

ALBOURNE PARISH [2023]

Minutes of the meeting of the Annual meeting of the electors in the Parish of Albourne

held on: Tuesday, 16th May 2023, at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall

Present: **Albourne Parish Councillors:** Cllr Joy Parks – Vice Chairman, Cllr Di Smith, Cllr Suzanne Sawyer, Cllr Shane Axtell, Cllr Imelda Spencer

Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk), Councillor Geoff Zeidler (Mid Sussex District Council), and 12 local residents (being electors of the Parish of Albourne).

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

In the absence of the Parish Council Chairman (who had sent apologies), the Vice Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor Joy Parks, opened the meeting, and introduced the new Parish Council that had been elected at the local elections on 4th May 2023. It was noted that there is a vacancy for the seventh member of the Council to be filled by co-option as soon as possible.

2. Minutes of Annual Parish meeting held on 24th May 2022.

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

3. Reports from WSCC and MSDC Councillors.

There was no report from West Sussex County Council as the Ward Councillor could not be present. Councillor Geoff Zeidler (GZ), who had been elected as the Mid Sussex District Councillor for the new ward of Downland Villages, gave his report to the meeting. The main issue concerns the review of the District Plan, and how the Council can continue to show that it has a 5 year housing land supply, and to ensure that all its planning policies are fully up to date. How this pans out will have a significant effect on planning applications and appeals in the District. There are some proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework which might help. The various statutory consultations are underway, and will progress through to the appointment of a Planning Inspector to decide if the Plan is legally sound and workable. It was noted from the floor that the District Council needs to ensure that its legal advice and presentation by barristers needs to be top draw. However, it was recognised that developers and landowners tend to have many more funds to throw at issues, than the District Council does. He said that responses to the consultation concerning the proposal for the new

Sayers Village proposal need to concentrate on the traffic, flooding and ecological aspects. GZ was asked to help lead the way in trying to secure improvements to the Recreation Ground. The concerns about the adequate provision of dog waste bins also need to be resolved.

4. HGV/ Traffic issues/Village Gateways.

In his absence, Cllr John Drew's written report was read out to the meeting-

"During the past year we have continued to argue the case for speed limit reductions on Albourne roads. The first of these is in the form of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for a 20mph speed zone on the section of the B2116 between its junction with the B2118 and to just west of its junction with The Street. The request includes The Street and Church Lane though to its junction with the B2118. This proposal, which aims to mitigate the adverse effects of speeding traffic including noise disturbance, vibration and pollution, also recognises potential safety hazards given the presence of the local school and increasing use of the road by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. This TRO, which also includes a request for a 30mph limit on the B2116 between the junctions with Truslers Hill and Twineham Lanes and for a 40 mph where the national speed limit currently applies, was originally rejected by West Sussex CC Highways but is to be reconsidered in the context of the County's new road safety policy. We have also asked WSCC to redesign the road markings and hatchings on the southbound carriageway adjacent to the traffic lights on the B2118 given the potential danger of two lanes north of the lights merging into one south of the lights. Unfortunately this has been rejected on grounds that more structural changes would be necessary together with alterations to the traffic light controls. This may be resurrected, however, given the approval for a retirement complex in this area and local residents concerns about speeding traffic. A fatal accident on this stretch of road has encouraged local residents to set up a speedwatch scheme. Most recently we have received a request to consider traffic calming measures for Shaves Wood and Truslers Hill Lane which we will pursue with WSCC. A Community Highways Scheme has also been submitted to discourage inappropriate and unsafe parking in The Street at school drop off and pick up times. This has been the source of considerable annoyance for local residents for some time and renders crossing the road hazardous. The proposal includes installing zebra style road markings with bollards across the road at the school entrance and adjacent to the village hall car park, visits by a community police officer to ensure compliance and extending yellow road hatching either side the crossings. During the year the PC has successfully argued for the removal of three large road direction signs from the B2116 and B2118. These were a legacy from the days when the B2118 was the main London to Brighton A23 road and were large, unsightly, redundant and in a poor state of repair. Residents' concerns have also been expressed about the state of the B2116 surface since it was poorly top dressed. This has resulted in significant potholes and the creation of large puddles which cause dirty water to be splashed over properties. These concerns and possible remedies are being discussed with WSCC Highways. Finally we continue to deploy the Speed Indication Device (SID) at four locations around the village and have established that while it is displaying it reduces average speeds, which translates into a lower chance of a traffic accident."

5. Planning issues/District Plan.

This had been covered under item 3 above.

6. Trees/hedges/footpaths/Millennium Garden.

Councillors Suzanne Sawyer and Joy Parks gave their reports. The Parish Council continues to monitor the condition and accessibility of the footpaths, and to report issues and concerns to West Sussex County Council. Some improvements have been made, but there are a number of ongoing issues, relating to footpath bridges and gates. Residents are encouraged to report any problems directly to the Public Rights of Way Team (PROW) at WSCC on their website page, or to the Parish Council. The Parish Council also monitors trees and hedges particularly where these might overhang the highway or footpaths. It also comments on any tree applications that have a Tree Preservation Order on them, or are within the Conservation Area. The Council also routinely carries out works of maintenance and improvement to the Millennium Garden in order to ensure that it remains a valuable community asset for the Village.

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

Jerry Butler, as the outgoing Chairman of the VH Management Committee, gave his report. The Hall continues to see improvements and repairs so as to make sure that it remains fit for purpose as the focal point of the Village. The Friday night Village pub “The Albourne Arms” is proving to be a success, and is usually well attended.

8. General session for the public.

The main issue concerned the forthcoming planning appeal regarding the proposed Croudace development of the land adjacent to the Millennium Garden from the B2116. Views were expressed from the floor about how the District and Parish Councils should seek to fend off the application, and fight the appeal. It was thought that if the appeal fails, perhaps the Parish Council could try and do something with the land in partnership with the landowner. It may be that the School parking issue could be revisited at some point. The other issue concerned the need to deal with the dog fouling in the Parish, particularly as many outside dog walkers visit the Parish, and therefore the possibility of having more signs around the Village was discussed.

9. Chairman’s concluding remarks and close.

Finally, the Vice Chairman thanked all for attending, and she encouraged villagers to attend Parish Council meetings if they can, as the contribution and input from residents is very important. She also particularly thanked Graham Stafford (previous Chair of the Parish Council for many years), and Jerry Butler (outgoing Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee) for all their invaluable, past service to the Parish and its work.

The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.

SIGNED.....Cllr Joy Parks (Vice-Chairman)