

# ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2016]

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## Minutes of the meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016, at 7.00 p.m.

*Present:* Cllr Meg Price (MP) - Chairman  
Cllr Graham Stafford (GS) – Vice Chairman  
Cllr Heather Jordan (HJ)  
Cllr Nikki Ernest (NE)  
Cllr Di Howard (DH)

*In attendance:* Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk), Councillor Garry Wall (Leader of MSDC) (from start of meeting to item 6), and 3 members of the public (for parts or all of the meeting).

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- 1. (2016/012) – Chairman formally opens the meeting, welcomes those present, and receives apologies for absence.** Apologies were received from Councillors Nick Wergan, Barry Compton, Councillor Peter Griffiths (WSCC) and Councillor John Allen (MSDC).
  - 2. (2016/013) – Declarations of interest.** There were none declared.
  - 3. (2016/014) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public** – There were no new issues raised that would not be coming up separately on the Agenda.
  - 4. (2016/015) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016 were duly approved and signed, as a true record, by the Chairman.
  - 5. (2016/016) – Report from Councillor Garry Wall (GW) (Leader of Mid Sussex District Council) – Possible Brighton Park and Ride scheme at Q Leisure Park.**  
Councillors mentioned that they had only been alerted to the possibility of this scheme through the local press. It was also considered odd that Councillors at Hurstpierpoint and SC had been involved but not anyone from Albourne PC. GW said that no planning application had been made, and that the owner had engaged a planning consultant to try and take the idea forward. However, MSDC planners do have some issues with it, although the Brighton Board are broadly supportive. The site is some way out of Brighton, and there may be more suitable and appropriate alternatives. It was noted that the scheme could be connected with the Mayfields development proposal, and the owner

of the site is clearly looking to maximise the land value. GW said that it was not sensible to speculate too far into the future, and that although the Local Authorities need to be alive to the issue, there is no concrete proposal as yet. Heavy traffic issue. GW completely understood the issue, which was all around the District, and although this is a WSCC Highways issue, it was important to have a good evidence base to support any TRO proposals. He agreed that desk top studies did not always provide the complete answer. District Plan. The latest timetable is on MSDC's website, but hopefully the Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State in the next few weeks, an examiner will be appointed, and the hearings held over the spring and summer. The Plan could then be adopted in the autumn. There are still challenges ahead, and some 35% of respondents to the consultation are still querying the housing numbers. MSDC is getting the best legal advice to take the Plan successfully through examination, and previous lessons have been learnt. Much work has been done on the duty to co-operate and the Plan should be compliant now. There is big pressure from Government on housing, but MSDC has tried to protect Towns and Parishes in terms of their Neighbourhood Plans from the increase in the numbers proposed for Mid Sussex. MSDC is the only authority delivering in excess of its assessed need, so it is doing its bit. It is hoped that the examination hearings can be opened up to those who support the Plan, as well as those who are challenging it. The inter Parishes Group may want to be represented at the table. The big restraints in terms of development in the area were referred to, e.g. the AONB, the SDNP, Ashdown Forest, etc. Neighbourhood Plans. GW confirmed that these are a big and important part of the District Plan, and the more there are in place, or well advanced, the better. Mid Sussex is doing very well on this front, and 20 are in the course of preparation, with possibly 10 or 11 being formally made by the time of the DP examination. The 5 year housing land supply argument needs to be won early on, and GW made the point that the 800 x 5 (or 4,000) houses over the first 5 years, is a rolling figure, and must be deliverable. Crawley Down letter (on status of NPs, where there is no DP or 5 year housing land supply in place). GW repeated that MSDC has always been very supportive of NPs, but planning applications had to be judged on merit, and any case law could not be regarded as a precedent or binding. The NPPF was still a major consideration, and policies in the document had to be looked at as a whole. Planning officers' reports need to be balanced, but the number of call-ins by the Government showed that NPs were being taken very seriously. S.106 funding. It was noted there were no monies for upgrading the playground in the Recreation Ground, but GW suggested the Council pursue with Councillor John Allen, the possibility of tapping onto the new homes bonus fund. GW confirmed that the policy is always to build on brown field sites in mid Sussex, but there is not much of it around in this essentially rural part of the world. On the Firmland issue, GW said that he was happy to take up with the leader of WSCC. It is also the case that MSDC will determine the planning application for the water tank, and Councillor John Allen needs to be involved. The big issue of the HGV movements in and around the Parish was touched on. NE agreed to provide GW with a bullet point précis of the issues, which have concerned APC. *Finally, the Chairman thanked GW for his time, and very enlightening talk to the Parish Council on all of the above issues.*

- 6. (2016/017) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Peter Griffiths (PG), and MSDC Councillor John Allen.** No reports were made, as neither Councillor was present. However, it was noted that if Councillor Allen is unable to

attend any meeting, it would be helpful if he could arrange to send a substitute ward Councillor in his place, and Councillor Wall, who was still present, said that this was a perfectly fair expectation.

## **7. (2016/018) – Planning matters.**

7.1 On the Neighbourhood Plan, it was noted that the regulation 16 consultation period ended on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Ten responses had been received, of which four were objections, three were neutral, and three were supportive. All these are on MSDC's planning website under Neighbourhood Plans. The Clerk had circulated details provided by MSDC of the CVs of three possible people to undertake the independent examination of the Plan, being the next stage of the process. There was a discussion on the suitability of the candidates, and it was agreed that Councillor NE would speak with Mark Bristow at MSDC in order to take this forward.

7.2 On the Firland Industrial Estate Park planning application, the most recent correspondence with the planning officer at WSCC was referred to. It was noted that some of the planning conditions had now been met, e.g. as to the height of the stock pile, but not the requirement as to road markings. It was reported that West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service are satisfied in the short term about the fire safety conditions, because of the water carrier vehicle. However, in the long term they are looking for an on-site facility to be provided, and indeed the operator has just submitted a planning application to MSDC for a water tank to be installed near to the premises, which APC will be consulted on. Overall though, the need was still felt to pursue the matter with the local MPs, and to request a meeting with them in due course.

7.3 On other planning enforcement matters – (i) Albourne Equestrian Centre: there had been no follow up yet, as promised by the planning officer, and so the Clerk will take this up further; (ii) Field off Albourne Place: it was noted that the planning issues are the subject of an ongoing planning investigation by MSDC; (iii) On Foxglove Cottage, there is no sign as yet of the expected planning application, and so the Clerk will chase this up; (iv) it was agreed that a new matter relating to the track near Bishops Place, going south towards Singing Hills Golf Course, needs to go on the list. NE has spoken with the planning officer, but it appears that the track is not connected with the planning consent for the agricultural building. The Planning Officer needs to take this up further, and so the Clerk will need to pursue the matter with him.

## **8. (2016/019) – Finance report and matters.**

8.1 The financial summary and the Bank reconciliation for the month, were received, noted, and approved.

8.2 Invoices were presented for payment, and it **was RESOLVED to agree and to make the following payments:-**

<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>PROCUREMENT</b>	<b>PAYEE</b>
£20-78	Christmas meeting refreshments	Meg Price (reimbursement)
£410-63	Clerk's salary plus on costs (January)	WSCC

£48-17	Previous GS cheque cancelled (01.09.15) + postage for bank mandate form	Graham Stafford
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8.3 The Clerk confirmed that following the agreement at the last meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016, he had requested a precept sum from MSDC for 206/17 of £15,022 as compared with the current year of £14,054. This will give the Parish Council an extra £968 of resources. However, because the increase is balanced out by the decrease in the tax base, due to an increase in the number of households paying, there will be no change in the individual amounts paid, as far as the precept part of the bills is concerned.

**9. (2016/020) – Operation Watershed.** Councillor GS has met with Richard Speller (RS) (WSCC) along with Councillor NE for part of the meeting. RS has looked at the flooding issues along Reeds Lane. He is not happy with the culverts along the road, or in the Sayers Common area generally. He proposes a camera survey of the ditches and gullies along the north side of the B2116, but noted that there is an issue with blocked pipes on private land. This needs to be investigated further. GS that a response to the flooding outside Ernest Doe’s and near Church Lane, is still awaited, but it may be that the size of the pipes is the problem. In passing, GS also discussed with RS the issue of providing “Unsuitable for HGVs” signage. Councillor HJ also said that two further accidents near the High Cross junction had been reported, where the police were involved.

**10. (2016/021) – Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC).** It was noted that an application for funding for the refurbishment of the kitchen had been made to WSCC’s Communities Initiative Fund, and this needs to go through the Local County Committee. Ann Higginson has a meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> February to look further at social cohesion through the Village Hall. It was noted that Jenny Gratton is resigning as the bookings secretary. The issue of allowing car parking overnight in the VH car park for local residents was discussed, but it was acknowledged that this would be very difficult to achieve in practice, because of the parking pressures at other times. The issue of the churning up of the grass verges by delivery vans (Tesco’s) was discussed, and the Clerk would pursue this with the supermarket chain (Company) involved. Also, the illegal parking of Jersey registered cars in the Street (near and/or opposite the School) should be reported to the PCSO, so that a suitable warning could be given. It was believed that these vehicles were all connected with one particular property, which appeared to be occupied by airline staff.

**11. (2016/022) – Current issues.** (i) On the ongoing saga of the removal of the road signage, RS thought that the estimate that the Parish Council had obtained through Councillor GS, as reported previously, was very reasonable. However, even at that level, WSCC could not take it up, as it simply had no money to spend at the present time on such projects. (ii) It was noted that there is still no update on the applications for TPOs on the trees in the “common” land in the Street. (iii) Councillor MP reported that the Anti-Social behaviour officer at MSDC (Nicola Green) had recently left MSDC, and so although some progress with her had been made, this had left the issue of the access-ways into the Recreation Ground, which were being used for motorbikes to get in, etc., unresolved. However, MP will be pursuing with

an alternative officer at MSDC. In the meantime, it was noted that any solutions would need to try and preserve the access for prams and buggies.

**12. (2016/023) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters.** GS referred to his conversation with an owner of land in the Parish about footpaths and stiles in terms of ownership and responsibility, and it was noted that once again the details of the “Monday Group” had been provided to him. It is now up to him to contact the Group. HJ had chased up the tree TPO issue referred to above, but there is still no response from the Tree Officer at MSDC. She further mentioned that the hedge responsibility issue at Hunters Mead needed to be chased up with MSDC, as the overgrowth was becoming a real problem. There was also still the issue outside 20 Barleycroft, where it was believed that Affinity Sutton was responsible. HJ will provide further details to the Clerk, who will then pursue these matters. MP raised the issue of the inspection by the WSCC footpaths ranger, and that a report on what was found, and what work is proposed, needs to come forward. She also briefly went through the list of Parish Council activities/projects, and it was noted that some could now be deleted, and others would be updated for the next meeting. Finally, she requested that the annual review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be put on the next Agenda for March.

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.

SIGNED.....Meg Price/Graham Stafford  
Chairman/Vice Chairman

***NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 1<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2016 @ 7.00 p.m.***