



MINUTES OF THE MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
Held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on Tuesday 4th July 2023

Present: Councillors: Michael Lunn (ML) Chair (+WDC), Damon Wellman (DM) and Peter Weston (PW).

In attendance: Samantha Weatherill (Locum Clerk), Cllr. Bob Standley (ESCC) and six members of the public.

ML updated that Hadlow Down PC were currently without a Clerk so remained with limited coverage from Samantha Weatherill who had agreed to stay on as a locum until Victoria Rutt, who had been recruited and was in attendance this evening, could commence employment.

87. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A member of the public (MOP) raised various issues including the transportation of a caravan that had demolished bollards and also concerns re Cart Lodge and the planning permission granted for a tea room there. These were noted and ML (WDC) said that the Cart Lodge matter had been passed to Wealden DC Enforcement who had visited the site and assigned it a case number.

Another MOP raised concerns regarding the local school; the demography of the village had changed over the years and the school had doubled in size and now had 95 children attending from outside the village. Notices had been posted to residents asking for permission to park outside their houses in order to drop children at school. The MOP had spoken to the school who said that they recognise there is a parking issue and they had discussed creating a carpark on land they own, however, the school had been allowed to double in size without any action being taken re parking. These comments were noted and ML said that the PC would come back to this subject in the future. It was acknowledged that the PC had expanded the carpark at the play area so that parents could park there and walk up to the school. Cllr. Standley added that he had held a meeting with the school in the past re creating a carpark; if there are places in the school then sending children there would be supported by ESCC.

88. APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE – were received from Cllrs. Floyd and Munday and the apologies were noted.

89. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – none.

90. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS held on 6th June were agreed and signed as a true record (previously circulated).

91. 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 had 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. **Action: The Clerk would add this item to the SLR meeting agenda.**
- iii. **Cllr Standley** would investigate the issue regarding the oil spill on Dog Kennel Lane. *DW updated that the road is still black and, as pointed out by a MOP, blue sandbags had been left in the ditches either side.* **Carry Forward.**
- iv. ML would find out what progress had been made by Wealden DC with regard to their emergency plan review. **Action: David Munday** would be asked to look at updating the Hadlow Down PC emergency plan in light of the Wealden DC emergency plan updates sent through from ML.
- v. **ML** would speak to Wealden DC about the replacement of the caravan at Cart Lodge and whether Enforcement would be involved due to the change in location. **Done**
- vi. **ML** would seek clarification from Wealden DC Planning as to the difference between a caravan and a mobile home. *ML would also chase a response re the four mobile homes situated around the village.* **Carry Forward.**
- vii. **Clerks report:** update passed to councillors prior to the meeting:
 - a. The locum Clerk had carried out the minimum business in order to keep the Parish Council running until a new Clerk could be recruited.

92. PLANNING:

i. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

- a. **WD/2023/1334/F – TINKERS WOOD, TINKERS LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4ET** – conversion of rural building to dwelling house.

The PC voted: 2 in support of the application and 1 objection. The reason for supporting the application was that it was an appropriate use of a redundant building, however, this was with the additional condition that SE Water must fulfil their legal obligation to supply water to the property.

b. **WD/2023/0471/F – THE OLD DAIRY, MAIN ROAD, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4EP** – extend alter and convert existing attached garage into single storey dining room.

The PC voted 3/0 to support the application due to it being an appropriate conversion.

c. **WD/2023/1614/FR - NEW FARM HOUSE, STOCKLANDS LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4EA** – retrospective application for a proposed balcony.

Standing Orders were suspended.

An MOP informed that the balcony was overlooking the next property and was very close in proximity.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

The PC voted: 2 objected due to it being intrusive to neighbouring properties and in an AONB and 1 abstained.

d. **WD/2023/1193/LDB- DUDSLAND FARM HOUSE, HEATHFIELD ROAD, CROSS IN HAND, HEATHFIELD, TN21 0UJ** – erection of a smart meter antenna 665mm long made from antenna elements situated within a glass fibre polyester resin marine grade tube, coloured gloss white but can be painted to match surroundings. Antenna has a fixed 10M cable and to be fitted in most suitable position as allowed by fixed cable length limitation. As high and as discreet as possible on flank wall modern timbers or brickwork. Cable to pass through existing access hole in flank wall provided by mains electrical cable already in situ. Antenna to be fixed to property with 4 screws. 2 top and 2 bottom.

The PC voted 3/0 to support the application because it was a reasonable application in order to meet the needs of the occupants.

ii. **APPEAL ALLOWED:**

a. **APP/C1435/W/22/3310223 - WD/2022/1719/FA – THE ROBINS, STONEHURST LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN20 6LL.** Precis of issues: The appellant has submitted a duly executed unilateral undertaking and it provides for a contribution to mitigate impacts on the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area. The main issue is whether temporary or permanent permission should be granted for the traveller site having regard to the effect on the character and appearance of the area, including the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

93. **REPORTS FROM CLLR.BOB STANDLEY, ESCC & CLLR MICHAEL LUNN, WDC - written reports had been submitted and would be published on the village website.**

Cllr. Standley updated that the flexi bus had been introduced which should be of benefit to residents. Highways repairs seemed to be of better quality than those done by the previous contractor. He agreed that the water situation was totally unacceptable and said there was a problem with the planning system as SE Water had to agree to supply water rather than saying whether they were able to do so and how they would.

DW asked what would happen about existing road repairs done by the previous contractor, Costain, that were now failing and which were supposed to be guaranteed for a year. **Actions: Cllr. Standley** would investigate DW's Costain contract query and also what was happening when areas were being marked up for repairs but then when the repairs were carried out only some of the areas were getting done and the others were left marked up. He would also look into a particular pothole in Budletts Lane, Coopers Green, that had been partially filled at the bottom with tarmac.

Standing Orders were suspended.

A MOP added that with regard to the water problems in the village, water stations had again been situated outside the area and there was no public transport to get residents without cars to them.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

ML (WDC) updated that he had tried to call for the matter to be treated as an emergency but this fell on deaf ears. ML also called for an extraordinary meeting of Wealden DC to discuss the water issue when it was happening which had eventually taken place and had resulted in a motion being passed by Wealden DC to write to the Chief Executive of SE Water, to call them before Wealden DC's Scrutiny and Overview Committee, to refer the whole matter to Ofwat as a formal complaint and to write to the Secretary of State regarding the impact of housing numbers on infrastructure. SE Water had no capacity to deal with equestrian and farmer related water issues and the explanations that they had given were completely unacceptable. The Wealden DC bin dispute issues had been resolved. Also, he was aware that there was a suggestion that the Uckfield Leisure Centre is going to be saved with a 19 year lease but as yet the cost is unknown. The Planning Committees had resumed and mandatory training had taken place for all councillors.

94. **HIGHWAYS:**

- i. Speed Indicator Signs – PW updated that he was very disappointed with SWARCO as they had come up with many excuses about why the SID had not been delivered but assurances had been given that it would be supplied before the next PC meeting in August. **Action: PW** would provide a report for the September meeting ready to present to the SLR meeting in September.
- ii. ES Highways – ML updated that Trevor Leggo had said he was willing to table this issue at an ESALC meeting if it was thought appropriate by the PC. **Carry Forward.**

95. **COUNCILLOR VACANCIES** – following the last meeting an advert had been put in the Parish Magazine and ML had been approached by one person. **Action:** ML would ask this individual for the required information and invite them to attend a future meeting.
96. **REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS (COUNCIL MATTERS AND OUTSIDE BODIES)** – *a written report had been submitted by PW and would be published on the village website.*

PW said that he had reviewed Footpath 3b which goes from the junction of School Lane and Five Chimneys Lane after receiving several queries about a new way mark which had been put up. He had discovered a big gully which he had reported. He had done some work to support the fingerpost opposite Wheelers Lane and would follow up any other fingerpost issues highlighted in the Fingerpost Risk Assessment. **Action:** PW would report the issue of a new large pond that had appeared in Fishpond Wood to Wealden DC as this would require planning permission. DW had taken photos of various issues, including the bridge at the bottom of Stonehurst Lane which had been seriously damaged. **Action:** DW would report the issue to ESCC.

ML updated that some drug activity at the playing field had been reported to the police. He had also been informed about a public meeting being arranged by the Hadlow Down Community Centre to take place on 20th July and had agreed to Chair the meeting as a resident, not as PC Chairman.
97. **PARKING ON THE ASHDOWN FOREST** – this was the issue about parking charges being digital only. **Action:** Cllr. Standley would look into this. **Action:** DW would draft a letter outlining the issues for ML to send to the conservators of the Ashdown Forest which he could copy to Cllr. Standley.
98. **SOUTH EAST WATER OUTAGE** – **Action:** PW/ML would draft a letter to send to the Chief Executive of SE Water to say that they had again forgotten about Hadlow Down when there were water issues and include all issues surrounding the location of the water stations and lack of delivery to vulnerable people etc. and would invite them to attend a public meeting.
99. **BURIAL GROUND** – update on clearing the extension to the burial ground. **Carry Forward**
Action: The Clerk would find out when the verges were due to be cut.
100. **BOUNDARY AND DRAINAGE ISSUES AT BOTTOM OF PLAYING FIELD**
 - i. Draft specification of works – **Carry Forward**
 - ii. Letter of authority to carry out works – **Carry Forward**
101. **RISK ASSESSMENTS**
 - i. Quarterly Risk Assessment – **Carry Forward**
 - ii. Fingerpost Survey – **Action:** PW was passed the latest assessment for further review.
 - iii. Tree Survey – **Carry Forward**
 - iv. Annual burial ground Risk Assessment – DW had done this and no problems had been identified.
102. **CLERKS MATTERS:**
 - i. Consultancy and Locum hours for May and June were authorised and it was agreed that the locum would provide some extra hours as required in order to help the PC and Chair.
103. **BANK RECONCILIATIONS:** - 25th June reconciliations were agreed and signed additionally by a non-signatory Cllr. to meet quarterly regulations.
104. **OTHER FINANCE MATTERS**
 - i. Quarter 1 Reconciliation – was approved.
 - ii. Assets Register – was approved.
 - iii. The following payments and decisions were ratified: Hire of locum clerk at locum rate to cover minimum level of business in order to keep the PC running until a new Clerk could be recruited; the re-formation of the Interview Committee in order to proceed with recruiting a Clerk; issue P45 to previous Clerk; Wealden DC for litter bins paid by DD £412.50 + £82.50 VAT.
105. **ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT (UT ref = Unity Trust Bank reference number)** - ML and PW would authorise.
 - i. Helen Derbyshire - £776.15 salary & expenses (UT ref: 61630888)
 - ii. Samantha Weatherill consultancy & locum fees - £639.99 (UT ref: 8748864)
 - iii. HMRC - £771.21 (UT ref: 466802252)
 - iv. Lucy McConachie Play area inspection June - £40 (UT ref: 369639083)
 - v. Village Hall – for hall hire - £40 (UT ref: 609074425)
106. **CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 Section 17** – nothing raised.
107. **DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY** – this had been checked on 4th July. **Actions:** The Clerk would investigate whether defibrillator pads were reusable; she would order a new defibrillator pad as one had been used and would reset the status of the defibrillator on The Circuit.
108. **ITEMS TO GO ON NEXT AGENDA:**
 - Police attendance at manhole covers.

The following item was discussed in a closed session:

109. **CLERK'S RECRUITMENT** – a discussion was held and agreement reached on recruitment/package for the new clerk.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 20:50pm.