



# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

A Meeting of the **COUNCIL** will be held in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **THURSDAY 18 JULY 2019 AT 7.30 PM**

Susan Parsonage  
Chief Executive  
Published on 10 July 2019

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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.
15.		<b>APOLOGIES</b> To receive any apologies for absence	
16.		<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b> To confirm the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 22 May 2019.	15 - 28
17.		<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest	
18.		<b>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> To receive any announcements by the Mayor	
19.		<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>	
19.1	Loddon	Alex Davies has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:  <b>Question</b> It is my understanding that the property developer Taylor Wimpey gave, as part of Sandford Farm development, £30,000 towards the repair of the dilapidated footbridge crossing the River Loddon near the development. This access route would open up walking routes to Twyford, Hurst, Dinton Pastures etc. Please can you tell me when this bridge will be overhauled and opened?	

- 19.2 Bulmershe and Whitegates John Walker has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:
- Question**  
Following the cancellation of the East Reading Mass Rapid Transit scheme, the Thames Valley Park "Park and Ride" site would seem to be unnecessary. But there are still construction activities on the site. Would Wokingham Borough Council pause the construction activity on the site in order to consider the use of a trial park and ride service making use of one of the currently unused office car parks on the TVP site; this would make it possible to assess the likely level of take up and whether the Business Case still holds good in the light of the operational costs that were not originally included?
- 19.3 Bulmershe and Whitegates John Mullaney has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:
- Question:**  
In the Full Business Case for the Park and Ride at Broken Brow which was submitted to the Berkshire Local Transport Board (BLTB), there were no operational costs included. This was brought to the attention of the BLTB in a report considered at the meeting of the BLTB at which the business case was approved. The answer to the reason why there were no operational costs was that they would fall to the operator.
- Can it be clarified: Will Wokingham Borough Council have operational responsibilities for the site and what is the operational budget that has been projected for the site and what is the envisaged scope that this budget will cover?
- 19.4 None Specific Alexandra Smith has asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:
- Question**  
In the draft SEND strategy the Council states that it will identify need as early as possible. We have parents here tonight who have been waiting longer than the statutory 20 weeks for a draft plan, and the OFSTED report states that staff shortages are impeding the timely delivery of plans. What steps have the council identified to address this unacceptable situation?
- 19.5 None Specific Tom Mayer has asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

**Question**

Staff shortages and turnover are a recurring issue identified by OFSTED in their report, yet the draft SEND strategy document does not detail how this will be addressed. What are the Council doing to address staff shortages and high turnover?

19.6 None Specific

Annabel Yoxall has asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

**Question:**

All children with special needs require intervention as early as possible in order to achieve the best possible outcome. In the case of ASD, families are waiting in excess of twelve to eighteen months and beyond just to receive an initial assessment. This has a huge negative impact on children's ability to learn and their self-confidence as they fall further behind peers. What is the council doing in order to reduce this waiting time?

19.7 None Specific

Ruth Rae has asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

**Question**

Some parents are having to seek legal aid in order to challenge decisions made by the Council on EHCP requests. This is both costly and stressful for parents. National figures show that the vast majority of appeals are decided against councils. Are the Council using the rejection of SEND provision as a cost-cutting measure?

19.8 None Specific

Marcus McDowell has asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

**Question**

According to the OFSTED report, "several parents described an inequitable system where some access private assessments because of lengthy delays, while others are not able to do this". How does the Council justify discriminating against children from less wealthy backgrounds in this manner?

19.9 None Specific

Juliet Sheratt has asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

**Question**

On the Wokingham Facebook Group, UllaKarin Clark, the Conservative member for Emmbrook, commented that WBC are trying to find a suitable location to build

an additional school for the provision of special needs education. In this comment, she mentioned that funding is an issue. How does the Council prioritise funding for children and young adults with special needs and disabilities when it is able to find £80k to fund a consultation on housing in the Borough?

- 20.** **PETITIONS**  
To receive any petitions which Members or members of the public wish to present.
- 21.** None Specific **PAY POLICY STATEMENT** **29 - 40**  
To consider a recommendation from Personnel Board in relation to the Council's draft Pay Policy Statement for 2019.  
**RECOMMENDATION:** That Council approve the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2019.
- 22.** None Specific **CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION** **41 - 78**  
To consider proposed changes to the Constitution as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group.  
**RECOMMENDATION:** That the following changes to the Constitution as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group be agreed:  
That Council:  
  - 1) agree that the requirement for Licensing and Appeals Sub Committees to be politically balanced be removed.
  - 2) agree the following changes to the Constitution as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group:
    - a) that Section 2.2 Members' Allowances Scheme be amended as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
    - b) that Section 4.2.1.1 Timing and Order of Business [Annual Council] be amended as set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the report;
    - c) that Section 4.4 [Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board] be amended as set out in Appendix 2 to the report;
    - d) that Section 8.4.10 Licensing and

Appeals Sub-Committee Procedure Rules be amended as set out in paragraph 5 of the report;

- e) that Section 12.1.10 [Insurance, Risk and Opportunity Management] be amended as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

**23. None Specific APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBER TO THE THAMES VALLEY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 79 - 82**

To consider which Councillor should be appointed as the substitute Member on the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel (Joint Committee) for the remainder of the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council consider the nominations put forward by the political groups on the Council and decide which Councillor should be appointed as the substitute Member on the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel (Joint Committee) for the remainder of the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

**24. 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

**24.1 Hillside** Pauline Jorgensen has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

**Question**

Thank you for responding to residents' concerns with regards the area of land in my ward known as Area DD, which I have been fighting to protect as natural green space. Is it possible to protect this area for future generations?

**24.2 Arborfield** Gary Cowan has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

**Question**

It was brought to my attention that several trees have just been felled in a protected copse opposite 10/12 Barker Close RG2 9NQ, which is privately owned land. I was very surprised to find out after the trees

were felled that this Council gave permission to a local resident to fell these protected trees on land not in their ownership.

As the ward Member, I was not made aware of this. Also I am not aware of any site visit by the Council yet I have been informed that the permission to cut down these trees was based on a survey which I have never seen and which I would appreciate a copy of.

Can you explain why and if the Council permitted to do allow the felling of protected trees on private land to someone who is not the landowner but a private resident?

24.3      None Specific      Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey has asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:

**Question**

What are we doing for climate emergency: are we planning on putting solar panels on all council buildings including affordable housing and new schools, if not why?

24.4      None Specific      David Hare has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

**Question**

Will Wokingham Borough Council undertake to ensure that every tree that is cut down in the Borough is replaced? Whoever cuts the tree down will replace it with an appropriate number of trees, within the area of Wokingham Borough, within 6 months. The appropriate number being sufficient to replicate the carbon uptake of the cut-down trees within 3 years.

24.5      None Specific      Ian Pittock has asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement the following question:

**Question**

Regarding the housing consultation. I am sure that we all wish there to be as large a response as possible. I understand, with some relief, that responses are flooding in. There has, however, been some noise around concerning the lateness of delivery of letters to residents and other time related issues. Can you please confirm the latest date by which residents can respond to the consultation?



- 24.6 Hillside Caroline Smith has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:
- Question**  
The Earley Residents and Councillors are extremely pleased with the announcement that Area DD will not be developed in the immediate future but what I would like to understand is why the Earley Councillors were not informed before the public announcement and only found out by reading an item in the local papers?
- 24.7 South Lake Laura Blumenthal has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:
- Question**  
I know this Council is working to improve South Lake and its water garden - please can you summarise the work that is on the horizon which my residents can look forward to?
- 24.8 Bulmershe and Whitegates Jenny Cheng has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:
- Question**  
A number of elderly residents have tripped over the uneven paving in Woodley Precinct and broken bones or fallen unconscious. Outside Waitrose and around the trees are the worst areas which has been raised with this Council with photographic proof. An inspection by this Council was carried out recently and a few areas addressed, but not these accident hotspots. Please can you explain what will be done to fix the slabs in these areas and potentially save a life?
- 24.9 None Specific Imogen Shepherd-DuBey has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:
- Question:**  
I have noted that one of our councillors, who left the Council last year, did not get removed as a Non-Executive Director of WBC Holdings until June this year
- Can we have the information on how much money has been paid to ex-councillors, in this way?

- 24.10 None Specific Maria Gee has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:
- Question**  
 Will our Council be joining many other councils across the UK and the Houses of Parliament by flying the rainbow flag on the date of our local Pride celebration, which this year will be 31st August?
- 25. 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
- 26. 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
- 27. STATEMENTS 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.
- 28. 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
- 28.1 None Specific **Motion 416 submitted by Sarah Kerr**  
 Local Authorities have a statutory requirement to

demonstrate their compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equalities Act 2010. This Act requires Local Authorities to consider how their work affects people of different ages, disability, sex, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs, marital status, pregnancy and maternity and gender identity. Everyone that lives in, works and visits Wokingham Borough needs to have confidence that this is being done throughout the Borough. This Council will evidence its compliance with the PSED through undertaking Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA's) when required, and ensure they are included in public reports and are easily accessible on the Council's website. In addition, all newly elected Members will have PSED and EqIA training as part of their induction. Executive Members will also have to undertake PSED and EqIA training.

28.2 None Specific

**Motion 417 submitted by John Halsall**

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) believes the world is now in a climate emergency. More concerted and urgent action is needed at local, national and international level to protect our planet for future generations. As such, this Council commits to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030 and report within six months as to what actions are required.

28.3 None Specific

**Motion 418 submitted by Wayne Smith**

Wokingham Borough Council understands and supports the need to provide homes, as it does the Government's desire to speed up delivery. That is why we are a proactive planning authority, seeking to shape future development through a carefully managed approach, which is enabling the delivery of sustainable, infrastructure rich new communities, including schools, new strategic roads, neighbourhood centres, sports hubs and improved public transport, in addition to 35% affordable housing.

Since 2006, over 8,200 new homes have been provided and outstanding planning permissions are in place to deliver a further 7,000 new homes. In addition, current allocations will deliver a further 2,300 new homes.

Looking at future delivery from now: our housing permissions, allocations and windfalls are capable of

delivering 10,700 homes between 2019 and 2036 (equates to an average of 630pa). This compares with the projected demographic growth of new households of 555pa calculated by the 2014-based ONS projections used by the standard method for calculating local housing need (despite more recent ONS figures in the 2016-based ONS projections demonstrating that this figure is an overestimate; the real growth is more likely to be around 486pa).

The standard method for calculating local housing need is designed to require more homes to be built above that required by demographic growth, which is flawed for Wokingham Borough. Building more homes drives up house prices rather than lowering it because of the 20-30% premium on the cost of new homes. Developers will not build housing for sale at lower prices. Also the focus on workplace earnings fails to recognise that residents travel out of the borough to high value, well paid jobs, and that flexible working with work registered out of the borough, where in reality work is undertaken locally, often at home. The real and necessary response would be to allow us to focus on affordable housing and self-build products, both of which directly help our residents.

The Council supports the Executive to oppose any housing need calculation over and above the demographic growth by whatever means the Executive has at its disposal.

28.4 None Specific

**Motion 419 submitted by Keith Baker**

Recently a major political party has been embroiled in a large number of allegations of statements and speeches which express serious anti-Semitic sentiments. Up until now this had not really emerged locally but recent local newspaper reports have suggested that this area is not immune. Get Reading reported on 22<sup>nd</sup> May that "Reading Labour scraps anti-Semitism training session because of a pro-Palestinian speaker." This was followed up by an article in the Jewish Chronicle on the same day, 22<sup>nd</sup> May expanding this same story.

Nationally the Equality and Human Rights Commission have now opened an investigation into the Labour Party following complaints about anti-Semitism. On 28<sup>th</sup> May they posted "The Equality and Human Rights Commission is today launching a formal investigation to determine whether The Labour Party has unlawfully discriminated against, harassed

or victimised people because they are Jewish.”

I do not envy the Reading Labour Party or any other political party as they wrestle with how to deal with these matters and I wish them well in dealing with anyone who has expressed anti-Semitic views.

I hope all Councillors will put party politics aside and support this motion:

This Council abhors any attack on individual groups, including our Jewish residents and commits to lend support to anyone attempting to drive out such anti-Semitic views from our local political scene regardless of any political allegiance.

### **CONTACT OFFICER**

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