



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
Held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on Tuesday 16th May 2023

Present: Councillors: Michael Lunn (ML) Chair, Ben Floyd (BF), David Munday (DM), Peter Weston (PW).

In attendance: Cllr. Bob Standley (ESCC), Samantha Weatherill (Clerk), Helen Derbyshire (new Clerk) and two members of the public.

- 23. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN** – it was proposed and seconded that Cllr. Michael Lunn be elected as Chairman, this was supported unanimously. The Chair signed the Declaration of Office.
- 24. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN** – it was proposed and seconded that Cllr. Peter Weston be elected as Vice-Chairman, this was supported unanimously.
- 25. ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE FORMS** – all Cllrs. including Cllr. Wellman had signed their Acceptance of Office forms which were also signed by the Clerk.
- 26. CODE OF CONDUCT AND CIVILITY & RESPECT PLEDGE** – Cllrs. were reminded of the Code of Conduct and the Civility & Respect Pledge which they were signing agreement to as part of their acceptance of office.
- 27. REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS** – Cllrs. completed and signed their Register of Interests forms.
- 28. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

One member of the public (MOP) congratulated ML on his appointment as District Councillor for Wealden District Council (WDC) and hoped this would ensure support for Hadlow Down on planning matters. They raised their concerns about the caravan on Cart Lodge land which WDC had said was legal and also felt that the continued use of a wood burner and chimney at Drakes Head Den not being taken further showed a lack of commitment by the Enforcement team. ML responded that, on behalf of the PC, the caravan at Cart Lodge would be monitored and, as the WDC representative, he had already started pursuing this issue and was currently awaiting a response. Another MOP read a section from a letter sent to them by WDC Planning in January 2019 re this issue and the fact that change of use may be considered.
- 29. APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE** – were received from Cllr. Wellman and the apology was noted.
- 30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – BF declared a pecuniary interest on item 48ii.
- 31. COUNCILLOR'S ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES** – the Clerk updated what allowances and expenses could be claimed by Cllrs. and all Cllrs. agreed not to claim.
- 32. REVIEW OF REPRESENTATION ON OR WORK WITH EXTERNAL BODIES INCLUDING THE MAYFIELD CHARITIES** – Penny Eliot was the appointed Hadlow Down representative on the Mayfield Trust until May 2024. DW would remain the PC representative on the Village Hall and the new Community Centre committees. BF would remain the PC representative on the Playing Field Committee.
- 33. COUNCILLOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES** – the following responsibilities were allocated:
ML – Community Plan, Public Transport, Wealden District Association of Local Councils, Police & Neighbourhood Watch, Community Projects;
PW – Rights of Way, Strengthening Local Relationships Meetings/Support, Speed Indicator Device;
BF – Playing Field, Planning Applications, Parish Panel Meetings;
DM – Planning Applications, Parish Panel Meetings, Emergency Co-ordination Plan;
DW – Highways, SLR Meetings, Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign, Burial Ground & Tree Warden.
- 34. SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK ELECTIONS** – this would be a nil return as no-one had the time to take on this extra responsibility.
- 35. COUNCIL'S BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND SIGNATORIES OF BANK ACCOUNT** – it was agreed to continue with the current banking arrangements with Unity Trust. The PC agreed that no changes were required to the current Direct Debits and Standing Order. Rachel Lewis would be removed from the signatories list and Helen Derbyshire would become the key contact to replace Samantha Weatherill and the Unity Trust mandate form was signed by the three signatory councillors; no other changes would be made.
- 36. SUMMONS** – The Cllrs. agreed for the Summons to meetings to continue to be sent electronically and signed the Declaration form.
- 37. ASSETS** – the Assets Register was agreed and signed by the Chairman.
- 38. GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE** – it was resolved that, the PC continuing to meet the eligibility criteria as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and S1 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed

Conditions) Order 2012 of having a CiLCA qualified Clerk and the requisite proportion of Councillors elected, the PC would continue to adopt the General Power of Competence until the next relevant Annual meeting.

39. **POLICY FOR DEALING WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA** – it was agreed to keep s.21 of the Standing Orders the same.
40. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on 4th April were agreed and signed as a true record (previously circulated).
41. **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 as it was now on the shortlist for consideration in March. Cllr. Standley updated that this was not going to be done this year. **Carry Forward.**
 - ii. **Cllr Standley** would look into the issue with the system not being able to deal with the reporting of the same pot holes multiple times. This would be a new report but DW explained that it was not possible to re-report as it comes back as “satisfied”. Cllr. Standley had passed on the problem for further investigation. **Carry Forward.**
 - iii. **DW** would post the letter to the owner of the property with the broken fence. **Done.**
 - iv. **Clerks report:** *the update had been passed to councillors prior to the meeting/posted on the website:*
 - a. The Clerk had emailed Enforcement at Wealden DC to ask why the chimney, the wood burner and the toilets had not been mentioned as part of the Enforcement Notice and their response was that they would not be taking any action against these issues.
 - b. The editor of the Parish Magazine had agreed to publish the locations of the two defibrillators in the village in the front part of the magazine each month. The Clerk had put a “Defibrillator” label inside the clear box that the Village Hall defibrillator was housed in to make it more obvious.
 - c. The Clerk had emailed the Practice Manager at the Buxted Surgery to request that the sign saying that the pharmacy would only accept card payments was amended to say that cards were preferred and made the Clerk at Buxted PC aware.
 - d. The Clerk had responded to the HD Community Centre Committee (HDCC) with the recommendation that they forward the letter to the Village Hall Committee (VHC) and said that it was the PC’s view that a formal meeting should be held between the HDCC, the VHC and the new PC that was minuted.
 - e. The Clerk had responded to the HD Village Hall Committee to let them know that the PC had no objections to them repairing the pot holes outside the hall.
 - f. The Clerk had submitted a VAT claim for financial year 2022-23 of £1,683.62 which had been received.
 - g. The Clerk had informed all grant recipients of their award and had been asked to pass on sincere thanks to the Parish Council for their continued support.
42. **PLANNING:**
- i. **APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL DEVELOPMENT FOR EXISTING USE:**
 - a. **WD/2023/0822/LDE – BRICK KILN FARM, BRICK KILN LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4EJ** – continued use of land as residential garden linked to Brick Kiln Farm.
The PC voted unanimously to respond to Planning with “no comment.”
 - ii. **APPROVED PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**
 - a. **WD/2023/0175/F – CROWPITS HOUSE, WILDERNESS LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4HB** – proposed detached garage.
 - iii. **REFUSED 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.
43. **REPORTS FROM CLLR. BOB STANDLEY (ESCC) & CLLR. MICHAEL LUNN (WDC)** – *a written report had been submitted and had been published on the village website.*
Cllr. Standley updated that the new Highway Services Contract had started but admitted it would not be a panacea. One of the problems in the short term is that all outstanding faults have to be manually input onto the new contractors’ system. He had been made aware that County Clean lorries had gone back to using School Lane on a regular basis so he would chase this. ML asked when the consultation for the Uckfield Leisure Centre closed and Cllr Standley thought it was the end of May/early June.
Cllr. Lunn had submitted a written report following the elections but added that there was a lot of change happening at WDC. He would be happy to raise any issues to those responsible as and when things were a bit clearer.
44. **HIGHWAYS:**
- i. **Speed Indicator Signs** – the clock on the existing SID was problematic so PW had raised the issue under the warranty. The Parish Council agreed to discuss at their next meeting how best to make the case for changes to the speed limits on the A272 approach to the village from the Buxted side (currently 60 mph to 30 mph which is considered unsatisfactory and dangerous). **Action: PW** would collate a report comparing the speed of vehicles entering the village along the A272 from both directions using all available speed sign data. He would also ask the SWARCO engineer how it records individual cars when they are clustered.
 - ii. **ES Highways** – **Carry Forward**

45. **REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS (COUNCIL MATTERS AND OUTSIDE BODIES)** – a written report had been submitted and had been published on the village website.
ML had met with representatives from St Mark’s Church and covered subjects such as the Church burial ground, PC burial land, extension to the burial ground land, litter, long term use of Church land including access issues, issues to do with the pot hole on the drive, flooding issues coming from school play area, maintenance of the Church and events at the Church etc. and would like to have another meeting in six months time as it was very useful. **Action:** ML would send through a written report on this meeting which would be published on the village website.
46. **CARAVANS ACCESSING CART LODGE LAND, STONEHURST LANE.** ML said that three traveller families were in the process/had attempted to purchase some of the plot lands. A number of residents had verbally expressed concerns to ML. WDC Planning Enforcement were aware but cannot do anything until the travellers move onto the site.
47. **BURIAL GROUND:**
- i. Monitoring how the graves are left by grave diggers – it was agreed that the Clerk would remind Funeral Directors of the requirement for grave diggers to both remove the spoil whenever an interment was requested, and, also for enough spoil to be retained in order to maintain the level of the plot. The Clerk would also inform the Cllr. Responsible for the burial ground when an interment was taking place so that the issue could be monitored and rectified at the time.
 - ii. Update on clearing the extension to the burial ground – **Carry Forward**
48. **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**
- i. Oil spill on Dog Kennel Lane – this had been a significant environmental incident and the relevant authorities had been contacted about this but the response had been inadequate. **Action:** ML would chase this up with WDC.
 - ii. Reiki sessions in Wilderness Wood – **Actions:** DM who would draft an email for the Clerk to send to WDC Planning to query whether these additional events were permitted within their current planning permission.
 - iii. Hadlow Down Community Centre Committee (HDCC) meeting – an email had been received from the HDCC to say that at their meeting in May they had agreed that they would like the PC to arrange a meeting between themselves, the PC and the Village Hall Committee (VHC) to discuss the way forward and that the survey would be delayed in order to allow time for the PC to be consulted. Since then, further correspondence had been received from the HDCC to say that the survey timetable would not allow enough time for the survey to be considered by the PC as a body at their next meeting but would be sent to all the Councillors individually and that once the survey had been summarised and the results analysed they would like a three way meeting between the PC, VHC and themselves. **Action:** BF proposed and DM seconded that when the survey was received ML would respond on behalf of the PC.
 - iv. DLUHC Consultation on Infrastructure Levy – **Action:** ML would respond to this consultation on behalf of the PC.
49. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE VILLAGE EMERGENCY PLAN** – Further review may be required once Wealden DC had completed their review of emergency plans. **Actions:** DM would update the current plan; ML would find out what progress had been made with Wealden DC’s emergency plan review; the Clerk would update the key contacts list.
50. **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY** – was reviewed and approved.
51. **SAFEGUARDING POLICY** – was reviewed and approved.
52. **BOUNDARY AND DRAINAGE ISSUES AT BOTTOM OF PLAYING FIELD** – **Carry Forward**
53. **MOBILE PHONE SIGNAL** – **Carry Forward.**
54. **TRAINING** – no additional training for Cllrs. was required at the moment.
55. **RISK ASSESSMENTS**
- i. Previous Quarterly Risk Assessment – DW had filled the gaps in the bench in School Lane so there were no outstanding actions.
 - ii. Fingerpost Survey – **Action:** BF would do the survey.
56. **CLERKS MATTERS:**
- i. Clerks hours for April – were agreed and signed.
 - ii. Clerks holiday hours – were agreed and signed.
 - iii. Clerks Replacement and handover plan, including training courses – the Clerk updated that Helen Derbyshire had been appointed Clerk & RFO and there would be a two week handover period after which the Clerk had agreed to provide support for a period of two hours per week up to a maximum of 10 hours per month for a period of two months for which she would invoice at the agreed rate. It was agreed that Helen would be booked on the following training courses: Data Protection; Finance & Budget Setting. Further training was being sought. The PC thanked the Clerk for all her hard work in getting this transition organised.
57. **BANK RECONCILIATIONS** - for 25th April were agreed and signed.
58. **OTHER FINANCE MATTERS:**
- i. Review the effectiveness of the system of Internal Control – this was reviewed and agreed.
 - ii. Internal Auditor Report - was reviewed and approved. The PC recorded a vote of thanks to the Clerk for the successful outcome.
 - iii. Section 1 of the AGAR – was considered, approved and signed.
 - iv. Section 2 of the AGAR – was considered, approved and signed.

- v. The Commencement of the date for the exercise of public rights – the dates were noted.
 - vi. Receipt of 1st instalment of Precept 2023 - was acknowledged.
 - vii. Income Received: £110 for 2nd ashes into existing plot at burial ground; 25p for annual rent of playing field by Playing Field Committee.
 - viii. The following decision was ratified: BT cost of termination of connection at old address, connection at new address admin fee £37.95 will be added to quarterly bill; new connection starts a new 2 year contract but alternative would incur a termination fee of £477.21. New contract post April increases will be £36.95 per month so an increase of 23p.
- 59. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT (UT ref = Unity Trust Bank reference number) - ML & PW would authorise:**
- i. Samantha Weatherill - £920 salary paid by SO
 - ii. Samantha Weatherill - £425.54 - salary & expenses (UT ref: 700279757)
 - iii. ES Pension Fund - £386.47 (UT ref: 452142049)
 - iv. Lucy McConachie - £40 play area inspection April (UT ref: 386346071)
 - v. ESALC & NALC - £232.16 (UT ref: 597872807)
 - vi. Hadlow Down Village Hall - £40 hall hire April (UT ref: 57655358)
 - vii. BHIB Aviva Insurance Ltd - £504.67 for annual insurance renewal (UT ref: 160430623)
 - viii. Mulberry & Co - £204.90 + £40.98 VAT for Internal Audit (UT ref: 284737646)
 - ix. BT - £ 110.84 + £22.16 VAT for phone and broadband quarterly charge paid by DD.
- 60. CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 Section 17** – nothing raised.
- 61. DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY:**
- i. To confirm checked – this had been checked on 16th May.
 - ii. Signage – had been improved.
- 62. ITEMS TO GO ON NEXT AGENDA**

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8:33 pm.