



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
Held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on Tuesday 1st November 2022

Present: Councillors: Michael Lunn (ML) Chair, Ben Floyd (BF), Rachel Lewis (RL), David Munday (DM), Damon Wellman (DW), Peter Weston (PW)

In attendance: Cllr. Phil Dixon (WDC), Cllr. Bob Standley (ESCC), Samantha Weatherill (Clerk) and three members of the public.

198. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A member of the public (MOP) aired views for consideration during the closed discussion about Wilderness Wood (WW). Firstly, they drew the Parish Council's (PC's) attention to the noise diary that had been kept by another resident as noise was a huge problem for local residents. They added that, on a positive note, as a result of the WW business model the number of day visitors had reduced considerably and their management of Christmas and Easter events had alleviated a lot of problems with parking etc which was good. However, the noise and the number of events with amplified music (last night, Halloween, was an example of this) meant that they were obviously in breach of their noise management plan which states that there will be no amplified music at all. Wealden DC Enforcement have had numerous complaints but had not done anything. The other issue was the number of people living at WW, they should have a diary of all the people staying on site daily and they should hold a record of events they have as part of the planning condition; the MOP asked whether we know if those conditions are being met and why is it not being monitored by Wealden DC? Another MOP was concerned that Wealden DC Enforcement have still not made a decision about 4 Grange Cottages.

199. APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE – were accepted from Cllr. Blyfield.

200. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – DM declared a pecuniary interest in Item 203ia; BF declared a pecuniary interest in item 223.

201. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS held on 11th and 18th October were agreed and signed as a true record (previously circulated).

The Chair brought forward item 210 and suspended Standing Orders.

210. PROPOSAL FROM 'WINGS TO FLY' FOR A SENSORY GARDEN AT THE BURIAL GROUND

A representative from Wings to Fly presented the proposal to dig an area 4ft by 9ft at the front of the burial ground and grow plants to be used to make dyes for the fabric that the school children were planning to make things with. The detail of positioning and rules for managing the area would be investigated further and discussed at the next meeting.

The Chair reinstated Standing Orders.

202. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

- i. **Cllr Standley** would continue to investigate whether the Waste Wood bridleway could be scheduled for urgent repair work as this was a major strategic bridleway. *He would continue to pursue this issue. **Carry Forward***
- ii. **Cllr Standley** would investigate what had happened to the direction sign at the top of Five Chimneys Lane and when it would be replaced. He had updated that this was scheduled to be replaced on 18th November. **Carry Forward**
- iii. **BF** would commission a resistograph to be done on the zip wire at the playing field. *This had been commissioned. **Done.***
- iv. **Cllr Dixon** would investigate the planning application for agricultural driveway on Stonehurst Lane WD/2021/7059/AD and report back to the PC. *Cllr Dixon updated that planning permission was not required; Wealden DC Enforcement do not think there is an issue with what has been put in except for a hedgerow which may need some extra paperwork. The PC updated that the concern was that the original planning application had been given for agricultural use but it was alleged that this would not be used for agricultural purposes. **Action: Cllr Dixon would investigate this further. **Carry Forward*****
- v. **RL** would offer to help Mayfield Trust with fundraising in order to help support people in crisis and would also offer the PC's support to help them to advertise their services. **Action: The Clerk would contact the Mayfield Trust to offer RL's support.**

- vi. **RL** would request a meeting to be arranged between ML and the Chair of the HD VHC. *A meeting had been arranged for the following week. Done*
 - vii. **DW** would go back to Wealden DC Enforcement about the issue of fly tipping on Stonehurst Lane. *DW had done this but had not received much help from Wealden DC. Action: The Clerk would draft a letter.*
 - viii. **Clerks report:** *update passed to councillors prior to the meeting and posted on the village website.*
 - a. The Clerk had received notification from the Directors of Rialtas Software that the firm had been sold to N.Harris Computer Corporation. Harris is a subsidiary of Constellation Software Inc. which is the second largest software company in Canada. Rialtas have reassured that the existing software will continue; levels of support will not change and there will be no change to our contractual relationship with Rialtas. The letter had been forwarded to the PC.
 - b. The Clerk had forwarded the complaint re the dangerous camber on main A272 east of Five Chimneys Lane to Karl Taylor, cc Dale Poore and Cllr Standley (all ESCC) and included the previous emails from the Highway Steward re criteria for repairs.
 - c. Re request from Wealden District Council for an update on Hadlow Down's Neighbourhood Plan progress, the Clerk had responded that there had been no change to the situation, the new Community Centre was still being planned and the PC were awaiting planning permission for the old Village Hall to be approved by Wealden DC.
 - d. The Clerk had signed the PC up to the Civility and Respect Pledge.
 - e. The Clerk had been notified that the mole at the Hadlow Down burial ground had been dealt with, the Parish Council were very grateful to the mole man for dealing with this.
 - f. The PC had received £1,560 fee for the interment of ashes at Hadlow Down burial ground.
 - g. The Clerk had transferred £86 interest received on the Unity Trust Active Saver account to Unallocated Reserves.
- 203. PLANNING:**
- i. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**
 - a. **WD/2022/2558/F – HASTINGFORD OAST FARM, HASTINGFORD LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4DY** – extension to the western elevation, including soft landscaping to existing dwelling.
DM left the room.
The PC voted 5/0 to support the application provided that Wealden DC gives due consideration to the impact of the skylights on dark skies, as per light pollution policy EN29 and whether there needs to be a reduction in the number of skylights.
DM re-joined the meeting.
 - ii. **APPROVED PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**
 - a. **WD/2022/1719/FA – THE ROBINS, STONEHURST LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN20 6LL** – variation or removal of conditions 1 and 2 of WD/2015/2287/FR (change of use of land for stationing of caravans for residential occupation as a gypsy site with associated development (alter access, hard standing, utility shed/day room) – retrospective) to extend or remove the temporary consent period). The renew consent for site first occupied in 2014 on a permanent basis or for a further temporary period. **CONDITION ON THE DECISION NOTICE STATES THAT IT IS FOR A LIMITED PERIOD:** The development and use of land hereby permitted is granted for a limited period only expiring on 14 October 2025. On or before this date, the use carried out in pursuance of this retrospective permission shall be demolished/removed from the site and the land restored to its former condition in accordance with a scheme which shall have been previously submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
The PC gave a vote of thanks to Cllr Dixon for referring this to the Planning Committee who gave due consideration as to whether it should be granted temporary or permanent permission. ML thanked DM who had done a very good job of presenting the argument for supporting a temporary planning permission which had been the outcome.
- 204. REPORTS FROM CLLR.BOB STANDLEY, ESCC & CLLR PHIL DIXON** - *written reports had been submitted and had been published with the agenda on the village website.*
Cllr Standley thanked DW for sending through photographs of drainage which had helped ESCC to update their plan. Cllr Dixon commented that it was difficult to do anything about issues with The Robins site without evidence. Work continued on the Local Plan. Re Drakes Head Den, the report is going into legal but there was still a bit of work to be done on this.
- 205. HIGHWAYS:**
- i. Speed Indicator Signs – PW presented the costings for a new retention socket and license. The PC voted unanimously 6/0 to support this. **Actions: PW** would contact the Church Warden at St Marks to give them the opportunity to comment on the proposed location and would also get in touch with the local resident who had offered to help with crowd funding for the shortfall in money.
 - ii. Discussion re ESCC Highways – Misuse of public funds/Misconduct in public office. DW explained that back in 2020 The Burwash Common and Weald Residents Association produced a report identifying 47 recent examples of poor practice in respect of highways maintenance in their area which they had sent to ESCC Highways. The response to this had been defensive and failed to recognise the significant problems or show any willingness to change them.

He had recently attended an ESCC training meeting and had afterwards received a strongly worded email from another attendee with a list of complaints about ESCC Highways. DW had done a lot of research and found that several other areas had stopped having their SLR meetings as they were viewed as a waste of time and he believed that there would be a group of about 41 other PC's who would be interested in moving forward with action that was more serious, and potentially seeking legal advice, in order to change the way things were being dealt with at ESCC Highways. DW gave recent examples of problems and the way ESCC Highways had responded.

The Chair suspended Standing Orders in order for Cllr Standley to respond.

Cllr Standley thought the suggestion of misconduct in public office was an outrageous allegation especially given the serious nature of such an allegation. He did not see how going down this route would help the local residents. The PC had indicated a preference for a partnership approach but this proposal was far from that and was a confrontational approach.

The Chair reinstated Standing Orders.

The PC noted that Cllr Standley had done a lot on behalf of the PC for which they were very grateful. It was agreed that it would be good to find a collective view on these issues and see what avenue that leads to as it was clear that the level of frustration was high. The PC voted 6/0 to take the first step. **Action: The Clerk** would draft a letter to be sent to other Wealden Clerks for them to put to their PC Chairs. Whilst it was accepted that there were severe financial constraints on ESCC Highways there was a groundswell of concern about their strategic approach as seen through working practices and it would be good to see if there was any interest in coming to a collective view about changes that should be made.

206. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

- i. From Sussex Residents Association re-examining the effects of the rollout of telecommunications equipment - this was noted.

207. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS (COUNCIL MATTERS AND OUTSIDE BODIES) - written reports had been submitted and had been published with the agenda on the village website.

ML updated that the Chair of the new Community Centre Committee had confirmed that he had written to Stacey Robins to ask for an extension to the planning application. **Action: The Clerk** would email Stacey Robbins, cc Cllr Dixon, for an update on the old village hall planning application.

BF updated that the bonfire event was scheduled for 5th November as long as the weather was ok.

ML had met with the PCSO who wanted to remind people that with the nights drawing in thefts may increase. The PCSO was willing to attend a TN22 club session to do a meet and greet. **Action: RL** would get in touch with the TN22 club to get this organised.

208. BOUNDARY AND DRAINAGE ISSUES AT BOTTOM OF PLAYING FIELD – ML had met with BF and identified what needed to be done. **Action: ML** would work on the specification for the work and talk to the land owner about the boundary hedge needing further cutting back. **Action: Once ML had talked to the landowner the Clerk** would write to them to get their permission for the work to be done. **Action: BF** would draw a map of the bunds and the spoil from the work.

209. HOW TO ATTRACT VOLUNTEERS TO VILLAGE COMMITTEES – the 'Together We Can' Project. The Clerk updated that the organisers of both the Big Village Picnic and the Walks on the Wildside had requested that the project deadline be extended until next summer so the Clerk had written to the National Lottery to formally request an extension.

211. MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR PLAY AREA – the tenders were reviewed and it was agreed to go with Contractor A on a two year basis.

212. MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR BURIAL GROUND – the tenders reviewed and it was agreed to go with Contractor A on a two year basis.

213. MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR VERGES – the tenders were reviewed and it was agreed to go with Contractor A on a two year basis.

214. DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY – the policy was reviewed and agreed.

215. RISK ASSESSMENTS

- i. Fingerpost Survey – update on work. The contractor had been unwell but should be completing the work soon.
- ii. Quarterly Risk Assessment – the findings were reviewed. **Action: BF** would deal with the fingerpost in the burial ground.
- iii. ROSPA Play area inspection – BF confirmed that all actions had been done other than the zip wire which would be dealt with after the bonfire event. **Action: The Clerk** would commission the work to be done to mend the fence at the entrance to the play area. Three quotes would not be sought due to the urgency of the matter.

216. CLERKS MATTERS:

- i. Clerks hours for October were agreed.

217. BANK RECONCILIATIONS: - 25th October's reconciliations were agreed and signed.

218. OTHER FINANCE MATTERS:

- i. Review Precept prior to approval in December – **Action: The Clerk** would circulate an updated precept summary now that the maintenance contracts had been agreed and as soon as the NALC annual pay award had been announced. The final review would be done in December ready for sign off in January.
- 219. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT** – were agreed and RL and PW would authorise.
- i. Samantha Weatherill - £920 salary paid by SO
 - ii. Samantha Weatherill - £478.19 salary & expenses (UT ref: 91194804)
 - iii. ES Pension Fund - £300.86 (UT ref: 840817396)
 - iv. D Fears for total of 3 annual contracts for maintenance of play area, burial ground and verges - £1,840 + £368 VAT (UT ref: 293706486)
 - v. Lucy McConachie Play area inspection October - £40 (UT ref: 582141000)
 - vi. DM Payroll Services – half yearly invoice - £120 (UT ref: 696637170)
- 220. CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 Section 17** – nothing raised.
- 221. DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY** – this had been checked on 1st November.
- 222. ITEMS TO GO ON NEXT AGENDA:**
- Future of Transport in East Sussex consultation.

The following item was discussed in a closed session:

223. WILDERNESS WOOD

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9:29pm.