

## Watermead Parish Council Meeting

Thursday 16 March 2023 at 7.30pm

Held at the Village Hall, Watermead

Attendees: Cllr Severn (Chair), Cllr A Schwab, Cllr M Singleton, Cllr D Forder  
Cllr M Morgan, Cllr A Bond

BC Cllr Diana Blamires, BC Cllr Peter Cooper, Noreen Shardlow (Clerk)

plus, members of the public Graham Severn, Karen Collett, Kelvin Wong, Miya Wong, Pri Main, Anwar Choudhury, Muhammed Muzzammal, Simon Forrest, Libby Rose, Eric Rose & Mr & Mrs Messinger

### 22.74 Apologies

Cllr I Schwab

Michelle Jackson – the PC extended its sympathies on the loss of her father.

### 22.75 Declarations of Interest

To declare any personal or prejudicial interests regarding the agenda - Cllr Bond on any items relating to Planning, the Community Board or Buckinghamshire Council.

### 22.76 To Receive Police Report re Protection of Persons & Property

Our Local Neighbourhood Policing Team now intends to attend Parish Council meetings. We are scheduled for attendance May/July 2023 meeting.

Watermead Hotel Residents' concerns discussed in the Open Forum

#### Report received from PCSO Megan Dean

Watermead Crime Figures between 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2023 & the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2023

During this time frame, there were 2 crimes of note for the Watermead area, and these are as follows:

1 x Criminal Damage.

1 x Theft From Motor Vehicle.

The Neighbourhood Team will be focusing on the Crematorium/Lake area over the coming months as historically, we see an increase in Anti-Social Behaviour around these areas during the warmer weather.

We will also be arranging a Have Your Say event in the Piazza. The time and date for these to be confirmed.

### 22.77 Open Forum for Parishioners at 7.40pm – 8.10pm followed by the Council Meeting

Simon Forrest wished to raise a matter which he had first raised with the PC in July of last year querying why a £3.5k contract was awarded without any other quotes being sought, which is a legal requirement. All contracts over £3k have to go out to tender before being awarded. He had written to the PC to enquire why the PC had decided to ignore these legally binding regulations. In addition, no vote was taken about the contract award and the decision to ignore the rules wasn't even recorded. Again very serious breaches of the Local Government Act. He was aware that at least one Cllr he knew of did flag this as a potential problem after the meeting but his concerns were batted away. Original letter was finally discussed at the October meeting but the explanation given that the PC did not have the time to obtain other quotes for an event which had been agreed 4 months earlier simply does not cut the mustard. Mr Forrest responded to the meeting by requesting a minuted apology for the deliberate breach of the regulations and secondly an undertaking that this would never ever happen again. He did not believe this to be an unreasonable request but it was ignored and he therefore assumed that the PC has decided they didn't do anything wrong and more worryingly are ready to do it again, awarding high value

contracts without putting it out to tender. However the PC has the opportunity to put this right tonight by apologising for a) deliberately breaking the procurement regulations and b) for not recording the issue as a regulations state in the minutes and c) to assure the parishioners that this cavalier breaking of local government act regulations will never ever happen again. These should all be minuted tonight and an apology given.

The Chair responded by saying that Mr Forrest's speech would be included in the minutes and that responses had already been given to Mr Forrest and Dr Rose on this matter and the PC had explained itself to both in full. Dr Rose was a Cllr at the time the PC took this decision and he did not say anything at the meeting. A matter could not be revisited once a decision had been made by the PC. The PC does not believe it did anything wrong and it did explain in detail why a quote had not been sought earlier - the death of Noreen's mother which had meant she was not at work for several months and by the time she did return to work there was very little time for which the Chair apologised. However all the PC has done is provide the best it could using the resources it could find at the time in order to provide something nice for parishioners in Watermead. The Chair was not going to apologise for wanting to provide something lovely for people and if Mr Forrest believes the PC had done something deliberately to breach regulations and effectively broken the law, then she suggested he discuss with the Monitoring Officer.

Mr Forest responded by saying you that you have deliberately broke the rules.

Cllr Schwab also responded to say that Mr Forrest was making accusations and that the PC had not broken the law and that Mr Forrest has been responded to and that he should follow the correct process and take the matter to the Monitoring Officer. Cllr Schwab reiterated that we have not broken the law and added that Mr Forrest was making allegations that were unfounded. Again, it was repeated that Mr Forrest should follow the correct process, why come in here and make allegations that are unfounded. Cllr Schwab confirmed that this is his response.

Dr Rose apologised that what he wanted to say is quite lengthy and he is going to quote chapter and verse to the Chairman and Vice Chairman who he believed had just very aggressively rejected Mr Forrest's allegation.

Both the Chair and Vice Chairman confirmed this was not the case they were responding to the unfounded allegations.

Dr Rose commented that the PC's decision to pay Mr Gomm £3.5k at the April 2022 meeting was not made with proper regard to its own financial and procurement regulations and for the avoidance of doubt he read from the relevant sections which he wished for this to be properly minuted.

The Chairman said why don't you give a copy of this document and Dr Rose responded saying no Chairman, I will read it as I believe you have ignored it.

The Chairman confirmed that we had seen their letters and we have responded several times.

Dr Rose said he would like this heard publicly.

Cllr Schwab said it is like you have come here with us having no correspondence, like you have come here tonight for the very first time raising, this issue. Have you raised this issue before? Cllr Schwab repeated the question and asked have we responded to you.

Mr Forrest asked Cllr Schwab to be quiet and let Dr Rose talk.

Dr Rose said this is a public meeting.

The Chairman confirmed we have replied to you repeatedly. Dr Rose responded by saying yes you have but you have ignored the points.

“Number 1 of your own regulations states these financial regulations governed conduct of financial transactions of the Council and may only be amended or varied by regulation of the council. These regulations also set out guidelines for procurement activity” I won't read the whole thing.

“Section 10 of the financial and procurement regulations– an official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders should be retained. All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value at all times. An officer issuing an official order is to ensure as far as is reasonable and practical that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction usually by obtaining 3 or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers. The Responsible Financial Officer (“RFO”) shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority for making that payment shall be reported to the meeting in which the order was approved so that the minutes can record the power being used.”

Paragraph 11 deals with contracts and states “Procurement procedures as to these procedures are laid down as follows:

Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that these regulations shall not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:

(i) for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;  
(ii) for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants; (iii) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant; (iv) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council; (v) for additional audit work of the external Auditor up to an estimated value of £250 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council); (iv) for goods or material proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed price.

Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £3,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk shall invite tenders from at least three firms to be taken from the approved list.

The Clerk has stated that by the time Mr Gomm's quotation was received apparently just a couple of hours before that April meeting, there was no time to get two more quotations given that the date of the Jubilee was less than 2 months away.

So Paragraph C in your own regulations may have been applicable and this states. When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.

Dr Rose then stated there is also Paragraph 11 H

When it is to enter into a contract less than £3,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 and above £400 the RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates; where the value is below £400 the RFO shall obtain 1 estimate. Otherwise, Regulation 10 (c) above shall apply.

At the meeting on 21 April 2022 the Cllrs were not reminded of section 11b or paragraph 11h to obtain 3 tenders, nor was there a legal application to waive the requirement according to section 11c, nor did the Clerk, as RFO, verify the lawful nature of the contract or ensure that the statutory authority by which that contract was let was reported to the meeting so the minutes could record the power being used as required by paragraph 10d. In fact, I (Dr Rose) was at that meeting as had been rightly pointed out, there was no discussion at all and no vote was taken. It was simply an announcement by the Chairman.

Cllr Severn responded that this was not true and that all Cllrs had agreed to it. No vote was taken but all agreed and the PC had already voted to hold the event. This was a direct attack on the Council, as usual, and the PC had already answered.

Dr Rose's questioned repeatedly and states it was merely an announcement by the Chairman who agreed to pay Mr Gomm £3500. Cllr Severn replied that this was not true.

Dr Rose advised that he had emailed his concerns as soon as he got home. The Chairman asked why he had not raised them during the meeting. Dr Rose responded that he should have done but that he had been somewhat distant from the table and it had taken him a while to take in what had happened. The minute merely stated: "Jubilee Events Update: Event management plan to be sent to all in due course. Phil Gomm's fee was £3.5k ...." It did not state that any consideration had been given. The PC is not a private body which can simply do what it wants. It is a tier of local government and as set out in paragraph 1 of the financial regulations, they have the force of law. Furthermore standing orders and regulations are there for everyone's protection. They protect residents from improper use of their money and if adhered to protect Cllrs themselves and the RFO against any suggestion of such improper use. As a council tax payment resident and as a Cllr at the time I (Dr Rose) has a vested interest in all of those protections being applied rigorously.

The Chair responded that the PC all have the same interests.

Dr Rose continued that he believed it to be clear that the PC did not follow the steps required in its own financial and procurement regulations and therefore acted unlawfully in agreeing to pay Mr Gomm £3.5k. Mr Forrest has proposed a remedy, namely that the PC should admit that it has breached the rules and that this admission should be clearly minuted together with an undertaking that greater care will be taken in future. He added that in future where financial decisions are taken, the minutes should explain fully how that decision was reached and confirm that it complies with the PC's own regulations.

Cllr Severn thanked Dr Rose for his view and speech which would be minuted. The questions raised by Dr Rose and Mr Forrest have been asked several times and the Clerk has responded to both each time in detail. The last time that Dr Rose had written, the PC responded that if he really believed the PC breached a rule or regulation that he should report it to the Monitoring Officer.

The PC would not apologise and she would not ask Cllrs to incriminate themselves. Nothing criminal has taken place. If there has been a breach of the regulations it had been inadvertent and didn't believe there had been as we properly agreed. This Council is very mindful of people and doing the best for Watermead and sorry for how they feel. The Chairman will not apologise for putting an event on for the community.

Dr Rose said it is the simple fact that you didn't follow your own regulations.

Cllr Schwab asked what is the next stage and to follow the correct procedure. The Chairman again confirmed that all questions have been answered.

Mr Forrest said the PC have not answered all the questions and that the PC have provided wallpapered/whitewashed answers. Again Cllr Schwab said follow the

correct procedure. Mr Forrest advised he would be taking the matter further with the Monitoring Officer and thanked the PC for the opportunity tonight and to admit the errors of the PC ways and to provide an undertaking not to do this again.

The Chairman reiterated that they should be mindful that at no time has there been any advertent idea of doing anything wrong or outside of the regulations and were merely trying to do the best for the community. The Chairman was very sorry and extremely disappointed that this had happened and that we have written to both of you, particularly Dr Rose on several occasions, we have done all that we can to explain what had happened. The Chairman will not apologise and stated if we have done something wrong in the regulations the Monitoring Officer will tell us. We haven't done anything intentionally wrong for the community. Sorry they feel like this and disappointed.

Mr Forrest replied disappointed in what?

Dr Rose added that if the PC don't follow the rules over something as simple and harmless as a picnic, who is to tell that the PC won't disobey the rules on other more important matters.

Cllr Severn advised that Dr Rose should be very careful what he said and that was an extremely unpleasant thing to say. How dare he.

Dr Rose said there is only one law, and you obey it.

Cllr Schwab & The Chairman repeated we do obey the law.

Cllr Morgan commented that Dr Rose's memory appeared to be somewhat selective at times. In between Cllr Morgan speaking Mr Forrest asked all the PC are you all happy that you followed the correct procedure to the letter. Cllr Morgan found the feedback from Dr Rose and Mr Forrest very useful and had taken notes and it would change the way he does things going forward.

Cllr Morgan continued, interesting that certain things are forgotten that happened in that meeting when Dr Rose was a Cllr which was a shame as the PC had done lots of work over the years, the latest being the walkway round the large lake where there is selective memory about the process the PC went through in getting to the point where the walkway was put in place.

Dr Rose said that was a different issue. Cllr Morgan replied to, it may be a different issue but again selective memory.

The Chairman repeated that there was no intention of doing anything wrong and if we have, we won't do again. Thank you for pointing this out. Do not come here suggesting we deliberately entered into some sort of maleficence.

Cllr Schwab found this quite insulting as did the Chairman. The Chairman stated if she had given this contract to a member of her family or something then that would be a totally different matter, but she hadn't. Cllr Schwab stated it's like we had a private event.

Cllr Peter Cooper commented that one of his roles as members of the Buckinghamshire Council is to see good running at PC meetings. There was clearly a dispute going on and legal accusations going in both directions. The Chairman has suggested and the complainants have agreed that the Monitoring Officer is the way to proceed. He suggested that the discussion be stopped immediately and he felt it necessary to advise the Monitoring Officer that he is likely to receive a complaint. Cllr Severn ask Cllr Bond will he be doing the same, Cllr Bond confirmed no. Cllr Blamires did not believe there was any requirement for BCC to report to the Monitoring Officer and that it was a matter for the PC and the complainants to take forward with him.

Cllr Schwab confirmed that the PC about a month ago advised to contact the Monitoring Officer.

### **Best Western Hotel**

Cllr Severn reported that a parishioner was nervous about an incident which had taken place. The PC had checked and no complaints have been made to the Police. The Police are satisfied that the hotel is perfectly safe with 24-hour security personnel on site. It is currently being used to house the homeless as it has been for the past 18 months or so. No complaints that we are aware of.

Parishioners queried whether there were criminals being housed there. Cllr Severn advised that there no criminals being housed, only homeless. If parishioners believed this not to be the case, Cllr Severn advised that they should take it up with the Police as the PC does not have any powers regarding the matter.

Mr Choudhury wished to thank the PC for the upkeep of Watermead, he had been living here for 14 years. Concerned about the hotel, sympathises with the homeless but believes there are drug dealings going on. Cllr Severn responded that there were drug dealers on Watermead not just from the hotel. Mr Choudhury also commented that there was believed to be an increase in burglaries with more people walking around Watermead looking suspicious. He was concerned that the hotel was being used as a centre with copious amount of people with the same problems and how this affects the hotel and the area.

Cllr Severn responded that the PC was taking this matter seriously and had taken up with the Police and would be requesting a meeting with them. The hotel is under contract with the Home Office. The PC and The Buckinghamshire Council have nothing to do with it. The Police have assured the PC that there are no released criminals being homed at the hotel. Cllr Blamires added that the person in charge of housing at the Council confirmed this to be the case.

Ms. Main was concerned that it was becoming common knowledge within the community that people who have just been released from prison and reoffenders are being housed at the hotel. Cllr Severn advised that the police have assured that this is not the case. Ms. Main asked do we have a right to know who is being housed. Urged residents to call 101 if they witness any wrong doing.

Mr Choudhury did not believe the Home Office has the right to turn a hotel in a rehab centre within the community without consultation with the residents.

Mr Choudhury queried whether the hotel was housing drug addicts. Cllr Severn advised that this information would not be shared with the public by the Police. Cllr Blamires commented that the person in charge of housing at BCC had advised that the people staying at the hotel were homeless and not facing criminal record. Parishioners were advised that if they witnessed any suspicious activity, they should report it to 101 or 999 if it is happening at the time.

Mr Choudhury queried how many people were staying at the hotel and Cllr Blamires would try and find out. Cllr Severn invited Mr Choudhury to discuss with Cllr Blamires what she thought she could do to acquire data.

Cllr Bond advised that he had discussed this matter at cabinet level and the main concern was Facebook journalism spreading rumours. The Home Office made these arrangements and there is no consultation. We have no power to ask for personal data of who is housed. Cllr Blamires will try and obtain the numbers.

Mr Choudhury was concerned about the groups of people loitering outside the hotel. Karen Collinswood asked for the change of purpose of the building to be looked into.

Cllr Bond advised that the hotel did not need to apply for planning as it was hired by the Government/Home Office. It did not class as a change of use as it was still being used as a hotel.

Cllr Cooper suggested the PC contact Constable Dionne Edwards at Wing. Confirmed the Police can only deal with criminality.

Kelvin reported on his sightings around the bandstand and car park after the pub has closed and how this has changed since the pandemic from groups of young men arriving by car and smoking weed to single men who smoke or take drugs on the bandstand. These men do not arrive by car. Cllr Blamires advised to report any sightings to the Police so they can monitor and see if there is an increase in activity.

**Actions:**

The PC agreed to hold a meeting with the Police and ask if anyone poses a risk to children

Cllr Bond to report the discussions and concerns to BCC

The hotel to be asked if they would increase security measures

Costs of security cameras was discussed and it was agreed to obtain quotes and add to the agenda for the next meeting. The community would also need to be consulted on this.

Cllr Morgan commented that he had seen an increase in security around the hotel, personnel, CCTV and 360 surveillance system.

**Tree Planting Request received from Miya & Kelvin Wong**

Hello everyone, my name is Miya, and I went to St. Louis Catholic Primary school, I am now a pupil at Sir Henry Floyd. A year ago, they planted 14 trees on their school field in honour of the late Queen's Jubilee, I would like to continue planting trees because that would help to offset the CO2 that we produce.

An average human contributes 12.7 tons of CO2 emission per year and to just reduce that one person's CO2 footprint, 600 trees would need to be planted. My family and I are going to start planting trees to play our part in helping our planet have a better future.

So far, we have permission to plant trees around Haddenham St. Mary's Infant School and Stoke Mandeville Stadium and I would love to plant some tree's where I live, Watermead.

Thank you for listening, Miya Wong

Miya's Dad, Kelvin Wong attended our Neighbourhood Plan Open Days to advise that his Daughter would be contacting the Parish Council. He spoke to members of the team and would like the Parish Council to consider the following areas for planting if permission is given.

- Both areas running alongside the new walkway where the ground and vegetation has been significantly disturbed by the recent construction.
- The cutting area near the small bridge around the large lake which has been cleared during the recent path work.
- Any suitable area around the large lake where infill planting would help existing trees and vegetation.
- The small area of land behind the gatehouse which was planted wildflower.
- Any area of the Crown land that is transferring to the Parish and would benefit from planting to support existing flora and fauna and potentially help with flooding
- Support additional planting in front of crematorium.

It was unanimously agreed to support Miya's request to plant 300 trees supplied by the Woodland Trust around Watermead. A community volunteer day was needed to clear some of the debris. Miya to produce a poster and Cllr Singleton to include a write up in the next edition of the Village View.

Kelvin to forward a proposal in writing for a dog agility park/field with agility equipment.

The Chairman thanked the visitors for their attendance.

### **Council Meeting**

**22.78 To agree the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 16 February 2023**  
The Minutes were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

**22.79 Planning Matters**  
(1) **To update on any Planning Applications submitted** – no new applications submitted. No update on existing applications.

Information had been received by the Clerk from The Bucks Herald reporting on movement on the Football Stadium application. We have not been notified of any amends on this application but the following documentation has been added to the portal.

It would appear that the applicants have met with Buckinghamshire Council and are asking them as the Lead Flood Authority to withdraw their objections. The EA still have an objection in place and the Clerk would now monitor this on a daily basis, just in case something appears.

The PC had not been consulted on this but it was agreed to resubmit the PC's objections.

The Clerk





The Village Hall was very well prepared (thank you Peter and Noreen) and we now have an excellent format to enable people to follow the process and sections covered in the plan easily around the Village Hall. We also provided supporting packs and info for on-line access.

The questions and feedback we received was fantastic! I have written a post for Facebook/Neighbourhood Plan page and our website expressing this and the need for more feedback.

The Design Code has been uploaded to the Neighbourhood Plan webpage and all documentation presented at the open days to be uploaded in the next few days.

#### Business/Landowner/Key Stakeholders

Having identified this as an area where the Team required more feedback and input, we have increased activity to achieve this.

Firstly, Noreen Shardlow has contacted all the key businesses on the spreadsheet again and now we are following up with those who have commercial property or land in Watermead.

Clearly still some misunderstandings as Compton Property Management and the Environment Agency do not think they have 'any interests'!

Where requested members of the team are meeting to help provide some further guidance.

For example, a meeting was held with Max Mossman (representative of landowner for area adjacent to Kestrel Way) and Alan Jose (representative for Westerleigh Crematoria). During these meetings we cover the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan and ask for their views and feedback as businesses or landowner within Watermead so we can include within the Plan.

#### Draft Plan

Having provided all the latest updates to Sally Chapman our retained Planning Consultant we are incredibly pleased to report that the first Draft Plan is due on 14 March. This is earlier than we anticipated, and we still have a lot of work to do but is excellent news.

Sally has also confirmed to Noreen that we require a 'Community Statement' to be written which should include all the feedback and comments we have received, which is then to be included as a Section in the Plan. All 'do-able' but quite a task.

#### Play Equipment/Open Spaces

Do we wish to designate them in the Plan as green space? Balloon Meadow, outdoor gym. It was proposed and unanimously agreed that all existing designated green areas be for recreation and leisure.

#### Next Steps

What are the next steps?

- Engagement - critical that we do not lose momentum on engagement on all our stakeholder groups. So, we will be organising more open days, more meetings, more communication.
- Consider/discuss possible dates for next open days.
- Continue to develop the various Sections in the Plan.
- Hold meetings where stakeholders require additional support/guidance/understanding.
- Keep talking to people when you are 'out and about and make sure they understand the importance of their involvement and contribution.

- Consider timings for final parts of the process, including Referendum.



## 22.82 Reports, Requests and Recommendations Received

### 1 To update on Land Registry Matters

Cllr Severn advised that Cllr Schwab was in touch the Crown Solicitors and it was hoped to have resolution very shortly.

### 2 To update on Land & Routine Land Work Fallen Tree Piles on Small Lake

Our grounds contractor Darren Adamson has made contact to advise he believes there are too many fallen tree piles around the small lake and believe some need removing. Darren can provide the manpower, but the PC would need to cover the cost of the tree chipper, £400 for two days. He would of course leave some tree piles for the environment.

**Hanging Baskets Quotation** – it was agreed to proceed with the quote from WindowFlowers at £2,210 plus VAT.

**Watermead Small Lake Walkway** – Awaiting an update from David Patrick from Environments For People and Contractors. Contractor previously advised March, awaiting confirmation. Focuss are unable to do due to their work commitments but the Clerk had been in contact with another bridge company, Bison. Site visits were awaited.

Trevor Jones is now the Ramblers Voluntary Rights of Way inspector for Watermead and Bierton.

RoSPA annual health and safety inspection will take place in May which would include the walkway.

**Walkway Brackets** to be installed by Dave Lucas

#### **Works agreed and awaiting completion:**

Existing Benches Ground Works D. Lucas – Awaiting better weather.

#### **Watermead Piscatorial Working Group Day Update**

The dates for the working parties will be Sunday 2nd April, Sunday 28th May (8am – 1pm) & Wednesday 31st (Evening 5pm – 8pm).

**Existing Litter Bins** – As agreed at our February 2023 Parish Council Meeting a full survey of all land bins is being actioned. All those in need of replacement will be replaced as we have found a company who provide.

## Watermead Crematorium Planting Scheme

Update received from Alan José 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

As an update on the planting, during the past two days the following work has been completed:

- Planted 3 dead Hazel on the bank between chapel window and lake to replace shrubs that had died.
- Added 2 *Viburnum opulus* and 6 *Rosa rugosa* to bank between chapel and lake.
- Added 1 Hazel and 1 *Viburnum opulus* to bank by bridge.
- Planted bridge with 4 Ivy and 2 Honeysuckle. Over time these will soften the bridge and provide great nesting habitat.
- Planted 1 Field Maple lakeside.
- Planted 1 Weeping Willow lakeside – near shipping container.
- Replaced 15 dead Hornbeam in the lakeside hedge – near shipping container.
- Staked, mulched and added guarding to multiple trees.

The benefits of this work will be seen over the coming months and years.

All documentation received and circulated via email.

### 3 To Update on Allotments

No update.

### 4 To Report on Village View

Another great edition, copies are being requested in Berkhamsted and Winslow. There had been a printing issue with pages missing on one or more copies.

### 5 To update on Village Hall

As per email previously sent, the below scope of works commenced Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023. Since the below works were carried out there has been no further water ingress into the hall. We will continue to monitor.

A request has been made for the scope of works that they have recently carried (as advised by Joseph Irwin. I attach below a copy communication that I was sent of the works needed (copy provided recently by Joseph Irwin).

I refer to your email of 15<sup>th</sup> July. The problem with rainwater leaking into the nursery accommodation at ground floor level, is the result of the build-up of rainwater levels on the balcony of the flat above the nursery. The asphalt balcony has been overlaid with pre-cast concrete slabs and there would seem to be only one rainwater outlet through the parapet at the side of the balcony. I have lifted a number of slabs with Kieron (contractor for ACC Facilities Management) and we found the build-up of silt on the asphalt, to have got to a point which is obstructing the flow of rainwater from the balcony. At the time of inspection (probably about 12 months ago), the outlet to the balcony was also noted to be partly blocked.

Arrangements need to be put in hand for the balcony to be washed clear and clean. The only way to achieve this would be to lift the precast concrete slabs. This may have to be done in two halves. It would probably not prove to be practical to lift the slabs down to ground level and then lift them back onto the roof. Nor would it be practical to stack the slabs to one side of the balcony as this may overload the building structure. I therefore recommend as follows;

To arrange for the removal of all leaseholders' furnishings and equipment from the balcony to leave clear open plan space.

To lift one half of the precast concrete balcony concrete slab and set aside.

To wash clear and clean the exposed asphalt balcony. Remove silt and weeds, etc.

To reinstate the concrete slabs upon the cleaned asphalt surface.

Lift and set aside the remaining concrete slabs and to continue cleaning the balcony roof until the whole area has been fully and properly cleaned. Include for cleaning out of rainwater outlet(s).

Include for the jet washing and cleaning of the precast concrete slabs individually before re-setting into position.

Include for all labour and materials required to carry out the works. This should include for two operatives minimum and pressure jet washing equipment. Water supply and electricity to be provided by leaseholder for the flat.

**6 To update on Transport/Highways**

To discuss the changeover of contractor at Buckinghamshire Council and update the replacement street lights & MVAS.

Thanks were given to Cllr Blamires and Cllr Bond for dealing with 5 issues which had been outstanding for some time.

**7 Florence Nightingale Hospital Walk of Life**

The PC were happy to welcome them back.

**8 Larks by the Lake**

Sunday 28th May 2023 is the date set for the Watermead Events Committee community fundraising event, which will take place on the Balloon & Fishermen's Meadow. The event promises to be a wonderful family day out with local dance schools, retail stalls (local crafts), charity stalls, raffle, a fun dog show, children's games and entertainment, catering outlets, bar outlet (Kelvin Wong only) and several fairground attractions. The aim is to keep the event local and a fun day for all.

Dementia Awareness courses would be hosted in the Village Hall.

Florence Nightingale Open Gardens to take place on 9 July.

**22.83 Date of meetings**

20 April 2023, 18 May 2023 and APM, 15 June 2023, 20 July 2023, 17 August 2023, 21 September 2023, 19 October 2023, 16 November 2023, 21 December 2023

Cllrs expressed their condolences at the sad passing of Betty Plumbley, Mary's mother, who has been the most amazing friend to Watermead for the past 30 years.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm and thanked people for their attendance.