



# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **COUNCIL** will be held in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **THURSDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2018 AT 7.00 PM\*\***

**\*\*Please note the earlier start time**

Heather Thwaites  
Acting Chief Executive  
Published on 14 November 2018

This meeting will be filmed for inclusion on the Council's website.

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## **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Our Vision**

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

### **Our Priorities**

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

### **The Underpinning Principles**

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

To: The Members of Wokingham Borough Council

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
53.		<b>APOLOGIES</b> To receive any apologies for absence	
54.		<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b> To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 September 2018.	21 - 54
55.		<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest	
56.		<b>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> To receive any announcements by the Mayor	
57.		<b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any public questions  A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice.  The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of the Council  Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Council or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to <a href="http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions">www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions</a>	
57.1	None Specific	Stephen Ollerhead has asked the Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning the following question:  <b>Question</b> What measures do WBC have in place to use or develop Brownfield sites across the Borough (e.g. empty houses left by the MOD in Arborfield) on a large portion of land and building owned by WBC to help meet the Borough's housing target?	
57.2	None Specific	Stewart Richardson has asked the Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning the following question:	

**Question**

WBC can improve their control of housing delivery, managing the 5 year land supply and passing the housing delivery test by decreasing dependence on the developers who have different agendas. How is WBC planning to use the considerable financial capacity available to it to contract directly with builders to construct a higher proportion of the housing needed?

57.3      None Specific

Alan Scott has asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement the following question:

**Question**

Policy CP18 of the Core Plan provided for measures to maintain separation between the Arborfield Garrison SDL and surrounding settlements; Policy CP11 made similar provision in more general terms for all of the SDLs. Residents in the surrounding areas relied on those provisions when they acquiesced to these major developments taking place. There are now a number of housing proposals being considered in the area around the Arborfield Garrison SDL and in particular at Barkham Square. Such developments would be in violation of policies CP11 and CP18 of the Core Plan. Would you affirm that CP11 and CP18 are still in force and that it would be perfidious to renege upon them and allow these proposals to go ahead or to be included in the Local Plan Update?

57.4      Barkham

Paul Steel has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

**Question**

The Inspector conducting an Inquiry regarding Woosehill in 1974 ruled that Barkham Road was 'already operating at about its theoretical capacity'. The roads in and out of Barkham have not changed since then, and being locked in by housing, offer little scope for increased capacity.

The population of Barkham directly affects the traffic using those roads. Census data shows that the population of Barkham had increased by over 40% by 2001, after the building of Elizabeth Park, an estate of some 350 houses.

The SDL development of Arborfield Green is adding 3,500 new houses to the area, 10 times as many as on Elizabeth Park. About half of these will fall within Barkham. With only about 15% of the SDL so far

completed, the bulk of the impact has yet to be felt.

There are whole series of bottlenecks in and around Barkham, and clearing only some simply releases traffic to worsen the situation at the next.

The Local Transport Plan fails to acknowledge any known congestion spots within Barkham. However, those who use the roads are painfully aware of how serious the problem already is.

If a further 1000 houses were to be allowed at Barkham Square, in the middle of Barkham, how would the Council address the accompanying incremental congestion without destroying the remaining rural ambience?

57.5      None Specific

Pam Stubbs has asked the Executive Member for Housing the following question:

**Question**

Providing affordable housing is understood to be one of the Council's key objectives. So, with the Cap on Council borrowing having now been lifted on the amount local authorities can borrow to fund social housing, how does WBC intend to make maximum use of this initiative aimed at increasing the number of affordable homes within the Borough?

57.6      Hawkedon;  
Hillside; Maiden  
Erleigh

Andrew Mickleburgh has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

**Question**

Recently, a keen motorcyclist living in Earley expressed grave concern that the wooden fence beside the cycle-path on Lower Earley Way is a dangerous hazard to motorcyclists. Organisations I have canvassed since have made observations and raised sufficient issues to suggest that the resident's safety concerns may have substance and need investigation. I have conveyed their written responses to the Executive Member for Highways and Transport. In light of the matters raised in those responses, can the safety of this fence be assessed by Highway engineers, and the full findings and any recommendations reported publicly?

57.7      None Specific

Peter Dennis has asked the Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning the following question:

**Question**

Wokingham has grown massively in prosperity and size in the last 25 years, due mainly to its highly convenient location next to J10/11 of the M4 corridor which is the artery providing easy access to Heathrow, the M25 and London for the ever-expanding IT, science, biotech and engineering industries which have made the Thames Valley their home. Considering the Council is going to be short of £7,000,000 in government grant next year plus will no longer have access to EU funding, what steps has the Council taken to counter the threat of these large and small companies relocating their European headquarters into the EU, along with the other huge multinational conglomerates who have settled in the Thames Valley who may also relocate or splinter, or have indeed already done so or are in the process of planning to do so, if they lost their current passporting facility of goods, services, capital and staff into the EU after Brexit?

57.8      None Specific

Vanessa Rogers has asked the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing the following question:

**Question**

The Borough relies heavily on EU migrant labour in the health and manual labour markets, as well as on the highly skilled sectors of its local industries. Has the Borough recognised and prepared for the impact of a labour shortage in all these sectors and especially the care/NHS sectors, in view of the fact that EU migrants are leaving the UK and the area en masse and the numbers are not being replaced by EU migration?

57.9      Winnersh

Paul Fishwick has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

**Question**

The central island traffic signal pole on the King Street Lane approach to the Sainsbury's junction was damaged in an accident during March 2018 and was repaired by Wokingham Borough Council during May 2018. However, a torn plastic bag covering a circular hole still 'flaps around in the breeze' on the lower part of the secondary signal. How long will it be before Wokingham Borough Council either replaces the torn plastic bag or installs a more meaningful sign for drivers?

- 57.10      None Specific      Lisa Kelly has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:
- Question**  
Because of its location and its rural market town charm, Wokingham has attracted a huge influx of highly qualified and highly paid residential owner occupiers and the attendant manual labour to service them, prompting massive residential and infrastructure development and redevelopment in recent years with the town's population expanding exponentially. What contingency plans or risk assessments have the Council undertaken to assess the impact of an economic slump on its finances and services after Brexit, both commercial and residential, and especially in light of the current ambitious and very expensive and extensive town centre schemes whose development is financed by loans?
- 57.11      None Specific      Carl Hammond has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:
- Question**  
Regarding littering, there is more or less zero enforcement of littering around town, while Car Parking enforcement is very actively and efficiently managed with plenty of fines and wardens around town. It's a shame to see endless littering of the new town centre, especially cigarette butts, which are everywhere. Would you please consider employing environmental enforcement officers to issue fixed penalty notices for littering?
- 57.12      None Specific      Peter Humphreys has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:
- Question**  
There is a history of lack of foresight within the Council such as installing new LED lights on London Road a few months before the road was widened leaving the lampposts stranded in the middle of the inside lane rather than on the pavement.
- Likewise, a large number of trees have been planted in the past couple of decades and subsequently uprooted or scheduled for felling even though it was known at the time of planting that those trees were in the way of planned developments. Would you please inform me how many trees, and at what cost, have been planted during this period only to be scheduled

for demolition relatively shortly afterwards.

57.13     Bulmershe and  
              Whitegates

John Booth has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

**Question**

East Reading Park and Ride: This site by the Thames riverbank at the north end of the A3290, just to the east of Kennet Mouth, has been purchased by Wokingham. Planning permission has been given for a 258-place Park and Ride site primarily to address demand from regular weekday morning peak-hour traffic into Reading. It was projected to cost £3.6 million with operational costs of £45,000 per year. The site has been cleared of trees and scrub but if left the vegetation will revert to 'green' landscape and wildlife habitat. I am concerned that: The operational and maintenance costs may have been underestimated and the revenues from such a small site overestimated; In use, especially with lighting, it will adversely affect landscape and amenity and wildlife habitat; To address cost, congestion, clean air and climate change it would be better if commuters used public transport or shared vehicles for the greater part of their journeys rather than taking cars so close to Reading; In particular it will increase traffic in the area around Suttons roundabout increasing congestion suffered by peak hour traffic to and from Reading. I think the Council should put this project on hold and re-assess it before spending more public money on it and causing long-term environmental loss. Priority should be given to getting more residents to use bus or train for most of the distance from their homes to Reading. If the Council is still convinced that Park and Ride in the proposed area is a good idea it should run a trial scheme using the vacant car parks in Thames Valley Park to test viability. What are the current plans, timescales and cost projections for this proposed Park and Ride?

**58.**

**PETITIONS**

To receive any petitions which Members or members of the public wish to present.

**59.**

**PETITION DEBATE**

To debate a petition.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 3.5.4.2 a maximum period of 30 minutes will be allowed for petitions to be debated.



The process below will be followed at the meeting:

- a) the petition organiser(s) will be given five minutes to present the petition (if there is more than one petition organiser then they will share this time);
- b) the petition will then be debated by Councillors for a period not exceeding 30 minutes;
- c) the petition organiser(s) will have the right of reply of up to a maximum of three minutes;
- d) the Mayor will then ask for motions on how the Council wishes to respond to the Petition which may include;
  - i) taking the action or some of the action the petition requests;
  - ii) not taking the action the petition requests;
  - iii) referring the petition to another body for them to consider the matter and take the appropriate action;
- e) once a motion has been put forward it will be voted on without discussion or amendment;
- f) if the motion falls then the Mayor will ask for a further motion to be put forward;
- g) if the Mayor is of the opinion that a decision on how to respond to the petition cannot be reached then he/she can decide, on behalf of the Council, not to take the action that the petition requests.

59.1      Barkham

**Petition submitted by Chris Heyliger and Graham Dexter**

The following petition containing in excess of 1,500 signatures, which is the threshold to trigger a debate at Council, was submitted at the Council meeting held on 20 September 2018:

*“Please sign our petition to generate a debate at Wokingham Borough Council and help defeat any impending plans for development of housing on Barkham Square and any other unsuitable sites that may be considered in the future. We the undersigned urge Council Members to hold a debate addressing proposals for 1,000+ houses which are in addition to the 3,500 houses already with planning permission.*

*This is not only contrary to the adopted current Council planning policy but will have serious traffic and other implications for Barkham and surrounding parishes.*

*The main site proposed is Barkham Square. Residents accepted the development of the former Arborfield Garrison site as it involved largely regeneration of brownfield land but now the wider area is being exposed to potential development creep, meaning encroachment upon the much valued countryside and on our overstretched roads within Barkham, Arborfield and Finchampstead. This goes against current Council planning policies (such as CP11) which were designed to protect the separate identity of settlements.”*

60. None Specific

#### **IRP REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES**

55 - 74

To receive a report from the Independent Remuneration Panel on their review of Members' Allowances.

**RECOMMENDATION** that Council agrees that:

- 1) the time contributed component of the Basic Allowance be increased by 2% in line with the 2018/19 increase in Officer pay, and backdated to 1 April 2018;
- 2) the £500 component of the Basic Allowance for the provision of IT should continue to be claimed only by those Members who provide facilities which allow constituents and Officers to communicate with them by e-mail and the self-certification process be continued;
- 3) the out of pocket expenses component of the Basic Allowance be reduced by £40 to allow for the mass registration of Members to the Information Commissioners Office by Wokingham Borough Council, from April 2019;
- 4) the Leader of the Council's SRA be increased to 4.5 x SRA = £22,500, from April 2019;
- 5) the Leader of the Opposition SRA be restructured via a new formula whereby all opposition group leaders with a membership of more than 2 receive an SRA based in part on a figure of £100 per group member. In addition, if the lead opposition group has four or more members more than the next largest group, its

leader should receive a further £5,000; but if the lead over the next largest group was less than 4 members the addition to the Leader of the Opposition's SRA should be reduced to £4,000. In the event that there were two or three leading opposition groups, each with the same number of members, then £5000 should be distributed equally between them as well as the £100 per group member

A condition of this formula should be that the gross cost of the SRA to all Groups should not exceed £8,000 (compared to the £7,500 now), and that in the event of any excess over £8,000 occurring, that excess should be deducted from the SRA granted to the Opposition Group leader with the fewest Members. These changes are recommended to be implemented from April 2019;

- 6) the budgeted cost covering SRAs for Executive Members and Deputy Executive Members be capped at the current level of £100,000;
- 7) the Chairman of the Planning Committee's SRA be increased to  $1.2 \times \text{SRA} = £6,000$ , and the SRA for Members of the Planning Committee SRA be increased to  $0.3 \times \text{SRA} = £1,500$ , from April 2019. A condition be agreed whereby there be a maximum budget of £18,000 for Chairman and Members of the Planning Committee;
- 8) the Members Subsistence Allowance and Overnight Accommodation Allowance be amended as follows:
  - (i) Overnight approved absence (from normal place of residence):  
Bed and Breakfast as charged by no higher than a 3 star hotel (with the exception that, if an approved conference takes place in a 4 star hotel with the expectation that attendees will stay at the same hotel, 4 star bed and breakfast is allowed).
  - (ii) Daily subsistence (for more than four hours away from normal place of residence covering any meals or refreshments) up to a maximum of £25 receipted expenditure;

- 9) the publication of Members' remuneration on the WBC website be reviewed with the intention that a single document be created and be accessible via an easy to find hyperlink, which would show for each Councillor all WBC related remunerations (Basic Allowance, SRA, NED remuneration and Outside Body (namely the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority) remuneration) received by that Member;
- 10) the Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral Allowances be included within the IRP's remit, from April 2019;
- 11) no changes be made to the current Childcare and Dependant Carers Allowance;
- 12) apart from the above recommendations, no further adjustments to Members' Remuneration are necessary until the next review by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

61. None Specific

#### **APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Following the departure of Manjeet Gill, Interim Chief Executive, it is necessary to appoint an Officer who will take on this role and carry out the functions of the statutory role of Head of Paid Service. At the meeting of the Personnel Board held on 31 October 2018 it was resolved "That it be recommended to Council that Heather Thwaites be appointed Interim Chief Executive until Personnel Board are able to interview and appoint a permanent Chief Executive, subject to no objections from the majority of the Executive". Executive have subsequently confirmed their support of this proposal.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Heather Thwaites be appointed Interim Chief Executive, and carry out the functions of Head of Paid Service, until such time as a permanent Chief Executive is appointed and commences employment.

62. None Specific

#### **WOKINGHAM'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY**

To receive an updated Health and Wellbeing Strategy as recommended by the Wokingham Wellbeing Board.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Council approve the revised Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and

75 - 130

accompanying focused Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) chapters to allow for implementation of the engagement plan and creation of an action plan.

63. None Specific

### **CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

131 - 170

To receive a report setting out amendments to the Council's Constitution as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group.

**RECOMMENDATION** That Council agree the following changes to the Constitution as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group:

- 1) that Section 3.3 Freedom of Information Policy and Section 3.4 Data Protection Policy be amended as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- 2) that Section 3.5 Petition Scheme be amended as set out in Appendix 2 to the report;
- 3) that Sections 4.2.9.3 Notice of Question (Public), 4.2.10.4 Notice of Questions (Members), 5.4.27 Notice of Question (Public – Executive) and 5.4.36 Rules of Procedure for Questions by Members (Members – Executive) be amended as set out in paragraph 3 of the report;
- 4) that Sections 4.2.9.8 Supplementary Question [Public] and 4.2.10.7 Supplementary Question [Member] and Sections 5.4.32 Supplementary Question [Public - Executive] and 5.4.39 Supplementary Questions [Members – Executive] be amended as set out in paragraph 4 of the report;
- 5) that Section 4.4.23 Membership [Health and Wellbeing Board] be amended as set out in paragraph 5 of the report;
- 6) that Section 8.1 Planning Committee Terms of Reference be amended as set out within paragraph 6 of the report;
- 7) that Section 8.2.7 Speaking by Members other than [Planning] Committee members be amended as set out within paragraph 7 of the report;

- 8) that Section 11.3 Scheme of Delegation to Officers be amended as set out in Appendix 3 to the report;
- 9) that Section 13 Procurement and Contracts Rules and Procedures and Section 5.5.1 List of Items Delegated to Individual Executive Members be amended as set out in paragraph 9 of the report;
- 10) minor amendments as set out in Appendix 4 to the report.

64. Wescott

**APPROVAL OF A PERIOD OF ABSENCE FROM MEETINGS BY COUNCILLOR OLIVER WHITTLE**

171 - 172

To receive a report requesting a period of absence from meetings for Councillor Oliver Whittle.

**RECOMMENDATION** that Council:

- 1) note that Councillor Oliver Whittle has not been able to attend meetings of the Council due to ill-health since his attendance at Council on 19 July 2018;
- 2) extend its sympathy to Councillor Whittle and wish him a speedy recovery;
- 3) approve Councillor Oliver Whittle's non-attendance at meetings of the Council due to ill-health up to 22 May 2019.

65.

**STATEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS, AND DEPUTY EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

To receive any statements by the Leader of the Council, Executive Members, and Deputy Executive Members.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.23 the total time allocated to this item shall not exceed 20 minutes, and no Member shall speak for more than 5 minutes

66.

**STATEMENT FROM COUNCIL OWNED COMPANIES**

To receive any statements from Directors of Council Owned Companies.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.24 the total time allocated to this item shall not exceed 10 minutes, and no Director, except with the consent of

Council, shall speak for more than 3 minutes.

**67.**

**MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

To answer any member questions

A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for Members to ask questions submitted under Notice

Any questions not dealt with within the allotted time will be dealt with in a written reply

67.1      Winnersh

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

**Question**

We have spoken several times about changing the traffic signals to part time rush hours only on the three roundabouts (not the Loddon Bridge (Showcase) roundabout) next to the A329M in Winnersh Triangle. Is there any progress on this project?

67.2      None Specific

Gary Cowan has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

**Question**

Looking at the time scale for progressing the Minerals and Waste Plan and the Local Plan can one explain why when minerals are required to build houses that the timing would appear to be back to front? By that I mean you need sand and gravel to build houses so one needs to know the number of houses being planned to determine that amount of sand and gravel needed or are there other reasons?

67.3      Emmbrook

Imogen Shepherd-DuBey has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

**Question**

The Woosehill Underpass in my ward has been progressively attacked by vandals who persist in scrawling graffiti on the walls. These messages and images are violent, sexually explicit, homophobic and deeply offensive to most. It is visible to all; including children who walk through the tunnel on the way to school and it makes residents feel unsafe when using the tunnel.

I have been advised that this tunnel used to have anti-graffiti rendering, which seems to be working well

in nearby locations. I would like to know why this graffiti resistant rendering was not replaced?

67.4 None Specific

Clive Jones has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

**Question**

What plans does the Council have to improve Air Quality in the Borough?

67.5 Wescott

Lindsay Ferris has asked the Executive Member for Regeneration the following question:

**Question**

According to papers that went to Audit Committee, Wokingham Borough Council has paid £14.5M for three commercial properties in Wokingham including Barclays Bank in Market Place for which the gross annual rental income is forecast to be circa £507k p.a. No information was provided to show

- (a) What responsibilities (including financial) do Wokingham Borough Council have as Landlords (for example repairs etc).
- (b) What the estimated annual costs are of servicing both the borrowing costs, the costs of repairs and administration of these properties.

With these costs taken into account, the net income could be considerably less than £507k a year.

What figures for costs and income were used in the business case that was made for purchasing these three properties?

67.6 None Specific

Carl Doran has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

**Question**

At the Tory party conference, Theresa May said that austerity is over.

Can the Executive Member for Finance tell us whether the austerity refund cheque for the £35.9 million taken from this Council, since 2010, has been received yet?



68.

## **MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND WARD MATTERS**

A period of 20 minutes will be allowed for Members to ask questions in relation to the latest circulated volume of Minutes of Meetings and Ward Matters

69.

## **MOTIONS**

To consider any motions

In accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.11.2 a maximum period of 30 minutes will be allowed for each Motion to be moved, seconded and debated, including dealing with any amendments. At the expiry of the 30-minute period debate will cease immediately, the mover of the Motion or amendment will have the right of reply before the Motion or amendment is put to the vote

69.1      None Specific

### **Motion 412 submitted by Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey**

Wokingham Borough Council requires the correct installation of sprinkler systems in newly built schools and school buildings within Wokingham Borough.

WBC has recognised the importance of sprinklers in schools for many years and a previous motion passed by this Council required a risk assessment to be undertaken, but this opens the way for sprinklers not to be required, and needs to be strengthened.

School fires continue to occur and latest reports suggest they are getting bigger and more costly. The impact of these fires is significant not just in financial terms but also in terms of the devastating effect on the communities they serve, the environment and the disruption to students, teachers and families. The impact on children's education is not confined to lost coursework but often includes longer travelling times, disrupted social groups and poorer facilities. There is an additional effect of interrupting a child's education due to damage to their classrooms which may hinder their learning of essential skills.

There is a misconception that water systems often cause more damage than they prevent, but with modern technology sprinkler fire suppression systems are far smarter and only activate in the areas that require suppression and only for the time that the risk is evident. In respect of Sprinkler Installations Building Regulations, Regulatory Reform orders and insurers are increasingly calling for active fire

suppression systems such as sprinklers as part of the design of new schools. DCSF BB100 sets out a risk assessment methodology which dictates the use of sprinklers in the majority of new school build.

WBC believes if sprinklers were considered at the design stage of new builds, costs could be kept to a minimum. Each year more than 1300 schools in the UK suffer fires large enough to be attended by Fire services, and over half are non-accidental.

Sprinklers reduce the impact of fires in schools on children, and the public by reducing the costs of insurance and of rebuilding, and most importantly by reducing the cost to the child's education and future. For all these reasons this Council supports the installation of sprinklers in all new school buildings and will work cross-party and with Officers to see how this can be best implemented in all new build schools, whoever is the organisation seeking to build a new school.

69.2      None Specific

**Motion 413 submitted by Gary Cowan**

This Council will evaluate its existing policies on trees to ensure its policies are fully open and transparent. The new policy recognises that many trees may be subject to some tree work and it is not practical to consult on all works undertaken. For example pruning works carried out is unlikely to cause significant public concern, however the felling of any trees can be contentious. Felling trees without prior consultation due to health and safety issues is understood but where the felling involves any loss of TPO or protected tree/s for any other reason whatsoever the public must be formally consulted on the proposed works and the reasons why it is necessary.

The Council must maintain proper records of all TPO trees felled. For trees which are to be felled which are protected by TPOs, green routes or those situated in Conservation Areas, or in association with development proposals and planning permissions this Council will put in place a statutory consultation processes and current council policies will be reviewed to reflect these changes as soon as it practicable.

69.3      Emmbrook;  
Evendons;  
Norreys;  
Wescott

**Motion 414 submitted by Prue Bray**

The Constitution commits this Council to ensuring that "the principles of efficiency, transparency and

accountability are demonstrated throughout the decision making process and the delivery of services.”

The Wokingham town centre regeneration project has now been running for some years. It is the largest single project being undertaken by the council. No income and expenditure figures for the project as a whole have been published. Nor has any assessment of progress or variation from the original specification. This makes it extraordinarily difficult for both residents and councillors to find out how the project is going, and means that the council’s constitutional commitment to transparency and accountability is not being observed.

While ongoing spend and future commitments may be difficult to quantify, or may need to be kept confidential for commercial reasons, income and expenditure which has already happened in previous financial years must have been accounted for in the council’s accounts, which have all been properly signed off. In addition, any contracts entered into are required to be published by the Transparency Regulations. This means that all the information relating to past spend on the Wokingham town centre regeneration project should be readily identifiable and available to be pulled together into one document covering the whole project.

Therefore, in order to ensure the transparency and accountability to which it has committed itself, this council will by the end of December 2018 publish a report detailing

- The total income and expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018 on all works associated with the regeneration of Wokingham town centre, including the Market Place joint project with Wokingham Town Council, broken down to show separately the figures for Peach Street phase 1, Peach Place, Elms Field, Carnival Pool, the Market Place and any other subprojects, and, for each project, broken down to the stages of the project, such as design, and construction
- The original budget and timetable for each of those elements
- An explanation of any variances between the original budget and actual income and expenditure and original timetable and actual progress
- The sources of the funding, with the amounts

obtained from each separate source.

69.4 Wescott

**Motion 415 submitted by Rachel Burgess**

This Council opposes the closure of Wokingham's Post Office and its franchising to WH Smith.

Wokingham's Post Office is at the heart of the local community and an important community hub for many residents, particularly the older and more vulnerable. It is part of the historic character of our market town.

This Council is concerned that there was no proper consultation on whether this controversial proposal to franchise the Post Office should take place.

Wokingham's residents are concerned that WH Smith's record for quality of service and queuing times is one of the poorest, and many believe that the retailer will provide a reduced service with longer queues and the provision of inferior advice to customers.

This Council notes that WH Smith currently does not have adequate disabled access.

A number of jobs are at risk of being replaced with minimum wage jobs. Public money will be used to seal the deal in the form of compensation payments to remove existing staff.

This Council will write to the Post Office calling for the abandonment of plans to franchise Wokingham's Post Office to WH Smith and calls on John Redwood MP to write to the Minister for the Post Office to request that this proposal to be abandoned.

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