



MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 12TH OCTOBER, 2010 AT 7.30 PM, IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, PLUMPTON GREEN

PRESENT: Mr R Taylor Chairman (RT)
Mrs B Watson Vice Chairman (BW)
Mrs. C Eastwood (CE)
Mrs K Wride (KW)
Mr R Stone (RS)
Mr T Thompsett (TT)
Mrs S Akers (SAA)
Mrs S Angel (SA)
Mr I Earl (IE)

Mr O St John
Mr Drummond
Mr and Mrs Charles

APOLOGIES: None

MINUTES: The Minutes of a meeting on 14th September, 2010 were signed as a true record.

Mr Tom Warder AiRS and Mr Leighton Rowe of LDC attended the meeting. Mr Warder gave a summary of the HNS. There had been 43% response rate and 75% of the village were in favour of a small affordable housing scheme; there were a number of people eligible for affordable housing because they had strong local connections and most who registered an interest were in their mid 20's to mid 30's, some single and living at home and some couples. 39 households were in need of financial assessment, 10 people were interested in shared ownership, 16 single people, 10 couples with no children and 6 couples with children had said they were in need of affordable housing.

KW asked if an affordable housing scheme were to take place could all the units be for rent as many of the respondents could not afford even shared ownership schemes?

Mr Rowe said that a housing association would get involved; they would apply for a grant from the government (part) and the association would take out a loan, and by collecting rents, this would pay the loan/mortgage for the properties. For shared ownership a smaller grant would be requested from the government and a mortgage taken out for the building of the properties.

Mr Warder said the bulk of those applying needed rented social housing.

Mr Rowe said that usually there were 14 units in an exception site, two or three shared ownership, the rest rented; those requiring this scheme could not buy the entire property, it would always be in perpetuity.

Mr Warder said that 227 households had responded to the survey.

SAA asked if there would be more flats than houses? She said the recommended amount of half an acre seemed rather small for fourteen units.

Mr Warder said that needs would be identified, there would be some flats. LDC were looking to the future when building such units, and could include 2, 3 or 4 beds to cater for families with children. Any building would not just be for those identified on the present HNS.

KW asked how those who could afford the properties would be identified.

Mr Rowe said those on the housing needs register were sent a form and they would have to record their needs.

RT said those who lived at the social housing units at Westgate included only one family from the village, there were others from London and Brighton.

Mr Warder said the HNS was a strong indication of need, and the need in rural areas was going up. He said the next step was to form a sub committee of Councillors who

would be a working group to look at affordable housing needs; meetings would include planning officers from LDC.

A map with list of sites would be needed and respondents identified of those with land to sell. There would be a list of questions, to assess whether sites are useful and then a short list would be made. A specialist housing association would be involved and the community would be consulted. Mr Warder said that a first meeting should be arranged within the next two weeks, and it could take up to a year to get a scheme to site.

KW asked if a committee could go to the village with potential sites?

Mr Warder said the top site would be assessed by means of a point system that was if there were more than one site available.

PC should demonstrate a robust process to the community.

CE asked if after the election next year a new council decided they did not want to go through with a scheme to build affordable homes that had been decided by the existing Council.

Clerk said that it would be minuted that the present council had agreed to start proceedings for affordable housing, and that this would stand for the future.

Mr Warder said that not everyone would agree on a site chosen, particularly those living near it. A process with twelve questions would determine what is a good site, transport, utilities, highways etc.

Mr St John asked how much say would a housing association have in what is to be built?

Mr Rowe said that several schemes would be looked at by housing association, these would be schemes that specialise in rural housing. Housing Associations and LDC work together.

Mr St John asked if there would be consideration given to Eco housing?

Mr Rowe said that it would come down to funding. Housing Association would push to have a specification that was as eco friendly as possible.

Mr Warder said all had to comply with a code for sustainable homes, Code Level 4, and have provision for reusable energy, energy efficient, provision for rainwater etc.

KW asked how building affordable housing in Plumpton fit with the LDF's proposal to build lots of homes Plumpton?

Mr Rowe said that if Plumpton would agree to build these affordable homes, it would mean it had fulfilled it's prescribed quota for affordable housing from the LDF and would not be called on build more in the future. However, it would not affect private housing on allocated land sites.

RT asked the Council to look at the proposal for affordable housing and form a sub committee. A vote was taken.

All Councillors were in favour with this. The sub committee would be KW, BW, RS and CE.

Mr Warder said he would be sending the full report on the HNS in the next week; this would also go on the website.

MATTERS ARISING:

Circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting: Comments were invited from these.

Gradwell Park, Chailey: Confirmation of PC's comments had been received.

Waste and Minerals Core Strategy: Confirmation of comments had been received.

Drains at Wells Close: Highways had looked at the problem and thought that it may be connected to either South East Water or Southern Water. Clerk had contacted both agencies and they had responded that they would look into the matter.

Parking: School Headmistress said that there had been constant reminders to parents to park considerately when picking up or dropping their children at the school; she said she would put a notice in the school newsletter. Police presence had been in the village on several days during the last month at school times to observe the situation.

S106 funds from Smithy's Close: Clerk had heard from Peter Young asking what the funds may be used for. Clerk had replied that it was expected these would be used for new equipment at the play area; Mr Young said that this would be permitted, though further details would be needed at the time; the funds do not have to be spent until 2014.

College: Mr Lambert had sent a copy letter addressed to Highways about his concerns about the lack of signs outside the college with students driving, particularly on dark nights.

EDF: There have been further problems with electricity supply; Clerk contacted EDF and the faults on the high voltage line were rectified. The low voltage system is to be refurbished. Clerk also contacted Mr Baker MP to highlight the problem experienced by the owner of the shop who has had to dispose of frozen food items when the power has been cut off. No response had been received to date.

SDNP: KW had completed this and it had been sent off.

SALC: Subscription is going up to 0.27 per elector, plus the £70.07 NALC subscription which gives an overall figure of £343.98.

CPRE AGM will take place on 23rd October, 2010 at 2.30pm at Beechwood Hall, Cooksbridge.

Election Charges: The estimated cost will be £3800 for the election next April. The reasons are that: LDC cover 50% of all election costs for District, Town and Parish elections. The 2011 figures are based on the actual cost to Town and Parishes since 2007 plus 10% inflation. The maximum figure is based on the assumption that six Town and Parish Councils will be contested; if there are more contested, the costs would be lowered.

Claim for window: TT had sent this off to the insurance company.

Mr Nicholson had spoken to the owner of Ashurst Organics and he was to cut the hedge along the south side of the Ridge including where the seat dedicated to Mr and Mrs Ridley is situated.

SAA asked what is happening on the forecourt of the Pitstop, are the barriers to be replaced?

Mr St John said that he had contacted Highways about these. He said the only conditions on the property were to do with decontamination, even though there could be a problem with the charge on the property.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS:

BW reported that there were some damaged setts opposite 2 East View Fields. Clerk said she had reported this to Highways.

TT had attended the AiRS conference in September. A full report of the conference will be issued, and subjects included were the Big Society. Several organisations had stands for delegates to peruse the VAP had a stand. An interesting stand was Community 21 which is a joint venture with Brighton University and AiRS; this is an online information source for everything in a village or town that anyone wants to put on it.

TT attended a workshop on community buildings and facilities/community owned assets and found this particularly interesting with a view to the proposed new pavilion. Several councils had raised large sums of money from various sources with no 'pay back'. One PC had a professional fund raiser. It was clear that the electorate were kept fully informed of what was happening; one council had to retract from a well advanced scheme as it proved the majority of the electorate did not want it.

TT attended a further workshop with speakers from the leader of WSCC and the CE of ESCC, both concentrating on the main concerns of spending cuts and how they will affect everybody.

KW said that she had completed the SDNP consultation and it had been sent back. She thought it would be a good idea to cluster with other local parish councils, as a way of communicating; there are only two parish councillors for the area on the SDNP Committee and that more representation from councils involved in the NP should be involved: she thought that meetings could take place with councils including Hamsey, Streat, East Chiltington, Westmeston and St John Without, and someone could be nominated from this cluster to talk to SDNP members.

AGENDA ITEMS

New Internal Auditor: Mr Greening would be stepping down after the next Audit which would take place in 2011. RT and SAA said they would approach three people who it was suggested may be willing to take over the role.

SANDPIT - Mr Nicholson had sent a report to the meeting: Activity at the Sandpit continues at a higher level as reported last month. No complaints have been received by me and apart from some wet sand on the road left by lorries leaving the site, there is little to report.

FINANCE:

The balances at the end of September, 2010 were Admin £16,323.25, Village Hall £15,345.62, Playing Field £8,117.63.

Mr Satchell had prepared the Village Hall budget which would be reduced by 5%. TT had prepared a preliminary budget for the Playing Field, which may have to include provisions for work to be done on the football pitch which appears to be sliding down the hill; this could cost approximately £500; it will be monitored over the next year; more investigations would have to be done before a calculation could be obtained for the budget.

The Admin budget had been prepared in principle. The Clerk said that there would be no salary increases for Parish Clerks this year. The budget for telephone would be increased by £50, and the subscription charges would have to be increased by £70 due to increase in SALC subscription; the maintenance budget may be less as the PC only pays for two dog bins; there would have to be an increase for election costs in view of the estimated amount for next year's elections (see above) – from 2011 there would only be £908 in the election budget to cover a potential £3,800 charge.

ACTION: Clerk to contact LDC to ask for a breakdown of election costs.

Clerk had asked that the subject of election costs should be raised at the LDC conference at Plumpton College.

The budgets would be presented in a formal layout at the November meeting.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

ESCC are developing a local transport plan 2011-2026 and the consultation draft is available; comments are invited by 4th January, 2010.

RS said there were defects in the service; those working in Haywards Heath or Burgess Hill had to leave either an hour earlier than was needed or be an hour late for work. There were gaps in the service at both ends of the working day, and people were often left waiting for a bus.

The VAP had promoted Plumpton as a 'gateway to the National Park' to try to attract people to the area, but it was thought there were insufficient buses to cover this, particularly with no bus service on Sunday.

KW said that she had attended a meeting last year; people were not using the buses, they were not cost effective, so it was better to focus on community transport, using a Dial a Ride service rather than a full on bus service.

Mr St John suggested that the PC ask the VAP to look at bus services; he said that the road safety and transport team was to be amalgamated. He would ask the VAP

to be involved.

ACTION: Clerk to write to ESCC Transport about the lack of buses.

HIGHWAYS:

The footpath at Osborne Villas needs resurfacing.

Speeding: District Commander looking at PCSO's powers to issue tickets for parking and speeding. Police had attended during school times to observe inconsiderate parking

ENVIRONMENT

SAA reported that several of the newly seeded verges had been walked and driven over.

Clerk asked to contact owner of Station House to ask them to cut the hedge which is overgrown.

FOOTPATHS

SAA reported that the launch of the footpath leaflets had gone well. There are 16 walks.

Clerk to report the following problems with footpaths to ROW:

F19 Station Road, stile insecure. F5 onto South Road, stile insecure.

PLANNING AND HOUSING

The following application was discussed: LW/10/2289 Overhead Lines re-alignment of 1 span of high voltage overhead line at land at Plumpton College, Wales Farm, Plumpton. PC approved this application.

The following applications have been granted:

LW/10/1006 2 Cox's Cottages, Station Road, Plumpton Green: erection of single storey rear extension.

LW/10/0874 Change of use of shop serving former petrol filling station to A1 retail unit and associated access arrangements at Land at former petrol filling station, Ditchling Road, Plumpton.

BW reported she had not been receiving the weekly notifications on planning applications from LDC despite letting them know her new e mail address.

ACTION: Clerk to ask for updates to be sent.

POLICING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

SA reported that the parking problems at school start and finish time had been increasing; registration numbers had been taken and Mr St John suggested she reported these to Operation Crackdown which can be accessed on the internet. SA reported that vehicle crime is down 24% and burglaries 31%. Concerns had been noted about possible cuts, but the District Commander said that she would spread her staff so that there will still be coverage, but areas would have to share. A road traffic collision had taken place at the Half Moon on 4th October; no-one was hurt and there was minor damage to the bollards at the Pitstop.

VILLAGE HALL:

RT reported that the acoustic panels were to be installed. A new hand dryer in the gents had been put up. Two quotes had been received for the new kitchen, £13,500 and £22,000, both included cookers.

Mr Satchell was looking at grants, and the application for a PWLB loan had gone in. TT had suggested a write up in the magazine about the proposed work and Mr Satchell had prepared this.

TT asked if the S106 funds could be used for this and Clerk had enquired, but this was not allowed. They are only allowed for leisure facilities.

There is now a long mirror in the ladies cloakroom. Cutlery had gone missing recently.

There will be a meeting on the 24th October to discuss storage space in the hall.

The Jumble Sale had raised £947.

PLAYING FIELD:

TT reported that a meeting had taken place on 4th October.

Water Supply: PFC hope to split supply with a separate water meter with the Tennis Club.

Window: broken window to be replaced during November.

Electricity Safety check: carried out by EDF, a few minor items need attention.

Burglar alarm was damaged allegedly while EDF were carrying out the test and this has been reported to them.

Skateboard Area: Nothing to report on the problems of noise.

Percy's Patch: PFC are arranging to have the brambles cleared; PC will pay for this.

Cleaner: Sarah Turner has taken over the cleaning at the Pavilion; all relevant tax documents have been given to her, and Clerk is preparing a contract.

Honeybees are facing a lot of challenges and looking for staff, otherwise they may have to consider closing; options are being considered; the outcome will affect the current use of the pavilion and the proposed new pavilion.

Bookings: there have been some problems with overlap of users for the field, this has hopefully been sorted.

Play Park/New Pavilion: Mrs Barrell has resigned from the VAP team and the PFC thank her for all her efforts. PFC are waiting for confirmation of a new VAP representative to take this on. The PFC has expressed concern regarding any delays and would if necessary, take the projects back in house.

PFC are also concerned that the new pavilion is primarily a sports pavilion and that it does not end up as a venue to rival the Village Hall.

CE said that a fun day is to be organised for 4th July, 2011.

COMMUNICATIONS:

CE asked if any councillors had been to meetings during the summer that could be reported in the magazine article. BW, RS and Clerk were attending the LDC conference at Plumpton College on the 21st October so that would be reported in the next magazine.

RS said he would re-write the profiles to put on the website.

VAP- any items not covered elsewhere

Mrs Nicholson sent a report saying there would be no VAP team leaders report as the meetings were now bi-monthly so early September papers had not been approved.

An AGM had taken place. She thanked TT for attending the AGM and the AiRS conference. The Footpath Team launched the 16 new walk leaflets, and a celebration walk and drinks event was held; she thanked SAA for attending this.

Copies of the footpath leaflets will be available at the shop, station, pubs.

CLERKS REPORT:

Clerk presented to the Council: Waste and Minerals Core Strategy September 2010, Lewes District News Autumn 2010, Glasdon Local Councils leaflet, changes to bus services, East Sussex County Council what will we do with waste, SLCC branch newsletter, meeting of Fire Service 21st October, 2010, information of free home safety visits and smoke alarms, SALC Annual Reports and Accounts 2009/10, Newsletter South Downs National Park.

Letters of thanks for donations had been received from: 1st Plumpton Scouts, Wildlife and Habitat Group and Windmill Rangers.

News from the School: Newsletters were now fortnightly. A texting service has been set up for emergency use such as school closures/ Parents consultation evenings and celebration assemblies were being held during October, November and December.

BUSINESS PLAN NTR.

CHAIRMAN

THESE MINUTES ARE IN DRAFT FORM. THEY WILL BE RATIFIED BY THE PARISH COUNCIL AT THE MEETING ON 6th NOVEMBER, 2010.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN MINUTES:

SDNP – South Downs National Park
LDC – Lewes District Council
ESCC – East Sussex County Council
VOSS – Vale of Sussex Society
EA – Environment Agency
LCR – Local Councils Review
ROW - Rights of Way
MOP – Member of the Public
SLR – Strengthening Local Relationships
VMT – Village Maintenance Teams
VAP – Village Action Plan
RST – Road Safety Team
PCSO – Police Community Support Officer
SID – Speed Indicator Device
SALC – Sussex Association of Local Councils
AirS – Action in Rural Sussex
NR – Network Rail
EH – Environmental Health
NTR – Nothing to Report
OHP – Overhead Projector
LDF – Local Development Framework
HNS – Housing Needs Survey