

ALBOURNE PARISH [2017]

**Minutes of the meeting of the Annual meeting of
the electors in the Parish of Albourne
held on: Tuesday, 2nd May 2017, at 7.30 p.m.**

Present: **Albourne Parish Councillors:** Cllr Meg Price – Chairman, Cllr Graham Stafford, Cllr Di Howard, Cllr Nikki Ernest, Cllr Heather Jordan, Cllr Jerry Butler.

Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk).

Paul Boichat (BT).

Ann Higginson (Chair of the Village Hall Social Group).

30 local residents (being electors of the Parish).

(Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Nick Wergan).

1. Chairman's introduction and review of the previous year.

The Chairman referred to the successful referendum for the Neighbourhood Plan on a good turn out by the Village. Overall, there will be a need for more housing in the District, but the District Plan does not support this being achieved through a new market town. This will come up further in the presentation below. She confirmed that the Parish Council had secured a 5K grant from MSDC for the installation of a climbing frame in the children's play area of the Recreation Ground. The issue of training for the defibrillator was mentioned. It was pleasing to see an increase in the social activities taking place in the Village Hall

2. Minutes of Annual Parish meeting held on 2nd May 2017.

These were unanimously approved, and signed as a true record by the Chairman, subject to one amendment requested by a resident regarding the number of volunteers needed for the Operation Speed Watch scheme.

3. Broadband roll out.

Paul Boichat from BT gave a presentation. Broadband roll-out is on the increase in West Sussex. Investment is taking place in rural areas. Superfast Broadband is on the way. The Government wants maximum coverage and the aim is to have this at 95% by the end of 2017. BT thinks it is on target to meet this. BT is working on even better speeds and trialling this in West Sussex with new equipment. Fixed line 4G trialling is proving successful. BT is investing up to

£5bn of its own money. They are looking to WSCC to be a partner in advertising what is can be done, and availability. £2m has been received by WSCC for reinvestment in the network. See the Open-reach website for further information. BT has to work to value for money rules in prioritising areas, and this may explain vagaries. However, individuals can get in touch directly with regard to specific issues in their own areas, and this is to be encouraged. BT will then assess the options, and the potential costs. It may be that some areas will have to raise some of the funds for themselves. WSCC has a “Better Connected” page on their website for further help and advice. Paul Boichat then addressed a Q&A session, and individuals were invited to follow up directly with him on any concerns or issues they may have.

4. Neighbourhood Plan/District Plan.

Councillor Ernest confirmed that following the successful referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan (from 2014-31) has been duly “made” and confirmed by MSDC. It is therefore now a statutory planning document, albeit subject to the progress of the District Plan, which is now in the process of examination by a Government appointed Planning Inspector. It is also the case that there is still no 5 year housing land supply as required under national planning policy. The opposition to the Mayfield new market town development remains strong, and not something being supported by MSDC. There are currently two large scale strategic sites being put forward for development in order to help MSDC get to their current annual housing figure. However, if the housing number goes up, it may be necessary for all NPs to be reviewed in due course. All the details regarding the progress of the District Plan are available on MSDC’s website.

5. Operation Watershed and flooding issues.

Graham Stafford noted that the grant for the latest project had just been received from WSCC, and this would enable the camera survey work to proceed. The WSCC County elections had delayed the process a bit. The administrative side of the applications is becoming quite detailed and time consuming. The Reeds Lane ditches ownership issue remained a major issue, and WSCC needed to be involved in resolving. The owners of land affected by the schemes need to sign the consent forms. However, in overall terms, good progress is being made, and there should therefore be vast improvements in the containment of flooding in Albourne.

6. Trees/Hedges/footpaths

Councillor Heather Jordan (HJ) gave her report as follows: Last year WSCC asked the Parish Council if would like to add any footpaths to their regular footpath clearing list. County just clear the ground, i.e. cut grass etc., and they were already doing a footpath that runs along the A23. The Parish Council added footpaths at the allotments, Hunters Cottage, and the footpath adjacent to Yew Tree Farmhouse. Problems with footpaths can be map reported via e-mail to HJ

or directly to WSCC via their web site. It was noted that the hedge at the front of Hunters Mead, needed to be cut back as this had not been done for several years. It took a while to get it looked at and started by MSDC, and likewise the removed hedge between the Village Hall and Barn Close. This couldn't be replaced with conifers, as the previous hedge died of contamination. However, the new line of Beech plants should make a very good hedge in time. Other problem areas are under review. It was pointed out that if you live in the Conservation Area then you need to apply to MSDC for planning permission to do work on trees in your garden. If a tree dies you don't need permission to take it down, but you do need to send a photo and advise MSDC that you are going to remove it. The same applies if you have a dead tree with a TPO on it. Cllr HJ has a list of all TPO'd trees in the Village, and anyone can contact her, if they are unsure of the position. Finally, footpath problems can be reported to WSCC via their website. (Put public rights of way in the search bar, tick on launch the i map click public rights of way on the map features, drag pin to footpath to get number go back to page with "launch the i map" on it and click on "report a problem".

7. Village Hall/Social Group/Pop up Pub report.

Cllr Jerry Butler, as the Chairman of the VH Management Committee, gave his report. The kitchen refurbishment project is ongoing. There are lots of activities taking place in the Hall, contributing to the overall well being and maintenance of the Hall. The constitutional arrangements governing the relationship between the Village Hall and the Parish Council are being looked at and improved, so as to allow for better governance. Ann Higginson referred to the aims and initiatives of the Social Group in terms of enabling people to meet with each other, and she mentioned the range of events being organised, such as the film nights on a Friday evening. The idea is also to do some local fund raising. She ran through forthcoming events, such as local bands, a cheese and wine evening, the family fun day on the 16th July, etc. Cllr Di Howard mentioned that the Pop up Pub (PuP) has been running for a year now, and is proving quite popular and successful. However, there is a need for some more volunteers to help with the running of the pub. It was noted that could be combined with other events, subject to the licensing requirements being met. People can keep in touch with the Face Book page "Albourne Village connected" for further information. She made clear that the PuP is a non profit making venture designed just to bring the community together, and that any surplus monies are ploughed back straight into the Village Hall funds.

8. General session for the public.

It was noted that in terms of Village communications, the four Cottages near High Cross are not on the mailing list. These will need to be added. There is a major issue with regard to pot holes in and around local roads. However, these can be reported directly to WSCC on their Love Sussex website. There is concern about the large Oak tree in Church Lane (near Wellcroft Cottages) but it was noted that

as this is on highway verge land, and so the responsibility of WSCC, it was unlikely that a Tree Preservation Order could be put on it.

9. Chairman's concluding remarks and close.

The Chairman announced her intention of stepping down from the Parish (PC) Council, and since it is likely that Cllr Nick Wergan will also be stepping down later in the year, there will be a couple of vacancies on the PC in due course. If anyone was interested in becoming a Parish Councillor, please contact the Clerk. She thanked her fellow Councillors and the Clerk for all their help and support throughout the year. She then closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending, particularly those guest speakers and presenters. Cllr Graham Stafford in turn, thanked the Chairman on behalf of all present, for her service on the PC, and especially her four years as Chairman, and for all her tireless work in taking the interests of the Village forward.

The meeting closed at 9.42 p.m.

SIGNED.....Graham Stafford (Chairman)