



MINUTES OF THE MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
Held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on Tuesday 7th February 2023

Present: Councillors: Michael Lunn (ML) Chair, Sally Blyfield (SB), 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 four members of the public.

280. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

One member of the public (MOP) raised the issue of the water leak at the junction of Five Chimneys Lane and School Lane which was getting icy again which they and the PC had reported to SE Water several times.

Action: The Clerk would report it again and also raise it at the next SLR meeting.

Another MOP made a statement about item 285ii a. on behalf of the residents of Stonehurst Lane outlining why the appeal should not be upheld. They requested that the PC added their original comments to the appeal papers that would be submitted to Wealden DC and used at the hearing to represent the residents.

281. APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE – none.

282. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – none.

283. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS held on 10th January and 24th January were agreed and signed as a true record (previously circulated).

284. 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. *Cllr. Standley updated that it had been inspected and it is on the shortlist for consideration in March. **Carry Forward***
- ii. **Cllr Standley** would check whether the patching due to take place in February by ES Highways was still happening. *Cllr Standley updated that an answer to this was still being chased. **Carry Forward***
- iii. **Cllr Standley** would seek clarification from ES Highways re quality controls for utilities and the direct contractor raised by a MOP. *In terms of the repairs by ES Highways they don't routinely inspect their contractor's work. Their contractor is required to self-certify when they apply for payment each month that the work has been carried out in accordance with the contract and ES specifications. Two supervisors carry out random checks of the work as well as random checks of photographs that are taken of all completed works. With regards to utility inspections, they don't inspect 100% and the requirement is set out in an Industry Code of Practice underpinned by legislation. In essence they inspect 30% of utility company workings based on the average number of workings over the past three years -10% during the actual work, 10% of reinstatements and 10% will be follow up inspections twelve months after completion of the work. There is new legislation coming out in April that will allow them to do more inspections on poor performing utility companies. **Action: The Clerk** would let the MOP have this information. **Done***
- iv. **Cllr Dixon** would investigate three issues at Wilderness Wood (WW): the creation of a second dwelling and associated Council Tax; the extension of time periods on rent of lodges from 28 days to 11 months; putting a roof on an existing building to move weddings indoors in order to reduce noise from outdoor events. *The separate dwelling shares facilities etc. so does not constitute a separate dwelling but may require licensing; re extending the lodges this is being looked at by Wealden DC at the moment; re venue, questions have been asked but nothing has been submitted but WW will have to submit a separate planning application. **Action: Cllr Dixon** would seek clarification about what counts as events. **Carry Forward***
- v. **Clerks report:** update passed to councillors prior to the meeting.
 - a. The Clerk had purchased the Silver Standard Warranty for the existing Speed Indicator Device (SID).
 - b. The Clerk had forwarded the correspondence seeking clarification from ES Highways about quality controls for utilities and the direct contractor to Councillor Standley.
 - c. The Clerk had transferred £181.95 interest received on the Unity Trust Active Saver account to Unallocated Reserves.
 - d. The Clerk had been notified by British Telecom that they would be increasing their prices by 14.4% on 1st April 2023.

285. PLANNING:

- i. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

a. **WD/2023/0035/F – FIVE CHIMNEYS OAST, THE TOLL, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4DU** – proposed conversion of existing outbuilding to form a home office, together with associated external alterations.

The PC voted unanimously 7/0 to support the application as it was an appropriate development to support people working from home, with minimum impact, using existing materials.

b. **WD/2022/3361/PO – WILDERNESS BARN, WILDERNESS LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4HU** –

variation/modification or discharge of section 106 agreement dated 5 February 2003 attached to planning permission WD/2001/2521/JRC (conversion of existing buildings to B1 use with display garden ancillary to B1 use only, but permitting a maximum of 6 charity, lecture or similar events which together shall not exceed 14 days per calendar year) ****Discharge of the planning obligation****.

The PC voted unanimously 7/0 to support the application as it would be inappropriate to have a site that has residential approval that cannot be implemented because of the existing condition.

c. **WD/2023/0175/F – CROWPITS HOUSE, WILDERNESS LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4HB** – car port.

The PC voted unanimously 7/0 to support the application due to it being appropriate to the size of the building and using natural materials and similar to the already approved application.

ii. **APPEALS:**

a. **WD/2022/1719/FA – THE ROBINS, STONEHURST LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN20 6LL** – variation or removal of conditions 1 and 2 of WD/2019/0208/FA (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). To renew consent for site first occupied in 2014 on a permanent basis or for a further temporary period. The PC voted to support a proposal to submit additional comments to Wealden DC in order to support the Stonehouse Lane residents' requests i.e., that there were no changes and nothing is new since the original application was refused and the PC's comments still stand. Also, the Wealden Planning Case Officer has used the argument of precedence when it was acknowledged that precedence does not exist as every case is reviewed on its own merit. **Action: The Clerk** would submit these comments.

iii. **APPROVED PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

a. **WD/2022/3177/F – MOONS MILL, TINKERS LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4ET** – demolition of existing conservatory and replacement with single storey extension.

286. REPORTS FROM CLLR.BOB STANDLEY, ESCC & CLLR PHIL DIXON - *written reports had been submitted and had been published on the village website.*

Cllr Standley added that ESCC's original budget had been approved following lengthy debate.

DW said that the ESCC system for reporting pot holes was unable to keep up with the frequency of reporting and where, due to the temporary nature of the repairs, the same pot holes were being re-reported the system was showing them as dealt with, meaning that people were unable to re-report them when the repairs failed so quickly after initially being done.

Action: Cllr Standley would look into this.

Cllr Dixon updated that re Drakes Head Den, Wealden DC Enforcement had finished their report and it had gone to the legal department. ML had noted that Wealden DC were meeting with Southern Water to hold them to account for failings and asked Cllr Dixon to note the issues with SE Water re water shortage experienced by Hadlow Down and consider them if the opportunity arose.

287. HIGHWAYS:

i. Speed Indicator Signs:

a. Update on progress re new SID location; The Clerk was still waiting for the invoice to come from ES Highways at which point it would be paid and the licenses would be issued.

The Chair suspended Standing Orders.

b. Discussion re potential purchase of additional SID – A MOP updated that a substantial amount of money had been raised by the generous residents of Hadlow Down for which thanks were given. Fundraising would close on 28th February.

The Chair reinstated Standing Orders.

A discussion was held about the usefulness of having a second SID and what type of SID would be purchased if the PC went ahead. The PC voted 7/0 to support in principle the possibility of purchasing a second SID assuming that sufficient money was gifted to the PC. The actual purchase would be subject to a further discussion and vote. The PC also voted 7/0 that when the money was gifted it would be ringfenced for use on speed initiatives within the Parish. **Action: PW** would report back to the PC at the next meeting the different options of SID and estimated costings.

ii. School Lane sign – Wealden DC were dealing with this. **Carry Forward.**

iii. Wilderness Lane Parking – there had been no further update on the residents attempts to get the telephone pole moved. DW pointed out that Wealden DC or ESCC could use a PSPO to stop parking and it was acknowledged that moving the telephone pole would cause other issues to the highway.

iv. ES Highways – approval of letter to be sent to other PCs & TCs.

The PC voted unanimously 7/0 to support sending out the letter, signed by the Clerk on behalf of the PC, to see if there is appetite for further action. DW noted that this was not about using tax payers money to take an action that would be defended by tax payers money.

288. HOW TO ATTRACT VOLUNTEERS TO VILLAGE COMMITTEES – the ‘Together We Can’ Project

The Chair suspended Standing Orders.

Sarah Prall (SP) explained that there was no event taking place on 8th May, just that they would be using the signs created for the ‘Together We Can’ project, which she had brought to show the PC, to make people aware of volunteering in the village and agreed to include the PC into any future emails re volunteering. ML thanked SP for the clarification and reiterated that the PC was legally responsible for the grant money therefore it was very important that the PC were included and it was agreed that it was a good idea to get full use of the boards which ML said looked brilliant. SP updated that the Big Village Picnic (BVP) was already on track to replicate what had already been planned and to produce a volunteering book which would be available at the 1st July BVP event. Hopefully, most expenditure would be incurred and recorded before the event so that all the forms and monitoring would be completed in plenty of time before the deadline of 21st July. SP would attend the PC meeting to be held on 4th April to give another update. ML thanked SP for the update.

The Chair reinstated Standing Orders

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

RL updated that she had attended a meeting between ML, the Chair of HD Community Centre Committee (HDCC) and representatives from the HD Village Hall Committee (VHC) to give updates about what is happening with both venues. Timetable and action plans were discussed and it was a very positive meeting. There will be a new survey from HDCC which will be passed to the PC and VHC for comment before going out to villagers re the future of the HDCC in about 2 to 3 months.

ML updated that there had been four MOP reports of a suspicious person in the Waste Wood area causing some distress for people walking along the footpath and this had been reported to the police who were investigating.

290. BURIAL GROUND

SB commented that there were a lot of discarded flower wrappings and wreaths etc. at the burial ground. It was agreed that members of the PC would collect any rubbish if they were at the burial ground. The area that is the extension to the burial ground had been cleared partially once but was now growing back. **Action: BF** would revisit the site and evaluate what needed to be done to complete works.

291. PLAY AREA UPGRADE PROJECT

RL had found a potential source of funding. The PC agreed that there was no need to re-tender for the work as the original work had been tendered for and the equipment already selected.

292. BOUNDARY AND DRAINAGE ISSUES AT BOTTOM OF PLAYING FIELD

ML updated that he had met with the owner of the adjoining property. **Actions: ML** would write a specification for approval by the PC and would also draft a letter to the neighbours seeking formal consent to go ahead with the work as per the agreed specification. **BF** would produce a bund map.

293. ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY including publicity and speakers.

The options for boards were discussed and it was agreed to commission two boards with the additional service of putting them up before the event and removing them after. One would be sited at the top of School Lane and the other at the top of Wilderness Lane.

Speakers were discussed and it was agreed that SE Water would be asked to attend and if they were unavailable to ask UKPN.

294. LOCAL ELECTIONS

Action: All Cllrs. would let the Clerk know whether they would be re-standing for election so she could order the packs.

295. RISK ASSESSMENTS

- i. Fingerpost Survey – **Carry Forward.**
- ii. Zip Wire Resistograph – there were no issues reported but the company had recommended to do another resistograph in two years.
- iii. Commission SID Risk Assessment – **Action: PW** would complete this.
- iv. Annual Review of Risk Assessments – were agreed and signed.

296. CLERKS MATTERS:

- i. Clerks hours for January were agreed.

297. BANK RECONCILIATIONS: - January’s reconciliations were agreed and signed.

298. OTHER FINANCE MATTERS:

- i. Reserves movements: £2,000 budgeted for Election expenses would be transferred to EMR Election expenses as the bill would not be received before the end of the financial year. £169.95 to be paid for the SID warranty would be taken from the CIL. Other reserves movements would be agreed at the 7th March meeting.

299. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – were agreed and ML & PW would authorise.

- i. Samantha Weatherill - £920 salary paid by SO

- ii. Samantha Weatherill salary & expenses - £425.76 (incl. £94.82 for ink) (UT ref: 3588865719)
- iii. ES Pension Fund - £366.43 (UT ref: 828241559)
- iv. Lucy McConachie Play area inspection January - £40 (UT ref: 461213426)
- v. Rialtas Annual Support & Maintenance License - £216.38 + £43.28 VAT (UT ref: 8470843)
- vi. Arbor Cultural Ltd for Zip Wire Resistograph - £295 + £59 VAT (UT ref: 543074278)
- vii. DM Payroll Services Ltd 2nd half of annual contract - £120 (UT ref: 11545349)
- viii. HD Village Fayre Committee for 'Together We Can' Project expenses - £1,846 (UT ref: 520594469)

300. CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 Section 17 – nothing raised.

301. DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY – had been checked on 7th February.

302. ITEMS TO GO ON NEXT AGENDA

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9:11 pm.