

WOODMANCOTE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting held in the Parish Hall on Tuesday 8th September 2015 at 7.30p.m.
(Members of the Public were invited to attend)

Mrs L Bannister – Clerk to the Council
48 Titmus Drive Tilgate Crawley West Sussex RH10 5ER
Tel: 07921 822869
Email: woodmancoteparishcouncil@gmail.com

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

Others Present: 2 x members of the public (M. Meir & P. Batchelor)
WSCC Cllr. D. Barling
HDC Cllr. C. Coldwell
2 x representatives from Eon

139. Apologies

Apologies were received from HDC Cllr. B. Staines.

140. Minutes of the last Meeting held on the 11th August 2015

These were agreed subject to correcting a small typo on page 2.

141. Action updates from previous Minutes

Truslers Hill Farm has been informed of the problem with the footpath in Blackstone, and they have told their tenant to make sure this is cleared. However, this has not yet been done.

The salt bins have all been checked and they are all in reasonably good, usable condition.

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

None.

143. Reports from other authorities

143.1. West Sussex County Council

Cllr. Barling reported that:-

- The application for Firland Industrial Park is possibly going to committee on the 23rd September – this will be decided in the next 48 hours. If it is going ahead on this date an Agenda will be sent out on Friday. If Woodmancote Parish Council wants to speak at the committee they will need to register to do so. Cllr. Peter Griffiths (councillor for Albourne) is planning to speak. Cllr. Broucke said he may speak, but would have to declare an interest in the application. There will be a site

visit, but this will not be open to WPC. A report will be published once final information has been collated. Cllr. Broucke has seen about 20 objection letters on the WSCC website.

- There is a new Highways team in place managed by Chris Stark. The member of the team responsible for Woodmancote is Andy Pledge. It is best to call him direct if there is an issue.
- Cllr. Barling has received an email from a resident of Woodmancote about the garages in Blackstone Rise, asking how WSCC would be involved in any decision making process. Cllr. Barling explained that once a planning application had been made, the Highways department would be consulted and asked for an opinion, but they do not get involved in the decision made by HDC. Cllr. Barling's understanding is that HDC will be providing enough parking spaces so that there won't be extra cars parked on the lane.
- Cllr. Barling was copied into an email sent to WPC from a resident of Furners Lane. They are complaining that the Operation Watershed work has not been done yet. Cllr. Barling is aware that WPC have the money for the Operation Watershed work for Furners Lane, and that the contractor wasn't prepared to do the work because they couldn't guarantee that it wouldn't make the problem worse. Cllr. Barling suggested speaking with the engineer from WSCC (Peter Smith), and advised that the money will have to be given back if the work does not go ahead.

Cllr. Broucke updated the meeting that as far as WPC are aware, there are no plans for additional parking on Blackstone Lane at the moment, but HDC are drawing up plans for the garage site to include a residential development with parking spaces.

M. Meir asked Cllr. Barling if WSCC are able to object to the development if they disagree with the proposal. Cllr. Barling explained that WSCC are a consultee, and HDC don't have to follow their advice.

143.2. Horsham District Council

Cllr. Coldwell reported that:-

As is normal, August is a quiet month for Councils, there being few meetings to attend and therefore fewer reports on activities.

Presently HDC is awaiting the HDPF Inspector's report which is expected shortly; members will recall that the initial findings of the inspector was that HDC's targets were too low and thus he imposed a higher target of 750 housing units per annum; the Strategy was then revised to meet this figure and a second consultation was carried out; the revised plan was then submitted and shortly thereafter the inspector requested a further 50 units per annum. This request has now been accommodated and so the expectation is that the plan will be accepted by the inspectorate. Thereafter the Plan will come to the October Council meeting for adoption.

The plan does of course include a significant element of affordable housing, the preferred figure is 40% on the larger developments; what is not quite clear to Cllr. Coldwell at this time is the effect of a recent court ruling that affordable housing numbers cannot be forced upon developers and so we wait to see the outcome.

Locally, there is to report:-

- The Upper Beeding Pound Lane applications are expected to come to committee this month
- The Woodmancote Hascombe application should be in committee in September
- Cllr. Coldwell met with John Loxley to ask for an update on the Blackstone Rise garages. See below for a full update on this

The South Downs National Park Authority will publish its draft local plan on 2nd September for consultation. The plan can be seen locally at Steyning or Henfield libraries and at Horsham DC offices. It is a large document and can be viewed, and comments made, on line. There will also be Parish Workshops – Pulborough Village Hall 10th September 6.30 – 9.30 and an exhibition at Arundel Town Hall 16th September 3pm to 8pm. This is out for consultation until the end of October.

Cllr. Barling leaving meeting

Cllr. Grimes asked if the Horsham plan is likely to be adopted. Cllr. Coldwell said that it looks positive, but this depends on whether the inspector sends the report in the next few days. If this report is positive it should be adopted on the 21st October.

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

M. Meir stated that John Loxley has not answered any of her questions fully enough to be able to put together a proposal. She was interested to see what information could be found out about a loan for WPC to buy the garage site.

Cllr. Broucke said that WPC has not discussed the possibility of getting a loan as they have not met since this was discussed last month. However, Cllr. Broucke has made some initial enquiries, and a loan for £150,000 would involve increasing the rent for the garages by three times the current amount paid just to leave the site as it is. This also assumes that the site can be bought for this amount, even though the reality is that HDC would have to sell the site at an open auction, they couldn't sell the site directly to WPC without the site being offered on the open market.

WPC do not have a formal valuation of the site.

Without knowing what HDC's plans are, it is difficult to think of a proposal. Residents want a parking provision to remain, and they are prepared to pay for this. Cllr. Broucke said that as far as Council are concerned they wouldn't wish to approve a plan which reduced the parking provision.

145. Neighbourhood Plan (Cllr. Austin)

The Steering Group met just before the Council meeting began. Various documents have now been completed and are ready to send to F. Bayo at AirS. These documents are:-

- Housing report
- Site assessment

- Proposals for the future
- SWOT
- History of events

Once received, F. Bayo will check these and then put together and send a draft plan for the Steering Group to check. Once this has been done the plan will go to pre submission.

146. Blackstone Rise garages

Cllr. Coldwell reported that HDC have had a survey done on the land and are looking at the feasibility of two small houses at the back of the site, the removal of the garages and car parking provision for perhaps 12-14 cars. They are speaking to architects at the moment to see if this is feasible. They would build the houses to finance the car park. Cllr. Coldwell believes there are only two garages used for parking cars (this was challenged by M. Meir and P. Batchelor who understand it is four or five). Cllr. Coldwell doesn't yet know if the site would be sold or retained by HDC.

Cllr. Grimes asked if HDC are legally required to provide parking for the site. Cllr. Coldwell doesn't believe so, but he knows that HDC are working to try and keep the parking provision.

Cllr. Coldwell leaving meeting

147. Report from Eon re. Rampion Wind Farm

The plan for laying the cable has been re base lined because conditions have prevented them starting in April. Various restrictions have now been removed. They are now just starting to the South of the Downs. Woodmancote will be later on in the program, but they are still seeking consent clarification on some of the restrictions.

With PROW, there shouldn't be any long term closures, just perhaps 4 days while they establish access. The closures will be minimal. For nearly all the PROWs there will be a temporary surface put down so that the footpaths are still usable.

There will most likely be a six month delay to avoid trenching in the winter. The intention is to work while the weather is favourable. They will possibly start trenching in Woodmancote in May-June next year.

Any hedgerow taken out will be either replanted or replaced.

There was recently a presentation in Henfield held by Eon, but nobody from WPC was able to attend. Cllr. Underwood tried to call EON and found it hard to get in touch with anyone, and was just told that all of the information was on the website. This was difficult to negotiate and pinpoint what Cllr. Underwood was looking for.

Could Eon let us know when they intend to start work in Woodmancote? Eon confirmed that roughly two weeks before work is starting in any stage a letter will be sent to the Parish Council and all who live within 1 km of the route.

The reason Eon haven't been in touch is because not much has happened yet! It was requested that perhaps they could attend a meeting every quarter, or send an update every month, even if it contains no news.

There is a chance of starting work this winter, but this depends on the weather.

Eon will have a look at the specific rights of way for this area, but is pretty sure they will not be closed long term.

The best place to look on the website is: Eonenergy/rampion. There is not much information up at the moment, but this will be updated as things happen, and in the next week a quick update for each area should be available.

148. Planning

148.1. SDNP/15/03889/HOUS – Bellows, Bramlands Lane

As the comments deadline for this application was the 4th September, so as not to miss this, WPC have already commented on this application as follows:-

'Woodmancote Parish Council objects to this application as it feels the placement of the proposed large pool building unbalances the newly built main house and would change the open landscape.'

148.2. WSCC/019/15/WK Firsland Industrial Park

All members have looked at the information on the website. See point 143.1 above for a full update.

It has been noticed that there are many more lorry movements than are allowed, and the floodlighting from the site is very bright.

A comment from WPC has been lodged to say that WPC reiterate their previous comment, and highlight the safety issues with the site.

148.3. SDNP/15/04056/HOUS – Catsland Farmhouse, Bramlands Lane

It was decided that no objections were raised to this application providing that it fits all of the criteria of the listed building. **ACTION** – Clerk to report this to SDNP

149. Planning updates

There was an appeal made on application DC/14/2449, Blackstone Gate. This was refused.

150. Trees

A tree fell over on Bramlands Lane, and a resident has emailed to ask what can be done to safeguard the Parish from future issues. It was felt that there is no practical solution to this as there is often no warning

before a tree falls. All that can be done is to notify WSCC immediately if a tree appears unsafe or as if it may be about to fall or drop branches. **ACTION** – Clerk to reply to resident

151. Proposal from Blackstone residents re. garages

WPC have received an email from John Loxley saying that HDC are speaking to architects to draw up plans.

Cllr. Grimes suspects that once plans have been drawn up HDC will put in a planning application which WPC will get a chance to comment on, and then he suspects it will be sold with the benefit of planning permission, with a restriction on the developer of having to develop the car park.

Architects may say this is not a feasible idea.

It is positive that HDC have said they want to retain the parking.

152. Finance/Payment

A letter has been sent to Christine Warren, from HMRC, but this has not yet been received.

152.1. Reconciled accounts and cashbook

These were checked, agreed and duly signed by Cllr. Prangnell along with the bank statement.

It was noted that the VAT reclaim has now been received.

152.2. 10 hours overtime for Clerk relating to Neighbourhood Plan - £100

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

152.3. Invoices to pay:-

WSCC Invoice for Clerk's salary for August – £364.17

Expenses for Clerk - £57.16

These were agreed and cheques duly signed.

Cllr. Austin has an outstanding expense to claim, but will put this in when he has the receipt.

153. Correspondence / meetings

153.1. HALC conference

This is on Saturday 31st October 9.30-130. There is a cost of £5 per person.

There is also a HALC meeting on Thursday 10th September at 7pm.

153.2. Celebrating later life in Horsham District – invitation

Nobody is able to attend this.

153.3. Blackstone Rise garages

There have been a few emails between M. Meir and John Loxley, which WPC have been copied in to. These are largely M. Meir attempting to get further information from HDC (as was discussed earlier in the meeting).

153.4. Horsham Indoor Bowls Club event

WPC are not able to advertise this on their notice boards.

153.5. Pensions Automatic Enrolment

WPC are now obliged to make provision for any staff to be automatically enrolled into a qualifying pension scheme. It was therefore agreed that WPC agrees to join the Local Government Pension Scheme, as administered by WSCC, and all employed members of staff are given opportunity to join.

It was noted that there are implications for WPC in passing this resolution – they would be required to pay an employer's contribution of 20.5% (rising to 21.7%). **ACTION** – Clerk is to find out if anything else needs to be done, and what other implications this scheme will have for both the Clerk and WPC

153.6. Consultation on SDNP Local Plan

This was covered by Cllr. Coldwell at point 143.2 above. They have sent us posters to advertise this, and they will be put up at Blackstone Lane and in the bus shelter opposite the Parish Hall.

153.7. Transparency fund

There is a fund available to councils with a turnover of less than £25,000 if they have spent money in order to comply with the new Transparency Code. This could cover internet connections, website administration fees and scanning equipment. However, it was felt that WPC have not needed to spend anything extra to ensure that they are compliant with the code.

154. Holiday for Clerk 26th – 30th October

This was agreed.

155. Notice boards

These could do with updating, and there may be funds available to pay for this. It was discussed whether five boards are still needed. **ACTION** – Cllr. Broucke to obtain quotes for replacing the boards

The Clerk will continue to update the notice boards, although it was noted that this costs WPC as this is time that the Clerk could spend doing other work for WPC.

156. Other business

A fence appears to be about to be put up at Hollinger, and it looks as if this is on the highway instead of private land. This has been reported to WSCC, but they did not have anyone available to drive out and look.

There is no news from the local PCSO, and it is not known when they will next attend a meeting. They have not attended a meeting for about three years.

A photograph has been received from Sussex Prairie Garden that can be used in the neighbourhood plan.

A notice for a ploughing match has been put up on the A281. This appears to be in a dangerous location and is only supposed to be put up two weeks before the event. **ACTION** – Cllr. Broucke to find out who put this up and see if it can be put in a more suitable location

There is no objection to the Clerk being employed by another Parish alongside Woodmancote.

157. Date of next meeting

This will be on the 13th October at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 21.20