



MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON 20TH NOVEMBER, 2007 AT 7.30 PM, IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, PLUMPTON GREEN

PRESENT: Mr R Taylor Chairman
Mr. K. Speirs Vice Chairman
Mrs B Watson
Mr. T Thompsett
Mrs. K. Wride
Mrs. C Eastwood
Mrs S Angel
Mrs C Nicholson
Mrs S Akers

1. APOLOGIES:

None.

2. MINUTES:

The Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held on 16th October, 2007 were signed as a true record.

The Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 10th November, 2007 were signed as a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING:

Highways – Mrs Akers said that the boulders in the stream had not been reinstated in the correct place and were not doing the job they were supposed to do. Clerk to ask Highways to reinstate them in the correct place.

Half Moon – Mrs Nicholson and Mrs Wride had a meeting with Mr Hawthorn regarding this issue. It was thought that a mini roundabout could help here, and possibly one at the College and Plough; lighting may be required. Mr Brooke had said that there would be no funding from the County Council. There was strength of feeling in the village about this problem and it was thought that fund raising could take place to help with the costs. Clerk to get costings from Mr Brooke, and ask about lighting issue, in time for the next meeting.

Mrs Akers said she thought there was not enough room for a normal sized roundabout and it would need lots of signage. A change of priority might make a difference. Mr Taylor said that there was a very small roundabout in West Sussex which did the job well.

Riddens Lane – The resurfacing work had been done.

LDC Policy on Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management - Mrs Nicholson, Mrs Angel and Mrs Watson had met Mr Frost and highlighted two areas in Plumpton that had problems with flooding. Mrs Angel reported the sewage problem at the back of Old School Cottages where the car park is, sometimes flooded. Southern Water had come to flush this out. A private individual had claimed on insurance to have a similar problem sorted out further up Station Road.

The other area of concern regarding flooding was the drainage from Green Cross to the Old Mill House; the drains have to be unblocked by residents, otherwise water goes onto the land at the Old Mill House. Similarly, the problem happens south of this area along Plumpton Lane. Mr Frost was asked if regular maintenance of the drains could take place here and he said he would arrange a meeting with Highways to discuss this.

ootpath 13a – Clerk had received a letter from Mr Dennett regarding an incident with his daughter who had been bitten by the tenant's dog on this footpath. Clerk had contacted the ROW Officer who asked if Mr Dennett could be asked to contact her with details of dates and times of the incident, report it to the Police and then ESCC could liaise with the police with a view to taking legal action. Clerk had written to Mr Dennett.

Network Rail – Clerk reported that the signal box would be refurbished by the end of March 2008.

Princess Royal Hospital - Clerk read out letter from Mr Norman Baker MP; who had attended a meeting Mr Selbie Chief Executive of the NHS Trust in West Sussex. Mr Selbie confirmed that the Trust wants A and E, elective surgery and acute medicine to remain at the PRH. In the short term, it was possible to continue present arrangements for maternity, but it was suggested it would be necessary to have a higher number of births coming through the hospital if the facility was to be safe in the medium and long term.

Water at Old School Cottages - Mr Brooke had replied to the letter to say that the site had been visited and there was some retained water, but there was a vast improvement on previous conditions. He suggested that the owner whose wall had been damaged made a claim to Highways Contact Centre in the first instance.

Enforcement Matters – Clerk had received an e mail from Enforcement to say that a planning application would be submitted for Willow Farm for new stables. Clerk was asked to enquire whether council tax or business rates were being paid on this area; Clerk had been contacted to say that no rates were being paid.

Tree Preservation Order (No 6) 2007, Land at Oakwood, Beresford Lane – Mrs Nicholson outlined the submission that had been put together by her and Mr Hutson. The Habitat Survey had mapped out trees, hedges and quite a lot of pieces of woodland that need preserving; there are trees to be protected and woodlands of historic interest. Mrs Nicholson is aware that it is unlikely that TPO's would be put on all those trees on the list. She recommended that this document should be looked at when assessing planning applications. She felt that the habitat survey had done some good. Clerk had been asked by Mrs Ridley to ask Mr Wynn the current position on the TPO's at Oakwood and the TPO requested on an oak tree at the Creamery. The PC ratified that the document produced by Mrs Nicholson and Mr Hutson is useful and will be considered further by the survey committee before sending to LDC after the December meeting. Clerk to write to Mr Hutson and thank him for all his hard work. Mrs Nicholson was thanked for her hard work on this project.

Post Office – Clerk had received a document from LDC stating the post offices that would close in the Lewes area; there were 5. Plumpton Post Office will remain open.

Rate Relief on Village Hall and Pavilion – Clerk had prepared Child Protection Policies for Village Hall and Playing Field which had been requested by LDC for rate relief on above Council owned properties. These were signed and ratified by the Council. Clerk had checked from the Village Hall Manager and Mr Speirs that the clubs and societies that involve children at the Hall and Pavilion have their own child protection policies in place and that those working with children are CRB checked. Clerk to send accounts and confirmation of Child Protection Policies to LDC Finance.

Half Moon Junction – Clerk had received a telephone call from Mr Wilby in response to PC's letter. He did not believe reducing the bank outside his property would help with the problems at this junction; it would be a huge job and cost a lot. Mr Wilby thought that a mini roundabout of change of priority would be a better solution.

Rats! Mr Hawthorne had reported that he had received reports of rats in Barnfield and Southdowns. Mr Speirs had spoken to some residents and told them to contact LDC Pest Control.

C & S Coaches - There had been no reply to two letters sent; Clerk had chased by phone and fax. Mr Taylor had reported a coach that had turned dangerously from Station Close into Station Road; the number of the vehicle and time had been logged. It was thought that this company had been taken over. Clerk to chase these up again saying the matter would be reported to the County Council if there was no reply.

Mr Taylor had spoken to Mr Hills about the problems of vehicles at school starting and closing times, and he would do all he could to alleviate this problem. Mr Taylor would speak to all the instructors.

4. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS:

Mrs Watson said that Mr Patel at the shop had asked for footpath maps as he gets requests from walkers for them. Mr Taylor said he could copy the master. Mr Patel had also asked about a 2010 About Plumpton but Mrs Watson said someone should do it.

Mrs Nicholson said that a village in Devon (Modbury) had all plastic bags removed from the shops there and were producing a hessian carrier bag. She will speak to Mr Patel to see if he would consider having these in his shop; there would be a possibility that a local business could sponsor the cost. Mrs Nicholson would get a quote from a source known to her for the bags.

Mrs Eastwood asked about the Millenium Fund, and who this was available for. Mrs Watson said she had application forms. Clerk to write to Mr Satchell (ask for answer by December meeting) to suggest it should be wound up and money used for the advantage of the village, such as the refurbishment of the pavilion which is a facility used by many residents.

Mr Speirs reported problems with parking between the station and the bridge on Station Road. The situation was getting ridiculous. On the 20th November it was particularly bad with people parking on the pavement.

It was suggested that the Clean team from LDC were able to move cars that were causing an obstruction. Suggestions were made that previous discussions on extending the car park at the playing field should be discussed again. Mrs Akers suggested putting notices on cars asking owners to park on one side of the road only. It was thought a good idea to look at the Action Plan and note areas of concern and discuss this issue further.

It was reported that an unofficial Sussex Police sign had been put near the school to say cars would be clamped if parked there. Mr Speirs reported this to the PCSO, who confirmed it was not a Police sign; Mr Speirs removed it.

Clerk to include in the Parish Magazine that residents should not park inconsiderately near the school as this could impede emergency vehicles getting to the school.

Sandpit – Mrs Nicholson reported that there was lots of stockpiling taking place but it appeared that it was being managed quite well.

Mrs Akers explained the 20 year rule for footpaths; these were well trodden, off-track paths which had been used for over twenty years who could have the status of permitted rights of way and a way of protecting paths for future use. Any individual can apply for this status but there would be more weight if this came from the PC. This would be discussed further at the January meeting.

Action Plan – Mrs Wride said that the results would be available shortly; the committee were looking for more parishioners to be on the committee and put things into action. 'Champions' would be responsible for certain areas, including traffic, housing etc. The 'Champions' would identify the priorities and the plan committee would look at moving ahead with the top ten issues. The PC would be asked to go to various agencies for funding and to back up 'champions'.

Vale of Sussex Meeting – Mrs Wride had attended this; the group are looking at ways to secure funding for a Development Officer; a group would meet with Councillor Lock ESCC transport to present a case for Quiet Lanes in the area, and parishes need to log more traffic accidents and near misses.

AIRS Annual Conference – Mrs Wride had attended this meeting. The Carnegie UK Trust presented some insights from around UK and Ireland urging villages to rationalise their facilities in the future and not to rely on grants. Two participants at the meeting were now looking at how current criteria to assess sustainability in towns must now be applied to rural villages and posed the challenging question 'What happens when the oil runs out?'

5. VILLAGE HALL:

The lightning conductor test had been done.

A recent Jumble Sale had raised £1190, which was a record.

The lighting project was going ahead and it was hoped that all bars would be wired up by Christmas. There was a problem with the kitchen door. The locks on the doors on the ladies toilets had been damaged; Mr Taylor would replace these with another type of lock.

6. FINANCE:

The balances at the end of October were: Admin £8170.19, Playing Field £8,268.79 and Village Hall £11,352.86.

Due to the high election costs £3,136.35, an extra £300 had to be added to the precept for 07/08.

Clerk had been asked by Mr Taylor to query election costs, as they were extremely high excessive charges were £899.89 for other printing, £458.83 for general stationery and postage, and £208.41 for transporting ballot boxes. Clerk had written to Mr Magness and Mr Batty. £150 had been added to the budget for training costs.

The precept for 2007/08 would be £26,312. This was proposed by Mrs Watson and seconded by Mrs Wride – all Councillors were in agreement.

Clerk reported that £5000 had been taken from the Northern Rock account to pay for lighting project at the hall. Clerk was asked to contact Northern Rock to remove the rest of the money from the account.

7. PLAYING FIELD:

Mr Speirs reported that there had been a playing field meeting and maintenance needed doing on the Pavilion and major projects such as the car park. The Football Club had offered to paint the interior of the Pavilion with the PC paying for the paint. Work also was needed to be done in the play area.

Mrs Eastwood would do some research into funding, and it was thought fund raising events such as Fun Day and Quiz could be done.

8. PLANNING:

The following permission had been granted:

LW/07/1207 Little Dwelling, Station Road, Plumpton Green. Single storey side extension and rear extension.

Mrs Watson had received a phone call asking if there were any sites in Plumpton suitable for a gypsy camp. Clerk had contacted Mr Taylor who said there were no suitable sites.

Mrs Watson said that there had been a resubmission for The Firs. There was concern of the closeness of the doors to the path down the side of the wooden fence due to a potential fire risk. Certain areas of the plans had changed including the removal of dormer windows.

A planning meeting would take place on 1st December 2007 at 9 am Village Hall. Mrs Watson and Mrs Wride had attended a meeting with LDC planning regarding the Local Development Framework. Plumpton came out well at this meeting and not earmarked for extra housing. Cooksbridge has been included in the coastal fringe which was thought unusual, as it is not on the coast. The top end of the village had been taken out of the Gatwick plan. The SE plan requires LDC to make provision for 4400 dwellings before 2026; the coastal region would be expected to have 3400 dwellings with the rest of the area 1000.

9. VILLAGE CARE:

Clerk had received an e mail about maintenance free road signs with a contact number. Mrs Akers asked why posts had been placed at the end of the village near a resident's house; it was understood that a resident had phoned Highways and requested posts as a van was constantly parked on this area outside the property. This had been done free of charge. Clerk to write to Highways to ask why posts requested by the PC had not been done such as those in North Barnes Lane, and that PC had been asked to pay for some posts in the village in the past; Clerk to ask for the posts at North Barnes Lane to be reinstated. Clerk to ask if the verge at the approach to the railway crossing could be reinstated as this had been damaged due to people parking on the verge.

Mrs Akers said that Riddens Lane looked smart after refurbishment and to enquire whether white lines would be reinstated and hatchings by the post box. Also to inquire if the markings could be reinstated at the turning to the road opposite North Barnes Lane. Mrs Akers had received an e mail from a resident in Riddens Lane who was concerned that work had been done outside other properties, and she had not been approached to contribute towards having the frontage of her property included in the programme. Clerk to acknowledge this e mail sent to Mrs Akers.

Mr Speirs and Mrs Wride had met Mr Brooke to discuss highway issues. Those mentioned included the Half Moon junction, the Southdowns sign, footway between Strawlands and Wells Close, and the poor state of some signs (this could be done by the village maintenance team). Other issues included drainage outside No 2 Old School Cottages; it was though better to do this later on when there is better weather. Potholes identified in Barnfield were reported and have already been done. Mrs Akers said that the lines at the playing field entrance need to be done. Mrs Wride said she felt there were too many weight restriction signs coming from Lewes, and there is no need to have them there. Clerk to write to Mr Brooke to ask why there are so many.

HIGHWAYS

10. FOOTPATHS:

Clerk gave Mrs Nicholson and Mrs Eastwood a letter regarding a Parish Paths event on 4th December, 2007. Neither Councillor could attend; Clerk to inform ESCC and ask for any information that comes from this event.

Clerk had received an e mail from EC Clerk to say that the stile on the footpath by Rylands was dangerous and that there had been fly tipping in this area. Clerk to report this to ROW Officer.

The footpath sign going towards Jenners Farm needs replacing, as it has been missing for some time.

Mrs Eastwood said that there were several new footpath signs and stiles on the main footpath through the College. It was felt that there were more pressing areas that needed attention to footpaths including the one at the back of Drews Farm that comes out onto Plumpton Lane, near the stream – those using it have to walk across a plank because the stile is damaged. Clerk to report this to ROW Officer.

Mrs Nicholson would prepare a map of stiles on footpaths in the village.

11. PUBLIC TRANSPORT:

Mr Taylor had received an e mail from Mr Hardy regarding trains to Plumpton from London Bridge saying there is only one direct train in the evening. He had contacted Southern. Clerk to reply to say Council would look into this.

Mr Speirs reported that the 752 bus to Lewes goes 7 minutes earlier than it states on the time tables. Clerk to ask ESCC to update timetables at bus stops and send current bus timetables.

12. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH:

PCSO Whittaker Jones is now back patrolling Plumpton.

13. TREE WARDEN:

Mrs Watson had been given a number for tree clearing 0845 7114141. Clerk to keep this on file.

14. REPORT OF CLERK: Clerk presented to the Council: Action in Rural Sussex newsletter October, 2007, Consultation on the Fire Authority's Integrated Risk Management Annual Action Plan, SRCC Report and Financial Statements, Lewes Community Directory, District Link Newsletter, Applause Rural Touring, Furniture Now leaflets, FWAG Ferrett Racing 28th November, 2007, ESCC Your County, LCS NALC November 2007, NALC National Salary Award for Clerks 2007-2008.

News from the School: PPTFA are holding a Christmas Fair on 8th December, 2007, a Film Afternoon had raised £250. Staff Changes: Mrs Francis has left her post as teaching assistant but continuing to be a mid day supervisor, Mrs Lane is to undertake specific support programmes for two days a week, Ms Awdry has been employed on a temporary contract to facilitate the new role for Mrs Lane. Mr N Baker MP had asked children to enter a competition to design a constituency Christmas card. Class assemblies from year 6 have started. A new Home Learning Pilot is to be started and a learning sheet will be sent out. A Big Dig took place in November, in the four House Gardens. A Book Swap and Cake Stall had taken place. It was hoped that parents could hear their child read and record it in home/school reading books provided.

Clerk had received a letter from LDC regarding Future Provision of Land for Cemeteries Scrutiny Review regarding potential land for future cemeteries. A questionnaire had been sent. Clerk filled this in and returned it to LDC saying there was no potential land for future cemeteries in Plumpton.

CHAIRMAN