briefing notes – 03/July 2024, dated 24th June 2024 (copy attached).
- e) The Arts & Culture committee's Chalk About It event will be taking place on market place on Sunday 18th August.

10 MATTERS TO PUBLICISE VIA SOCIAL MEDIA FROM THIS EVENING'S MEETING

To receive and consider a verbal report from the Chairman

Amenities Committee: Cllrs: R Bishop-Firth, S Cornish, A Fraser, M Fumagalli, C Jamthe, T Lack (Chairman), M Malvern (Vice Chair), A Medhurst and N Nagella

Copy: Cllrs R Comber and I Shepherd-Dubey

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, all persons attending this meeting are hereby notified that this meeting will be recorded. The purpose of recording proceedings is that it acts as an aide-memoir in assisting the clerk of the meeting in the compilation of minutes. The recordings are held in a secure location and deleted once it has been resolved that the minutes are a true and correct record.

In accordance with The Openness of Local Government Bodies regulations 2014, persons attending this meeting may make their own recordings of the proceedings subject to the Council's Policy on Filming, Recording & Reporting on Council and Committee Meetings (copy available on request).

DRAFT

20th May 2024

Minutes of the proceedings of the **AMENITIES COMMITTEE** meeting held on this day in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, WOKINGHAM** from 7:30 pm to 9:25pm.

PRESENT

Cllrs: R Bishop-Firth, S Cornish, M Fumagalli, C Jamthe, T Lack (Chairman), M Malvern (Vice Chair), and N Nagella

IN ATTENDANCE

Amenities Officer (AO) – Fiona Sleaford
Grounds and Bloom Officer (GBO) – Marianna Pentek
Town Clerk (TC) – Katy Hughes

Note: Some items on the agenda were taken out of their sequential order, but for the purposes of the minutes have been recorded in original agenda order.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Cllr A Medhurst

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)

None

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC (Agenda Item 3)

None

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 4)

Cllr T Lack highlighted the key aspects of the March committee meeting.

**RESOLVED
30852**

It was proposed by Cllr M Malvern and seconded by Cllr S Cornish, and it was

that the minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 12th March 2024 (pages 16926 to 16928) be received as a true and correct record, and they be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

COMMITTEE BUDGET (Agenda Item 5)

Members receive a report of the committee budgets for the 2024-25 financial year. The Town Clerk gave a verbal explanation of the budget figures for the various Amenities Committee cost centres.

WOOSEHILL BENCH CONSULTATION (Agenda Item 6)

Members received and considered a report from the Town Clerk summarising feedback received on a neighbourhood consultation carried out in April 2024 regarding a proposal for a new bench off Meadow Road.

During discussion, members noted that whilst some responses to the consultation had been positive, the majority had not. There were a number of concerns raised by residents in their consultation responses, regarding anti-social behaviour, littering and noise disturbance experienced from seating previously located nearby. This seating was subsequently removed.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the committee would not progress this bench request any further.

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS _____



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GRAFFITI UPDATE (Agenda Item 7)

Members received a report on graffiti removal carried out in April in the town area. Members expressed thanks to Cllr Andy Croy for undertaking this clearance work. The Town Clerk noted that Cllr Croy had undertaken further graffiti clearance work during May, however, details have not yet been circulated to members.

Cllr T Lack expressed thanks to Cllr Croy and other volunteers who carry out cleaning and clearance work to improve the appearance of the town.

VIKING FIELD COMMUNITY ORCHARD (Agenda item 8)

The GBO reported on the background to the Viking Field Community Orchard project, including details of an event and consultation carried out in Viking Field in May 2023.

Members noted that the overwhelming response to the consultation had been positive, and reviewed a summary of concerns raised during the consultation:

Concern raised:	Committee response:
Inaccessible due to fencing or orchard	Native hedging (a combination of 8 different UK native hedges provided by the Forestry Commission) will be used to create a protective barrier around the orchard area. There will be gated access provided within the fencing once it is established
Area bequeathed for dog walking	The area proposed for the orchard is not part of the walked path area so it is not anticipated that there will be any significant amenity loss for dog walkers
Disturbance by youth during evening / night	There are no proposals for seating or lighting so it is not anticipated that the provision of an orchard will create any additional likelihood of antisocial behaviour
Disturbance caused by other users	The orchard is located in public open space, and it is not anticipated that visitors to the orchard will generate any more noise than other users of the public open space
Noise issue if there is an outdoor class held in the orchard	Whilst we have local schools interested, it is expected that this would only be occasional visits, so it is not anticipated that this represents a significant noise disturbance
General noise disturbance of volunteers maintaining the orchard	The orchard is located in public open space, and it is not anticipated that volunteers maintaining the orchard will generate any more noise than other users of the public open space
Nut tree / bush concerns due to allergens	Any nut trees or bushes will be clearly marked
Altering the current view / scene from neighbours' houses	There is no automatic right to retain a view or outlook from a property
Safety issue due to lack of fencing	Native hedging (as detailed above) will be used to create a protective barrier 3 – 4 feet in height around the orchard area. This will allow visibility but protect the trees from dogs, deer etc whilst they establish.

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS _____



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	There will be gated access provided within the fencing once it is established
Fruit trees might be toxic to dogs	The quantity of fruit produced should not be sufficient to be toxic to dogs
Removal of existing trees in the orchard area	The GBO explained the reason why some trees in the area may be removed to allow the orchard to establish itself

During discussion, members noted:

- The orchard should support an increase the biodiversity of the area and monitoring and measuring of this will be carried out before and after the planting.
- It is anticipated that maintenance of the orchard will be carried out in-house by the grounds team and by volunteers, supported where needed by contractors funded with Bloom budget.

Following extensive discussion, it was proposed by Cllr N Nagella and seconded by Cllr R Bishop-Firth and members

**RESOLVED
30853**

to approve the planting of a community orchard, to include nut trees and bushes (clearly marked) and, as necessary, the removal of existing trees within the designated area to allow the orchard to establish.

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) FUNDING REQUEST (AGENDA ITEM 9)

The Town Clerk gave a verbal explanation of CIL funds and the town council's CIL reserves, and spoke about the request received from Wokingham Borough Council to consider the funding of resurfacing work in a Wokingham Borough Council managed play park in the town area, located off Latimer Road.

The Town Clerk noted that in order to meet the council's Financial Regulations for spending a sum of this size, additional quotes for the work had been requested from the officer at Wokingham Borough Council.

The Town Clerk noted that as this was a CIL funding request, the committee was being asked to consider and make a recommendation to the Finance and Personnel Committee.

Following discussion, it was agreed that a recommendation in principle, to fund 50% of the cost of the resurfacing work from the town council's CIL reserves would be made to the Finance and Personnel Committee.

MONITORING REPORT (Agenda Item 10)

The Town Clerk reported that item 175 (Meadow Road bench) would be removed following the earlier discussions at this meeting. The Town Clerk noted that Viking Field Orchard and Market Place lighting will remain on the report to allow the committee to receive further updates.

AMENITIES COMMITTEE INFORMATION (Agenda Item 11)

Members noted the following:

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS _____



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- Councillors are asked to bring spending ideas for the 2025-26 budget to the July committee meeting.
- The replacement bench has been installed outside the town hall following a vehicle incident in 2023. The bench differs slightly from the original benches installed following the Market Place refurbishment, as that design is no longer available.
- Park Yoga sessions have been running for three weeks now in Howard Palmer Gardens on Sunday mornings and are proving very popular.
- Bee trail posts have been installed around the wildflower areas in Elms Field.
- The public right of way over the Tan House Lane bridge remains closed due to a delay in the delivery of the steps, as a result of the manufacturer going into administration. The Town Clerk will keep the committee updated as further information is received.
- A children's funfair will be held in Elms Field over the weekend of 30th August / 1st September 2024.
- An E-Vehicle event is planned for Elms Field on Saturday 21st September. This will be the town council working in conjunction with the My Journey team at Wokingham Borough Council.
- Grass repairs have been carried out at Elms Field as a result of vehicles damaging the turf during the May Fayre event.
- The committee meeting in July will move from 9th to 2nd July to accommodate a change in date for the July Full Council meeting.
- An Olympic themed sculpture created by Optalis is planned for Market Place over August and early September.
- Evendons Primary School held a colour run fundraising event in Viking Field on Sunday 19th May.

MATTERS TO PUBLICISE VIA SOCIAL MEDIA FROM THIS EVENING'S MEETING (Agenda Item 12)

The Town Clerk noted the request to publicise the following items:

- Elms Field Bee Trail
- Elms Field Funfair
- Park Yoga
- Viking Field Community Orchard
- Market Place sculpture

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC (Agenda item 13)

It was proposed by Cllr T Lack, seconded by Cllr M Malvern and it was

**RESOLVED
30854**

that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted i.e. commercial, financial and personnel, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and instructed to withdraw.

A vote was taken, and it was unanimous.

ALLOTMENTS (Agenda item 14)

The Town Clerk gave a verbal report on the proposal for the recruitment of a new Allotment Officer, following the announcement of the planned retirement of the current officer.

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS _____

Amenities Committee 20th May 2024 16987



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Meeting closed at 9:25pm.

CHAIRMAN

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS _____





Wokingham Town Council

Amenities Officer's Briefing Notes – 01/July 2024

To:	Amenities Committee
Date:	21st June 2024
Council Principle:	Being Sustainable, Enriching Community, Fostering Town Pride & Involving Everyone
Amenities Service Area:	Parks
Subject:	Wokingham Borough Council Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding Request

To update Councillors on the situation regarding Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) community infrastructure levy (CIL) funding request:

- In May 2024 the Town Clerk's Report 09/2024 was presented to the Amenities Committee (copy included in the 20th May meeting agenda pack).
- This detailed WBC's request to WTC to fund the partial refurbishment and resurfacing of Barkham Recreation play park, off Latimer Road.
- The request from WBC was for financial assistance towards:
 - 2x new sit on spring riders, and **either**:
 - partial replacement of the play area surfacing (option A), **or**
 - comprehensive replacement (option B) of the play area surfacing.
- Following discussion, it was agreed that a recommendation in principle, to fund 50% of the cost of the resurfacing work from the town council's CIL reserves, would be made to the Finance and Personnel (F&P) Committee.
- The minutes of May's Amenities meeting are included in this pack (Agenda Item 4).
- At their 18th June 2024 meeting the above recommendation was presented to the F&P Committee.
- The F&P Committee resolved (30867) they would recommend to Full Council that Wokingham Town Council match fund option B, with a requirement to ensure due diligence is undertaken of costings and quotations.
- The Town Clerk has requested three competitive quotes for the work, from the WBC Officer, as required by WTC's Standard Financial Regulations requirements.
- If the alternative quotes are provided by 28th June this request will go to Full Council's 9th July meeting. Alternatively, the next available Full Council meeting is 10th October.
- Once approved, WBC would undertake the work and, upon completion, WBC would invoice WTC for the CIL contribution.

Ref	What	Where	Funding	Potential Cost	Principle	Notes
PARKS:						
1	Resurfacing Howard Palmer Gardens for Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance	HPG	One off	£85,000 indicative cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being sustainable • Involving everyone • Fostering town pride • Enriching community 	To comprehensively resurface the current stone tiled area with a new surface suitable for use by wheelchair and pushchair users and which will add to the improving aesthetic of this increasingly popular park.
2	New footpaths in Leslie Sears	LS	One off	£28,000 indicative cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being sustainable • Fostering town pride • Enriching community 	Small number of community resident requests, as access becomes waterlogged for much of winter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roberts Grove to Reeves Way (car park) • Crail Close to Viking Field. Both are potentially providing improved walking routes to a local school (Evendons Primary School)
TOWN HALL - improved Health & Safety						
3	Upgrade of emergency light fittings and old track lighting in the main hall, as per Fire Risk Assessment	TH	One off	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being sustainable • Involving everyone • Fostering town pride • Enriching community 	Work required as identified by the annual Fire Risk Assessment
4	Upgrade old light fittings in the lobbies and main entrance	TH	One off	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being sustainable 	Some fittings are reaching end of life, causing flickering of lights etc.
5	Creation of an earmarked reserve to provide for the refurbishment and replacement of the lift equipment	TH	Ongoing 5-years	£10,000 for 5-years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being sustainable • Involving everyone • Enriching community 	To create an earmarked reserve of £50,000 over a 5-year period, to enable necessary work to be planned and undertaken
6	Sign-in system - for the main entrance and staff entrance	TH	One off	£4,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being sustainable • Enriching community 	To enable effective fire evacuation
7	New intercom with a camera	TH	One off	£3,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being sustainable • Enriching community 	To enable safer working, especially lone working, in the building
BUDGET UPLIFTS:						
8	Park Yoga	HPG	Ongoing	£100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving everyone • Fostering town pride • Enriching community 	Pre-empting a small increase in instructor costs. Increasing the budget to £1,500/yr.
9	Christmas lights Extension of project budget for maintenance testing, and lamp column infrastructure upgrades	-	Ongoing possibly	£5,000 TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering town pride 	Including: Testing and maintenance requirements for lamp column infrastructure Reworking and maintenance of lights wrapped in trees Catenary wire infrastructure testing
WOOSEHILL:						
10	Necessary upgrades to the building, and to improve the safety of users, and user experience	WH	One off	£5,000 TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being sustainable • Enriching community 	Including: •Roof and gutter repairs / replacement •Upgrade emergency light fittings •Upgrade CCTV cameras •Water heater replacement

Suggestions need to be considered alongside the council's **Principles and Priorities**, which are:

Being sustainable

Working to reduce our negative impact on our local environment and use our financial resources and physical assets as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Involving everyone

Striving to ensure the council's events, activities and democratic processes are open, accessible, and welcoming to everyone in our community.

Fostering town pride

Protecting, enhancing, and celebrating what's good about our council, our community, our town, and our heritage.

We will learn from our past, acknowledge where there's room for improvement, and prepare for the future.

Enriching community

Creating and supporting opportunities to bring our community together and help it to thrive.

Graffiti clearance report: work completed by Cllr Croy 5th – 7th May 2024



Bell Foundry Lane

No before photo



Broad Street



Broad Street



Cantley park cycle way and barrier

Graffiti clearance report: work completed by Cllr Croy 5th – 7th May 2024



Cantley park bins



Cantley park bins



Cantley park bins and exit



Cantley play park signs

Graffiti clearance report: work completed by Cllr Croy 5th – 7th May 2024



Denmark Street

No before photo



Denmark Street

Elms Road



Elms Road



Milton Road

Graffiti clearance report: work completed by Cllr Croy 5th – 7th May 2024



Norreys Avenue / Wiltshire Road

Norreys Avenue



Norreys Avenue



Norreys Avenue



Warren House Road

Wellington Road

Graffiti clearance report: work completed by Cllr Croy 5th – 7th May 2024



Wiltshire Road



Wiltshire Road



Wiltshire Road speed sign

Wokingham Town Council Strategic Principles 2023-2027

Being sustainable
 Working to reduce our negative impact on our local environment, use our financial resources and physical assets efficiently and effectively.

Involving everyone
 Striving to ensure the council's events, activities and democratic processes are open, accessible, and welcoming to everyone in our community.

Fostering town pride
 Protecting, enhancing and celebrating what's good about our council, community, town and heritage.

Enriching community
 Creating and supporting opportunities to bring our community together and help it to thrive.

While not exclusively, the prime contribution of the Amenities Committee is towards “being sustainable”

- **Amenities**
- **Grounds & Bloom**
- **Buildings & Market**
- **Allotments**

Ref	Date Active	Item for Action	Action by	Proposed Completion Date	Status: Previous Progress Progress Update
176	20.05/24	Viking Field community orchard	GBO	TBC	Committee resolved for the installation to go ahead Preparations are ongoing
177	20.05/24	Failure of wall lighting on western Market Place	WBC	TBC	Officers at WBC have been contacted for an update The WBC officer confirms the design is completed and they are ordering equipment, however; they may need to arrange communications with the building owners prior to undertaking the works; no timeline at present
178	02.07/24	Grass cutting budget uplift for new four-year contract	GBO	already completed	FY24-25 Budget uplift: £15,000 – Contract Renewal Four-year contract with existing supplier, NGL Boxgreen, agreed Mar 24
179	02.07/24	Funding for Market Place parking permits	BMO	already completed	FY24-25 Budget: £1,050 – New budget line Budget awarded and parking permits purchased
180	02.07/24	Funding for allotment waterless toilets cleaning contract	ALO	already completed	FY24-25 Budget: £4,500 – New budget line Budget awarded and cleaning contract awarded
181	02.07/24	Graffiti clearance budget uplift	RFO	already completed	FY24-25 Budget uplift: £2,000 Uplift allocated

Wokingham Town Council's vision:

Wokingham Town Council embraces our past, celebrates our present and builds for our future.

Ref	Date Active	Item for Action	Action by	Proposed Completion Date	Status: Previous Progress Progress Update
182	02.07/24	Woosehill fire alarm upgrade	BMO	already completed	FY24-25 Budget: £1,000 Budget awarded and work completed
183	02.07/24	Play park equipment upgrade for older equipment	AO	ongoing in FY24/25	FY24-25 Budget: £40,000 Budget awarded and initial quotes investigated
184	02.07/24	Defibrillator for the Town Hall	AO	end July 2024	FY24-25 Budget: £3,000 Defibrillator purchased, awaiting delivery and installation
185	02.07/24	Park Yoga provision of 20 sessions for summer 2024	RFO	already completed	FY24-25 Budget: £1,400 – New budget line Budget awarded and weekly Park Yoga sessions are being held in HPG

Wokingham Town Council's vision:

Wokingham Town Council embraces our past, celebrates our present and builds for our future.



Wokingham Town Council

Amenities Officer's Briefing Notes – 02/July 2024

To:	Amenities Committee
Date:	24th June 2024
Council Principle:	Being Sustainable, Enriching Community, Fostering Town Pride & Involving Everyone
Amenities Service Area:	Parks
Subject:	King George V Playing Field

To inform Councillors regarding the recent situation at King George V playing field:

- In April, we received reports, via Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) customer services, of flooding within the park, with water coming up through the manhole cover near the children's play area.
- We reported the issue to South East Water / Thames Water and have been liaising with the Flood Officer at WBC, Ray Drabble.
- Thames Water visited the site twice during May (24th & 27th), carrying out jetting and tree root removal, between two identified manhole covers in both directions. Thames Water are currently only communicating directly with Ray Drabble, and we are receiving updates directly from him.
- Ray Drabble has reported that Thames Water are due to revisit the site in late June, to undertake further root removal and repair a displaced join.
- We remain in contact with Ray to determine whether any action is required from the town council.



Wokingham Town Council

Amenities Officer's Briefing Notes – 03/July 2024

To:	Amenities Committee
Date:	24th June 2024
Council Principle:	Being Sustainable, Enriching Community, Fostering Town Pride & Involving Everyone
Amenities Service Area:	Parks
Subject:	Grounds Team Staff

To inform Councillors regarding recent staffing updates for the Grounds Team.

- We have successfully recruited a part-time grounds person who will also directly support Marianna with the delivery of the Wokingham in Bloom work. Louise joins us on 3rd July and will be working 20/hr per week. Days and times to be confirmed.
- This was a role agreed in the last financial year as a mid-year request. We were not successful with recruitment last year, but the funding was rolled forward into the current year's budget. Louise will report directly into Marianna.
- We are offering a part-time work experience opportunity to Abdul, who is living in Wokingham under the Afghan resettlement scheme.
- He joined us on 10th June will be working with our grounds team to learn some transferrable skills and improve his spoken English.
- We are interviewing on 26th June for a full-time grounds-person.
- Jim our current groundsman will be retiring in July.
- We have interviewed and made an offer for the part time Allotment Officer role.
- Paul our current Allotments Officer will be retiring in July.
- Emma, our Information Centre Assistant, will be taking on some additional hours to support the administration of the market bookings.
- This will free up some of Mike's time to focus on the necessary works on the building and facilities management side of his role.
- Induction training and settling new staff will be carried out over the next few weeks/months.