

# ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2019]

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## Minutes of the meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2019, at 7.00 p.m.

*Present:* Cllr Graham Stafford (GS) – Chairman  
Cllr Nikki Ernest (NE)  
Cllr Jerry Butler (JB) – Vice Chairman  
Cllr Joy Parks (JP)  
Cllr Di Smith (DS)

*In attendance:* Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk), Councillor Judy Llewellyn-Burke (MSDC), Councillor Joy Dennis (WSCC) and 4 members of the public (for all or parts of the meeting).

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- 1. (2019/110) – Councillor GS formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** Apologies for absence were received from Parish Councillors Suzanne Sawyer and John Drew, and the reasons accepted.
- 2. (2019/111) – Declarations of interest.** There were none declared on this occasion.
- 3. (2019/112) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** A representative from the Parochial Church Council informed Members that in order to improve the car parking in Church Lane, it was looking at three options with the cost in excess of £10K for each option. The idea was to improve car parking, not just for the Church but for other visitors as well. The PCC hoped to tap into possible grant funding, but wanted to approach the Parish Council to see if any financial assistance might be available from it. Members noted the request and raised a few queries, which were responded to.
- 4. (2019/113) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 were duly approved and signed, as a true record, by the Chairman.
- 5. (2019/114) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Joy Dennis (JD), and MSDC Councillor Judy Llewellyn-Burke (JLB).** (i) JD was asked to check the Public Rights of Way (PROW) inspection for the Parish, as nothing appears to have happened on it as yet. The issue of the repairs needed to the fence alongside the Village Hall is still outstanding, and a reply from Richard Speller (WSCC) is awaited. On the dumping and burning of rubbish issue on the land in Church Lane, the trees are

being badly affected, and although JD believes that the land is not WSCC owned, she will chase up the Land Registry search. There is a further meeting to discuss the local traffic issues coming up. There is a consultation on recycling at the Burgess Hill waste disposal site ongoing. She raised the issue of County Lines Gangs (cross County drug dealing from the Cities, involving the exploitative use of local children). Awareness, especially for parents, is the key issue. It will be appropriate to put this on the Albourne Connected Face-book page. The trees in the Common Copse, which are WSCC's responsibility, are now dangerous and intertwined with overhead power cables. This has been reported on several occasions, and JD agreed to pursue it again. JLB said that the planning issue of the floodlights at the Equestrian Centre is being dealt with by the planning officer this week. Enforcement action at the Barn has been commenced. It was reported that the hedge alongside the Village Hall footpath has become infested with Black Locust tree spread. This is a toxic plant and needs to be treated for removal by MSDC. JLB agreed to take this up. JLB also agreed to look into whether or not MSDC could help with the installation of the new bins. The issue of the unofficial "playground" use of the green at Hunters Mead has been reported, and a response is still awaited from MSDC. The cutting back of a hedge alongside the Recreation ground (B2118 end) has not been done well, and the trimmings have just been left. However, it was noted that this may have done by an adjoining private owner, so there may not be much that can be done.

## 6. (2019/115) – Planning matters.

6.1 Three planning application were considered, and the plans and relevant policies presented and discussed. It was therefore **RESOLVED to comment to MSDC as follows:-**

PROPERTY	PROPOSAL	AGREED RESPONSE
DM/19/4025 Softech House, London Road*	Removal of Condition 9 relating to application AE/021/93 that states "The proposed premises shall be used for offices (B1a) and no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class B1 of the schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987)."	Albourne Parish Council objects to this application as there is insufficient information on the proposed use of the site, and it is clear that certain B1 uses could impact nearby properties, some of which are very close to the site. We appreciate historically the site has been used as a public house. However, since that time new dwellings have been erected in the original grounds of the site, some of which are less than 2 metres from the boundary. In our view, the condition was imposed for good reason, and should therefore remain.
DM/19/3876 Q Leisure, The Old Sand Pit, London Road *	Proposed two storey, partially buried dwelling (warden accommodation for: 1) the wellbeing of overnight occupants of 9 eco pods as approved	Albourne Parish Council notes that there have been similar applications on this site, made and refused by both the Planning Authority and Government

	<p>under ref DM/18/1807), now extant. 2) additional security issues in respect of approved 50m shooting range as approved under ref DM/18/4461; and 3) addressing existing and ongoing security and management issues associated with the existing business activities.</p>	<p>inspectors several times. Nothing has changed in this latest application, and therefore our previous comments still apply. The Parish Council questions the need for an on-site manager for the proposed eco-huts, and does not accept that this is an essential requirement for running the business. In any event, the Parish Council objects to the proposal for the same reasons, as are set out in respect of previous applications for a dwelling on this site, i.e. it is against relevant District Plan, and Albourne Neighbourhood Plan policies. These reasons have previously been accepted by the Planning Authority in rejecting previous proposals, and this stance has been supported on appeal, by a Government Planning Inspector. Further, the property is considered to be oversized, and excessive for the purposes for which it is claimed it is needed. It is also noted in commenting, that the eco-pods do not appear to have been built as yet.</p>
<p>AE/DM/19/4639 Kings Head Stud, London Road</p>	<p>Variation of planning condition no. 20 of DM/19/0259 - To amend the approved plans to allow amendments to the highway access, plans numbered 10.01 - 10.12 inclusive. All topographical survey drawings remain unchanged.</p>	<p>Albourne Parish Council has no objections to this application.</p>

\* These two applications were dealt with under delegated authority, prior to the meeting, on the grounds of urgency. It should also be noted that application DM/19/3876 has since been refused by MSDC.

6.2 In the absence of Councillor Drew, his written report was tabled as follows:-

“We have been advised that our New Highways Scheme proposals containing speed limit reductions, improvements to road junctions and road signage has passed the moderation stage of assessment by WSCC, albeit not with a high priority ranking. Next stages are to estimate costs and identify sources of funding (Councillor Joy Dennis to be asked to advise

regarding s.106 monies). Richard Speller has offered to advise indicative costs. The next meeting with Olus Management is arranged for 21<sup>st</sup> November. Joy Parks, Ann Higginson, myself, and possibly another will attend. Issues are variable adherence to Olus speed restrictions, clarity on HGV routes, names of new companies using Firland, overloading of green waste trailers and Olus offer of support. Jerry Butler is producing pictorial representations of proposed style and locations of Gateways for review with Richard Speller on 26<sup>th</sup> November. I had a positive meeting with Anne Claxton, Head of Albourne School, on 12<sup>th</sup> November during which she confirmed she would write to WSCC in support of our highway proposals. We also discussed parking problems which she offered to raise at a forthcoming Governors' meeting. A meeting between residents and Governors was suggested and a note detailing residents' experiences was forwarded. We are still pursuing complaints to the Ombudsman regarding the 2015 planning decision. We are still waiting for a further telephone call to be arranged. All three complaints are now sensibly being dealt with by the same officer. The Speed Indication Device has been installed adjacent to the village lay by for the past two weeks facing both directions."

6.3 On current planning, planning enforcement, and other strategic planning matters, Cllr NE had circulated a response to MSDC's Housing Sites Development Plan Document, and this was **AGREED** as: *Albourne Parish Council believes Appendix B should be removed from the document. It is not referred to from the main document, and given that MSDC has proposed sites through the DPD process, it is rather misleading, and in our view, superfluous. The Clerk will send this response off to MSDC tomorrow.* It was confirmed that a letter had been sent to the CEO at Horsham District Council from the Inter Parishes Group setting out in detail, a number of concerns on the possibility that the Mayfield's site could be included in their revised District Plan. A copy of this letter is available from the Clerk.

## **7. (2019/116) – Finance report and matters.**

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

7.2 The 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>
£427-83	Clerk's salary + on costs (October)	West Sussex County Council
£51-00	Share of the cost of the flooding report commissioned on the impact of large scale housing development in the area	Shermanbury Parish Council
£829-08	New rubbish bin for the Street (to replace the existing one), and a new dog waste bin for the corner of Church Lane (plus the respective fixing equipment)	Glasdon UK Limited
£202-54	Street lighting maintenance contract Payment 2 (of 2)	Streetlights
£33,121-44	Operation Watershed works - Oakvale Cottages project	Landbuild Limited
£565-00	Tidying up - gardening work at the Millennium Garden	TS Landscapes

7.3 The Clerk raised the issue of whether the Council should have a half yearly internal audit, around September in each year. It is considered best practice, but mainly for the larger towns and parishes. After discussion, and in accordance with the Clerk's recommendation, it was **AGREED** that as a small authority, with a low precept, not to have a half yearly internal audit for the time being.

**8. (2019/117) – Current issues.** (i) On the tidying up of the Millennium Garden, the work to clear the Garden of brambles and overgrown vegetation has been done, and done well. On the issue of dealing with the paths, and the tarmac around the central tree, the three quotes were presented and discussed. It was proposed by Cllr JP and seconded by Cllr DS, that the quote from TS Landscapes at a cost of £2,995 (inclusive of VAT) be accepted. It was then unanimously **RESOLVED** to accept the quote, and so commission TS Landscapes to carry out the work accordingly. It was noted that the School will need to be notified of the work, as they use the path through the Garden for access. An issue was raised about a child climbing over the locked gate from the School to the Garden, but as it was a one off incident, it was decided against increasing the height of the gate, (ii) On the Common Copse land Cllr GS is having a meeting with Richard Speller (WSCC) at the end of the month, (iii) On the Church Lane burning of rubbish issue, this has been discussed above, (iv) On the new dog waste bin for the corner of the Street (to the right of the salt bin) near Church Lane, Cllr GS raised a query as to whether a Highways License would be required, and the Clerk will check this.

**9. (2019/118) – Operation Watershed (OW).** Councillor GS commended the work of the recently completed project along the B2116 (Oak Vale Cottages), and noted that the items left at the site had now been removed by the contractor, Landbuild. It was therefore agreed that the invoice should be paid.

**10. (2019/119) - Delegated Decisions.** The decisions of the Council, taken under delegated authority (on the grounds of urgency) to commission Tim Smith to carry out various tidying up work at the Millennium Garden at a cost of £565 (two other quotes having also been obtained), and in respect of some additional re-hedging work at a further cost of £50 (for the hedge whips), were formally noted for the record.

**11. (2019/120) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters.** Cllr JP mentioned that the further issues with regard to the manhole near Church Lane (being the dumping of the old reinforced concrete surround some metres down the footpath by the contractors, as well as the stopcock post not being replaced) had not yet been resolved. The Clerk will chase this up with SE Water. Cllr DS asked about the whereabouts of the Silent Soldier. It is still in the Churchyard, and may be brought back to the Village at Remembrance time next year. Cllr NE asked how the request from the PCC made earlier in the meeting, should be dealt with. It was agreed that this should be on the Agenda for the next meeting. Cllr GS raised the issue of the overgrown hedges along the B2116 at Inholmes Farmhouse. It was recognised that the owner does regularly cut back the hedges, but it was agreed that the Clerk should write to the owner, and request that particular attention is paid to this issue.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.

SIGNED.....Graham Stafford/Jerry Butler  
Chairman/Vice Chairman

***NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 3<sup>rd</sup> DECEMBER 2019 @ 7.00 p.m.***