



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

Present: Councillors: Michael Lunn (ML) Chair (+WDC), Peter Weston (PW) Vice Chair, Ben Floyd (BF), David Munday (DM) and Damon Wellman (DW).

In attendance: Vicki Rutt (Clerk), Cllr. Bob Standley (ESCC) and 8 members of the public.

Cllr Lunn welcomed three residents who are interested in the Parish Councillor vacancies. The Clerk will send them an application and there will be an agenda item on the December 2023 meeting to fill the vacancies by co-option. **Action 1.**

175. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A resident has been made aware that ESCC are not supporting the change in the speed signage on the A272 and asked if anything further can be done. Cllr Standley suggested doing a petition and put something about it in the parish magazine, the resident agreed to action this. A resident stated that the Advisory Committee for the New Community Centre is going in the right direction and it seemed positive, he also reminded Cllrs that the planning application is in the name of the Parish Council so they need to lead by example and ensure conditions are fulfilled. A resident congratulated the Parish Council on the boundary ditch at the playing field, the water is flowing well and the Council moved quickly to ensure fencing was arranged and the site was made safe.

176. APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE – None.

177. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – BF declared a personal interest in item 181.

178. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS held on the 3rd October 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record (previously circulated).

179. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

i. Action Log 2023 Clerk reported from the action log which is available on the village website.

ii. Clerks report This was noted (previously circulated).

180. PLANNING:

i. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

WD/2023/2341/F - LILAC COTTAGE, WILDERNESS LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4HU

Demolition of double garage and construction of a replacement double garage with ancillary accommodation in the roof. *The PC voted: 1 for the application, 4 were against due to the size and scale, as well as the roof lights breaching the dark skies policy.*

ii. APPROVED APPLICATIONS

WD/2023/2084/FR - NEW FARM HOUSE, STOCKLANDS LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4EA.

Part retrospective application for the demolition of part of existing unauthorised balcony to create an access platform to accommodate newly installed bi-fold doors.

iii. APPEALS

APP/C1435/W/22/3310232 - Brick Kiln Farm, Brick Kiln Lane, Hadlow Down, East Sussex, TN22 4EJ.

The development proposed is 10m x 5m swimming pool, with a 3.5m x 2.5m pool house, to house the pump room, with simple stone tile surrounds. *This appeal was dismissed.*

181. TO DISCUSS WILDERNESS WOOD PLANNING [ALTERNATIVE USES] DW requested this item as looking at the website for Wilderness Wood and attending a recent site visit, the events being held are out of control and it seems an event is being held weekly. The creep of entertainment development is phenomenal. DW proposed that clarification is sought from Wealden Planning as it is believed they are allowed 6 events per year. It was agreed that ML would action this as District Councillor. **Action 2.**

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

Cllr Standley reported that ESCC are looking at their budget. There is a lot of pressure to spend within Children services and Adult social care. A discussion was held whether ESCC received an alert ahead of poor weather so they could clear drains before it hit.

Cllr Lunn reported that the local emerging Local Plan is progressing, and an internal Wealden meeting is taking place next week to outline possible sites, the key issue is remains housing numbers and what comprises will be made to meet the new administrations objectives. ML will be able to report back in due course. ML reported on enforcement at Drakes Head Den which is ongoing and believes that the buses at Wilderness Wood have been removed.

183. HIGHWAYS:

i. Blocked drains causing flooding issues on A272 and Five Chimney Lane

ML reported that the drains are blocked despite the Clerk reporting and being told that the drains are clear and are now on a 6 months maintenance service. The Clerk and Cllr Standley will report again. **Action 3.**

DW asked about a response from ESH on the SLR report, Clerk advised no response despite chasing several times.

Cllr Standley took an action to chase them also. **Action 4.**

ii. Change to consistent of speed signage on A272

PW reported that a response from ESCC on the proposal speed signage changes on the A272 was disappointing and he believes there may have been some misunderstandings. It was agreed that PW would draft a response and see if a site meeting could be arranged. **Action 5.**

184. COMMUNITY CENTRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

i. Note draft minutes from the Committee held on the 10th October 2023 The minutes were noted.

ii. Approve the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee The Terms of Reference was agreed.

iii. Approve the Clerk to undertake new registry searches It was agreed that the Clerk would undertake these searches and the cost will come out of unallocated reserves. **Action 6.**

185. LOWER PLAYING FIELD – ML explained that the boundary ditch works resulted in a large hole on the playing field that needed to be made safe whilst discussions were held on how to proceed. Fencing has been erected and discussions are being held with the drainage team at ESCC and the new Community Centre Committee [HDCC]. A report was given to Cllrs to agree a way forward, there were 2 options tabled. 1 to continue with the proposed plans on installing a chamber and silt trap connecting to the existing pipes with an associated headwall. The costs of which would be absorbed by HDPC. Option 2 was to refer the issue to the Advisory Committee to see whether the works could be done in conjunction with the works needed by the HDCC to obtain extant permission and money could be saved for both parties. BF proposed that the Council proceed with option 2. This was agreed by all. PW expressed his thanks to the Chair and Clerk for the amount of work they have both undertaken on this issue. ML reported that the Advisory Committee are next meeting on the 21st November so it is hopeful a report will come back to Council for the December meeting. The Clerk reported that the fencing is on loan from Crowborough Town Council (CTC) but now it is required for longer there will be a cost implication. CTC are proposing the same hire rate as local companies so £2+VAT per panel, per week. It was agreed to reduce the panels on site to 6 panels from the 13th November and the final invoice will come out of unallocated reserves. All Cllrs agreed and thanked CTC for their assistance in this matter.

186. CONSIDER PARISH COUNCIL IT REQUIREMENTS Clerk reported that the existing hard drives are full and need replacing, PW recommended some new ones but a resident present at the meeting may have some so discussions will take place before any are purchased. The Clerk reported that the PC laptop is very slow and ML agreed with this, discussions will be held with PW and a resident to see if anything can be done to speed it up and it will be discussed as potential budget item for next year at the finance meeting next week. The Clerk reported that the email server offers 5GB of data on the email system which is not a lot so this needs to be looked into further and see what options are available.

187. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

i. Email of thanks from resident following recent boundary works on playing field. This was noted.

ii. Email from ESCC regarding Urban grass cutting options for 2024. DW proposed that HDPC continue with option 1 which is standard where ESCC undertake two urban verge cuts as no cost to the Parish Council. Clerk to inform ESCC. **Action 7.**

iii. Request for memorial bench in burial ground. Clerk reported that a request has come in for a memorial bench in the burial ground where a bench has recently been removed. BF believes that bench is being returned after maintenance works but will find out and report back to Clerk. **Action 8.**

188. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS (COUNCIL MATTERS AND OUTSIDE BODIES):

DM reported there is a blocked drain in Hastingford Lane. PW reported that there has been a lot of trouble with the second SID. Clerk to chase them regarding the warranty. **Action 9.** BF reported that more field shelters have been added to Gingers Patch and he has had 3 residents speak to him about the excessive amount of horses boxes at Lynx House Barn and it is believed a business is running from there. It was agreed that the Clerk would refer this to enforcement. **Action 10.**

189. BURIAL GROUND:

i. Update on clearing the extension to the burial ground. BF reported that he has prices for digger hire and the Clerk reported that we are awaiting approval from the Diocese. ML reported that need to wait until the ground is not so wet. **Carry forward.**

ii. Update on transfer of ownership and additional inscription. Clerk reported that there have been two requests to transfer ownership of two burial plots and to add additional inscriptions but both had to wait for probate. Clerk has sent the necessary paperwork and is having a final handover with her predecessor next week to have a better understanding of the burial ground processes.

- 190. RISK ASSESSMENTS**
i. Quarterly Risk assessment – review findings: PW has done the assessment and everything is to be monitored.
- 191. CLERKS MATTERS:**
i. Clerks hours October 2023 This was agreed.
ii. Locum hours October 2023 This was agreed.
iii. To approve the appointment of an interim audit by Mulberry & Co This was agreed and will be booked in.
- 192. BANK RECONCILIATION – 25TH OCTOBER 2023 TO BE SIGNED.** PW and DM approved and signed.
- 193. OTHER FINANCE MATTERS:**
i. Quarter 2 Reconciliation – to approve. Cllrs noted and approved the Q2 report.
ii. Acknowledgement of receipt of final instalment of precept for 2023 and interest on savings account of £400.37. Noted.
iii. Payments for ratification: Payment to HMRC for Q2 2023/24 at £122.92 (UT ref 335777785). Noted.
iv. Ratify approval for amending SO date for Vicki Rutt from last day of the month, to the 28th of the month. Noted.
v. To discuss and agree how to proceed with 2024 tender for maintenance and verges. Cllrs agreed to go out to tender but it was agreed the wording would need to be carefully reviewed. Time scales were discussed as would be good to agree a contractor at December meeting so the contract can be included in the budget for 2024-25.
Action 11.
vi. Unity Trust Bank – mandate to remove access. All signed and noted.
- 194. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT (UT ref = Unity Trust Bank reference number)** - DM and PW will authorise.
i. Samantha Weatherill consultancy fees - £113.19 (UT ref: 705289911)
ii. Vicki Rutt salary end November - £920 paid by SO
iii. Vicki Rutt salary - £479.15 (UT ref:648959799)
iv. Lucy McConachie Play area inspection Oct - £40 (UT ref:644404257)
v. Village Hall for hall hire - £40 (UT ref:333087114)
vi. Reimbursement to Cllr Lunn for grass seed - £75 (UT ref:215291002)
vii. Wealden District Council for May 2023 election - £551.43 (UT ref:145299772)
viii. Daren Spillane for boundary ditch works - £1000 (UT ref:984453787)
ix. Mr Denzil Fears for contract 2023 - £2050 + VAT £410 (UT ref:436310630)
- 195. CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 Section 17** – nothing raised.
- 196. DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY** – this had been checked on 7th November 2023.
- 197. ITEMS TO GO ON NEXT AGENDA:**
- Probationary period review of Clerk
- Co-option of 2 new Cllrs.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 20:30.