

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2015]

Minutes of the meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 2nd June 2015, at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllr Meg Price (MP) - Chairman
Cllr Graham Stafford (GS) – Vice Chairman
Cllr Nikki Ernest (NE)
Cllr Barry Compton (BC)
Cllr Heather Jordan (HJ)
Cllr Nick Wergan (NW)
Cllr Di Howard (DH) (from item 4 onwards)

In attendance: Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk), and 2 members of the public (for parts of the meeting).

-
- 1. (2015/022) – Chairman formally opens the meeting, welcomes those present, and receives apologies for absence.** Apologies were received from Councillor Peter Griffiths, as he was attending a local CLC meeting.
 - 2. (2015/023) – New Chairman signs Declarations of Acceptance of Office.** The item having been deferred from the last meeting in the absence of the Chairman, as agreed by the Council, the Chairman duly signed both forms, which were then witnessed by the Clerk.
 - 3. (2015/024) - Vacancy on Council.** Di Howard has lived in the village for some 15 years, and gave a brief outline of her work experiences and background. There being no other candidates for the one vacancy on the Parish Council, following the uncontested election on 7th May 2015, it was **unanimously RESOLVED to co-opt Di Howard on to the Parish Council in order to take the Council up to its full complement of 7 Councillors.**
 - 4. (2015/025) – Signing and witnessing of Declaration of office by new Councillor.** Councillor Howard duly signed the Declaration, and this was witnessed by the Clerk.
 - 5. (2015/026) – Declarations of interest.** There were none declared.

- 6. (2015/027) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public** - (i) The issue of the HGVs was raised, and particularly the damage that is now being caused to the surrounding roads. There had also been a particular danger over the half term school holidays. Peter Griffiths is still pursuing the matter, and has suggested a meeting to discuss the situation. This now needs to be arranged urgently, and MP will contact PG accordingly. There was a concern that the ongoing Firmland Industrial Estate planning application was not being dealt with transparently by WSCC. GS said that he had also raised the issue at a senior level with WSCC Councillors, at a recent networking lunch he had been to on behalf of the Parish Council. NW said that the thought the time would come where the Council would have to involve the press and media. (ii) The issue of the cyclists and their anti-social behaviour was raised again. MP said that she would monitor this at the weekend, in order to see for herself, the scale of the problem. It will also be raised at the regular meetings that she and GS now have with the PCSO.
- 7. (2015/028) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 5th May 2015 (being an extraordinary meeting) and on 19th May (being the annual Parish Council meeting) were duly approved and signed, as a true record, by the Chairman.
- 8. (2015/029) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Peter Griffiths, and MSDC Councillor John Allen.** There were no reports, as neither Councillor was present on this occasion.
- 9. (2015/030) – Pop up Village Pub.** MP confirmed that twelve volunteer bar staff had completed the appropriate training, and that it was planned to commence the venture on 19th July 2015, on a Sunday (to start with), from 11 a.m. to 4.00 p.m., but initially, this will in fact be to 1.00 p.m. It will be on a trial basis, and will be reviewed later in the year. Geoff Zeidler will be dealing with further publicising the scheme. NE suggested, in view of the comments at the Annual Parish meeting held in May, that it would be a good idea to canvass nearby residents, after a few events, about how they felt the pub was going, and this was **AGREED** by Council. The issue of reclaiming VAT on the costs of setting up the scheme was also discussed. It was **AGREED** that the VH Management Committee would at its next meeting, be requested to consider further the issue of the payments made in respect of the License, particularly as regards the advertising fee.
- 10. (2015/031) – Village Voice.** MP indicated that there was some availability in the Hurtspierpoint and Sayers Common Village Voice publication, for an Albourne Parish Council slot. It could be a useful communication tool, and the Council agreed that it should be pursued. It was noted that it would be free of charge up to a certain number of words. MP will take this up further.

- 11. (2015/32) – Transparency Code.** The Clerk reported that under new regulations, any Parish Council with a turnover of less than £25,000 p.a., would be excused from the external audit regime, but would have to comply with the new regulations on transparency (as from 1st July 2015). These required the publication on the website, of a wealth of financial information and Council assets, including details of all payments over £100. It was noted that there would therefore be some implications on the Clerk's time. However, it was also noted that some of what is required, e.g. publication of Agendas and Minutes is already being done. Councillors noted the Code, and that it would need to be periodically monitored as part of the governance requirements.
- 12. (2015/33) – Traffic issue in Albourne.** BC referred to the Notice in the local paper for the extension of the operator's License at the Firsland Park Estate, about which he had emailed Councillors, and said that he had already sent a response to the Traffic Commissioner. This was tabled at the meeting. It was noted that this activity would further exacerbate the issue of HGVs and the unsustainable volumes of traffic on Albourne's roads. It was therefore **AGREED** that the Clerk would also send a similar letter to the relevant parties on behalf of the Parish Council.
- 13. (2015/34) - Roadside signage in Albourne.** Councillor Peter Griffiths has the matter in hand, but it would have to be deferred as he was not present at the meeting. It was noted however, that he had previously said that the deadline for achieving the funding for the work was today (2nd June). The Clerk would therefore send a reminder to the WSCC officer, Richard Speller, in order to enquire about progress. This would also include reference to the fact that signage generally was in a pretty poor and dirty state.
- 14. (2015/35) – New bench for Parish.** The issue of the future maintenance responsibility for the bench was discussed, and although there was a budget for this, this would depend on it being installed at no cost to the Parish Council, and so the position would be reviewed in due course. Otherwise, it was agreed that the bench should be of the rural wooden style, and the installation and base construction, should be up to the sponsor. It was also agreed that the Council had no objection to a suitable accreditation plaque being placed on the bench. MP therefore agreed to report back to Peter Holding accordingly.
- 15. (2015/36 – Insurance for 2015/16.** In accordance with the Clerk's recommendation, as the quote still represented good value, it was **unanimously RESOLVED to insure the Council through Came & Company, with Hiscox Insurance, on the same terms and conditions as last year, the renewal date being 3rd June 2015, and the annual premium being the amount agreed for payment as set out below.**

16. (2015/37) – Planning matters.

16.1 One planning application was considered, and the plans and relevant policies discussed. It was therefore **RESOLVED to comment to MSDC as follows:-**

PROPERTY	PROPOSAL	AGREED RESPONSE
AE/DM/15/1830 – Dingley Dell, Truslers Hill Lane	Single storey rear extension, porch	APC has no objections to this application.

16.2 On the Neighbourhood Plan, NE and Mick Gratton have met, and all the submission documents are nearly ready to formally send to MSDC. There just needs to be a bit more work to the maps. It was confirmed that the intention (as referred to in the minutes of the meeting on 19th May 2015) was to create a NP working party.

16.3 This had been discussed in the context of the traffic issue (see above).

16.4 The planning enforcement list of matters was gone through, and the actions noted. The Clerk will pursue a number of issues with MSDC Planning Enforcement. It was agreed that some could be deleted from the list. This will be updated for the next meeting in July. NE also updated the Council on Mayfields, where 8 out of 9 Parish Councils had agreed to sign the letter (see previous minutes). It was also noted that the Horsham District Plan re-opens for examination in July, and NE will be attending the session on 3rd July. NE has also emailed MSDC about ensuring that APC is invited to the MSDC District Plan examination hearings, when they start later in the year.

17. (2015/038) – Finance report and matters.

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

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

AMOUNT	PROCUREMENT	PAYEE
£358-05	Clerk's salary/on costs	WSCC
£451-58	Annual Parish Council insurance premium for 2015/16 (Hiscox Insurances)	Broker Network Limited

17.3 (minute 2015/038.3). On the external audit for 2014/15, the Annual Return, together with the Accounting and Governance Statements, was formally received and approved by the Council. Accordingly, it was **RESOLVED to authorise the Chairman and Clerk to sign the document in readiness for submission to the external auditors, Littlejohns, by the due date - 8th June 2015.**

18. (2015/039) – Operation Watershed. GS/BC reported on progress. The ongoing work to clear the ditches is being monitored. There has been a big improvement on the previous work. On the OW work, Edburtons has asked to increase the diameter of the pipe from 300 mm to 400 mm. This will add a further £410 + VAT to the cost, which will take the price over budget, but which could be found from other budgets. On the basis that the 300 mm is quite an increase from the 75 mm, there should still be a significant improvement, but some members felt that the further increase would be worthwhile, while others were not convinced. The Chairman therefore called for a vote by way of a show of hands, as to whether the Council should agree the increase to 400 mm. This was carried by 5 votes in favour, with 2 against. **Accordingly, it was resolved to authorise the increase.** A resident has sent an email about the condition of the footpath following some OW work, which GS will look into. However, it was felt that the materials used would eventually weather down. GS will also be meeting with Richard Speller at WSCC regarding some outstanding works at John Standing's property. The Council felt that it would be useful to have a maintenance schedule from WSCC for all the drains and culverts, following all the work undertaken in Albourne, and the Clerk will also contact Richard Speller accordingly.

19. (2015/040) – Village Hall Management Committee. As previously reported, there will be a Village Hall Management Committee meeting on 23rd June. It would be necessary at this meeting to co-opt to a number of vacancies on the Committee, and to elect a new Chairman of the Committee. MP confirmed that there a number of willing candidates, who will be invited to the meeting. MP will also contact Elaine Makey (the outgoing Chairman) about the preparation of the Agenda, so that she can consult with the Clerk.

20. (2015/041) – Current issues. On the issue of the trees in the disputed land in the Street, WSCC had sent a plan, which did not indicate the trees, but which appeared to confirm that most of the land was highways. HJ is meeting with the Tree Officers, with a view to TPOs, and making sure that the trees are properly recorded. Also, Network Power need to be contacted regarding the proximity to the electricity cables. The Clerk will action this. On the leaning tree in the Millennium Garden, it was noted that 3 estimates are required under Financial Regulations, and so a third estimate will be taken. Once this is to hand, it was AGREED to authorise going ahead with the lowest estimate. The condition of the gate was discussed, and it was agreed to obtain 3 estimates for rectifying the problems with the gate, and also for removing a stump of wood, which was causing a trip hazard, and also for repairing the seat in the Garden, as raised by DH. HJ will action this.

21. (2015/042) – Clerk's report. The Clerk said that the South Downs National Park Authority had invited nominations from relevant Parish Councils to the two places allocated to parishes for membership of the Authority. However, Councillors felt that these would be better taken up by those parishes that fall entirely within the SDNP.

22. (2015/043) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters. NW raised the issue of the frequency of WSCC grass verge cutting, and the article in West Sussex Connections. GS asked whether it might be more helpful to refer to the Annual Parish meeting, as the Annual Assembly, so as to differentiate it from the Annual Parish Council meeting. This could be considered at a future date. He also urged Councillors to visit the Bolney PC website, to see the information they have on that, under the auspices of their volunteer group – such as winter management planning. IM raised the issue of the Rectory in the Twitten still being empty, and will write to PG about this, since the Clerk had received a local enquiry about it. HJ mentioned the Recreation Ground, and the work that had been done to it recently. IM has already taken up the issue of the long grass, which needs cutting, and will also raise the issue of the missing goalposts with MSDC.

The meeting closed at 8.58 p.m.

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

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 7th JULY 2015 @ 7.00 p.m.