



Windlesham Parish Council

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MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF WINDLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL **Held on Tuesday 1st September 2026, at 7pm held at St Anne's Church Centre, 43 Church Road, Bagshot**

Bagshot Cllrs		Lightwater Cllrs		Windlesham Cllrs	
Bakar	P	Harris	P	Hardless	P
Du Cann	P	Hartshorn	PA	Lewis	P
Gordon	P	R Jennings-Evans	P	Marr	P
Wilson	A	Malcaus Cooper	P	Richardson	A
Willgoss	P	Turner	P	Wheeler	A
White	P	Stevens	P		
		D Jennings-Evans	A		

In attendance: Jo Whitfield –Clerk to the Council
6 x Members of the public

P – present A – apologies PA – part of the meeting - no information
R - resigned

Cllr R Jennings Evans was in the Chair

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		Action
C/26/65	Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Wheeler, Richardson, Wilson and D Jennings-Evans.	
C/26/66	Declarations of interest Cllr Malcaus Cooper declared that she had been actively involved in discussions within the community regarding Agenda Item 5. Cllr Harris declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 5, noting his involvement in supporting Scout events. Cllrs Turner, R Jennings-Evans, Lewis and Hardless declared non-pecuniary interests in Agenda Item 8 due to their involvement in the Surrey Heath Borough Council Community Governance Review Working Group.	

C/26/67	Public Questions Mr Andrew Winfer, Group Scout Leader, who leads the Scout Bonfire event, advised Members that the event has been running for approximately 30 years and requested sight of the Council's insurance event guidance. The Clerk confirmed that this will be sent to the Event Organisers.	
C/26/68	Exclusion of the press and public. Members agreed that there were no items to be dealt with after the public, including the press, have been excluded under S1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. C/26/73 Community Governance Order - To consider proposed consequential matters	
C/26/69	Lightwater Recreation Ground - Update Following Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Site Visit and Consideration of Bonfire Location Members received an update following a site visit by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service to Lightwater Recreation Ground in relation to the proposed 1st Lightwater Scouts Bonfire and Fireworks Event. During the visit, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service advised that the proposed bonfire location was too close to neighbouring residential properties. This reflected insurance guidance recommending a minimum separation distance of 20 metres between a bonfire and neighbouring properties. Officers advised that the bonfire had historically been located at approximately 15 metres from the site boundary. Cllr Malcaus Cooper expressed the view that the bonfire and fireworks elements of the event should be considered together and could not be discussed separately. The Chair clarified that the matter before Council related solely to the proposed location of the bonfire, having regard to advice received from Surrey Fire and Rescue Service and the Council's insurers. Cllr Malcaus Cooper persisted with references to matters outside the scope of the agenda item, including previous correspondence between Members. The Chair reminded Cllr Malcaus Cooper to confine her comments to the matter under consideration. <i>19:17 The meeting was then adjourned briefly by the Chair.</i> <i>19:22 The meeting reconvened</i> Members noted the concerns raised by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service regarding the bonfire location, together with the advice that any event should be supported by a suitable and sufficient risk assessment taking account of the conditions prevailing at the time of the event. Members further noted that, as landowner, responsibility for determining whether the event should proceed rested with the Council.	

	Members noted that officers would provide the event organisers with details of the gaps, concerns and outstanding information requirements identified in the event documentation submitted to date. Members discussed the matters set out in the report, including advice received from Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, the requirements of the Council's insurers, and representations received from local residents regarding the impact of previous bonfire events, including concerns that heat generated by the bonfire had caused windows of nearby properties to become excessively hot. In considering the item, the Chair exercised her discretion to permit representatives of the Scouts to participate where necessary to clarify points of fact, answer Members' questions and assist in identifying a practical and proportionate solution. Members discussed the implications of relocating the bonfire further into the field, noting that this could encroach onto the football pitch. A number of potential solutions were considered, including temporarily removing the turf in the affected area before the event and reinstating it afterwards, or reducing the size of the football pitch to the minimum dimensions permitted under the relevant sporting guidelines. Members also considered the feasibility of completing any necessary reinstatement works within one week of the event. Consideration was further given to how and when ground conditions, particularly the dryness of the ground, would be assessed before the event to inform any final decision on the potential risks. <i>19:41 Cllr Hartshorn left the meeting</i> Members reviewed the documentation presented and resolved to: a) Note the advice received from Surrey Fire and Rescue Service following the site inspection of Lightwater Recreation Ground. b) Note the concerns identified in the papers provided, regarding the proposed bonfire location and decide on any future location of a bonfire. c) Acknowledge the Council's duties as landowner to manage health and safety risks. Noting that the Council could be considered negligent if appropriate measures are not in place. Additionally, Cllr R Jennings-Evans proposed, Cllr Hardless seconded, and a recorded vote was taken. <table><tr><td>Cllr Bakar</td><td>In Favour</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Du Cann</td><td>In Favour</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Gordon</td><td>In Favour</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Willgoss</td><td>Against</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr White</td><td>In Favour</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Harris</td><td>In Favour</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr R Jennings-Evans</td><td>In Favour</td></tr></table>	Cllr Bakar	In Favour	Cllr Du Cann	In Favour	Cllr Gordon	In Favour	Cllr Willgoss	Against	Cllr White	In Favour	Cllr Harris	In Favour	Cllr R Jennings-Evans	In Favour	
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Cllr R Jennings-Evans	In Favour															

	Cllr Malcaus Cooper In Favour Cllr Turner In Favour Cllr Stevens In Favour Cllr Hardless In Favour Cllr Lewis In Favour Cllr Marr In Favour It was resolved by 12 votes in favour, 1 against and no abstentions that permission be granted, subject to the following conditions: Suitable mitigation measures being agreed with the football club. The bonfire shall be relocated to ensure a minimum distance of 20 metres from any property not owned by the Council. Clarification shall be sought as to whether this distance is to be measured from the centre of the bonfire or from its nearest edge. The Council shall meet the reasonable costs of any agreed mitigation measures affecting the football pitch, including either reinstatement of the affected area following the event or amendment and remarking of the pitch to revised dimensions, as appropriate. The bonfire shall be limited to a maximum size of 4 x 4 metres. The event organisers providing a comprehensive risk assessment demonstrating that appropriate consideration has been given to risk management, including health and safety requirements, and that suitable mitigation measures are in place. The event organiser will carry out a ground condition assessment prior to the event. The event organisers shall set out within the risk assessment the methodology by which ground conditions, including ground dryness, will be assessed and monitored before the event. The event organisers shall include within their risk assessment details of how wind conditions will be monitored before and during the event, together with the control measures that will be implemented should wind speeds or wind direction create an increased risk to attendees, neighbouring properties or surrounding land.	Clerk / Operations Coordinator
C/26/70	To review and approve emergency tree works across the Parish area. Members considered a report regarding emergency tree works required across multiple Council sites following the prolonged period of exceptionally hot and dry weather experienced during summer 2026. Members noted that inspections had identified a significant increase in deadwood, branch	

	dieback and declining trees, creating potential risks to public safety, neighbouring properties and increased fire loading from dead vegetation Members noted that quotations had been obtained from two contractors and that the submissions were not directly comparable due to differences in the scope of works proposed. Officers advised that the proposal submitted by Contractor B represented a more comprehensive assessment of the affected sites and a broader programme of remedial works, which was considered a more resilient approach given the ongoing uncertainty regarding the condition of affected trees. Members further noted that additional quotations were still required for works at Windmill Field and High Curley and that the overall programme cost was anticipated to be in the region of £10,000 to £15,000. The report therefore sought approval to fund the work from the existing Tree Maintenance budgets and Earmarked Reserve and to delegate authority to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to appoint contractors where outstanding quotations had not yet been received. Council resolved to: 1. Note the increase in deadwood and declining trees across Council sites following the prolonged hot weather conditions. 2. Agree that emergency tree works are required in the interests of public safety and fire prevention. 3. Approve the use of the Tree Maintenance Earmarked Reserve to fund the works. 4. Approve expenditure of up to £15,000 to enable all identified works, together with any additional works arising from sites yet to be assessed, to be completed. 5. Note the officer assessment that the schedule of works submitted by contractor B represents a more comprehensive and resilient solution, subject to the final overall project cost remaining within the approved budget. 6. Appoint contractor B to carry works across all sites. 7. Authorise the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to appoint contractor B for those sites for which quotes are yet to be received.	Clerk / Operations Coordinator / RFO
C/26/71	To approve emergency replacement of playground equipment at School Lane Field. Members considered a report regarding the replacement of unsafe play equipment at School Lane Field Members resolved to: 1. Note the reported safety concerns regarding the bowl-shaped rocking play item at School Lane Field.	

	2. Agree that the equipment should be removed and replaced. 3. Approve expenditure of up to £6,000 for removal, replacement, installation and any associated surfacing or making-good works. 4. Authorise the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to appoint the most suitable supplier and progress the works without further reference to Council. 5. Agree that the expenditure be funded from the existing playground budget, with any additional requirement met from available playground repairs and renewals earmarked reserve if necessary	Clerk / Operations Coordinator / RFO
C/26/72	Exclusion of the press and public - To exclude members of the public, including the press, for consideration of items excluded under S1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.	
C/26/73	Community Governance Order - To consider proposed consequential matters It was resolved to carry out actions as detailed in the confidential report.	
	There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:34	