



Windlesham Parish Council

Joanna Whitfield
Interim Clerk to the Council
Email: clerk@windleshampc.gov.uk
Website: www.windleshampc.gov.uk
Telephone: 01276 471675

The Council Offices
The Avenue
Lightwater
Surrey
GU18 5RG

26th August 2026

To: The Members of the Windlesham Parish Council

You are hereby summoned to attend an Extraordinary meeting of the Windlesham Parish Council, convened by the Chair of the Council, to be held at St Anne's Church Centre, 43 Church Road, Bagshot on **1st September 2026 at 7.00pm** to act upon the undermentioned business.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please send your written apologies.

Joanna Whitfield
Clerk to the Council

Cllr R Jennings-Evans
Chair of the Council

MEETING INFORMATION

Members of the public are invited to attend this meeting or alternatively, if you wish to submit any questions or comment on any of the items on this agenda without attending, please email clerk@windleshampc.gov.uk by midday on 1st September 2026. Please note that submissions for public participation will be read aloud at the meeting, along with the name of the person submitting the comment. If you do not wish your name to be made public at the meeting you must specify this to the Clerk in writing at the time of submission.

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest:** Members to declare any interest, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any requests from members for dispensations that accord with the Localism Act 2011 S33(b-e).
- 3. Public Question Time:** In accordance with Standing Orders, a period not exceeding 20 minutes will be allowed for public participation.
- 4. Exclusion of the Press and Public.** To agree any 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.
- 5. Lightwater Recreation Ground - Update Following Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Site Visit and Consideration of Event Application**

6. To review and approve emergency tree works across the Parish area.

7. To approve emergency replacement of playground equipment at School Lane Field.

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.

8. Community Governance Order - To consider proposed consequential matters

Item 5 - Lightwater Recreation Ground - Update Following Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Site Visit

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with an update following a site meeting with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service at Lightwater Recreation Ground and to seek a decision regarding mitigation of concerns raised.

Actions

Members are asked to review the documentation presented and 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 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.**
- d) **Decide how the Council wish to proceed regarding the location of the bonfire and whether a bonfire will be permitted.**

Option 1: Relocate the bonfire to achieve a minimum 20-metre separation from the site boundary. Members should note that this is the distance recommended by the Council insurer. However, this would result in the bonfire being positioned solely within the perimeter of the football pitch and may create conflicts with the proposed fireworks safety and firing zones.

Option 2: Do not permit a bonfire as part of the event. The Scouts may still be invited to submit proposals for an alternative event format that does not include a bonfire

Background

During the summer of 2026, concerns were raised regarding the increased fire risk across Council-owned land arising from the prolonged period of hot and dry weather conditions. In response, officers arranged a site meeting with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service at Lightwater Recreation Ground to assess the general wildfire risk associated with the site and to obtain professional advice regarding the Council's management of the land.

Whilst undertaking the site inspection, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service were also asked to review the proposed location for the 1st Lightwater Scouts' annual Bonfire and Fireworks Event, for which

an application has been submitted seeking permission to use the Recreation Ground in November 2026. The fire officers therefore assessed both the general condition of the site and the specific risks associated with the proposed bonfire and fireworks event.

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Site Visit

The site visit took place at Lightwater Recreation Ground and included a review of the proposed bonfire location, surrounding vegetation, neighbouring residential properties and the wider site conditions.

During their assessment, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service raised significant concerns about both the proposed bonfire location and the potential fire risk posed by fireworks on a relatively small site during a period of unprecedented dry weather. Officers were advised that, based on the conditions observed at the time of the site visit, there was a heightened risk of fire spread across the site and to neighbouring properties. Whilst the event is not scheduled to take place until November, the fire officers advised that they could not be confident that conditions would improve sufficiently to eliminate those risks.

During the site visit, a resident whose property adjoins the recreation ground also spoke with the fire officers and advised that, during previous events, the heat generated by the bonfire had caused the windows of her property to become noticeably hot. Fire officers advised that the proposed bonfire location is too close to neighbouring residential properties and indicated that, should a bonfire event be considered, the bonfire would need to be relocated further away from adjoining homes to reduce the risks identified.

In subsequent correspondence, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service provided additional advice regarding the Council's consideration of the event:

"With regard to the Bonfire Night event that is traditionally held at Lightwater Playing Fields, I would strongly recommend that the arrangements for this year's event be reviewed in light of the current prolonged period of hot weather, together with the various government issued alerts, advisories, and temporary restrictions that are presently in force or being actively promoted. In response to similar enquiries received during these conditions, our Business Fire Safety Team has been providing the following advice:

"SFRS strongly advise against the use of Fireworks at this time. A 'small spark' could lead to a fire and we urge anyone to refrain from activities that could lead to sparks or uses naked flames. We would strongly urge people not to have bonfires or fireworks during the current spell of dry weather. Even a small spark can ignite dry grass, fields or woodland, causing fires to spread rapidly putting people, property and wildlife at risk. We also ask people to avoid the use of sky lanterns and other naked flames outdoors."

Following the removal of the two large trees since last year's event due to the radiant heat produced, together with reports from neighbouring residents that their properties have experienced significant heat from previous bonfires, I believe these matters warrant careful consideration.

As the landowners, the ultimate decision rests with you, and responsibility for that decision remains with your organisation."

The Fire Service was subsequently asked to clarify in writing whether its concerns related solely to the current weather conditions or whether they extended to the proposed November event. In response, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service advised:

"I believe it is important that all relevant risks are carefully considered as part of the decision-making process. Whilst the current level of risk may be assessed in one way due to the prolonged heat, ground conditions closer to the time of the event will be key factors in determining whether any additional fire risk is present in November.

Either way, a thorough and suitable risk assessment must be completed by the responsible person to ensure that all risks are identified, considered, and appropriately managed. This assessment should take account of the conditions at the time of the event; it is reasonable to expect that the current weather conditions will have changed by November; however, this should not be assumed, and conditions should be reviewed closer to the event date.

Should the event go ahead and concerns be raised by residents, resulting in calls to Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, it is likely that crews will attend to assess the situation. Where the bonfire is deemed to pose a risk to life, property, or the wider environment, appropriate action may be taken, including the extinguishment of the fire, to mitigate that risk and protect public safety."

Status of Surrey Fire and Rescue Advice

Members should note that Surrey Fire and Rescue Service does not have the legal power to direct the Council whether or not to permit the event. The decision rests solely with the Council as landowner.

However, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is the statutory emergency service with responsibility and expertise in fire prevention and wildfire risk management. Whilst their advice is not binding, officers consider that the professional opinion provided should be afforded significant weight when determining whether the event can be safely accommodated on Council land.

Conclusion

Having reviewed the event documentation submitted by the Scouts, Officers will provide the organisers with a schedule of the gaps and concerns identified, together with details of the further information required.

The decision requested from Members at this stage relates specifically to whether a bonfire will be permitted and, if so, its proposed location. A clear decision on this matter will enable the Scouts to understand the basis on which they should proceed and ensure that any revised documentation, risk assessments and event plans reflect the Council's requirements.

Item 6 - Emergency Tree Works Following Prolonged Hot Weather Conditions

Full Council EGM – 1st September 2026

Purpose of Report

To seek Council approval for emergency tree works across multiple Council sites to address deadwood, declining trees and associated fire and public safety risks arising from the prolonged period of exceptionally hot and dry weather experienced during summer 2026.

Action

Council is asked 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, including Windmill Field and High Curley, 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. Consider which contractor the Council wishes to appoint to carry out works on each site.**
 - 7. Authorise the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to appoint the preferred contractor for those sites for which quotes are yet to be received.**
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Background

Council-owned sites have been inspected, and a significant increase in deadwood, branch dieback and the deterioration of several trees has been identified. The effects are considered to be directly linked to the prolonged hot weather and lack of rainfall experienced throughout the summer.

Particular concerns relate to:

- Deadwood overhanging public areas.
- Increased fire loading from dead and desiccated tree material.
- Trees showing signs of severe stress, decline or mortality.
- Risks to footpaths, open spaces, playgrounds and neighbouring properties.

- The potential for further deterioration should weather conditions remain dry.

Given the public safety implications and increased fire risk, officers consider that a programme of emergency remedial works is required.

Quotations Received

Quotations were requested from suitably qualified tree contractors to undertake the required works.

At the time of writing, quotations have been received from two contractors:

- Contractor A
- Contractor B

Further quotes for Windmill Field and High Curley are still to be requested, and therefore the total project value cannot yet be finalised.

Officer Assessment

Although all contractors were provided with the same instructions, the quotations are not directly comparable on a like-for-like basis.

The quotation submitted by Contractor B includes a more detailed assessment of the current condition of the sites and proposes a broader range of remedial works. This approach is considered more appropriate given the unprecedented weather conditions experienced during 2026 and the ongoing uncertainty regarding the condition of affected trees.

Whilst the quotation from contractor A addresses the immediate concerns, it generally proposes a narrower scope of works and may result in additional remedial works being required in the near future.

Officers therefore consider that the proposal submitted by contractor B represents a more comprehensive and resilient solution.

Comparison of Quotations

	Contractor A		Contractor B	
Number of sites included	5		5	
College Ride	£500	• Group of Sweet Chestnut opposite 23 College Ride - remove dead tops into live growth • Full survey of these trees recommended from WPC tree surveyor	£3,990	• 2 oak Trees- Deadwood over footpath Heywood Drive entrance • Beech- Remove broken branch • Beech- showing signs of drought stress monitor • 2 Chestnut- fell dead • Beech- fell dead • Chestnut- remove deadwood over property

				• Oak tree- remove major deadwood over hanging footpath and College Ride • Fell dead lime tree- bottom entrance of gate • Fell previously reduced beech multiple fungi brackets heavily weighted to private garden, leaving 3-4m for habitat • Remove major deadwood on oak opposite 45 College Ride • Fell 2 dead chestnut stems • Fell dead chestnut stem opposite 63 College Ride • Fell dead chestnut opposite 77 • Remove major deadwood over road/footpath opposite 77 • Remove green waste piles 3
Bosman Drive	£150	• Lime opposite no.6 - remove dead wood over road	£780	• Small dead beech- Fell- opposite No 6 • Remove green waste piles • Lime Tree- deadwood over drive/footpath • Remove 2 fallen branches from lime tree • Deadwood mature sycamore next to Hawkes Leap • Deadwood 2 sycamore over footpath
School Lane Field	£850	• Oak on footpath remove dead wood over footpath • Oak on footpath - remove • dead wood over footpath • Sycamore with dead top on footpath remove dead top	£2,730	• Silver Birch- Monitor by pond • Silver birch- Dead- Remove • Fallen willow- Remove • Silver Birch- Dead- Remove behind tennis courts • Alders- behind life buoy- monitor • Willow- dead-remove- back strip by property • 3 fallen willow- remove- back strip by property • Willow- dead- back fence line • 6 dead willow- remove • 1 dead willow with hanging limb • Group of dead willow behind bench- remove • Hawthorne dying/failed root plate- remove • Willow stem-dead-remove • Group of sycamore- back left corner of school monitor

				• 4 oak trees- over hanging school-deadwood • remove piles of green waste next to school fence • Remove limb with decay over footpath by school • Sycamore- by picnic bench / school /playpark monitor • Fell 1 dead elm next to entrance • Fell dead holly to left of entrance • Monolith previously reduced oak next to public footpath to approx 6m multiple cavities on main
Lightwater Recreation Ground	£3,650 - £6,250	• Line of Lime trees on NE boundary - remove major dead wood over park/field and remove epicormic growth up to 2.5m • Line of Lime and Oaks on E/SE boundary remove major dead wood and epicormic growth on Lime trees up to 2.5m. • Remove major dead wood from Oaks. Fell dead Oak from Eastern side in group • Line of Lime trees on SW boundary: • Option a) remove major dead wood. • OR Option b) raise canopies over properties up to 6m. • OR Option c) reduce canopies over properties by 2.5m	£1,700	• Remove major Deadwood from Lime trees and remove epicormic growth on trees on left boundary, Back boundary and right boundary. This includes over private gardens, footpaths, play areas and gym some trees have tags attached as follows, some trees do not have tags Tag- 2002, 0003,0004,0005,0006,0007,0008,0009, 0062, 0073,0016, 0018, 0020, T31
Windlesham Cemetery	£2,350	• 2 x Dead Ash – fell to ground level • 2 x dead trees in hedgerow on front boundary - fell to ground level	£1,800	• Fell 2 dead ash trees on back boundary • Fell one dead pear • Fell one dead rowan on front boundary • Fell 2 dead conifers against laurel hedge in bottom graveyard.

Financial Implications

The approved tree maintenance budget does not contain sufficient funds to meet the anticipated costs of the required emergency works.

Members should note:

- The Tree Maintenance Earmarked Reserve currently contains approximately £36,500.
- Under the Scheme of Delegation, the Clerk may authorise expenditure from reserves up to £3,000.
- The anticipated total cost of the programme, including the outstanding works at Windmill Field and High Curley, is expected to be in the region of £10,000 to £15,000.

As the expected expenditure exceeds the Clerk's delegated authority, Council approval is required.

Risk Implications

Failure to undertake the works may result in:

- Falling branches causing injury or property damage.
- Increased fire risk from dead and desiccated vegetation.
- Deterioration of tree condition leading to more extensive and costly interventions.
- Potential liability exposure where known tree defects have not been addressed within a reasonable timeframe.

Item 7 - School Lane Field Playground – Replacement of Unsafe Play Equipment

Full Council EGM 1st September 2026

Purpose of the Report

To seek Council approval for the replacement of unsafe play equipment at School Lane Field, Bagshot, and to authorise expenditure of up to £6,000 to enable the works to proceed without delay.

Action

Members are asked 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 replacement of unsafe equipment, additional works required to either repair or replace the playground gates.**
 - 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**
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Background

The Council has received a report from a resident highlighting a potential safety issue with the green bowl-shaped rocking play item located within the School Lane Field playground. The concern raised was that a child could place their fingers or hand within the gap created by the movement of the equipment, creating a risk of serious injury.

Following receipt of the complaint, officers arranged for the equipment to be inspected by the Council's playground maintenance and inspection contractor. The subsequent assessment concluded entrapment was a risk and the equipment was unsafe.

Current Position

Officers consider that, given the potential entrapment hazard and having obtained professional advice indicating that removal of the equipment would be required, it would be prudent to replace the item.

The equipment cannot readily be removed and left absent. Removal would either:

- leave a protruding fixing or spike that could itself create a hazard; or

- require surfacing and ground reinstatement works to make the area safe.

For this reason, officers consider that removal and replacement should form part of a single project.

An alternative replacement quote has been received, and further quotes will be requested. Given the safety concerns identified, officers do not consider it appropriate to defer a decision pending receipt of further quotations. Additionally, there is a requirement for both playground gates to either be repaired or replaced.

Financial Implications

Members should note that:

- The Council's Scheme of Delegation permits the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to authorise revenue expenditure up to £5,000.
- Initial enquiries indicate that a replacement items, including installation, is expected to cost in the region of £4,500 excluding VAT.
- There is currently approximately £7,500 available within the existing playground budget.
- In addition, there is an earmarked reserve of approximately £44,000 available should further playground investment be required.

Given the uncertainty surrounding removal works, surfacing reinstatement and any unforeseen installation issues, officers recommend that authority be granted for expenditure of up to £6,000 to ensure the project can be completed safely without requiring a further report to Council.

Risk Implications

Failure to replace the equipment may leave the Council exposed to criticism should an injury occur after a specific hazard has been reported and investigated. Replacement will remove the identified risk and ensure the playground continues to provide safe play opportunities for residents.