

ALBOURNE PARISH [2018]

**Minutes of the meeting of the Annual meeting of
the electors in the Parish of Albourne
held on: Tuesday, 1st May 2018, at 7.30 p.m.**

Present: **Albourne Parish Councillors:** Cllr Graham Stafford – Chairman, Cllr Jerry Butler, Cllr Di Howard, Cllr Nikki Ernest, Cllr Heather Jordan, Cllr Suzi Sawyer, Cllr John Drew.

Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk).
Cllr Judy Llewellyn-Burke (MSDC)
Cllr Joy Dennis (WSCC)
26 local residents (being electors of the Parish).

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

The Chairman noted that the District Plan had finally been approved by the Planning Inspector, and this should strengthen the Neighbourhood plan, and help the planning process in Albourne. The new climbing frame for the playground is progressing, and should be implemented in the next few months. Some defibrillator training is taking place, but more volunteers are needed to undertake training. HGV movements will continue to be monitored throughout the Village. The new License arrangements for the Pop up Pub have now been put in place with MSDC. Finally, he thanked all Parish Councillors, the Clerk, and District and County representatives for all their help and work throughout the year.

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

These were unanimously approved, and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

3. Reports from WSCC and MSDC Councillors.

Cllr Joy Dennis (WSCC) referred to her role on the Children's and Young Persons Scrutiny Committee. Overall, WSCC plan a continuation of services against a solid financial position, but the ageing profile of the population is adding social care pressures. She has taken a particular interest in the local Firland issue, and also in supporting the Parish Council in its Operation Watershed bids. Traffic calming concerns will be looked into with WSCC Highways officers, and there is some s.106 planning money to help with this. There is a new Speed Indication Device on order, which the Parish Council will periodically be able to use. There is a programme of pot hole repairs and resurfacing on the B2116 and Hurst road for the coming year. The A2300 work to create a dual

carriageway should be finished during 2019/20. The quiet resurfacing issue is still ongoing and needs to be raised with Highways England. Cllr Judy Llewellyn- Burke (MSDC) said that she is on two MSDC Scrutiny Committees. The economic strategy has been adopted, and there is a particular focus on customer service delivery. There is a drive to improve welling being leisure facilities across the District, and planning is involved with this. The adopted District Plan now makes it much easier to control developments, and to enhance the effectiveness of made Neighbourhood Plans.

4. HGV and traffic issues.

Cllr John Drew gave his report as follows: By way of background many of you have been concerned for some time about the increasingly adverse impact of HGVs travelling along the B2116, a large proportion of which are either destined for or leaving the Olus waste recycling sites in particular at Firland but also at Winterpick. Concerns include speed, noise disturbance, out of hours operations and property vibration. HGV volumes were increased by the 2015 WSCC decision to approve a threefold increase in waste processing at the Firland site from 25k tonnes per annum (tpa) to 75k tpa . Concerns were further heightened in 2017 by the decision to allow an increase in the height of the waste stockpile from 2.8 to 5 metres which, together with an awareness that Olus were only processing at a rate of 45k tpa, led to fears of further increases in HGV movements. A prevailing view is that the B2116 is too narrow in parts for large HGVs and is in need of changes to improve the safety of the road for other users. Over the past year the following actions have been taken. To provide evidence of the volume and impact of HGVs four surveys were conducted during 2017. Two early morning surveys at the entrance to both sites were carried out in March – these recorded traffic movements before the 7.00am opening times. A 12 hour roadside survey of all traffic along the B2116 at the village centre was carried out in May. This survey recorded 194 HGV movements and a speed indication device (SID) recorded 75% of all vehicles exceeding the speed limit of 30 mph. A second 12 hour roadside survey was carried out in June to establish what proportion of HGVs were entering or leaving the Olus facility at Firland. In rounded terms 300 HGVs were noted in total of which 200 were entering or leaving the Firland industrial estate of which in excess of 100 were entering /leaving Olus – an amount confirmed by Olus' official records. This is in the context of Olus advising in their 2015 planning application that the daily average of HGV movements would not exceed 48. It would be helpful in this regard if we could have access to the HGV movement numbers that Olus are obliged to keep but for some reason these are regarded as commercially sensitive and are not publically available. With survey data confirming that the volume of HGV traffic is increasing, with informal action by WSCC against Olus breaches of planning conditions proving ineffective and with Olus objecting to a liaison group which could provide a useful platform for addressing residents' issues, it was decided to set up a working group to recommend and manage further action. This is comprised of 10 residents including 4 Councillors. From this came a decision to seek expert advice and proposals were sought from three consultants on: the extent to which WSCC were misguided in taking planning decisions which ignored relevant road and waste policies, changes to the road that would reduce the impact of HGVs and improve the safety of the road for other users (traffic calming measures, speed restrictions etc). GTA Civils, a Burgess Hill based engineering firm specialising in transport related issues, have been commissioned initially to advise on the extent to which policies have been adhered to and whether or not we have any realistic options to challenge WSCC planning decisions. We are in receipt of the draft report which, following feedback from the working group, is in the process of being finalised. Early

indications are that, although the report will highlight areas where we can question WSCC, it is unlikely that relevant decisions could be successfully overturned. This is in line with earlier informal legal advice that challenging WSCC would be expensive with low chance of success. As regards next steps, following review of the GTA Civils' report, we need to: decide on any questions we want to put to WSCC concerning decisions taken commission a review of changes to the B2116 that would mitigate the impact of HGVs and enhance road safety for other users. secure Section 106 funding for any improvements We also need to gauge the extent to which volumes are changing by planning further surveys of HGV movements and keep a watchful eye on planning applications that will further exacerbate the problem. Furthermore we need to keep pressure on the relevant authorities to ensure that planning conditions are complied with. A particular reason for remaining vigilant is that the latest available data confirms that Olus are processing well below their approved limit of 75k tpa at the Firsland site.

5. Planning issues/District Plan.

Cllr Nikki Ernest gave her report. Planning applications tend to break down into two categories. Individual house applications and then development style strategic applications. The Parish Council is a statutory consultee, and has commented on 23 applications (6 were objections) in the last year, of which 20 were approved, and 3 refused. The proposal for the retirement Village at the former Hazeldens garden nursery site was a big one, and this had been refused by MSDC. The District Plan has now been adopted, and so the Planning Authority is in a stronger position to deal with applications. There may be a need to review the Neighbourhood Plan in the light of the step up in housing numbers required by the District Plan. The shortfall of some 2,500 dwellings kicks in from 2023. The Parish Council still needs to be vigilant regarding the issue of the new Market Town being proposed in the area, even though this is not supported in the District Plan.

6. Operation Watershed.

Cllr Graham Stafford confirmed that a grant had been agreed from WSCC under the scheme, for some camera survey work. There are lots of blocked drains and gullies that need clearing. Reeds Lane is a big issue that needs resolving. There is a requirement to obtain relevant landowners' consents, and this is being dealt with. Overall though, the programme to improve flood alleviation throughout Albourne is progressing well. For example, Church Lane has been done, and this has greatly improved the situation in that location. Other work is ongoing, and the Parish Council is working closely with WSCC on these matters.

7. Trees/hedges/footpaths.

Cllr Heather Jordan said there were two tree issues currently. One is the large Oak tree in Church Lane (opposite the Old School House), which came down in February, and the other is the young Oak tree on the green opposite the Village Hall, which has a significant split in it. Both these issues are being addressed with expert officers at MSDC. She reiterated that if you live within the Conservation Area, then you need to get permission from MSDC to do any work to trees. The report on Footpaths, Allotments, and hedges is attached.

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

Cllr Jerry Butler, as the Chairman of the VH Management Committee, gave his report. He confirmed that the new licensing arrangements with MSDC are in place, enabling the Pop up Pub to re-open. It is hoped that the film night may be resurrected at some point. The Committee are looking into replacing some of the Village Hall chairs. Improvements to the Hall continue, and the need to repair or replace the garage is being assessed.

9. General session for the public.

Everyone was encouraged to take up the offer of defibrillator training being offered by John Parks. The issue of contractor's vehicles blocking Church Lane was raised, and this will be looked into. Also, some of the drains had been blocked by lorries delivering materials e.g. concrete, to properties having work done. This will need to be reported on to WSCC Highways. The drains issue had revealed large fat-burges in the system, and everyone was asked not to flush wet wipes, etc, down toilets.

10. Chairman's concluding remarks and close.

Finally, the Chairman thanked all for attending, and invited everyone to stay on after the meeting for some refreshments. He also encouraged everyone to try and attend some Parish Council meetings over the next year.

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

SIGNED.....Graham Stafford (Chairman)