

**WOODMANCOTE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of Meeting held in the Parish Hall on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 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 and A. Underwood  
L. Bannister (Clerk)

**Others Present:** HDC Cllrs. D. Coldwell  
19 x members of the public

**107. Apologies**

Cllr. J. Prangnell  
HDC Cllr. B. Staines  
WSCC Cllr. D. Barling

**108. Minutes of the last Meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

These were agreed and duly signed.

**109. Action updates from previous Minutes**

Cllr. Williams has sent another Freedom of Information request to HDC for details of how they came to the decision to do something with the garages at Blackstone Rise. Cllr. Williams did not receive a satisfactory response to the first request, and has received no reply to the second.

Cllr. Broucke confirmed that HDC have not formally agreed to sell the garages, but they do need to do something with them.

An email has been received from the planning department about the following:-

- Paynesfield – the compliance officer has visited the site and was concerned that the track was large and the site is not agricultural, so he has spoken with the owner about it and he has given her 21 days to put in a planning application.
- Opposite Woodmancote Place – again the officer has visited the site and spoken to the new owner regarding the gateway opposite Woodmancote Place. The gateway was already there and all the owner has done is to fill that entrance with hardcore to prevent his tractor from

sinking, the area measures approx. 25sqm, having heard the reasons from the owner the compliance officer and manager do not consider it to be expedient to pursue this matter.

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

None.

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

Alison Short (attending with partner Simon Hughes). Fireworks were set off close to her house on the night of 4<sup>th</sup> July about 2am. This does happen annually (infrequently), but this year the fireworks were particularly noisy and bright. She has horse in foal and would have brought them in had she been aware of the fireworks. She went to complain but was dealt with in an aggressive manner. She understands this is an offence but doesn't believe it warrants a complaint to the Police (and gathers they would not get around to dealing with the matter). A. Short asked the Council to send the landowners a letter asking that in future their neighbours are warned about their fireworks so that they can ensure their animals are comfortable.

Various points were raised about Blackstone Rise garages from members of the public and councillors as follows:-

<b>Member of public</b>	Members of the public present were concerned about the parking situation as it currently stands on Blackstone Lane. They are aware of problems with the emergency services and refuse collectors being unable to pass parked cars. They were concerned this situation would be worsened if the garages are sold.
<b>Member of public</b>	The school bus already doesn't come through.
<b>Member of public</b>	All the cars in the garages would be added to the parked cars on the lane – worsening the problem.
<b>Member of public</b>	The majority of houses don't have off road parking.
<b>Cllr. Broucke</b>	There is a need to keep some clarity between the current issue and the future issues with the potential loss of the garages. Members of the public present believed the two issues are very much related.
<b>Member of public</b>	Why does HDC want to sell the garages? They must be making some money from them and there is very little administration and there has been no maintenance in recent years. The money they would make from the garages is surely a 'drop in the ocean' to HDC.
<b>Member of public</b>	In past meetings it has been stated that the garages are surplus to HDC requirements. Why has this decision been made?
<b>Member of public</b>	The additional cars on the lane would also be an increased danger to pedestrians.
<b>Member of public</b>	Was there a timeline agreed with HDC?
<b>Member of public</b>	Tenants of the garages have not received official notification from HDC about what is going to happen to the garages.

<b>Member of public</b>	The asset of community value application was denied.
<b>Cllr. Broucke</b>	From what he understands, HDC see the garages as a liability to their register. They don't feel they generate enough income to warrant keeping them as they are. He has asked if the Council can remain involved in the process. HDC have agreed to keep us informed, and are open to debating possibilities.
<b>Cllr. Broucke</b>	The site needs to be 're-jigged' to generate an income for HDC. How that is done, WPC will have a little say, but it will need to be constructive.
<b>Cllr. Broucke</b>	HDC have suggested building two houses at the back of the site, but putting in perhaps 20 parking spaces. The parking spaces would be charged.
<b>Member of public</b>	If everyone refused that and just parked on the road, they would have to do something about this.
<b>Cllr. Broucke</b>	HDC will be changing the site, but clear proposals need to be put forward to them from the Council.
<b>Member of public</b>	Has a formal risk assessment been done yet? If not, they can't possibly sell the site. Cllr. Broucke does not believe this has been done, and doesn't believe it would be until HDC have a proposal to work towards.
<b>Member of public</b>	Could HDC lease the site to WPC for a certain amount, and WPC could deal with the administration?
<b>Cllr. Coldwell</b>	The amount that the garages could be sold for (perhaps £200,000) is not a drop in the ocean for HDC, they are strapped for cash. Rates have not gone up for years, and their funding from government has been cut by 30%. HDC has a duty to see a bigger picture. The garages are surplus to requirements, and the return on the value of the assets is not enough compared to the value of the asset.
<b>Member of public</b>	What will HDC have to pay if an emergency service cannot get through to somewhere because of the increased parking?
<b>Cllr. Coldwell</b>	What are the residents prepared to do to keep the garages? WPC could potentially get a loan and buy them, but there would be costs associated with this which would invariably be passed back on to the residents.
<b>Member of public</b>	Can we look at the asset register to find out the value of the garages? It is hard to put together proposals when they do not know how much HDC expect to make.
<b>Cllr. Grimes</b>	How much would residents be prepared to pay for parking in that area? Then they could put forward a proposal so that the garages can be removed and parking put in for the residents. These could be allocated to the area.
<b>Cllr. Underwood</b>	They need to factor in the cost of taking away the garages and making the land good.
<b>Member of public</b>	They don't believe residents will park in spaces that they have to pay for.
<b>Cllr. Grimes</b>	Suggested double yellow lines along the lane, thus forcing the cars into the car park.
<b>Member of public</b>	The land price would vary a lot depending on whether or not the land has planning permission.

<b>Member of public</b>	It is such a big issue for Blackstone if the garages go. Tenants had a letter from HDC about 2 years ago saying they were thinking about selling them. Then nothing happened. Would HDC be prepared to come and meet with the residents to discuss their proposals?
<b>Cllr. Broucke</b>	HDC might be prepared to come along to a meeting if there are some proposals to discuss.
<b>Cllr. Broucke</b>	We've managed to stall the sale so far with the asset of community value application.
<b>Member of public</b>	What is the average cost of a parking plot in the Horsham District?
<b>Cllr. Coldwell</b>	Believes this to vary quite considerably. The rural car parks in Steyning and Henfield do have long term spaces ranging from £21 to £50 pa.
<b>Cllr. Coldwell</b>	WPC need to put forward a proper plan. The longer this is left the more chance there is of the garages being sold off.
<b>Member of public</b>	Would like to keep the garages as well as parking.
<b>Cllr. Broucke</b>	If the garages are being used as storage instead of parking, this will not help their argument to keep the garages as they are.
<b>Cllr. Broucke</b>	Proposed the residents putting together a committee and coming back to the next meeting with a proposal.
<b>Member of public</b>	The total amount of income from the garages is around £5,200. They haven't been maintained since 2011. Their administration costs are minimal.
<b>Member of public</b>	The site does have power (although the garages do not).
<b>Cllr. Broucke</b>	There is currently no timeline that HDC have specified or that they are working to.

WPC will send a letter to John Loxley at HDC to say we've heard from all residents and they are concerned with the health and safety of the area and would like a risk assessment undertaken.

## **112. Reports from other Authorities:**

### **112.1. Horsham District Council**

Cllr. Coldwell reported as follows:-

Adopt-a-Street. HDC has asked all councillors to draw the attention of Parishes to this scheme and to give it some publicity. As he has previously reported, the scheme is complimentary to the Litter Picking scheme and, quite apart from keeping streets tidy, it should promote community spirit by bringing people together.

HDC Chairman's trust Fund. This is a charitable fund set up by the HDC chairman 2 years ago; it makes small donations to needy families – gifts which might be supermarket vouchers or tickets for family outings – usually up to about £100. The disbursable fund this year is about £1500. Applications have now closed

Planning Matters. Improvements continue to be made in the processes and new staff and consultants engaged. He understands that Parishes were briefed on developments. The consultants are principally involved in major applications of which there are a large number coming forward. The enforcement part of planning is under some stress given the relatively small size of the department and the sheer number of enforcements that are required to be dealt with. Members will be well aware of the building at Small Dole which has been the subject of enforcement; it was agreed that the building could be made weather proof but that work would then stop pending an application to vary the original approval. At the time of writing, a decision has not been reached. It may be coming to committee later this month.

Youth Services. HDC has invited Parishes to send representatives to Horsham to participate in a meeting 20<sup>th</sup> July (agenda etc. not yet published) to discuss experiences across the various schemes. I understand that response rates have been low. Cllr. Coldwell is not sure that WPC has been invited. Councillors confirmed that they have been invited.

HDPF. There was an attempt to make a major modification to the Plan but this was defeated. The problem is that any delay to the plan, also causes significant delays to CIL which directly affects parishes. The inspection of the plan resumed and completed Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> and all going well we will have an approved plan, ready for adoption in the Autumn. And then the neighbourhood plan would fit into it perfectly.

There is no update on Hascombe Farm. Cllr. Coldwell supported the application.

There is a layby on the A281 which Cllr. Coldwell was contacted about (see point 120.3 below for more details). This is an issue for WSCC and Highways to deal with, and so has been passed on to Cllr. Barling, who is due to drive past to look at the issue. Cllr. Broucke believes there is room to run the path around the back of the layby.

Cllr. Coldwell is now a member of the SDNP.

### **113. Sussex Police**

The PCSO was due to attend, but did not.

Cllrs. were going to ask the PCSO for advice about the fireworks (mentioned above). It was decided to write to the landowner to let them know that it has been brought to WPC's attention that the fireworks were excessively noisy and disruptive, and to ask the landowners to notify their neighbours in the future before any such planned events.

**ACTION** – Clerk to draft letter and send to councillors to approve.

### **114. Planning**

#### **114.1. DC/15/1188 – The Spinney, Bramlands Lane**

This was not discussed as the application has already been approved (even though an extension to the comments deadline was agreed).

## **115. Planning updates**

### **115.1. Firlands Industrial Park**

Cllr. Broucke is still unsure when the committee will be sitting to decide this.

### **116. Operation Watershed – Furners Lane**

The contractor has said that he could no longer do the job (after WPC sent an email setting out the requirements).

WSCC have provided two options:-

- 1 – For the engineer to contact the contractor directly to discuss the issues and see if they can overcome any concerns.
- 2 – To seek another contractor.

The land is owned by two different parties and they will not deal with the flooding issue.

Once the contractor is instructed, WPC are responsible for making sure the work is completed and effective.

It was decided to go with option one.

The Blackstone Lane works are due to start in August/September.

### **117. Footpaths**

There are many footpaths in Woodmancote and Blackstone that cannot be walked because they are in such a poor state of repair.

**ACTION** – Cllr. Williams will let the Clerk know the numbers of the footpaths affected, and the Clerk will report them to the ranger.

### **118. Neighbourhood Plan (Cllr. Austin)**

Cllr. Austin has been advised by AirS that individual sites should be treated as windfall and therefore not included in the plan. The agent for Stockmans has queried that, and the landowners at Farm Hill were advised by the planning department at HDC that if their site was not included in the plan that this could have an adverse effect on their application. Barbara Childs from HDC supports the advice given by AirS.

Cllr. Austin will clarify this point with AirS.

Letters have been sent to statutory stakeholders with a scoping report. Consultation is open on this for another three weeks. In this time the SG need to supply AirS with a decision on the sites and numbers of housing to be included in the plan. It was agreed that the housing figures will be as follows:-

Firslands – 5

Peacock Paddock – 5

Woodhouse Farm – 4

Cllr. Austin has met with the landowner at Peacock Paddock to agree this, and he accepted all points that the land was inappropriate for an estate. The other two sites are brownfield and so in a strong position. Peacock Paddock is a greenfield site (although has been used), but has the positive points of being in walking distance to Henfield and close to Swains. This is a decision that was made by the housing focus group, who report to WPC. These figures were agreed and so this information will be sent to AirS.

The landowner at Peacock Paddock is unable to produce affordable housing on these numbers, but will go for 'mid range' instead of luxury.

Cllr. Underwood queried whether the numbers of housing should have been proportionate to the size of the site. However, Cllr. Austin explained that after the open call for sites meeting, it was clear that the public were opposed to an 'estate' on the sites.

Cllr. Broucke has sent an email to Tom Warder at AirS to let them know that he feels the NP has taken longer than he thought it would to complete, and this is partly because WPC have not received clear direction from AirS. Tom Warder replied to ask if this was a communication problem with WPC and the SG, or between AirS and WPC. Mr Warder confirmed that AirS now have all the information required to move forward with the plan. Cllr. Broucke confirmed that he believed the issue was with being given options, maybes and scenarios in answer to questions. Mr Warder explained this is because AirS are advisors and so need to give options and scenarios about the process.

Cllr. Austin has now had an email from AirS setting out what they now need to do and what they need from WPC.

Following on from that, Cllr. Austin has received the community evidence paper from Faustina with blanks for WPC to complete.

Going back to the meeting at Cllr. Austin's house, there were questions asked of AirS which were not clearly answered.

Cllr. Austin reported that although the sites at Farm Hill and Stockmans have not been selected (because WPC has been advised not to include sites with just one or two units proposed), WPC does

not have any objections to them, and this will be reflected in the plan. Also, WPC also does not object to the redevelopment of the sites at the Parish Hall and Blackstone Rise garages, provided that they are developed in accordance with the neighbourhood plan and are developed for the benefit of the parish.

Several responses have been received to the stakeholder letter, and these will be sent around to all members of the Steering Group.

Council would like to see a formal plan of the site at Firlands. Clerk will prepare this and send around to all members.

Cllr. Austin will keep everyone informed of progress over the coming weeks.

A 'thank you' was extended to Cllr. Austin for the many hours work he has put in to progressing the plan.

## **119. Finance/Payment**

### **119.1. Reconciled accounts, cashbook & budget comparison**

These were all agreed, and the reconciled accounts and bank statements were signed by Cllr. Underwood.

### **119.2. 6 hours overtime for Clerk relating to Neighbourhood Plan - £60**

This was agreed and the overtime form signed by Cllr. Broucke.

### **119.3. Invoices to pay:-**

#### **a. WSCC Invoice for Clerk's salary for June – £304.17**

This was agreed and a cheque duly signed.

### **119.4. Signatories**

Barclays have now updated the records to add the Clerk as a signatory, and have removed Cllr. Ochoa.

## **120. Correspondence / meetings**

### **120.1. Blackstone Rise garages**

The Clerk has received three emails expressing concern about the potential sale/removal of the garages, and read these out.

Cllr. Broucke was concerned about comments that were made about the lane being blocked, and is concerned that the car owners will be responsible if their cars are causing obstructions.

### **120.2. Planning meeting with Clerk**

The Clerk attended a meeting at HDC to go over planning procedures. The main point to come out of this is that if applications are being objected, a reason needs to be given or a restriction suggested.

### **120.3. Email from Cllr. Coldwell**

A resident has written to WPC for many years to say that the pavement is not joined up along the layby, which means if cars are parked there they have to walk on the road or by the ditch. Cllr. Broucke believes there is room for pavement between the road and the ditch. This is being dealt with by Highways and WSCC at the moment.

### **120.4. Electoral review of West Sussex**

It was decided that as this does not directly affect Woodmancote, no comments will be made.

### **121. Other business**

A parishioner has approached Cllr. Austin about part of a tree that has come down on the west side of Blackstone Lane on the south end. This nearly hit a lady. Cllr. Austin advised the parishioner to speak to WSCC council and ask what needs to be done with a dangerous tree, and not attempt to do anything by himself.

**ACTION** – Clerk will also report this to WSCC

Tomorrow is the joint parishes meeting at 7pm if anyone wants to go.

A formal notice of vacancies now needs to be prepared.

### **122. Date of next meeting**

This will be the 11<sup>th</sup> August at 7.30pm.

*The meeting closed at 21.30*