

Shere Parish Council



FULL COUNCIL MINUTES

Thursday 21st March 2024 Tanyard Hall 30 Station Road, Gomshall GU5 9LF

Present: Councillors R Davey (Chairman), M Keeble, P Tompkins, B Harrap, M Taylor-Cotter, T Florent, G Reffo and J Hutton

Surrey County Council (SCC) and Guildford Borough Council (GBC) Councillor B Hughes

Clerk & RFO S Hoyland

Twelve members of the public

23.131 To accept apologies and reasons for absence in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, s 85(1) (LGA 1972) – Shere Parish Council Councillors C Carlisle, B Andrews, R Smith, J Cross and W Esplen. Guildford Borough Council Councillor D Newson

23.132 Approval of the Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on [7th February 2024](#) - Councillor G Reffo raised a point of order on Item 23.125 (b) Peaslake Farm Fields as she believed it contravened 9 (b) of the Council's [Standing Orders](#) that a motion to be voted on was on the agenda. Councillor G Reffo also claimed that the council had breached the Community Engagement Policy and reversed a decision made at a 2016 meeting for a 25-year commitment. The Clerk responded that the Councillor could not argue the minutes from the previous meeting as they had not attended. That the update for Peaslake Farm fields had been moved forward to draft lease phase as councillors present were happy with the Heads of Terms. That there had been no way of knowing that Councillor G Reffo had not attended the Peaslake Community Council or approached residents as she had agreed. **Councillor M Keeble stated that it was agreed in the February meeting to move forward with drafting the lease and that the draft lease could still be discussed and voted on.**

The Minutes were Approved and Signed as a correct Record with the following amendment: Item 23.122 Chairman R Davey and the Clerk replied that SPC does not approve or encourage the use of traffic cones used to save public parking spaces.

23.133 Chair welcomed new parish councillor for South West Ward (Peaslake) following the uncontested election

23.134 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) Declarations by Councillors on any of the agenda items below in accordance with The Localism Act 2011, ss.27-34 and the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012. (SI 2012 No. 1464) – **None** Chair R Davey asked Councillor G Reffo and T Florent to confirm that they did not want to declare an interest on items related to Peaslake Farm – Both Councillors replied no. Chair R Davey asked Councillors G Reffo and T Florent if they believed that living so close to Peaslake Farm could lead a possible perceived interest – Both councillors replied no. Councillor G Reffo asked why this was being raised now as it had not been in the past 10 years. Chair R Davey replied that it was because of the way in which views were gained from the community in a contentious way. Councillor Florent replied that it did not need to be contentious and they had not lobbied and accused the Chair of trying to silence councillors. The Chair said that there was a perceived conflict of Interest and Councillor P Tompkins said that had it been a planning application councillors would have to have declared an interest. Councillors T Florent and G Reffo disagreed and wanted to take the issue further. **Agreed** to take the question of whether

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there is a Pecuniary Interest/perception of a pecuniary interest for Councillors G Reffo and T Florent regarding Peaslake Farm to the Monitoring Officer at Guildford Borough Council.

The Clerk asked why the information regarding the retained land being held for use during the build phase for welfare units etc. had been discouraged by Councillors T Florent and G Reffo when a Peaslake Community Council member was asked to send the information out to members of the Community Council. The majority of the emails received from the public indicated they did not know why the retained land was being kept. The Clerk explained that the land was in the Greenoak lease and could not have been included in any lease with either Friends of the Hurtwood, Surrey Wildlife Trust or Coverwood in the past and the land was due to be returned to the original state after the build phase had been completed. Councillor G Reffo replied it was not relevant and the council had considered leases in the past with the land included and it was often flooded. The Clerk replied that the land could not have been leased until the 2020 contract with Greenoak had been terminated and if used during the build phase a suitable surface would have been installed temporarily and reinstated.

23.135 Brief Report from Surrey County Council (SCC) Councillor on matters from Surrey County Council affecting Shere Parish. SCC Councillor B Hughes reported the following:

- Hardcore had been laid on Felday Road Houses & Allotment Gardens – this was being investigated
- Thanked the Parish Council for the work to remove the tree in the stream in Gomshall to help with the flooding. Now discovered that roots had damaged the culvert under the road and it was SCC responsibility. The temporary wall was also preventing flooding but would need replacing in the near future
- Pursers Lane Flooding – there was a scheme in place years ago and that needed to be put in place and there was meeting with Highway Engineers next week. A member of the public said that the flooding was so bad her neighbour couldn't leave her property on foot.
- He was aware of an issue in Peaslake where walkers and cyclists were not getting into the Walking Bottom car park
- The £100,000 fund had been used, including disabled access to Shere Village Hall and the Old School Room in Peaslake. Money had also gone towards the renovations at Holmbury St Mary Village Hall
- Goose Green to Queen Street had been left out of the recent speed reductions but these should be done in the next year
- The VAS (vehicle activated sign) on the A25 may need to be put back further before traffic enters Gomshall but Highways will liaise with Parish Council
- The yellow lines on the bend in Gomshall are still being progressed

23.136 Brief Report from Guildford Borough Council (GBC) Councillors on matters from Guildford Borough Council affecting Shere Parish – Councillor D Newson gave her apologies

23.137 Questions or requests from members of the public to the Council in relation to the business on the agenda or future items for discussion. The majority of the members of public were in attendance regarding Peaslake Farm Fields – [Councillor M Keeble made a statement](#) ahead of any comments and continued to say:

- Need to restore trust as there is a common agenda to protect the fields and not build on them
- The lease had been drafted by Coverwood in good faith and could not have included the retained land as it was already in the Greenoak contract at that time
- There is no hidden agenda and the statement above covers the concerns over the retained land and break clause.

Chair R Davey confirmed that the council still wanted affordable housing on the farmyard but GBC controlled the number of parking spaces per property. The fields lease allowed for residents to ask

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for the 10metre strip to be used for overflow car parking if request was made to the Parish Council. Councillor G Reffo asked that residents could only ask for that via a public consultation and to listen to feedback from the community.

A member of the public asked that as much information as possible is shared. The Clerk replied that all non-confidential information is shared but better use would be made of the Peaslake Farm page on the website.

T Metson of Coverwood Farm acknowledged that the lease was a first draft and was balanced for the community. As long as farming was diligent there would be no demand to break the lease. The land was to be used for agriculture and fodder.

There were the following questions from members of the Public:

- Where was the retained land? - **A.** It is within the community garden area
- If used for the building phase or flood attenuation works, who will reinstate it? – **A.** the builders will reinstate back to the original condition and it will be specified in the contract.
- Access to the strip/community garden – **A.** not been discussed yet
- Who is allowed access to the community garden? – **A.** Not open to the public, most likely register an interest and get access
- Give maximum approach to transparency in the public domain. Can they have a redacted copy of the lease? – **A.** Councillor M Keeble replied If the draft lease is sent out too early, there would be too many emails and no time to carry out the work. The lease can be shared if agreed by Coverwood Farm.

T Metson replied that the lease would include the area for the community garden, specify no parties or late access, stipulate a time period for the community to put together a proposal and will layout the details of the [break clause and strip](#).

All but two members of the public left the meeting

23.138 Pursers Lane flooding – update from Surrey County Council regarding the persistent flooding – Discussed above during item **23.135 Brief Report from Surrey County Council (SCC) Councillor**

23.139 Changes to [website](#) – a brief explanation of the changes by the Clerk – **Postponed**

23.140 Finance matters

- a) **Approved** Lloyds income of £51,485.09 and Lloyd's expenditure of £75,379.31 for February 2024 ([Appendix 1](#) – Nationwide, Unity Trust & Boom Included to show transfers)
- b) **Approved** of Lloyds Credit Card cashbook transfer of £352.82 and expenditure of £170.41 for February 2024 ([Appendix 2](#))
- c) **Noted** bank reconciliations and statement balances (including credit card) for month February 2024 ([Appendix 3](#))
- d) **Noted** [income and expenditure against budget](#) and [earmarked reserves](#) to end of February 2024 ([Appendix 4](#)). It was **Noted** that some bills were expected for Parish Maintenance and the Earmarked Reserves had been severely reduced by the Peaslake Play tower and Shere Car Park repairs. General Reserves were now at the lower level of acceptable.
- e) **Noted** VAT expenditure for February 2024 ([Appendix 5](#))
- f) **Noted** receipt of Insurance Claim payment for the Gomshall Bus Shelter of £7,105, which was the full amount of the claim for a new bus shelter by Rob Arrow, less £125 excess
- g) **Ratified** £416.05 ex. VAT from EMR Tanyard Hall Long Term Maintenance¹ for replacement emergency lighting and **Agreed** use of EMR until the end of the financial year.
- h) [Surrey County Playing Fields Association](#) – **Agreed** [membership £10](#)
- i) Earmarked Reserves (EMR) 2024/25 – **Agreed** figures for the forthcoming financial year ([appendix 6](#)) and any income over expenditure for the drop-in and village larder should be transferred to each relevant EMR

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- j) Peaslake Village Hall extension – **Agreed** [request from the hall committee](#) to carry over the pledge to the next financial year
- k) Shere car park driving surface repairs – **Noted** completion, payment of invoice and grant aid claimed and received £10,307 29.2.2024. It was also **Noted** that there had been compliments on the new surface

23.141 To consider the following items and agree resolutions where appropriate:

- a) Peaslake Farmyard Development – **Noted** Greenoak Housing Association Termination of Contract and to consider next moves. **Agreed** that Shere Parish Council still wanted affordable housing on the site and Councillors M Keeble, R Davey and the Clerk to contact English Rural, who had been second to Greenoak to see if they are interested in the project. It was also **Agreed** to speak to Surrey Community Action who Greenoak had made contact with. It was **Noted** to take into account the correct procurement procedure and potential flood risk, as increased rainfall was expected in the future. It was also **Noted** that it may not be possible to build the housing in the same way and may be uneconomic to develop. **Agreed** to purchase the gates for £550 from M Nicholson to keep the site secured.
- b) [Shere Directional Sign](#) – to consider Placemaking suggestion – **Not Agreed**
- c) Bin Emptying – to consider the GBC charging and alternate options – SCC & GBC Councillor B Hughes offered to chase the meeting with GBC Councillor George Potter. Councillor M Keeble offered a trial of emptying the Shere Recreation Ground and car park bins into the commercial waste bin – Shere Village Hall was thanked and the offer accepted and **Agreed**. Also **Agreed** the [attached schedule](#) pending site visit. SCC & GBC Councillor B Hughes asked to check the maximum size of bin to allow for a larger bin in Pond Lane carpark to reduce collections.
- d) The Skudges behind Peaslake Play Area to consider [Land letting Agreement](#), [School Risk Assessment](#), [tree works £850 ex VATⁱⁱ](#) and [liability](#) for use of the area by Peaslake School for a forest school following further site meeting with councillors. A further site visit took place by Assistant Clerk and Councillor M Keeble. An oak tree had landed in the circle of logs the children were using when forest school took place. It was considered an unlooked after area and not safe to use without significant immediate cost and ongoing costs the council cannot afford at present. It was Recommended that additional signage and fencing was put up to discourage access. **Not Agreed** to allowed school to use the area as a forest school subject to final conversation with school by Councillor G Reffo.
- e) Holmbury St Mary Football Pitch and Pavilion – **Noted** communication with the administrator and solicitor that there was a moratorium on surrendering the lease was in place. **Agreed** to wait until September to see if the rent is paid. Maintenance should be done and paid for my Belmont School.
- f) Speeding on Ewhurst Road – to consider writing to the Duke of Kent asking they remind parents to keep to the speed limit – Councillor M Keeble offered to talk to the Bursar at the school and SCC & GBC B Hughes **Agreed** to look into the speed signage as it was not consistent

23.142 **Shere Car Park Charging Working Group** – [Received and Approved minutes](#) and **Agreed** the recommendations listed with a minor change of a full review after three months rather than six months. Signing of the Contract with Anchor **Delegated** to Shere Car Park Charging Working Group and the Clerk.

23.143 **Agreed the following Policies for readoption with a 20% increase on the filming fees:**

- a) [A Boards](#)
- b) [Freedom of Information Policy](#)
- c) [Freedom of Information Model Publication Scheme](#)
- d) [Filming Policy](#)
- e) [Co-option Policy](#)
- f) [Council Representation on Outside Bodies](#)

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- g) [Community Engagement](#)
- h) [Media and Communications Policy](#)

23.144 Police Matters - to consider any matters that need to be brought to the attention of the Police – It was **Noted** that there had been 4 break-ins on Upper Street and Middle Street, Shere and 1 in Peaslake. Councillor B Harrap had been told more patrols had been taking place – **Agreed** to put it on social media. Councillor J Hutton reported that the suspects for the fire at Tower Hill were still on bail and there was a more visible presence of police patrols in the area.

23.145 Date of next meeting: Annual Parish Meeting, with guest speaker and refreshments - 8pm Thursday 11th April 2024 at Tanyard Hall 30 Station Road, Gomshall GU5 9LF - Noted

23.146 Exclusion of the Public and Press (Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960) – Excluded the public and press for the following item of business because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

23.147 Peaslake Farm Fields – Considered draft lease for fields. Details of the draft lease were **Agreed** and will be conveyed to the potential lessee. These details took into account the 10metre strip and break clause discussed earlier in the agenda.

Meeting Closed 10.15pm

ⁱ Local Gov (Misc. Provisions) Act 1976 s19

ⁱⁱ Public Health Act 1875 s 164; Local Govt Act 1972 Sched 14 para 27; Public Health Acts: Amendment Act 1890 s 44; Open Spaces Act 1906 s 9 & 10