



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
Held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on 6th February 2024

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

In attendance: Vicki Rutt (Clerk) and 7 members of the public.

244. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A resident raised that the minutes stated he was going to do a petition in regard to the A272 speed signage, however it was agreed after the meeting that this would be put on hold until the latest response from ESH came back, this is on the agenda later tonight. A resident read out the following statement *“As Parish Councillors, you will be aware of our Parish Community Plan drawn up in June 2011 and the fact that it does not expire until 2026. Ostensibly it was developed as a tool to assist the Parish Council and other stakeholders (such as Wealden District Council and East Sussex County Council) to identify the community priorities for the future of the Parish in line with Wealden District Council’s Local Development Framework. Within the theme heading of ‘Culture, Sport, Leisure and Play’, it identifies the following as one of its three key priorities: ‘To design and develop a new Village Hall which incorporates the ability for multiple uses, e.g. meeting rooms, indoor sports facilities, kitchen, changing rooms, male / female toilets, Parish Council office, storage area and suitable car park area’.*

As your chairman pointed out at the time of its adoption, the process was very much driven by local people and the various outcomes gave a very clear direction of the priorities of the community. Since then, a public meeting endorsed the relocation of the hall to the playing field site. Perhaps, in my naivety therefore, I would expect all parish councillors to be fully behind the project and to set aside their personal preferences. Furthermore, I feel that it is perfectly reasonable for you, as parish councillors, to declare openly whether or not you support the project or you are opposed to it. Finally, I finish by pointing out the responsibility to ‘design and develop a new village hall’ has fallen to the trustees of Hadlow Down Community Centre, past and present. During those 13 years, over £90k has been raised with only one very modest shared contribution from the PC to pay for the outline planning application costs for this site.”

ML responded that the Parish Council as a whole is supportive and thanked the tireless work that the HDCC has done both in the past and currently, the Parish Council established the Hadlow Down Community Centre Advisory Committee to assist driving the project forward which is a sign that the Parish Council is being supportive towards the project. Whilst Councillors do not have to give their personal views, both ML and BF stated they were very supportive. SL stated he is fully supportive of the development of the facilities, however he is concerned that the financial liability falls to the PC if anything goes wrong. PW agreed with SL comments. DW stated his personal opinion is not relevant but he does share the same financial concerns as SL and PW. ML stated that progress is being made and it is hopeful that by HDPC and HDCC working together, we will be able to get this part over the line and obtain the extant permission. A resident reminded Councillors that the joint AGM is being held on Friday 23rd February in the village hall at 19:30. A resident raised that some land has come up for sale opposite the school. A resident arrived and said they thought the meeting was due to start at 19:30. ML apologised for the confusion and said the change was published but only on the website and social media. The time was changed due to allow a presentation from the project architect of the HDCC, however this could not go ahead as the documentation did not arrive in time, so the meeting reverted back to the usual time of 7pm. Apologies were made and it was noted that it was hoped that this will not happen again as this is the second time this has happened.

245. APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE – Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr David Munday and Cllr Alan Hobbs.

246. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – SL declared a pecuniary interest for 249i. BF declared a personal interest for 253vi.

247. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS held on the 9th January 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record (previously circulated).

248. 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).

249. PLANNING:

i. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. WD/2023/3062/F for THE PADDOCK, SUMMER HILL, HADLOW DOWN, TN20 6JL

Replacement of existing detached triple garage damaged/destroyed by fire.

SL left the meeting due to having a pecuniary interest.

The PC voted: 4 objected due to the new application not being a like for like due to the addition of sky lights which will breach the dark skies.

SL returned to the meeting.

ii. APPROVED APPLICATIONS

WD/2023/2341/F for 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.

iii. REFUSED APPLICATIONS

WD/2023/1796/F for WILDERNESS COTTAGE, 1 WILDERNESS LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4HX

Replacement shed. Change of use from garden storage to dog grooming area.

iv. ENFORCEMENT UPDATES

a. Lynx House Barn - alleged unauthorised change of use to business/business storage – An update was received on the 11th January 2024. An Enforcement Officer has attended the site and planning permission does appear to be required so they have been asked to submit a retrospective application.

b. Land East of Stonehurst Lane, Hadlow Down [known as Wander Down]. Notice issued – A section 215 notice was issued on the 8th January 2024 with a commencement date of the 9th February 2024 where they have a period of 4 months to demolish, dismantle and remove from the land the semi-derelect touring caravan and all debris, materials, rubble, rubbish and tools.

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

Cllr Standley sent his apologies, but he did send a report which is on the website. ML updated that the draft Local Plan consisting of 6,000 pages has been published. There is nothing of concern directly for Hadlow Down. The Local Plan goes to Full Council on Thursday 8th February. Significant developments in other areas such as Horam, Uckfield, Frant and East Hoathley. There was a site, south of the A272 known as Waste Wood that was put forward but this was rejected. Once the draft plan gets approved, there will be a formal consultation commencing at the start of March 2024 and will last 8 weeks. Policy documents that the PC refers to when discussing planning applications, this will need to be reviewed carefully. BF asked whether the policy numbers would be transferred over to the new one or renumbered. ML believes they will all be renumbered.

Standing Orders dropped so a resident who just arrived could raise a question.

A resident stated that back in 2011, WDC wanted to trim down an oak tree in Hut Lane. The tree has a Tree Prevention Order [TPO] on it. The resident has just got the TPO granted to cut the oak back, works will be taking place on the 19th and 20th February so there might be vehicular access issues.

Standing Orders reinstated.

251. HIGHWAYS:

i. Response from East Sussex re speed issues – PW updated on the response from ESCC. The letter stated that they had replied comprehensively in December 2023, although some points of PW's letter was not commented on.

They mention policy but no where in their policy does it mention when a footpath is near a Highway. PW suggested that the resident who has a petition ready to go, commences with that and a draft response will be sent for approval to go back to Nick Skelton along with the Lead Member for Transport and the Chief Executive.

Action 1.

Standing Orders dropped so one resident could raise a question.

Resident asked could the MP be asked to get involved. Concerns could be raised but it is likely they will just refer to the policy. A resident stated it is not just the speed, it is how narrow the section of road is near Waste Wood, it is not wide enough for 2 lorries.

Standing Orders reinstated.

252. COMMUNITY CENTRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

i. Note draft minutes from 16th January 2024 meeting. The minutes were noted.

ii. To agree recommendations from Advisory committee. The recommendation regarding the PC moving forward alone with the ditch work was agreed and is on the agenda for discussion. The recommendation regarding the approval of planning conditions will be discussed in a confidential session at the end of this meeting. All agreed.

iii. To discuss and agree recommendations regarding drainage chamber at playing field

ML gave background information. Following a Stakeholder meeting on the 18th December, as there was no clear action it was agreed to go to the Advisory Committee in January 2024 for further discussions. At that meeting it was agreed that the Parish Council should continue with the ditch works alone due to the proposed costs from Monsons, costing around £2,000/£3,000. It was confirmed that the ditch was working well with water flow going

into the highway asset and the Parish Council proceeding alone would have no bearing or hindrance on the new Community Centre plans to move forward. There are 5 recommendations for the Parish Council to consider.

Recommendation 1. Agree to engage Richard Boswell, Draftsman of drawings as per quote attached for 3 items of works; Site Plan – with levels, and ESCC assets flows, Cross sectional plan of 1200mm chamber with silt trap and headwall and Statement of construction and product list requirements.

This was proposed by ML, seconded by DW. All agreed.

Recommendation 2. As soon as Parish Clerk receives details from Richard Boswell (estimated 5 to 7 days after approval) that the Parish Clerk is authorised to submit application to ESCC Drainage Team at a cost of £50.

This was proposed by ML, seconded by DW. All agreed.

Recommendation 3. Once approval is gained from ESCC Drainage team that the Parish Clerk is authorised to seeks 3 quotes for contactors to implement and install as per drawings.

This was proposed by ML, seconded by DW. All agreed.

Recommendation 4. The Parish Clerk is authorised to place an order for materials once contractor is appointed and a date is confirmed. Contractor to confirm material requirements.

This was proposed by ML. SL asked could the quotes obtained have both costs, with and without materials, to see the difference before proceeding with recommendation 4. This was agreed and seconded by DW. All agreed.

Recommendation 5. The Parish Clerk is authorised to place an order for the hire of a digger excavator for 1 week hire from Coppards which would also allow clearance of the extended burial ground at the same time.

This was proposed by ML, seconded by DW. All agreed.

253. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

i. Fireworks at the New Inn – SOs dropped so the resident can discuss. The resident explained that a notice went out on social media about some fireworks on New Years Eve but no fireworks were mentioned from the pub. He believes that the fireworks were not shop brought, they lasted 25 minutes and a licenced technician was not present so a Health and Safety risk. The Clerk explained that the Parish Council have no powers or jurisdiction regarding fireworks and the advice available is to report to Noise Enforcement at WDC. *Standing Orders reinstated.* DW stated that the PC should do something even though no power as they have been elected by residents to action on their behalf. Councillors discussed and it was agreed that the email would be passed to WDC Noise Enforcement for information. **Action 2.**

ii. Wealden District Parish Conference Thurs 14 March 2024 – It was agreed that DW would attend.

iii. Rural Grass Cutting Service – Environmental Enhancement Service Option – It was agreed that HDPC would go for option 1 again which is to have 2 cuts per annum for rural verges, at no extra cost.

iv. Patient Transport in Hadlow Down – A resident wrote in suggesting setting up a patient transport scheme in the village for those who do not have vehicle access and who may have medical appointments to attend. Cllrs agreed this was a good and noted the information.

v. Request from WDC re time extension for WD/2021/0471/O Hadlow Down Village Hall – ML explained that an email had been received from WDC asking for an update on the application submitted in 2021 regarding the existing village hall. The deadline is the 1st June but it was agreed to ask for this to be changed to the 28th June to be in line with the new Community Centre application. All agreed.

vi. Changes at Tinkers Park – A resident has emailed the Council stating that large scale works can be seen at the bottom of the hill at Tinkers Park which has resulted in biodiversity loss and habitat destruction. ML stated that as District Councillor he is aware that the District Councillor have received 3 complaints about this. It was agreed that the PC would follow their existing procedure and forward this email to Enforcement. **Action 3.**

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

DW updated that he is having ongoing issues with Highways. Advice has been provided that they should be taken to the Public Audit Committee. Information is going to be sent to Clerk and added to the March agenda for discussion. **Action 4.**

255. LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

ML gave an update earlier in his District Councillor report.

256. DISCUSS UPCOMING PARISH ASSEMBLY

i. Approve and commission signage – It was agreed to order a new sign for the Parish Assembly this year, using the same company as last year. All agreed. **Action 5.**

ii. Ideas for guest speaker – SOs dropped so resident can discuss. Ideas for speakers were raised as Claire Dowling as Lead Member of Transport at ESCC. Chris Bending from WDC about the Local Plan. Nick Skelton about the A272 speed issues. DW raised a great guy who attended the ESALC conference and spoke about planning. Clerk to get contact information. **Action 6. Standing Orders reinstated**

iii. Sending out invitations and hold the date to St Marks School and Mayfields Trust – It was agreed that the Clerk should send out invitations and save the dates. **Action 7.**

257. BURIAL GROUND:

i. Update on clearing the extension to the burial ground – ML will speak to Janet about arranging a site visit date as no response as yet. **Action 8.**

- 258. CLERKS MATTERS:**
i. Clerks hours January 2024 – The hours were agreed.
- 259. BANK RECONCILIATION – 25TH JANUARY 2024 TO BE SIGNED.** PW and ML approved and signed.
- 260. OTHER FINANCE MATTERS:**
i. Payment for ratification - DD for quarterly service charge Unity Trust at £18.00. BACS to East Sussex Pension fund for December 2023 for £464.13. DD for WDC for Q3 bins at £495. – These were noted.
ii. Discuss proposed Earmarked Reserve movements. Clerk proposed two earmarked reserves [EMR] movements. One for £75 from the Highways pot to the EMR Speed Initiative pot bringing it back to zero. The EMR unallocated pot being renamed to EMR drainage hole and £5,000 being left in there and the remaining £16,230.73 being moved into the general reserves pot. This was agreed. **Action 9.**
- 261. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT (UT ref = Unity Trust Bank reference number) - PW and ML will authorise.**
i. Vicki Rutt salary end February - £920 paid by SO
ii. Vicki Rutt salary - £314.92 (UT ref: 137677763)
iii. Lucy McConachie Play area inspection Jan- £40 (UT ref: 412976651)
iv. Village Hall for hall hire - £67.20 (UT ref: 926116230)
v. Crowborough Town Council – Fencing hire - £48 + £9.60 VAT (UT ref: 45036805)
vi. Mulberry and Co – Rialtas training for Clerk - £61.70 + £12.34 VAT (UT ref: 217992832)
vii. ESALC – New Cllr training - £40 + £8 VAT (UT ref: 637870896)
viii. SWARCO – Maintenance contract - £178.94 + £35.79 VAT (UT ref: 581879037)
ix. DM Payroll Services [Oct 2023 – March 2024] - £120 (UT ref: 650025072)
x. East Sussex Pension Fund – January 2024 - £338.97 (UT ref: 353813523)
- 262. CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 Section 17** – nothing raised.
- 263. DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY** – this had been checked on 6th February 2024.
- 264. ITEMS TO GO ON NEXT AGENDA:**
- Enforcement re Four Grange Cottage
- Discussion on Public Audit Committee for Highways.

The meeting closed at 20:32.

**** CONFIDENTIAL SESSION ****

ML proposed to move the meeting into a confidential session. PW agreed and this was seconded by DW. All remaining members of the public were asked to leave.

ML proposed that Bob Lake to remain in the confidential session as Chair of HDCC. This was seconded by DW, all agreed.

- 265. TO DISCUSS AND APPROVE EACH PRE-COMMENCEMENT PLANNING CONDITIONS AND TO RECEIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**
This was discussed and approved.

Meeting closed at 20:40.