

HERSTMONCEUX PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Herstmonceux Parish Council Meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 19 January 2015 in Herstmonceux Village Hall.

Present: Councillors Mrs. J. Angear, Miss. A. Ashley, Mrs. S. Charlton, Mr. W. Gower, Mr. D. Hockings, Mr. S. Nash, Mr B. Naish and Mrs. I. Willson; East Sussex County Councillor Mr L. Keeley, Mrs. J. McInnes, the Parish Clerk and Mr. S. Goacher, the Finance Officer, were in attendance.

Nine members of the public attended.

In the time set aside for questions and statements from members of the public, Mr I. Stewart and Mr M. Stockman made statements.

Mr Stewart, who represents the Herstmonceux Action Group that is opposed to the proposed development at Lime Cross, Herstmonceux made the following points:

- The Action Group supports the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Herstmonceux including a section on site allocations.
- The Action Group considers that the Parish Council should work with the Group in opposing the planning application at Lime Cross, Herstmonceux.
- A recent meeting organised by the Action Group, to discuss the group's opposition to the development at Lime Cross, was attended by approximately 80 people from Herstmonceux and from other parishes in Wealden District.
- The meeting was attended by the prospective Conservative Party candidate and links have been made with other groups opposing housing development in Westham and Ninfield.
- The Action Group considers that the Parish Council's processes are badly managed and it is not representing the views of those residents who are opposed to the development at Lime Cross.

The Chairman thanked Mr Stewart for his comments and made the following points:

- Herstmonceux Parish Council will consider any planning application for development at Lime Cross at a Herstmonceux Parish Council Planning Committee Meeting in line with the process for any other planning application.
- Wealden District Council has advised the Parish Council that the application WD/2014/0663/MAO will be withdrawn in the near future and replaced by a revised application. It is expected that this new application will be considered at the Planning Committee Meeting to be held on 10 February 2015. Details of the meeting will be advertised on the parish notice boards and on the parish web site.
- Wealden District Council held a Protocol Meeting in respect of the potential development at Lime Cross. Representatives from Herstmonceux Parish Council were invited to attend. A report of the meeting is available in the minutes of the November Council Meeting. These minutes are available on the parish web site or from the Parish Clerk.

NOTE FROM CLERK Extract from November Council Minutes - Protocol Meetings - meetings set up by Wealden for large planning applications to allow representatives from town/parish councils and the Local Ward Members to understand what is being proposed in an application.

- ***It is not a decision making process for either Wealden District Council or the town/parish councils but allows representatives to look at the proposals before a formal planning application is submitted. Councillors, Ward Members and Planning Officers have an opportunity to identify issues of concern.***
- ***Full planning applications submitted to Wealden District Council will be considered by all the consultees during the normal planning process.***
- Wealden District Council has informed the Parish Council that it will hold another Protocol Meeting about another site in Herstmonceux in the near future. Representatives from Herstmonceux Parish Council will be invited to attend.
- Herstmonceux Neighbourhood Plan is on the agenda for this meeting and will be discussed in due course.

Mr Stockman made the following comments as an individual parishioner:

- He thinks that the Parish Council and parishioners should work together on considering the proposal for

development at Lime Cross.

- He suggested that the Council should rise above recent negative comments and keep all parishioners involved.
- He requests the Council Minutes are available more quickly on the parish web site. **NOTE FROM THE CLERK** - the Council resolved that draft minutes would be put on the parish web site - these minutes will be ratified at the following Council Meeting.
- He suggested that there could be money in hand from the opposition by the Friends of Herstmonceux Castle to proposed development at Herstmonceux Castle in the 1980s.
- **NOTE FROM CLERK** The Friends of Herstmonceux Castle still exists to develop the communication between the community and the students at Bader International Study Centre(BISC). Its funds remain for that purpose and constitutionally default to the BISC if the Friends ceases to exist.
- During 2002-03 the Parish Council received the balance of a 'Fund' from group opposing development at Herstmonceux Castle in the sum of £1799.23. Following advice from the Charity Commission, the money was used to start what is referred to in the Parish Council's accounts as the 'Building' Reserve Account. £50 per annum has been added to the Account. No payments have been made out of the account since 2002-03 and the balance as at 31 March 2014 was £2299.23.
- The Finance Officer recommends that this money should not be used by a small section of the community to fight for less development in the area, unless parish residents are consulted to ensure that the spending of the money, on such a venture, was approved by the majority of the residents.

1.2015 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Mr. K. Game, Mr M. Goodsell, Mr K. Wheatley and East Sussex County Councillor Mr. W. Bentley.

2.2015 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2014 had been circulated. It was **RESOLVED** to accept that the minutes be approved, adopted and signed as a correct record, proposed by Councillor S. Nash and seconded by Councillor S. Charlton. All Councillors in favour.

3.2015 MATTERS ARISING

- The Chairman will arrange convenient times with the Finance Officer and the Parish Clerk for the Staff Appraisals.

4.2015 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs. J. Angear: Elected Member to Herstmonceux Village Hall Management Committee.

Councillor Mr B. Naish: Elected Member to Herstmonceux Village Hall Management Committee.

5.2015 DISPENSATION REQUESTS

None.

6.2015 FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

- The meeting having been presented with the Payment of Account Report and accompanying vouchers, **RESOLVED** to authorise expenditure totalling £6986.60 (copy attached), proposed by Councillor I. Willson, seconded by Councillor B. Naish. All Councillors in favour.
- It was agreed that the chairman should sign the quarterly Bank Reconciliation.
- The Finance Officer will review the Council's Risk Assessment Policy which will be discussed at the Finance Meeting to be held in February 2015.

7.2015 PRECEPT

The Finance Officer referred the meeting to the bases of and the F&GP recommendation, as follows:

The estimates provided a working balance as at 31 March 2016 of approx. £2,200 which is regarded as an adequate level. In order to achieve this, a Budget Requirement of £64,880 is needed. The meeting noted that the Council Tax Support Grant provision received from Wealden District Council had reduced from £5,630 (2014/15) to £4,630 (2015/16), a reduction of 17.76%, the Precept required will amount to £60,250 an increase of 2.03%. It was also noted that the Council Tax Base, as notified by Wealden District Council for 2015/16, had increased from 981.10 (2014/15) to 1,010.70 (2015/16) and the combined result of these factors would result in a reduction in the Council Tax for a Band 'D' household of £1.31 in 2015/16.

Proposed Finance & General Purposes Recommendations:

The Finance & General Purposes Committee would recommend to Full Council the following:

1. That in the event of the Council deciding not to continue with the Neighbourhood Plan, to specifically allocate the provision of the £10,000 to a specific service or to Reserve the sum for a specific project to be carried out in 2015/16 or in future.
2. That every effort should be made to find a tenant for the Old Surgery, and to engage the services of a suitable Letting or Estate Agent for this purpose.
3. To decide whether the Parish Council should start to make financial provision for taking over Herstmonceux Village Hall in the event of it being 'Handed – Over' to the Parish Council.
4. That the Annual Estimates, as presented by the Finance Officer, detailing a total Budget Requirement of £64,880 be agreed. That a Precept of £60,250 be levied on Wealden District Council for the financial year 2015/16.

The meeting discussed the recommendations of the F&GP Committee, and the meeting agreed that:

1. The decision regarding the provision of £10,000 for the continuation of the Neighbourhood Plan would depend on the decision made following the discussion of this item at Minute 08.2015 of this meeting.
2. That The Clerk should engage the services of Mr Tingley of Tingley Commercial to secure an satisfactory tenant for The Old Surgery, without further delay.
3. The meeting did not decide to provide for taking over the Herstmonceux Village Hall, should the Management Committee's financial position worsen in the future. The position will be monitored and discussed further on the receipt of the next published accounts for the Village Hall.
4. The meeting agreed the financial requirement of the Council for 2015/16 would be £64,880, and that after taking into account the notified amount of the Council Tax Support Grant of £4,630, that a Precept of £60,250 should be levied on to Wealden District Council for the Financial Year 2015/16. It was noted that because of the increase in the Council Tax Base, for Herstmonceux parish, the charge to a Band 'D' property should reduce by approximately £1.31 in 2015/16.

Proposed: Councillor S. Charlton, Seconded: Councillor S. Nash. All Councillors in favour.

8.2015 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Herstmonceux Parish Council had resolved at the November Council Meeting that the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan should proceed without specific site allocation policies.

However, since that meeting, there were important changes arising from external events which meant that the Neighbourhood Plan had to be reviewed again. The Council considered the following points:

- During the process of the Plan, Wealden District Council carried out a consultation on sites available in certain parishes for the development of the Wealden Plan. Herstmonceux Parish was included in this process which resulted in additional sites being put forward.
- Wealden District Council will review the Core Strategy in 2015 which could lead to an increase in the number of houses required in Wealden District. Wealden has reported that there is already significant pressure by the government to provide sites for more housing in Wealden.
- Wealden District Council has informed the Parish Council that in addition to the current planning application for 70 dwellings at Lime Cross, Herstmonceux, it expects another application in the near future, for development at Lime Roughs. Both these sites will be classed as "windfall" sites.
- However, Mr K. Williams, the Head of Planning and Environmental Service has informed the Parish Council that "*...officers (Wealden) will not be entertaining at this stage any further development over and above the two greenfield sites which you are currently aware of. If we receive (subject to the two sites being approved) further approaches by developers, the Council (Wealden District Council) will resist any such application on the basis that it is premature and prejudicial to the plan making process, both at Neighbourhood Plan level and Local Plan level (Development and Site Allocations Local Plan).*"
- The statement by the Department of Communities and Local Government in January 2015 that there will be a review of the Neighbourhood Plan process in 2015.
- However, since all government activity will cease on 31 March 2015, it is not expected that any changes can be introduced before that date.
- This review could be affected by the national elections.

A Neighbourhood Plan for Herstmonceux was supported by the Council and a large number of residents as a positive action to create policies for the future of Herstmonceux. However, the Council notes the uncertainty about the future of the Neighbourhood Plan process, the current applications for proposed development, forthcoming elections and the potential costs. It was therefore proposed to put any further decision on the Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan on hold until the July 2015 Parish Council Meeting, proposed by Councillor S. Nash, seconded by Councillor A. Ashley. All councillors in favour.

The Chairman closed the meeting to receive comments from the public:

- Is it possible to put the current application for Lime Cross on hold to allow all residents to work together? **Note: Planning applications are submitted to Wealden District Council and must follow the legal process once submitted. Herstmonceux Parish Council is a statutory consultee.**
- Herstmonceux Parish Council needs to consider what it wishes to achieve.
- The Wealden Plan is for the period up to 2027 - any applications up to the Wealden District Council's adoption sites under the current consultation will be "windfall".
- ESCC Councillor L. Keeley expressed concern that developers are not interested in development for the benefit of residents of the parish.

The Chairman re-opened the meeting:

- Any planning applications for development would be reviewed by Wealden District Council Officers and then considered by Wealden District Council Planning Committee.

Correspondence relating to the Neighbourhood Plan

1. WDC - letter from Mr K. Williams with information about "windfall" sites.
2. Mr and Mrs Lucas - two emails requesting information about the Parish Council's response to the planning application at Lime Cross, Herstmonceux. **Copies of the emails and the Council's response circulated to all councillors.**
3. Mr I. Stewart, on behalf of Herstmonceux Action Group - requesting minutes of the meetings potential developers of sites in Herstmonceux and questions relating to the Parish Council's response to the planning application at Lime Cross. **Copies of the response to Mr Stewart approved and circulated to all councillors.**
4. Ms H. Vogt - requesting a copy of the statistics from the Community Survey. Herstmonceux Parish Council was advised that as the survey was carried out by Action in rural Sussex, it does not have access to the raw data. The information from the survey is contained within the State of the Parish Report which is available on the parish web site www.herstmonceuxparish.org.uk
5. DCLG - information about the potential changes to Neighbourhood Plan legislation.
6. Mr Pendlebury - copy of letter to RAMSAR National Focal Point re potential development at Lime Cross, Herstmonceux.
7. Mrs G. Blunden- requesting information on the status of the development at Lime Cross, Herstmonceux. **Reply sent.**
8. Mr J. Hurwood - requesting information about the Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan. **Reply sent.**
9. Southern Water - response to the Parish Council's request for information about the capacity of the Treatment Works at Windmill Hill.

9.2015 CLERK'S REPORT

Correspondence

1. Southern Water - responses to questions raised at the Public Meeting re the sewers in Victoria Road, Windmill Hill. **Circulated to all councillors.**
2. Sussex Association of Local councils - details of the National Association of Local councils web site. and informing the Council that Government has laid legislative reform that parish and town councils may use electronic means to send out agendas. **The Council agreed that the clerk will send out the Council Meeting papers to those councillors with computers. Paper copies will be available at the meeting for councillors. Those councillors without computers will receive the papers by post as usual.**
3. Rural Housing Alliance - guide for affordable rural housing. **Copied to Councillor J. Angear.**
4. Mr Gladstone-Thompson expressing concern about the signage and advertising at the Horseshoe Inn, Windmill Hill. **Forwarded to East Sussex County Council.**

10.2015 REPORTS

1. Finance & General Purposes Committee:

Attached to the minutes.

2. Planning Committee:

No planning applications.

Planning Consents from Wealden District Council

1. WD/2014/2046/LBR - Pastures, Church Road, Herstmonceux - regularisation application in respect of unauthorised works undertaken to the property not covered by current listed building consent WD/2014/0452/LB.
2. wd/2014/2044/F - 17 Fairfield, Herstmonceux - first floor addition.
3. wd/2014/1962/F - Lime End Farm, Church Road, Herstmonceux - proposed barn.
4. wd/2014/1912/LBR - 2 School House, Windmill Hill -retention of fourteen windows on rear elevations.
5. WD/2014/1933/LB - 2 Corner Cottages, Cowbeech - replacement of timber windows to family dwelling.
6. WD/2014/1963/F - The Old Farm, Trolliloes, Cowbeech - erection of a single storey garage/home office (resubmission of WD/2014/0579/F)

Housing for older residents

Herstmonceux Parish Council has met with Mr S. Marsden from Wealden District Housing and Mr W. Weis from East Sussex County Council to discuss the provision of housing for older residents in the parish.

The following points were discussed:

- Herstmonceux Parish has a social rented stock of 83 units with over 20% of this stock available for people over 55. This is higher than most other villages within Wealden District.
- Wealden District Council Housing Service would therefore be looking for general needs accommodation in its social rented stock, rather than age restricted accommodation, in any new developments.
- There is a need in Herstmonceux, identified in the Neighbourhood Plan consultations, for market housing suitable for older residents.
- Herstmonceux Parish may wish to consider requesting that any new development provides a small identified area of perhaps a maximum of 8 units which are built to a standard which could accommodate wheelchairs and stair lifts.
- The Parish Council could review the potential future needs of residents to ensure that any future development meets the needs of residents.
- There are a number of residents who receive care support from ESCC - the Parish Council has requested a breakdown of those needs to inform its decisions about housing. This information will be available in March 2015.

3. Ground Committee

- A stile has been erected beside the gate into Lime Cross Recreation Area so that the gate can be locked in wet weather.
- Herstmonceux Cricket Club reports that it has raised £1475 up to 16.01.15 for the new cricket net scheme. Applications for funding have been made to a number of organisations and the Club has received over 70 letters of support for the project.
- The chairman will arrange a Committee Meeting in the near future.

4. Street Lighting

- Nothing to report.

5. Highways and Traffic

- New bollards have been erected along the side of Denefield Green to replace the ones that were destroyed by vandals
- Butlers Lane - some potholes have been repaired but more work is needed.
- Cricketing Lane - potholes repaired.
- Victoria Road and New Road - potholes need attention.
- Flooding at Collins Garage - ESCC will extend the gully as a temporary action to clear road flooding in wet weather. The long term proposal is to install a larger pipe.
- SLR Meeting - an item for the agenda include the long term plan for road resurfacing in the parish.
- ESCC - has forwarded the application forms for the licence for the bollards along the road at Denefield Green.
- The public car park in Herstmonceux will be resurfaced and the bays repainted between 21-23 January 2015.
- Mrs Sands - informing the Council that there have been problems again with the sewers in Victoria Road, Windmill Hill. Cleaning was carried out on three occasions in one week.
- Mr A. Jupp - informing the Council that the cost of a Speed Indicator Device is £875 plus VAT. He has been informed by Sussex Police that parish and town councils will be approached for part funding of the device.

Correspondence relating to Highways

- WDC - copy of the Review of Road Safety in the Wealden District.

Footpaths

- A Footpath committee Meeting is needed to discuss the ESCC survey of Rights of Way which will be carried out from 1.12.14 - 20.02.15

7. Police Liaison and Local Action Team (LAT)

- There has been no information about action to improve the situation at the Horseshoe Inn following the December Street Meeting. The Council understood that the play area would be closed. The clerk will seek further information.
- Sussex Police has informed the Council that LAT Meetings will no longer take place in individual towns and villages. Street Meetings will be held as necessary and three monthly meeting will be held at

Hailsham for all parishes in this area.

- The Council reported problems with communication issues and problems for members of the public reporting incidents on the 101 number.

8. Information Centre

Nothing to report.

9. East Sussex County Councillors

- Mr Keeley reported that he had carried out an inspection of roads, footpaths and gulleys across the area with the new Highway Steward.
- He is concerned at the decision by ESCC to support the proposal for a new runway at Gatwick Airport.
- There is a problem across some areas with the number of school places available.
- The Hastings/Bexhill Link Road costs are increasing.
- He is opposed to the proposed cuts in bus services across the ESCC area.
- He is opposed to the proposed new school at Ingrams Way, Hailsham and expressed concern about future school provision in the Hailsham area.
- He reported the concerns from a local resident, Mr J. Maddock about the height of the material at Robins, Chilsham Lane, Herstmonceux. NB Herstmonceux Parish Council has forwarded these concerns to ESCC and WDC.
- Speeding cars are a problem in Fairfield, Herstmonceux.

10. Wealden District Councillor

No report.

11. Parish Tree Warden

Nothing to report.

12. Parish Emergency Plan

Nothing to report.

13. Wealden District Association of Local Councils

- Minutes will be circulated to all councillors.

14. Herstmonceux Village Hall

- Copy of email from Mr I. Stewart to Herstmonceux Parish Council's solicitor and Dr Simmons's solicitor, about the access road to Herstmonceux Village Hall, Herstmonceux Health Centre and the Pharmacy. The Village Hall Management Committee is concerned about the use of the access road, particularly in respect of parking on the road even where advisory yellow lines have been painted. Herstmonceux Parish Council expressed concern about the safety of residents whilst accessing the services at the village hall, the health centre and the pharmacy. However, the Management Committee has noted that under the terms of the lease it is responsible for the access road. Herstmonceux Parish Council has invited the Management Committee to attend a Council Meeting to set out its concerns so that the Full Council can respond to residents' and the Management Committee' concerns.
- The AGM of the Village Hall will be held at 7.30pm in the lounge of Herstmonceux village Hall on Monday 9 February 2015.

15. Allotment

Nothing to report.

16. Herstmonceux/Varengeville Twinning Association

- The AGM and Raclette Supper will be held at Herstmonceux Village Hall on 16.01.15

17. Herstmonceux Church of England Primary School

- Next meeting in February 2015.

18. Cuckmere Bus

- Next meeting in February.

19. Herstmonceux Business Association

- Nothing to report.

11.2015 ITEMS FOR AGENDA

- Standing Orders at the Council Meeting to be held on 16 February 2015. Copies of the existing Standing Orders will be circulated to all councillors.

ChairmanDate.....