

WOODMANCOTE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting held in the Parish Hall on Tuesday 10th November 2015 at 7.30p.m.
(Members of the Public were invited to attend)

Mrs L Bannister – Clerk to the Council
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Present: WPC Cllrs. C. Broucke (Chairman), M. Grimes, D. Austin, P. Williams, A. Underwood and J. Prangnell
L. Bannister (Clerk)

Others Present: HDC Cllrs. D. Coldwell & B. Staines
1 x member of the public Mr Roger Millman

172. Apologies

WSCC. Cllr. Barling gave his apologies.

173. Minutes of the last Meeting held on the 13th October 2015

These were agreed and duly signed subject to the following amendments:-

- Page 2 – Amend ‘Cllr. Grime’s’ to ‘Cllr. Grimes’
- Page 5 – Amend ‘it looks as if a permission’ to ‘it looks as if a similar permission’
- Page 5 – Amend ‘Weybridge’ to ‘Weighbridge’
- Page 6 – Amend ‘complemented’ to ‘complimented upon’
- Page 7 – Amend ‘cricket club in September’ to ‘cricket club/playing field in September’

174. Action updates from previous Minutes

Cllr. Broucke looked into the prices for the notice boards again, and as they were the same as quoted at the last meeting, purchased three. Two of these have already been put up in the bus shelters, and the third could go in the foyer of the Parish Hall if permission is granted for this. The notice boards are lockable and can get eight sheets of A4 paper in them.

Cllr. Staines arrived

The fence that has been put up on public land at Hollinger has been reported again to the Highways department, but no response has been received.

The footpath in Blackstone has still not been cleared. The footpath Ranger will contact the landowners directly to ask them to clear it.

The footpath that has been moved at Morley Farm will again be reported to the footpath Ranger for a fresh assessment. **ACTION** – Clerk to do this

175. Declarations of interest from members in respect of any items in the Agenda

None.

176. Open Forum (Council agree to adjourn proceedings for questions from the members of the public)

Mr Millman has been living in Woodmancote for 20 years and has noticed that the properties in the area are becoming more and more unaffordable for working families. Mr Millman would like to see more suitable houses in the area and would like the Parish Council to encourage this. Cllr. Broucke updated Mr Millman about the Neighbourhood Plan which WPC are currently trying to complete. This could include two potential sites that would provide this type of housing. However, HDC have told WPC that Woodmancote does not require any housing. Cllr. Coldwell added that West Chiltonington have a similar problem, which they have gotten around by demolishing a larger house and erecting affordable housing on the site. However, in most cases affordable houses need to be close to services so that living costs are cheaper for the occupants.

177. Neighbourhood Plan (Cllr. Austin)

There is a potential problem as an email has been received from the new Neighbourhood Planning officer at HDC (Maggie Williams) which says that WPC's proposals would not be supported by HDC. They sent various items of evidence to support this, and referred WPC to the Inspector's report of the Nuthurst Neighbourhood Plan.

The main issue seems to be that HDC, AirS and RCOH agree that the call for sites proposals do not match the results from the questionnaire or the HDC schedule for Woodmancote.

Cllr. Austin thinks we need to include a lot more detail about the sites that have been put forward so that it is clear that the sites chosen do in fact address the needs of the Parish. So, Cllr. Austin will approach the landowners and ask them to provide the details needed.

At the initial meeting with RCOH, WPC were advised that there are lots of areas for potential development in Woodmancote, and now they are saying that this is not needed.

Members of WPC are concerned with this new development, and feel it makes a lot of the work that has been done to date worthless. Was it worth WPC doing a Neighbourhood Plan at all if no development is going to be allowed?

There is an added pressure because the deadline for the grant is approaching in December. The Clerk has asked for an extension, but if it is not granted, the £8,000 from Groundwork will need to be returned if it is not spent by this date.

It was agreed that a meeting is needed with HDC and RCOH. **ACTION** – Cllr. Austin will arrange this

Cllr. Coldwell added that the information needed from the landowners would be similar to that for outline planning permission, e.g. just a footprint.

The problem seems to be that RCOH and AirS are seeing things differently to the Steering Group, who believe that the sites selected do address the need shown in the questionnaire.

Cllr. Austin suspects that the assessments that RCOH will undertake will show that the sites are unsustainable anyway.

There was much concern that this information is coming to WPC at such a late stage, when this information could have been passed on sooner.

A site owner has asked for some feedback, and the Clerk has let him know that there is no information to give until the draft Plan is prepared.

It is likely that even though they may not be included in the Plan, two of the sites put forward may get planning permission anyway as change of use.

178. Reports from other Authorities:

178.1. Horsham District Council

Cllr. Coldwell can speak to Maggie Williams about WPC's Neighbourhood Plan if it would help to reiterate the urgency of the situation. She may be able to help with the grant extension.

Cllr. Coldwell reported that:-

The Horsham Plan is coming up next Thursday for adoption. There is still a lot of opposition and there will be a long and intense debate. However, Cllr. Coldwell expects it will be adopted. The opposition is mostly from people in north Horsham who object to the housing around the north of the A264. The opposition is looking at raising £30,000 to go to judicial review if the Plan is adopted as they believe the process has been flawed. Cllr. Coldwell doesn't know what the chances are of a judicial review happening. The inspector has approved the Plan without comment (except for initially increasing the housing numbers). Only one Neighbourhood Plan has been approved (Nutfield), and HDC are waiting for others to come through.

There is a suggestion that the development control system is adjusted in an attempt to reduce huge costs in appeals lost in the planning process. The problem is usually caused when large applications are refused contrary to officer's recommendations and with insufficiently robust reasons for the refusal. There have been several recent cases, the latest being a claim for over £300,000 at Broadbridge Heath, and two cases in Henfield in recent years.

The Chairman's Trust is a charity set up to dispense small amounts of money for very needy people. If members know of anybody, they should let Cllr. Coldwell know.

Cllr. Williams asked about an appeal in Blackstone that has been lost for retrospective planning. What happens next? Cllr. Coldwell confirmed that it will be dealt with by enforcement, and if it goes far enough they will knock the structure down.

Cllr. Staines emphasised what Cllr. Coldwell said, and added that Neighbourhood Plans are helpful to them because it gives them ammunition for fighting applications.

179. Planning

Cllr. Coldwell mentioned an application at Oreham Common, but this is not in Woodmancote.

Cllr. Coldwell thinks Hascombe Farm will go to committee in December as it is not on the list for November.

Cllrs. Coldwell and Staines left the meeting

The applications for Catsland Farmhouse have been withdrawn.

The application for Bellows has been approved.

180. Planning updates

Members have now seen the report of the restrictions for Firland, which does limit them to certain heights and times of operation. They are also subject to quarterly checks, and it would be helpful for WPC to see reports of these checks. **ACTION** – Clerk to request these

181. Pensions

As previously mentioned, WSCC have said that WPC's contributions to employee pensions would be 20.5% rising to 21.7%. However, information from SALC said there would be no contribution based on the Clerk's current salary. When this was queried with SALC which information is correct, SALC referred the Clerk back to WSCC. WSCC have since confirmed that their letter is correct.

However, the Clerk is going to opt out of the pension scheme.

182. VAS – quotes for speed data collection

WSCC have said that WPC need to provide speed data collection to prove that the sign is needed, and this will need to be funded by WPC. The following quotes for this have been collected:-

- Benchmark - £180 + VAT
- ATR - £345 + VAT
- Base Point - £199 + VAT. This company was recommended by WSCC
- The Safety Forum - £350 + VAT

It was decided to go ahead with Base Point, and ask them to set up the equipment outside the Parish Hall on the A281.

A VAS sign could also be useful for the B2116, but Cllr. Broucke thinks that Henfield Parish Council has already collected speed data along here. **ACTION** – Clerk to ask if these details could be made available to WPC

183. Henfield Neighbourhood Plan

This was withdrawn and is again out in draft form to be reassessed. This is now available for comment.

184. Finance/Payment

184.1. Reconciled accounts and cashbook

These were agreed, and the reconciled accounts and bank statement duly signed.

184.2. Invoices to pay:-

a. WSCC Invoice for Clerk's salary for September – £404.17

There is no invoice for this yet, so although a cheque was written, it was agreed that this will be held by the Clerk until the invoice is received.

b. PHB invoice for Operation Watershed works on Blackstone Lane - £3,729.00 inc. VAT

This was slightly more than the quote that was received, as they had to put an extra pipe in the gateway. However, it was still slightly lower than the grant that was received.

c. Cllr. Broucke expenses for notice boards - £555.60

This was agreed and a cheque duly signed.

184.3. Budget preparation for meeting in December

This needs to be prepared and agreed at the next meeting. If there are proposals, can members please bring them to the meeting in December?

It was suggested that a VAS could also be suitable for the B2116. For now, speed data will just be collected on the A281, but this will be discussed again in a few months.

185. Correspondence / meetings

185.1. Accident on Horn Lane

The road was closed for the best part of the day by the Highways department, and they have sent a report of this as follows:-

Horn Lane was closed due to the amount of mud on the carriageway which caused a motorcyclist to come off his bike and hit a car. Their contractor had been called out the night before and had put out slippery road signs. They attended again after the accident and it was found that the mud was 2/3 inches deep and

had set hard like clay so a JCB was hired to scrape this off the road surface. The road was kept closed until this was done.

185.2. Clerk meeting with HDC to discuss paperless planning

The planning department is going paperless around Christmas time. They have a few parishes trialling the system, and they use a projector to project plans at their meetings. HDC think they will still send out paperwork for all large scale applications (more than 10), and may be able to send plans on request. So for WPC meetings, the Clerk will need to either project the plans or display them on a screen. Or the Clerk can print the plans on A4/A3 and hand out to members. HDC do not have funds for this, but they have pointed WPC in the direction of a National Lottery grant.

They also advised not to hold on to historical planning applications as the plans are sometimes amended their end without the Parish being notified. So the plans being held may not be the correct versions. WPC can contact HDC anytime for records of planning applications.

It was agreed that the Clerk will print the plans for meetings and will add the printing expense to the budget. This will be reviewed if the costs are too high.

185.3. Blackstone Playing Field Lease

An email has been received from Sussex Cricket in the Community Trust (SCCT) to say that a new charity was formed on the 1st November called the Sussex Cricket Foundation. This will take on the role of SCCT. They have not yet made moves to transfer the lease into the new name as the Allen estate has yet to be resolved, and their lawyers feel this should be clarified first. They suggest that the lease should remain in the hands of SCCT until a transfer becomes easier to facilitate.

It was decided to respond to them that WPC is in favour of their proposal, but remind them that the lease is also in the name of WPC so could they keep us more informed in future.

185.4. Email from Peter Bates suggesting donations

P. Bates has suggested three donations that WPC could make. These will be dealt with at the next meeting.

185.5. Letter from HMRC

This was sent to Christine Warren, who put it back in the post redirected to Cllr. Broucke. However, this has not been received. **ACTION** – Clerk to report this to C. Warren

185.6. Blackstone Rise

John Loxley at HDC has reported that they have sent a questionnaire to leaseholders of the garages (however a copy of the questionnaire has not been sent to WPC), and that their engineers are examining the car parking options.

An email has been received from a resident of Blackstone Rise copying WPC into their response to the questionnaire.

It was noted that HDC appear to believe that as some houses have provided their own off road parking, this has alleviated the parking issues on the lane. However, this is not the case as this just means that there is now less space on the road to park (as cars can't park at entrances to driveways).

185.7. Operation watershed

There is a flood at the south end of Blackstone Lane. This needs to be reported to Highways as it is a danger. **ACTION** – Clerk to do this

The contractors started work at Furners Lane whilst the Clerk was away on annual leave in October. Cllrs. Broucke and Austin have been to look at the work and their opinion is that not only will this not solve the issue, but it may in fact make it worse. Whilst there, Cllrs. Broucke and Austin were verbally abused by a resident about the work saying that it has taken too long to complete. Cllr. Broucke sent a report of this to the Clerk. Cllr. Broucke later attended the site with a level, which proved that the water would need to travel uphill!

ACTION – Clerk to write to WSCC saying that WPC do not accept the quality of the work and don't believe it will resolve the issue – instead the lane could hold two feet of water. Will they be responsible for tripping, slipping or drowning?

A resident of Furners Lane has been in touch to express concerns about the work. This will also be sent to WSCC.

185.8. Letter from Mrs Ochoa

Mrs Ochoa wrote to express her thanks for WPC's letter and for attending the funeral.

185.9. Remembrance Sunday service

Cllr. Broucke was asked to read the names of the fallen at the service at Woodmancote Church.

186. Other business

Cllr. Broucke has sent a reference for the Clerk to Rusper Parish Council. This will be kept on file. The Clerk starts her position with Rusper on Monday 16th November.

Cllr. Prangnell saw that a tractor trailer lost its wheel on the B2116 just before Morley Farm.

Anyone going down Wineham Lane should take care. The road is blocked by machinery and there is a massive hole which could cause accidents.

187. Date of next meeting

This will be Tuesday 8th December at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm