

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2023]

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 7th November 2023 at 7.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr John Drew (JD) – Chairman
Cllr Joy Parks (JP) – Vice Chairman
Cllr Di Smith (DS)
Cllr Suzanne Sawyer (SS)
Cllr Shane Axtell (SA)
Cllr Imelda Spencer (IS)

In attendance: Iain McLean; Parish Council Clerk, Councillor John Spencer (both via remote means), Councillor Geoff Zeidler (MSDC), Councillor Joy Dennis (WSCC), and 3 members of the public.

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- 1. (2023/108) - Councillor JD formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** Councillor John Spencer had sent his apologies for not being able to be present in person, and the reason accepted.
 - 2. (2023/109) – Declarations of interest.** In case the matter came up, Cllr JP declared a personal interest in the complaint to WSCC about the flooding issue on the B2116, as she was the complainant. Otherwise there were none.
 - 3. (2023/110) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** Tim Higginson from WILD gave a further presentation on the work they have been doing to promote the campaign against the Sayers Village proposal on the draft, revised District Plan. They also went to the Parish Council meeting at Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common (H&SC) in October in order to make their case. It was interesting to note that the Planning Inspector in the Croudace appeal had highlighted the character of the local rural landscape in the area as being a worthy consideration, and there are elements of her decision that could equally apply to this proposal. The Inspector has agreed that the District Council had a 5 year housing land supply, but that other plan policies were highly applicable anyway. It was noted that 2,000 homes are proposed for the rural village of Albourne, yet just 235 for Haywards Heath, and a mere 45 for East Grinstead being two of the three towns in the District. This goes against the aspirations of the Levelling UP and Regeneration Act (now in force), and various pronouncements from Government ministers. He also referred to the email that he had sent to the Chairman, and it was agreed that there would need to be a

separate meeting arranged in order to discuss and take forward the points he had raised.

- 4. (2023/111) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3rd October 2023 were duly approved and will be signed off, as a true record, by the Chairman as soon as possible.
- 5. (2023/112) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Joy Dennis (JD), and MSDC Councillor Geoff Zeidler (GZ).** Cllr GZ gave his report and referred to the written summary that had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The main points covered were (i) the concerns regarding the re-wilding area of the Recreation Ground and how this is managed by MSDC. Further, as this was so close to the playing field, MSDC would consider moving it to a more appropriate area, (ii) Cllr JP mentioned that the fly-tipping in the Rec., which had been reported in September, has still not been cleared. GZ asked that she send a reminder to MSDC with a copy to him. Cllr JD gave her report. The main points were (i) the TRO is progressing, and has been split into two parts. Adam Denby (WSCC) has been in contact with Cllr Drew, and set out the priorities, and what is capable of being delivered, (ii) the school parking problem is ongoing, and it is possible that traffic calming measures under a Community Highways scheme such as flashing warning lights, could be an option. Also, there is a proposal to replace the bus with smaller ones, (iii) officers are looking at measures to address the speeding issues along Truslers Hill Lane, (iv) there is a plan to introduce hydrogen-run buses, and to increase the route network and frequency, (v) the fire safety issues and risks relating to the various planning proposals for battery storage facilities was noted and discussed, (vi) the utilities/road charging regime for such works affecting highways has led to a speeding up of the process.

6. (2023/113) – Planning and traffic matters.

6.1 One planning application was 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/23/1919 - Lanehurst Stables, Twineham Lane	Erection of oak framed garage with workshop space following demolition of existing garage on a revised site. (Amended plans, description and additional information received 01.11.2023)	As before, Albourne Parish Council has no objections to this application

6.2 Cllr JD deferred this item (highway and traffic issues) to the rolling list of actions due for discussion under item 10, or had been covered within Cllr JD's (WSCC) report under item 5. However, on the traffic calming management of the B2118 in connection with the former Hazelden's development to a Retirement Village, Cllr IS reported that Inspired Villages would be funding the speed indicators for this stretch of the road, which would be hard wired and permanent. She advised that the development will be known as "Wellcroft Green." It was also noted that work on the site is well underway now, and that the developer is regularly

updating the Parish Council on progress and any issues arising. Indeed, Phil Docherty from Inspired Villages hopes to attend the next meeting so as to give an update in person.

6.3. As noted under item 3, it was confirmed that the Croudace planning appeal held in August, regarding the application to develop the land to the south of Henfield Road (DM/22/2416), had been dismissed by the Planning Inspector in a detailed decision letter dated 5th October 2023. The details are all available on MSDC's website (planning pages).

6.4 Cllr JS advised that the Council had received from a recent planning applicant, some helpful traffic speeding data on Truslers Hill Lane, and this could assist in terms of the measures that WSCC is currently looking at relating to the speeding issues along this road. He reported that he and Cllr JD had attended (on 12th October) a further meeting with MSDC in order to discuss the Sayers Village proposal in the draft, revised District Plan. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that the affected Parishes are involved in the process as it evolves, and to learn for example, why MSDC favours this proposal as opposed to the Mayfields Market Towns proposal. An email setting this out has been sent to those Parish Councils from the Deputy Chief Executive and is available on request. The Council has been invited to take part in workshops, and it was **AGREED** that Cllr JS, and Cllr JD (or a Councillor substitute) will participate. It was important to point out that such participation is to be informed about, rather than to endorse, the proposal, and the Council maintains its in principle objection to the Plan. Finally, it was noted that it would be a good idea to have a joint Parishes meeting with H&SC Parish Council and Twineham, in order to discuss a joint approach, and to pool resources, and the Clerk will be taking this forward.

7. (2023/114) – 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:-**

AMOUNT	PROCUREMENT	PAYEE
£427-83	Clerk's salary + on costs (October)	West Sussex County Council
£420-00	Repair to street light in Church Lane	Streetlights
£53-42	Payroll admin charges from 01.04.23 – 30.09.23	West Sussex County Council
£73-19	New pads for defibrillator at Village Hall	The Defib Pad (reimbursement for John Parks)
£217-33	Payment 2 of 2 street lighting maintenance contract	Streetlights
£42-52	Name badges for new Councillors	Name Badges International (reimbursement for Di Smith)

7.3 The proposed forward Action Plan as circulated by the Clerk was discussed. Cllr JP suggested the inclusion of the equipment in the Recreation Ground under that item, and it was felt that the figure allocated to work required on the District Plan was too low. However, it was agreed that Councillors would input any further suggestions for the Plan by the end of

November, and the Clerk will bring it back to the December meeting for final approval and signing off.

8. (2023/115) – Report from the Village Hall Management Committee. The latest meeting had taken place on the 31st October. Councillor DS gave her report. The main points were (i) a rolling list of action points and member responsibility for, had been prepared and discussed, which addressed the need to improve the Hall and bring it up to a proper standard in all areas. It will cost up to £5,000 to achieve, (ii) the Committee has dealt with the need to put in place safeguarding and other relevant policies for the Hall. It had resolved to ratify, and to put them in place. However, the Parish Council felt that as the body with the overall responsibility, it needed to be involved, with a view to affirming the Committee's work, and so the situation will be reviewed (comments to either Cllr DS or Cllr IS) by the end of November, (iii) there is an issue with the rear fire door and exit, which the Committee is addressing. The draft minutes will be available shortly.

9. (2023/116) – Calendar of Parish Council meetings for 2024. The proposed calendar of meetings for 2024, maintaining the tradition of the first Tuesday in each month, was noted and approved. However, it was agreed to move the January meeting from the 2nd to the 9th January, and the November meeting from the 5th to 12th November.

10. (2023/117) – Current issues. Cllr JD went through the rolling list of actions that had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, and this is attached. However, it was noted (i) that the issue of restoring the goal post on the Recreation Ground is still outstanding, (ii) the gate (post) from Barn Close to the Rec., needs replacing/repairing by MSDC. The Clerk has chased this up, (iii) Cllr SA will be having a walk round with Graham Stafford to look at flooding issues, and to take forward any Operation Watershed funding from WSCC, (iv) on the gap in the hedge, it was **AGREED** that the gap should be restored, and Adie Rowe (AR) has been asked to quote again to carry out the work. It is now known who the perpetrator is. It was also noted that AR has completed the autumn hedge cutting in and around the Millennium Garden (MG), and an invoice is awaited. He has also agreed to take on the maintenance of the Medieval Pound in the spring and autumn, when the works to the MG are done (starting in the spring of next year). There is a further gap in the hedge near the bus stop into the Recreation Ground, which needs investigation, (v) the emptying of the dog waste bin in Church Lane has been temporarily resolved by Cllr JP, and more permanent arrangements are being looked into by the Clerk, (vi) despite being cut back, the toxic Black Locust plant growing through the hedge at the footpath by the Village Hall, is still a problem, (vii) there is a date in December for WSCC to do the flooding works along the B2116 opposite Barn Close.

11. (2023/118) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters. There were none, and current issues had been raised and discussed under item 10 above.

The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

SIGNED.....John Drew/Joy Parks
Chairman/Vice Chairman

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 5th DECEMBER 2023 @ 7.00 p.m.