



Fittleworth Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16th November 2015 at 7.00pm in the Pavilion Building.

Present: Chris Welfare (CW) Chairman, Mike Allin (MA), Frank Boait (FB), David Brittain (DB),

In Attendance: Hannah Hails (Clerk), WSCC/CDC Cllr Janet Duncton (JD)

Members of public: Mike Stanbridge (MS), Norman Sperring (NS), Ron Thatcher (RT), Sammi Leese (SL), Alison Welterveden (AW), Mick Foote (MF), Robin Dunstan (RD)

Action by

1. Apologies for absence : Shelagh Morgan (SM)

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the previous meeting, held on 19th October 2015. Two items noted which needed amending as follows :-

DB observed that his name was not in the action column re writing a letter to Petworth Town Council which meant he had missed it and therefore had not done it.

MA – Item 3 paragraph 2, re the sign that used to be at the top of School Lane that pointed to Arundel/Pulborough; he queried it, and discovered that it is still listed as a lorry route. He didn't believe it had ever been downgraded. CW asked how the lorry route was defined, was it in the 2007 recommendations for lorry routes? MA wasn't sure and asked what was identified in this document. CW said that it was the structure of the major routes not the A283 or the A29 but the major trunk routes such as the A3, A24 and A272. MA commented that School Lane was listed as a B road, he felt that it should be raised as an issue with JD.

3. Public Questions

RT – Wanted to address JD but JD was late to the meeting so RT asked that his comments be passed on to her. His driveway has again flooded and there is approx. 6 inches of water which has collected and he is unable to leave his house. RT thanked Margaret Welfare for reporting the problem to West Sussex on his behalf. A highways team arrived and MA came down to check on the situation and confirmed the blockage had been cleared and that the flood water was receding. RT checked his driveway and although the water had gone down it had not gone completely; he then realised that the obstruction had just moved from the highways drain into the parish council drain.

MA commented that he had spoken with the highways team but had been informed that their rods were not long enough to clear the parish council drain. MA has rods but there were also not long enough to solve the problem. MA commented that the manhole cover near the hedge is not bedded down so

that it fills up and overflows. MA had contacted David Hamilton to see if they had some long rods and could come and clear it but on his last visit the situation seemed to have resolved itself and the water was running away as it should. RT believed it was due to the amount of leaves going down the drain this time of year. There was nothing covering the road drain to prevent leaves being washed straight into it.

RT feels frustrated that there seems to be a lack of communication between Highways & the Parish Council which makes it impossible to sort out this situation. RT believes that highways should alter the drainage to allow for this problem. RT is unhappy that this situation seems to happen every year and he is unable to leave his house for days at a time and if there was an emergency it would be impossible for him to get help. RT had contacted Age Concern who advised him that there is someone at the district council who should be able to help him resolve the situation. CW didn't think that CDC would be able to help, but agreed to raise the issue with JD on RT's behalf.

RT also wanted to comment on the council's plans to put some outdoor gym equipment next to the playground. Whilst he was happy that after years of not having anything for the youth in the area that there was finally something being provided, he was concerned by the location of the equipment; he didn't believe that placing it next to the playground was a good idea due to the bad language sometimes used by people in that age group. RT also voiced concerns that the installation was right over the drains and this could cause issues. CW did not believe that drains would be affected provided the contractors took care. RT asked where the proposed basketball site was to be located. FB said that the plan was to put it behind the Sports Pavilion, close to the football goal. It was hoped that it could be fitted in without encroaching on the strip of land by the side of the car park owned by the Village Hall.

NS – a resident of Greatpin Croft - wanted to ask for a road sign to be put up at the end of School Lane which clearly states where numbers 1 – 12 Greatpin Croft are located. His 93 year old mother lives with them and there have been difficulties when doctors and ambulances come to the house. Time is wasted as they are unable to find the property and have ended up on the main part of Greatpin Croft. RD thought there was a sign already there but NR said that there wasn't; he believes there used to be but it had been knocked down. CW asked for clarification on the desired location. NS said there is a sign at the end of School Lane for The Fleet; he thought that it should be placed to the left of that. CW wondered about the size of the sign. but NS thought it only needed to be the same size as the other sign or smaller. CW would speak with JD to progress this.

4. County and District Councillor's Reports

JD advised district had been working on setting their budget.

JD reminded the council about the Big Society Fund and asked that any groups wanting to take advantage of that should contact her.

The district will be taking on 240 refugees from Syria.

County are still waiting for Ofsted's report on Children's Services..

Task and finish group starting up with regards to transport and highways; more information to follow shortly.

Rural isolation was an important issue. We were reliant upon parishes to advise of people in this position.

CW asked if any restrictions were likely to be placed on the level at which parishes can set their precepts. JD didn't think so. Petworth were planning a substantial increase in theirs.

CW advised JD of the previous complaint re flooding from Ron Thatcher. JD agreed to ask a highways officer to come out and assess the situation as well as asking at District if there is anything else that can be done to help. **JD**

CW asked JD re Norman Sperring's request for a new road sign indicating the location of 1-12 Greatpin Croft. JD said she would put in a request to district on our behalf. **JD**

5. Declaration by Council members of personal or prejudicial interest

There were none.

6. Items for discussion

a) Co – Option of Councillors

CW advised there were 2 applications which were being considered this evening from Mick Foote & Robin Dunstan.

The 2 new applications received from Sammi Leese & Alison Welterveden would be considered at the next meeting, in the meantime CW & another councilor would like to meet both parties for an informal chat.

MF & RD were asked to leave the room whilst their applications were voted on by the councilors.

All councillors agreed to co-opt both MF & RD on to the council.

MF & RD were invited back in to the room and told their applications had been successful CW congratulated them and both took a seat at the main table.

b) Budget 2016/2017

CW gave a brief overview of how the budget works for the benefit of the new councillors.

Income and expenditure still to come 2015/2016

The clerk had previously circulated an income and expenditure list for the remainder of the current financial year. CW read through this and there were some amendments as follows:

- CW noted that we should take into account £735 leftover from the Operation Watershed award, which would have to be repaid to WSCC. MA advised this may be needed to erect a fence

around the ditch to prevent kids from playing in there; he will obtain a quote prior to the December meeting.

MA

- MA advised an amount of £470 for repairs to the sports club was missing from expenditure still to come.
- *New Homes Bonus Grant* – a grant of £2000 had been offered and it was likely that we would use this in conjunction with the funds from the youth account to install some outdoor gym equipment. The quote received amounted to £5000, leaving a shortfall of approx. £1200 to be made up from council funds.
- *Bus Shelter* – Grant received for £3000 and funds of £5000 put in to the reserve account, totalling £8000. Work to include a small pathway to the shelter as well as some bars in front of it. We have planning permission and will go ahead with this before the end of the financial year.
- *Hesworth Common Scraping* - £1000 to be added to expenditure.
- *It was noted that expenditure exceeded income by £7857.* This would leave about £7000 in the main account at the start of the new financial year.

Budget Discussions

The clerk had previously circulated the proposed budget and explanatory notes to the council. Comments and amendments as follows:

- CW thought we should discuss the tree situation first as this could be a very costly exercise. He had previously circulated a paper in which he had listed the recommended work in order of priority. This made it easier to see into which financial year each work package would fall. MA wanted to arrange a meeting with Andrew Gale to discuss his conclusions. Other members thought it was more important to obtain some approximate costs so that we could finalise the budget at the December meeting. MA would do this. Before actually commissioning any work, we would need to obtain three quotes. MA pointed out that we should also allow funds for shutting down the road as there is a fee to be paid to the county council for this. In the mean time we set an amount of £6000 for 2016/17, with final figures (for the current year and next year) to be confirmed at the December meeting.

MA

Income

- ***Precept*** – A provisional amount of £18,000 was estimated in the draft budget. To be confirmed at the December meeting.
- ***Countryside Stewardship Scheme*** – Natural England previously agreed to pay £2400 per year for 10 years to Hesworth Common.
- ***Donations & Grants*** – The council had previously donated £1000 to different organisations. Clerk to circulate a list of the

Clerk

donations to be made in January for discussion and possible amendment for the 2016/17 budget.

- **Pavilion Licence Fee** – Licence fee is £3600 per annum (paid quarterly) which was last reviewed in January 2015. Next review January 2017.

Rents – We receive rents from the following:

Bowling Club £25

Rifle Club £25

Scouts & Guides £25

Expenditure

- **Pavilion Building (Maintenance)**

It was agreed that we should set aside £3000 for maintenance

- **Hesworth Common**

An amount should be set aside to provide for further tree works as per the report, items marked HS2. Amount to be confirmed in the December meeting.

- **Recreation Ground**

It was agreed that we should ask Grasstex to quote for the coming year in January.

- **Playground**

The Rospa Safety report suggested that the playground flooring be replaced. An amount of £4000 was provisionally entered, but MA said that that a previous councillor has some resins which were purchased to repair the surface that may be sufficient. FB & MA to investigate and confirm costs for the December meeting, in the meantime it was agreed to reduce the estimated cost to £2000.

- **Fencing/Netting around the play area**

The sports pavilion were awarded a grant of £1500 to do this and it was agreed that the council would match the amount.

- **Basketball Hoop/Court**

1 quote received so far for £1985.00

- **Village Maintenance**

It was agreed to put aside £200 for bus shelter maintenance and £400 to allow for repairs to the millennium arch. £100 for benches.

- **Clerks Salary**

£6500 estimated to cover wages, admin costs and additional hours to comply with transparency rules.

- **Clerks Expenses**

Spending approx. £42 per month on various stationery items such as stamps, paper, printer cartridges, envelopes etc.

- **Insurance**

We have agreed a further 3 year agreement with Aviva which means insurance price will be £2220.17. Renewable in 2018.

- **Website**

Annual charge of £300 for the new website

- **Litter Bin Collection**

To be amended to £300

7. Planning – Status of recent applications

Reference	Address	Date Received	Comments Recieved
SDNP/15/05220 /LIS & SDNP/15/05401 /HOUS	Cotford, Wakestone Lane, Bedham 2 Storey Extension and internal alterations	16.11.15	No – Concerns, await comments from DB & MA
SDNP/15/05463 /HOUS	Fleet Cottage, The Fleet , RH20 1HN Building of a porch plus work to the rear		Yes – No Objections

8. Correspondence

The Clerk had previously circulated a list of correspondence, there were no issues arising from this.

9. Finance

- The following invoices/expenses were approved for payment in September:

19.10.15	Viking	Stationery	45.29
19.10.15	PKF Littlejohn	Annual Return	396.00
19.10.15	Paul Duffell	Litter Picking	30.00
19.10.15	SSALC	Courses	102.00
19.10.15	Grasstex	Grass Cutting	613.32
19.10.15	WSCC	Clerk's Wages	444.64
19.10.15	Viking	Stationery	45.29
	TOTAL INVOICES		£1631.25

- Update on Income and expenditure

Account Balances as @ 5th November 2015

Current	£14,261.00
Reserve	£14,417.23
Birchwalks Wood	£5,419.20
Hesworth Common	£6,877.74
Youth	£1,879.66

- Any other financial issues

The interim internal audit was completed and everything is satisfactory. The annual rent from Bowling Club & Rifle Club was received along with the insurance contribution from the Bowling Club. Recreation Ground annual charity return completed.

VAT refund submitted for £1008.00

10 Items for inclusion on the December agenda.

- Co-option of 2 more councillors
- Finalising Budget/Precept
- Bus Shelter
- Gym Equipment plus NHB Agreement
- Neighbourhood plan
- Good Neighbour Scheme

11 Date of next meeting

Monday 14th December 2015 at 7.00pm in the Pavilion Building.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was closed at 10pm