

WOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Wotton Parish Council held at 7pm on Tuesday 9 January 2024 in Wotton Village Hall

Present: Councillors Laurence Matthews, David Mir, Daniel Bennett and Janet Hunt.
(Cllr Matthews agreed to act as Chairman for the meeting)

In Attendance: Cllrs Hazel Watson (SCC), Leah Mursaleen-Plank (MVDC), Gary Burgess,
two members of the public and Clerk

- 1 **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Peter Evelyn, Andy Cole, Steve Hackett, MVDC
Cllr Budleigh
- 2 **Declarations of interest relating to matters on this agenda:** Cllr Matthews
declared an interest in planning application MO/2023/1960 Coast Hill Farm.
- 3 **Public questions:** None.
- 4 **Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 October 2023:** Cllr Bennett pointed out that
'Peters Wood' at item 9 on page 2 of the draft minutes should be changed to
Walpoles. This was agreed and the amendment made. The Minutes were
proposed for acceptance by Cllr Mir, seconded by Cllr Bennett, agreed by all and
signed by Cllr Matthews.
- 5 **Police Report:** (Annex 1) It was noted that the report contained more details
than usual which was helpful. Councillors noted two reports of incidents at a
property within the Parish. A serious situation had developed between two
residents and there had been witnesses to these incidents. Due to the level of
concern expressed, the matter would be reported to relevant external
organisations.
- 6 **Planning:** (Annex 2) Applications and decisions were noted.
 - (i) Decisions received since last meeting: MO/2023/1004 Vale Close-
Approved; MO/2023/0873 Stephan Langton Inn - Approved;
MO2023/1395 Leith Hill Place – Approved; MO/2023/1602 Ranmore
Court – Approved. Decisions received since last meeting: MO/2023/1004
Vale Close- Approved; MO/2023/0873 Stephan Langton Inn - Approved;
MO2023/1395 Leith Hill Place – Approved; MO/2023/1602 Ranmore
Court – Approved.
 - (ii) Applications received/ awaiting decision: MO/2023/1780 Mandrakes;
MO/2023/1606 Wotton House; MO/2023/1955 15 Sheephouse Green;
MO/2023/1960 Coast Hill Farm.
- 7 **Highways:** Cllr Bennett asked about white blobs of paint in the middle of Hollow
Lane near the turning to Brickyard Cottages. The original white lines had faded
away and when Thames Water re-sited a dangerous manhole cover they
reinstated a short area of white lining in the middle of the road.

Signed

The re-siting of the manhole cover had been carried out speedily following a report by Cllr Watson. Cllr Matthews suggested writing to Highways asking for reinstatement of the faded white line along its original length. Cllr Watson said she would chase this up, although it may take some time for the work to be done as several other locations would be scheduled for white lining on the same day. Cllr Watson had also asked about work needed on Leith Hill Road. Cllr Matthews said it was very important for safety reasons given the speed of traffic and narrowness of the road in places. The Clerk was asked to write to Highways.

8 Reports:

(i) SCC Cllr Hazel Watson said she had nothing specific to report and was happy to answer any questions. She had given the Clerk a printed copy of the Highways Guide for Parish Councils and said the SCC website is also very helpful. Cllr Matthews said there was a lot of pressure on Wotton's roads which are frequently used by motorists as a cut-through and this created extra potholes.

SCC Highways is on the agenda for the online SALC Councillors Forum on 17 January at 7.30pm. Michelle Collins from SCC Highways Operations and Infrastructure will speak about the new Highways Guide. It was suggested that Cllr Mir and Cllr Cole attend this.

(ii) MVDC Cllr Leah Mursaleen-Plank said the main update is on the Local Plan which has been on hold. The National Planning Policy Framework has now come out, but it is understood MVDC may not be able to use the new framework as regards the district's green belt. There will be an Extraordinary Council Meeting on 20 January to discuss this.

Cllr Mursaleen-Plank had updated the Parish Council previously regarding the possibility of Dorking getting a banking hub in the wake of all the banks closing their branches in the town. The Nationwide is considering withdrawing from the Link system used by banking hubs and this change in criteria may leave the way open for a banking hub in Dorking.

(iii) Parish Clerk:

(i) Following discussions at the October meeting, the Clerk asked if the Council wanted to purchase any litter picking equipment. Long-handled litter pickers cost about £11 each. Cllr Matthews said this was a good idea. Cllr Bennett agreed and asked where the full bags of litter would be stored before collection. The Clerk said arrangements can be made with MVDC for collection of several bags when a group litter-pick is organised. If there are only one or two bags collected by individuals from time to time, these can be put out for the fortnightly black bin collection or taken to the tip at Ranmore. After further discussion, Councillors agreed to the purchase of ten long handled litter pickers. Mr Burgess asked about the implications for the Council in providing the equipment. The Clerk said the Parish Council has public insurance.

(ii) Old Parish Council documents had been received from Cllr Hackett and were being sorted through to see what could be disposed of. The Council has a Document Retention Policy which sets out how long documents must be retained before disposal. Financial records, legal documents, and minutes of meetings must be kept permanently. Minutes can be lodged at the county records office, now called the History Centre, in Woking.

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Other documents that must be kept permanently can be re-stored in the Village Hall. Some minutes and accounts are still missing and may still be stored in the Village Hall. Cllr Matthews suggested the Clerk liaise with Cllr Hunt to retrieve these documents.

(iii) The Clerk asked if the Parish Council still owns and is responsible for maintenance of the red telephone kiosk at Broadmoor. This is used for community information and a book exchange. According to a document recently received, the telephone kiosk was purchased by the Parish Council in 2017 for £1. If the Parish Council still owns it, it should be listed on the register of assets and the insurance schedule. Cllr Matthews said he believes the residents of Broadmoor look after the kiosk but it is still owned by the Parish Council.

(iv) A licence from the National Trust for land adjacent to 1 Yew Tree Cottages at Ranmore had been found in documents recently received. The Clerk was unclear who owns the defibrillator and who is responsible for its upkeep. If the Parish Council owns it, it should be listed on the register of assets and the insurance schedule. Cllr Matthews said he believes Cllr Cole pays for the power to the defibrillator cabinet and may know who is responsible for defibrillator maintenance. He asked about ongoing costs of keeping a defibrillator ready for use and the Clerk said the battery and the pads have to be replaced at certain intervals and the battery is expensive. The defibrillator has to be registered with the ambulance service.

(v) There is still one vacancy on the Parish Council. However, Mr Gary Burgess was in attendance and indicated his willingness to be co-opted back onto the Council. This will be on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the Council on 7 May.

9 Finance:

- (i) Councillors were asked to agree the draft budget for 2024-2025. Cllr Matthews asked for approval of a pay increase for the clerk in accordance with the NALC pay scales issued November 2023 and this was agreed. The budget headings were considered and a small increase for insurance was agreed. The budget was then approved by all and signed by Cllr Matthews. Cllr Matthews noted the bank balance and suggested it was higher than necessary. The Clerk agreed and said this was because no extra expenditure had been made in the current year. The internal auditor had previously suggested the Council should have a projected spending plan in place.
- (ii) Cllr Mir proposed that the Precept should remain the same as the previous two years at £7,264, Cllr Bennett seconded the proposal, and all agreed. Cllr Matthews and Cllr Hunt signed the Precept Request Form to be sent to Mole Valley District Council.
- (iii) The payments (Annex 3) were proposed by Cllr Mir, seconded by Cllr Bennett and agreed by all. The list was signed by Cllr Matthews and Cllr Hunt.
- (iv) The bank statements were signed by Cllr Matthews and Cllr Hunt.

Signed

10 **Correspondence:**

- (i) Police Engagement online event on 17 January at 6-7pm. Cllr Mir agreed to attend this.
- (ii) SALC Councillors Forum online on 17 January at 7.30pm. Cllr Mir agreed to attend this and it was suggested that Cllr Cole also attend.
- (iii) Minutes of MVDC/Clerks meeting on 6 December.
- (iv) SALC December Newsletter.
- (v) SCC Surrey Matters, with link for residents to have their say on SCC Budget.
- (vi) SALC email re Government proposals for devolution in Surrey.
- (vii)** Email from Paul Cleaver re revival of Wotton & Abinger flower show. Cllr Bennett and Cllr Hunt have replied to Mr Cleaver expressing interest.

11 **Annual Residents Meeting on 5 March 2024:** There was a discussion about who to invite to speak at the Residents Meeting on 5 March. The Clerk said the Police Borough Commander for Mole Valley, James Green, had attended a MVDC/Clerks meeting several months ago and offered to attend parish council meetings and residents meetings. It was agreed that he should be invited to the Residents Meeting. Cllr Matthews asked Cllr Mursaleen-Plank if she could attend. She was not sure of her availability on 5 March, but said she would ask one of her colleague to attend in her place. SCC Cllr Hazel Watson said she would not be available to attend owing to a previous commitment. It was suggested that Mr Paul Cleaver be invited to speak about the Flower Show.

12 **Dates of meetings 2024-2025:** Cllr Matthews read out the dates and asked everyone to put them in their diaries.

2024

Parish Council Meeting	9 January
Residents Annual Parish Meeting	5 March
Annual Parish Council Meeting	7 May
Parish Council Meeting	2 July
Parish Council Meeting	1 October

2025

Parish Council Meeting	7 January
Residents Annual Parish Meeting	4 March
Annual Parish Council Meeting	6 May
Parish Council Meeting	1 July
Parish Council Meeting	7 October

13 **Any other business for note or inclusion on a future agenda:** The Clerk said it would be very useful to have the internet installed in the Village Hall as this would enable documents to be accessed on the laptop during meetings. There would then be the option of purchasing a projector and screen so that documents could be displayed in large format during meetings for everyone to see and would save printing most documents. Cllr Matthews said the Village Hall Committee would need to agree to installation of the internet. SCC Cllr Hazel Watson said finance might be provided for this through Your Fund Surrey Small Community Funding. This offers funding of between £1,000 and £5,000. Alternatively, if that fund is not able to assist, the Parish Council could apply to Cllr Watson for funding as County Councillors have a small fund to help parishes with projects.

She suggested the Clerk obtain further information and costings. Cllr Matthews said this could be on the agenda for the next meeting. The Clerk said she would make enquiries and get some costings.

Cllr Matthews thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.20pm.

Signed

Date

ANNEX 1

POLICE REPORT

Wotton Parish Council Meeting 3rd Oct 2023 – 9th Jan 2024

Wotton / Ranmore Common

Suspicious Activity	William Evelyn Co Urt	Banging noises coming from outside. No sign of workmen. No further reports.
Traffic	Guildford Rd	Tree Down near Wotton Hatch Hotel. SCC Highways Dealing.
Suspicious Activity	Ranmore Common Rd	Vehicle pulled over and occupants asked woman questions about her dog. Police aware of vehicle details for patrols. Crime report completed.
Traffic	Ranmore Common Rd	Tree down blocking road. SCC Highways Dealing.
Traffic	Ranmore Common Rd	Vehicle in ditch with hazard lights on. Awaited recovery service.
Traffic	Hollow Lane	Vehicle involved in a crash. No known injuries.
Traffic	William Evelyn Court	Collision where damage occurred to park car.
Traffic	Guildford Road	Driver with gear box issues on his vehicle blocking road. Large queue behind.
Traffic	Hollow Lane	Stop check on vehicle. S59 issued. Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 refers to vehicles being used in a manner which

		causes alarm, distress, or annoyance.
Domestic	Guildford Rd	Alteration fuelled by alcohol. Crime report completed.
Suspicious Activity	Guildford Rd	Report of abandoned vehicle in pub car park. No further reports.
Traffic	Ranmore Common Rd	Tree came down nearly hitting van and blocking road.

END

ANNEX 2

PLANNING MATTERS NOTIFIED BY MVDC SINCE 3 OCTOBER 2023

DECISIONS:

Application No.: MO/2023/1004/PLAH

[Link](#)

Location: Vale Close, Balchins Lane, Westcott, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 3LP
Proposal: Infill central yard with single storey extension with skylights; add new dormer to inside elevation to form bedroom in roof space; add new porch to west elevation plus replacement windows and doors.

Decision: **APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS**

Decision Date: 13-Oct-2023

Ward: Mickleham, Westcott and Okewood **Parish:** Wotton

Application No.: MO/2023/0873/CU

[Link](#)

Location: Stephen Langton Inn (PH), Friday Street Road, Abinger, RH5 6JR
Proposal: Change of use from public house (Use Class Sui Generis) to residential dwelling (Use Class C3).

Decision: **APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS**

Decision Date: 27-Oct-2023

Ward: Mickleham, Westcott and Okewood **Parish:** Wotton

Application No.: MO/2023/1395/LBC

[Link](#)

Location: Leith Hill Place, Leith Hill Lane, Holmbury St Mary, Dorking, RH5 6LY
Proposal: Taking down to roof level and reconstruction of two East chimney stacks, which were found to be unstable and considered dangerous. (Application for Listed Building Consent)

Decision: **APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS**

Decision Date: 07-Nov-2023

Ward: Mickleham, Westcott and Okewood **Parish:** Wotton

APPLICATIONS:

Application Ref: MO/2023/1602/PCL **APPROVED 29.12.23**
[Link](#)

Location: **Ranmore Court**, Hogden Lane, Ranmore Common, RH5 6SY
Proposal: Certificate of Lawfulness for the proposed development in respect of the installation of solar panels.

Case Officer: Sue Read
Registration Date: **06-Nov-2023**
Applicant Name: Mr James Tarbuck
Ward: Mickleham, Westcott and Okewood **PSH/Area: Wotton**

Application Ref: MO/2023/1780/PLAH
[Link](#)

Location: **Mandrakes**, Tillingbourne, Wotton, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 6JY
Proposal: Erection of a two storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory, erection of a front porch following demolition of existing.

Case Officer: Helen Clarke
Registration Date: **20-Nov-2023**
Applicant Name: Mary Prentice
Ward: Mickleham, Westcott and Okewood **PSH/Area: Wotton**

Application Ref: MO/2023/1606/LBC
[Link](#)

Location: **Wotton House**, Guildford Road, Wotton, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 6HS
Proposal: Removal of bell towers in the courtyard of building to restore and re-construction in same position. Repairs to the Chapel gable roof.

Case Officer: Aidan Gardner
Registration Date: 08-Dec-2023
Applicant Name: Mr Stevie Masterson, Wotton House Properties Opco Ltd.
Ward: Mickleham, Westcott and Okewood **PSH/Area: Wotton**

Application Ref: MO/2023/1955/CC
[Link](#)

Location: **15, Sheephouse Green**, Wotton, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 6QW
Proposal: Variation of condition 2 of approved planning permission MO/2022/2030 for the erection of a single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory, to allow a change of roof design from pitched to flat roof behind parapet.

Case Officer: Sue James
Registration Date: 21-Dec-2023
Applicant Name: Mr Graeme Allan
Ward: Mickleham, Westcott and Okewood **PSH/Area: Wotton**

Application Ref: MO/2023/1960/DEA
[Link](#)

Location: **Coast Hill Farm**, Sheephouse Lane, Wotton, Dorking, RH5 6QH
Proposal: Prior notification for the proposed engineering works to create 2 No. silage clamps measuring 40 metres x 16 metres.

Case Officer: Aidan Gardner
Registration Date: 22-Dec-2023
Applicant Name: Mr Laurence Matthews
Ward: Mickleham, Westcott and Okewood **PSH/Area: Wotton**

ANNEX 3

Bank Balances, Receipts and Payments

Unity Trust Bank Account

Bank Balance at 31 Oct 2023	8,118.49
Less: Payments (1 Nov – 31 Dec)	894.00
Add: Receipts (VAT refund 8 Nov)	129.63
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Bank Balance at 31 Dec 2023	7,354.12
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Payments 9 January 2024

		VAT
Hall Hire Inv WVH151 (9 Jan)	30.00	
SCA payroll Inv 7007 (Jul-Sep)	18.00	3.00
payroll Inv 7109 (Oct-Dec)	18.00	3.00
Helpdesq:		
Inv 14552 (create new user a/c)	40.50	6.75
Inv 14807 (create new email groups)	27.00	4.50
Inv 15201 (MS365 business - annual)	151.34	25.22
Viking Inv 3452808 (printer toner)	85.58	14.26
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	370.42	56.73 VAT reclaimable
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Signed *Laurence Matthews*

Signed *Janet Hunt*

Date: 9 January 2024