

HERSTMONCEUX PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of Herstmonceux Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 15 June 2015 in Herstmonceux Village Hall.

Present: Councillors Mrs J. Alder, Mrs. J. Angear, Ms. A. Ashley, Mr M. Bradshaw, Mr M. Goodsell, Mrs. H. Kenward, Mr. B. Naish, Mr S. Nash, Mr. I. Stewart, C. Stirling-Reed and Mr. M. von Barnholt Krag; East Sussex County Councillor L. Keeley and Wealden District Councillor A. Long.

Mrs. J. McInnes, the Parish Clerk and Mr. S. Goacher, the Finance Officer, were in attendance.

Three members of the public attended.

In the time set aside for public comments and questions., Mr Philip Hodgkiss, the Project Manager for the Meteorological Site in West End, Herstmonceux presented a short report to the Council:

- The Meteorological Office in West End, Herstmonceux is an important weather data collecting station.
- However, the building is under review as it is in need of significant repairs. The structure is sound but the roof is damaged which has led to interior water damage.
- It is proposed to repair the building and offer it for community use as the Met. Office will continue their operations from the computer storage area and generation room which will be developed into a completely separate unit.
- Mr Hodgkiss has made contact with Herstmonceux Scouts to ask if they would be interested in renting the site until the new scout hut is built on the Lime Cross Recreation Area. The Scouts are interested in entering into discussions but were unable to attend the Council meeting.
- Any repairs and renovation could be agreed in line with the requirements for the scouts.

The following comments were noted from councillors:

- Councillor I. Stewart Declared an Interest as he lives in the adjoining property.
- The Scouts will need to consider the costs of rental, maintenance, utilities etc.
- The Met. Office may need to apply for building a change of use for the building.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hodgkiss for the information but noted that although the Council would support any help for the Scouts who have not had a meeting place in Herstmonceux since the arson attack on the former scout hut, any rental agreement between the Met. Office and the Scouts will be a private agreement.

In February 2015, Herstmonceux Parish Council agreed a Recording and Reporting Policy on recording meetings. It was agreed by a majority vote that all council meetings will be recorded. Copies of the recordings will be available from the Parish Clerk, at £5 per recording.

56.2015 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from East Sussex County Councillor L. Keeley.

57.2015 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2015 had been circulated. It was **RESOLVED** to accept that the minutes be approved, adopted and signed as a correct record, proposed by Councillor M. Goodsell and seconded by Councillor S. Nash. All Councillors in favour.

58.2015 MATTERS ARISING

Reference the fundraising event on 23.08.15 on Herstmonceux recreation Ground for Herstmonceux Bowls Club, Herstmonceux Football Club and Herstmonceux Scouts - Herstmonceux Parish Council will waive the rental charge for the recreation ground.

59.2015 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.

Councillor M. Goodsell: minor maintenance work on Herstmonceux recreation grounds, Lime Cross and other sites in Herstmonceux Parish.

Councillor I. Stewart: an Interest in Herstmonceux Village Hall as he is a trustee of Herstmonceux Village Hall Management Committee, he is the treasurer of the Management Committee and he is the solicitor who drew up the lease between Herstmonceux Village Hall and Herstmonceux Parish Council.

The Old Surgery, West End, Herstmonceux - Councillor M. Bradshaw Declared a Prejudicial Interest in the discussion of the rental of the site.

60.2015 DISPENSATION REQUESTS

None.

61.2015 FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

The meeting having been presented with the Payment of Account Report and accompanying vouchers, **RESOLVED** to authorise expenditure totalling £12,100.66 (copy attached), proposed by Councillor M. Goodsell, seconded by Councillor M. Bradshaw. All councillors in favour.

62.2015 CODE OF CONDUCT - COUNCILLORS' REGISTER OF INTEREST

It was proposed by Councillor Stewart, seconded by Councillor Bradshaw that the councillors wished to discuss to have a private discussion about the correspondence between the clerk and Mr Scott, the Monitoring Officer for Wealden District Council concerning the councillors' register of interest. The proposal was agreed with six councillors in favour and four abstentions. The Clerk, the Finance Officer and the members of the public were asked to leave the room.

The meeting reopened after a 15 minute break and it was proposed by Councillor I. Stewart, seconded by Councillor J. Alder that the Parish Council Chairman will discuss the Code of Conduct issues with the clerk.

63.2015 COMMUNICATIONS FROM HERSTMONCEUX PARISH COUNCIL TO PARISHIONERS

- Quotations for the Directory Booklet - no further quotations are available and the matter will be referred to the July Council Meeting.
- June Parish News - a statement from parish councillors had not been agreed by the Council. Reports for the Parish News should be forwarded via the clerk after the appropriate approval by the Council.
- Surveys and Newsletters - it was proposed that the Council should send out regular newsletters. Perhaps a survey could be sent out to assess the most effective way of communicating with residents - more newsletters, parish council surgeries or any other communication? The clerk will draft a newsletter for discussion. Councillors will forward ideas and suggestions to the clerk for the newsletter.

64.2015 THE OLD SURGERY

- The background to the renovation of the surgery was reported to the Council.
- A short update about the previous application from Mr and Mrs Gardiner's was given by the clerk.
- The proposal for the rental of the Old Surgery is as follows:
 - i. A five year repairing and insuring lease.
 - ii. A non returnable deposit of £1500 to be paid as soon as (preferably within 14 days) the solicitors are notified of an agreement.
 - iii. Year 1 rental - £9000
 - iv. Year 2 rental - £9000
 - v. Year 3 rental - £9000
 - vi. Year 4 rental - £10,000
 - vii. Year 5 rental - £10,000

65.2015 THE ACCESS ROAD TO HERSTMONCEUX RECREATION GROUND

- There is an ongoing problem with the Recycling Partnership refusing to empty the refuse bin on the recreation ground as they have reported that the overgrown hedging is making it difficult for the refuse lorry to drive along the road. There has been a recent change in the size of the vehicle used.
- They have reported that the wing mirror on the lorry has been damaged on two occasions.
- Councillors Nash and Goodsell have met with representatives from the Recycling Partnership and it has been agreed that on a very temporary basis that Councillor Goodsell will arrange for the full bin to be moved to the end of the road on collection days, to ensure that it is emptied.
- Mr Ford, the owner of the road has agreed that the hedging can be cut back as required as soon as possible.
- The Clerk will write to Mr Ford and send a copy to the owner of Trinity Trees whose hedging is overhanging the road and ask them to cut it back.
- In the long term, work will be needed on the road surface.
- It may be necessary to remove the large metal gate as this may cause problems for large vehicles.

66.2015 CLERK'S REPORT

1. Victim Support - application for a grant. **Referred to the August Council Meeting.**
2. Volunteer Centre - information about volunteering.
3. WDC - information about the supply of the Register of Electors.
4. WDC - information about the changes to rubbish and recycling collection days.
5. Mr I. Steedman - information about Sussex Day on 16 June.
6. Mr P Hodgkiss - information about the potential use of the Met. Office building in West End, as a community building. See above.
7. WDC - details of the Parish Conference on 23.09.15. **Councillors J. Alder, Angear, Bradshaw and Kenward would like to attend.**
8. Mrs A. Lazell - update on the application for funding to Aviva for Herstmonceux Cricket Club.
9. Mr and Mrs A. Page - asking for the Parish Council's help in seeking a change in the ESCC decision to suspend the free bus service for children attending Heathfield School. The Council discussed this letter at length:
 - The clerk will seek more information from Heathfield School and ESCC.
 - Has car sharing be considered?
 - Could parents be encouraged to set up their own support network or their own private bus service? This could be advertised in the newsletter
 - The problem is widespread across the country with the reduction in funding from County Councils.
 - Mr Gower advised the Council that in the past representatives have lobbied County Hall but with no success. Long term issues may arise if the numbers of children attending Heathfield School are affected by the cost of the school bus.
10. Access to services in rural Wealden 10am -1pm 17.06.15 Reid Hall, Boreham Street.
11. Wealden Community Grants Programme. **Forwarded to Herstmonceux Village Hall, Herstmonceux Scouts, Vitality Villages, Lime Cross Sports Clubs.**
12. WDC - parish election review. **Copied to Councillors Alder, Bradshaw,**

67.2015 REPORTS

1. Finance & General Purposes Committee:

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Meeting held on 3 June 2015 are attached to the minutes.

The Chairman asked the RFO to take the meeting through the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Minutes.

The RFO took the meeting through the Minutes and drew the attention of the Councillors to the recommendations that were being put forward for the consideration

of the Council.

TERMS of REFERENCE of ALL COMMITTEES:

The F& GP meeting agreed that the format in which the Terms of Reference were written should be changed so that the responsibilities or areas of responsibility are clearly laid out in list or bullet point format. The meeting further **RECOMMENDS to Full Council** that this format should be adopted in respect of all its Committees to provide consistency across the administration of the Council. Where financial implications arise in other committees of the Council there should be a clear cross referencing to the need that any such implications to be forwarded to and discussed by, before being recommended to Full Council, directly or via the estimate process, by the F&GP Committee. Initially the Terms of Reference of all Committees will be put into the new format by the Clerk and RFO for ratification at a future meeting of Full Council.

TERMS of REFERENCE for the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE:

1. The Composition of the F&GP Committee. That there be four members of the Council elected at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, plus the Chairman and Vice Chairman as Ex-Officio members
2. That there be a requirement that at least three members of the committee be present to form a quorum.
3. That the F&GP Meeting meet at least four times a year to discuss and recommend to Full Council on matters associated with the draft Final Accounts, Awarding of Grants, the draft Estimates, and the setting of the Precept. The requirement that the F&GP deals with the finances of the Council, and that there are certain deadlines associated with Final Accounts, the budgeting and setting of the Precept processes as well as the Council's Policy on Grant awards, will determine that the F&GP Committee will need to meet during May, August, November and January. However, other financial issues that arise during the year, such as reviewing and renewal of the Council's insurance requirements will determine that other dates will be required the F&GP Committee to meet.
4. The new Format of the Terms of Reference of the F&GP Committee are to be rewritten by the Clerk and RFO, for ratification by the Council, and are to include the following:
 - Put in place a timetable for the Council to monitor progress of any recommendations of either the Internal or External Auditor.
 - Monitor actual expenditure of the Council against estimates, and report to Full Council as necessary.
 - Consider Grant applications from Local and National organisations that provide benefit to the residents of the parish and recommend awards to Full Council in accordance with its Policy.
 - Arrange for a review of its insurance policies, as required, prior to renewal
 - Oversee the procedure for risk assessments in respect of all Council activities.
 - Will recommend to Full Council any virements, between Reserve Accounts, which must be minuted separately when included and arising from the estimate process, and which must be ratified by Full Council before such virements are reflected within the Parish Council's accounts by the RFO.

ESTABLISHMENT of a PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE:

The meeting discussed the F&GP Committee's Terms of Reference in connection with officer's salaries, pay awards, and contractual arrangements. The RFO put forward for consideration the idea of the formation of a Personnel Sub-Committee formed from three Members of the F&GP Committee, to undertake these matters together with the conduct of staff appraisals, and the introduction of auto-enrolment. The Sub-Committee would be dealing with confidential items, therefore, its meetings would not be subject to access by the public or press. The Clerk and/or RFO may be required to

attend. Meetings would be on an 'as required' basis, and a separate Terms of Reference would be formulated for this Sub-Committee who would report to the F&GP Committee, in respect of all financial matters. The Chairman of the Council would be an ex-officio member of the Personnel Sub-Committee. The meeting adopted this idea, and **RECOMMENDS** to Full Council the following Councillors be elected to form the new Personnel Sub-Committee: Councillors Bradshaw, Nash, and Stewart.

Councillor Bradshaw had put forward the following Term of Reference for consideration 'To deal on behalf of the Council and as instructed by it, with any matters of policy which do not fall clearly within the responsibilities of other committees or where there is any conflict between them'. The meeting discussed this and **RECOMMENDS** that this suggestion is not adopted as it was generally felt that this undermined the overall powers of the Parish Council.

INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT:

The F&GP Committee having considered the Internal Audit Report for 2014-15, **RECOMMENDS to Full Council** that the Internal Audit report be noted and that the matters raised be implemented during this financial year.

The RFO went through each item raised by the Internal Auditor:

1. *Asset Register. The Council owns the Village Green and the Recreation Ground – these should be added to the Register. As it appears that they cannot be sold, Valuations of £1 should be used. The whereabouts of the Deeds might be investigated and included with the details.*

The RFO will amend the Asset Register to include both the Recreation Ground and Village Green with an asset value of £1.

2. *Backing up of the Accounts. This is carried out by copying to External Hard Drives, held by the RFO. To prevent any problems that might occur by way of Fire or Theft, it is recommended that copies are regularly provided to the Clerk or a Councillor, perhaps by way of a Memory Stick.*

Discussion took place in respect of memory sticks v. Cloud based back-up facilities. The general consensus of opinion was to purchase two memory sticks with the capability of protecting work by a password, in the short term, and investigating a cloud based back-up system in the long term. The Council has currently a 'Dropbox' facility which is full, but it was the opinion of the meeting that other cloud based systems, now available, may be more secure although additional cost may be involved.

3. *GALCP 2014 Version. Page 50 lists a number of new requirements that need to have Systems and/or Documentation in place:*
 - *Employees' Code of Conduct. A draft Template has been passed to the Clerk as a guide*
 - *Procedure documented re Responses to Consultation Requests*
 - *Procedure documented re the handling of correspondence, circulation, responses, filing and retention*
 - *Procedure (documentation not required) agreed re the recording and monitoring of Councillors' Gifts/Hospitality received*
 - *Procedure (documentation not required) agreed re the monitoring of Grants or Loans made or received*

The RFO circulated a copy of the suggested Employees Code of Conduct, as provided by the Internal Auditor, as there was no other guidance from NALC on this matter. The meeting agreed that the other procedures required would need to be put in place during this financial year. The Clerk and RFO would be asked to undertake the formulation of these procedures.

4. *Donations/Grants. Any Payments of this nature need to be minuted with the particular Local Government Act (LGA) that provides the relevant authorisation/powers. A List is available from SSALC. If no LGA is appropriate, S 137 can be used - note that the relevant sub-paragraph should be quoted – check with the Local Council Administration Book,*

Section 22.20. If the Council holds General Powers of Competence, the above Procedure is not required.

The Clerk of the Council holds the full CiLCA qualification, therefore, there is no need for the Parish Council to conform with this procedure unless it wishes to do so.

FINAL ACCOUNTS and ANNUAL RETURN 2014-15:

The RFO having circulated copies of the Final Accounts for 2014-15 to all Councillors, and these having been considered by the Finance & General Purposes Committee, and there being no questions relating to the Accounts.

Councillor Bradshaw proposed that a **RECOMMENDATION to Full Council** be made to adopt the Final Accounts for 2014/15 as presented by the RFO and that authorisation be given to the Chairman of the Council and Clerk to sign the Annual Return on behalf of the Parish Council, prior to its submission to the External Auditors. Seconded by Councillor Nash. All Councillors in favour.

The Chairman asked for a Proposer and Seconder to adopt all the Recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and authorisation to sign the Final Accounts and Annual Return, together with the Clerk, on behalf of the Parish Council.

Proposed; Councillor Goodsell, Seconded; Councillor Bradshaw. All Councillors in favour

2. Planning Committee

26 May 2015 - attached.

9 June 2015 - attached.

3. Ground Committee

Monday 1st June 7.00

Present : Cllr Stephen Nash, Cllr Von Barnholt, Cllr Goodsell, Cllr Naish,
Mick Watson

Apologies Cllr Bradshaw

1. Selection of Chair
Cllr Stephen Nash
2. Overview from Mick Watson
 - a. An appraisal of issues affecting the Recreation ground, some concern was voiced over the quality of the strimming around the seats, tennis courts etc - monitor
 - b. The wooden edging around the tennis courts is show signs of deliration therefore will need attention at sometime
 - c. Fencing around the scout ground still a problem but Cllr Goodsell spoke to Tabatha during the meeting to confirm what was required
 - d. Edging the twitten path was discussed Cllr Von Barnholt suggested that the scouts may wish to get involved as a community project
 - e. Cllr Goodsell suggest that Tim Honeysett could be an alternate to the current molecatcher - Cllr Nash to follow up and report
 - f. Cllr Van Barnholt suggested that provision of further trees would enhance the park somewhat.
3. The roadway continues to deteriorate and would benefit from some patching but a permanent solution will have to be found sooner than later. This of course should be linked to further parking provision.
Next formal meeting set for 3rd August.

- A bin is needed adjacent to the seat near to the Bowls Club at the entrance at the back of the school. It was agreed that a new bin will be ordered.

4. Street Lighting

- The problem with the light cover on street light 1 in Buckwell Rise has not yet been reported. Councillor M. von Barnholt Krag will report it on 16.06.15

5. Highways and Traffic

Meeting held 1 June 2015 at the Village Information Centre

Councillors Jenny Alder and Heather Kenward attended and Steven Nash came along to this first meeting for continuity.

This initial meeting was to familiarize the new committee with previous issues raised and minuted

The Terms of Reference were agreed. It was also noted that if there is any requirement for expenditure by the committee to a value of over £50 this would be put forward to the Financial and General Purposes Committee for approval.

Actions agreed.

1. A meeting will be arranged with Area Steward at ESCC after which the next committee meeting will be arranged.
2. Find out when the last SLR meeting was held
3. Obtain a copy of the Review of Road Safety in Wealden.

3 June 2015

15 June 2015

- The Council received reports of the problem with dog fouling on the Twitten - the clerk will contact Tess Fox, the Street Enforcement Officer.
- Additional signs will be ordered and advice sought on who has the powers to fine dog owners who allow their dogs to foul.
- A number of problems reported by residents have been forwarded to the Highways Committee.
- The Parish Council has yet received the details of the contribution from ESCC.
- The handrail along the footpath from Monceux Road to Bagham Lane will be fitted in the near future.
- Councillor Nash will seek information on the rural cutting programme from ESCC.
- The hedging of the houses opposite Herstmonceux Post Office and the adjacent to the Brewers Arms are overhanging the pavement.
- Cars parking on the pavements and verges is a problem in different areas of the parish.

Footpaths

- Meeting needed to discuss the outstanding problems.
- The programme for the young people who are undertaking the review of the parish footpaths will be circulated to all the Footpath Committee.

7. Police Liaison and Local Action Team (LAT)

- Next meeting will be held at Hailsham on 14.07.15.

8. Information Centre

- New computers have arrived.

9. East Sussex County Councillors

- No report.

10. Wealden District Councillor

- No report.

11. Parish Tree Warden

- Councillor von Barnholt raised the problem of ivy growing on trees which may cause the trees to fall.

12. Parish Emergency Plan

- Nothing to report.

13. Wealden District Association of Local Councils

- No meeting.

14. Herstmonceux Village Hall

- Quiz night raised £502.
- The chairman of the Management Committee will the July Council Meeting.

15. Allotment

- All allotments allocated.
- The Allotment Association do not support a proposal

16. Herstmonceux/Varengeville Twinning Association

- Nothing to report.

17. Herstmonceux Church of England Primary School

- Nothing to report.

18. Cuckmere Bus

- No meeting.

19. Herstmonceux Business Association

- No report.

20. Vitality Villages

- Report attached.
- Meeting to adopt the Constitution will be held on 1.07.15
Neighbourhood Watch Co-Coordinator is interested in becoming the Neighbourhood Watch Co-Coordinator.

68.2015 ITEMS FOR AGENDA

July Council Meeting

- Parish Council surgeries.
- The Neighbourhood Plan review will be postponed until the September 2015 Council Meeting.
- Small business contracts - to enable businesses in Herstmonceux to quote for any jobs. A list of contracts will be circulated to councillors and the matter will be discussed at the August Finance Meeting.

Chairman.....Date.....