
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

20th January 2025 at 7pm in Midgham Village Hall

This meeting was conducted strictly in accordance with Standing Orders as adopted by Council in May 2021. All Councillors are reminded to acquaint themselves with these Standing Orders.

District Councillor: Chris Read

Councillors: Anthony Fenn (Chair), Francis Long (Vice Chair), Nigel Bassford, Tracey Leadbeater, Ben Holden-Crowther

1. To receive apologies

Cllr Adams

2. To receive any declarations of interest

Cllr Long as landowner of the Hounds and Bounds application.

3. Council co-option

An application form for Ben Holden-Crowther was received by councillors, who were particularly keen for Mr Holden-Crowther's assistance with streamlining the parish council website. Cllr Bassford proposed Mr Holden-Crowther to be co-opted as a councillor, this was seconded by Cllr Long. Mr Holden-Crowther was invited to join the meeting as a councillor. ACITON – Clerk to contact West Berks Council with Mr Holden-Crowther's acceptance of office and declaration of interest forms.

4. To receive and approve the minutes of the last meeting of the council

Minutes were approved and signed for records.

5. To receive the District Councillors Report

District Cllr Read circulated his report to councillors prior to the meeting; a link will be posted to the parish council website.

MIDGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

C/o 2 Old Orchard, Upper Woolhampton, RG7 5TE

Email: clerk@midghamparish.co.uk

Tel: 07896 321 058

6. To receive the Clerks report

	Payments	Receipts	Balance
Balance as at 18th November 2024			£ 26,548.32
Income			
Interest received		£ 41.32	
Payments			
Salary Nov Dec Jan	714.30		
	£714.30	41.32	
Balance as at 20/1/25			£ 25,875.34

7. To receive/review any Planning Applications

7.1 Awaiting decision from West Berks Planning

- **22/02912/FORMB** – Land at Church View Farm - Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 to install or keep installed an electric line above ground. It is proposed that 2 spans of existing HV overhead line are to be upgraded to 3 phase with the addition of a third wire. – **PC have no objections**
- **23/01981/FUL**- Former Ryders Yard, Colthrop Lane - Change of use of existing truck and trailer hire fleet, maintenance and storage depot to provide flexible uses within Class E(g)(i), (ii) and (iii), B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order. **PC Objected due to lighting levels**
- **23/02096/LBC** - Part two-storey part, single-storey replacement extension to existing dwelling. Terrace doors in existing modified window opening –**NO OBJECTIONS**
- **24/01998/FULMAJ** - Land South Of School Hill and West Of, Midgham Green, Midgham, Reading – TO BE RE-DISCUSSED WITHOUT PREDETERMINED VIEWS –

The owner of Hounds and Bounds attended the meeting to address the meeting regarding the proposed site. A maximum number of 6 dogs can attend a single session, there has never been a noise complaint about any of the facilities. Users are given an access code, and only those with a booking can use the field. Individuals

use the field for a variety of reasons; health reasons for dog owners, health reasons for dogs etc. The company is in need of another West Berkshire site for local users.

Chair Fenn asked the owner how the number of cars at the site are kept at a maximum of three; there is an element of trust expected and spot checks are carried out.

Members of public have concerns that there isn't a local need for the site, and that there will be an increase of traffic from outside the area.

A member of the public also had concerns about dogs' barking noise levels.

Cllr Bassford asked about the cost to use the site; this is £14/hour.

A member of the public attended to express an appreciation for the fields in other areas and has found them very beneficial following medical problems.

Chair Fenn asked about other sites and levels of objections; the owner of Hounds and Bounds reported that these were minimal.

Chair Fenn asked about the client base; the owner of Hounds and Bounds explained that there was a client base in Midgham, Woolhampton, Chapel Row and Thatcham.

A member of the public who owns land adjacent to the field has concerns about the return of Nightingales to the East of the site, and newts to the West of the site; he has concerns that there hasn't been consultation with neighbours to assess the ecological impact to the area. The owner of Hounds and Bounds reported that ecological assessments had taken place for the field and that there was no evidence of newts.

A member of the public raised concerns that the opening hours are 8am-4pm in the winter, and in the summer 7am-9pm – she feels this is every daylight hour being open to disturbance.

The owner highlighted that many concerns were could/should/would happen, the business has eight years' experience and has no evidence of disturbance to local area.

Chair Fenn asked District Cllr Read to explain to members of the public how the process will happen going forward. The planning application will go to Committee due to the level of objections; District Cllr Read has already declared an interest as a supporter of rural business. If the application is refused, then the applicant has a right to appeal. Chair Fenn suggested that the group appointed a single member of the group to attend the meeting.

On behalf of Midgham Parish Council, Chair Fenn thanked the representative from Hounds and Bounds for attending the meeting.

A vote took place; there were two objectors, and two in support. The Chair therefore had the deciding vote; based upon the number of objectors at the meeting, Chair Fenn agreed that the parish council would record a view of objection to the application. ACTION – Clerk to email planning officers to change stance to objection.

8. Village Hall Matters

The Treasurer reported that planning permission had been granted to replace the roof of the Village Hall. There are ongoing repair issues with the floor. There is also an ongoing need for improved parking at the village hall.

The Coach and Horses is on the market; there was a suggestion that the pub should be considered for community ownership.

9. Other matters the Chairman feels necessary

Pedestrian access at the junction with the Bath Road

District Cllr Read has made contact to ascertain whether curbs can be dropped to improve pedestrian crossing. He will then lobby the council for CIL money to fund the project.

Lorry Parking in Woolhampton

There is unlicensed trading taking place at the old Sun Garage site and in the field at the bottom of Cods Hill. This issue has been raised with the Police and Crime Commissioner and Olivia Bailey MP.

KC Opinion for NE Thatcham Development

Bucklebury PC voted not to get a KC's opinion. Thatcham Town Council will vote tomorrow (21/1/25) to decide whether a KC should be engaged. District Councillor Read believes it is important to consider an independent legal opinion and will lobby individuals for donations to the fund.

10. To determine dates for the next meeting

10th March at 7pm

11. To record the meeting closed

2022