

## **HERSTMONCEUX PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of Herstmonceux Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 18 January 2016 in the small hall 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 S. Nash, Mr B. Naish, Mr. I. Stewart, Mrs C. Stirling-Reed; East Sussex County Councillor Mr W. Bentley and Mr L. Keeley.  
Mrs J. McInnes, the Parish Clerk and Mr S. Goacher, the Finance Officer were in attendance.

Two members of the public attended.

Prior to the meeting, the Chairman, Councillor Mrs J. Angear read out a letter from the Parish Clerk who had informed the Chairman that she wished to retire at the end of March 2016.

The Clerk has also advised the Chairman that as Herstmonceux Parish Council has resolved to continue the Neighbourhood Plan, she is offering to continue solely as Clerk to the Steering Group until the Draft Plan is available for public consultation by the end of May 2016.

An Emergency Meeting will be arranged as soon as possible to discuss the employment of a new Parish Clerk and the clerking arrangements for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

### **16.01.01 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Mr M. von Barnholt Krag.

### **16.01.02 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2015 had been circulated. It was **RESOLVED** to accept that the minutes be approved, adopted and signed as a correct record, proposed by Councillor Mr I. Stewart and seconded by Councillor Mr S. Nash.. All Councillors in favour.

### **16.01.03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**Councillor Mr M. Goodsell:** minor maintenance work on Herstmonceux recreation grounds, Lime Cross and other sites in Herstmonceux Parish. Tenders for work in the parish.

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

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

### **16.01.04 DISPENSATION REQUESTS**

None.

### **16.01.05 FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT**

- The meeting was presented with the Payment of Account Report and accompanying vouchers. It was **RESOLVED** to authorise expenditure totalling £1,573.71, proposed by Councillor Mr M. Bradshaw, seconded by Councillor Mr M. Goodsell. All councillors in favour.
- The Bank Reconciliation, signed by Councillor Mrs H. Kenward was circulated to councillors.

### **16.01.06 PRECEPT**

The Finance Officer referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee recommendation, as follows:

- The Estimates provided a working balance as at 31 March 2017 of approximately £3,000 which is regarded as an adequate level. In order to achieve this, a Budget Requirement of £66,920 is needed, an increase over the Budget Requirement for 2014/15 of 2.6%.
- The meeting noted that the Council Tax Support Grant provision received from Wealden District Council had reduced from £4,630 (2014/15) to £3,650 (2016/17) a reduction of 21.20%, the Precept required amounts to £62,950, an increase of 4.43%. This would result in an increase in the Council Tax for a Band "D" household of approximately £1.35 in 2016/17, an increase of 2.26% over 2014/15.
- The Finance Committee had undertaken a process to include all projects that had come forward from the Council's Committees and from individual councillors. Particular discussion had taken place in respect of the Council's Reserve Funds and, in particular, to the ring-fencing of amounts within the General Reserve and the Street Lighting Reserve Funds to cover various projects and restricting amounts of un-ring-fenced amounts within these two Reserves. To achieve this, there is recommended a virement from the Street Lighting Reserve Fund to the General Reserve Fund of £17,700.
- The Council had introduced a new Tendering process, whereby it has let all contracts for various general maintenance works within the parish for a three year period, with the exception of the verge cutting contract. The highway verge cutting contract has been looked at in some detail and has resulted in an increase in the cuts within the residential areas and a reduction in rural areas. The Estimate process, therefore, has led to the Estimates reflecting a more accurate financial basis for its general maintenance contracts.
- The Finance Officer stated that at present the Government had not introduced any form of "capping" of precepts of local councils, but that there was some anticipation that this could still be something that may be introduced in the future. The Government may also be looking at the level of Reserves held by local councils and the Council has taken a proactive approach by ring-fencing the majority of its Reserves.
- The meeting agreed to accept the Annual Estimate, as recommended by the Finance Committee, which included the virement of £17,700 from the Street Lighting Reserve to the General Reserve Fund, and to levy a Precept on Wealden District Council in the sum of £62,920 for the financial year 2016/17.

Proposed by Councillor Mr M. Bradshaw, seconded by Councillor Mrs H. Kenward. All councillors in favour.

### **16.01.07 HERSTMONCEUX VILLAGE HALL THE ACCESS ROAD TO HERSTMONCEUX VILLAGE HALL, HERSTMONCEUX HEALTH CENTRE AND THE PHARMACY**

- Herstmonceux Village Hall Management Committee has agreed to the proposal from the Parish Council that future maintenance of the access road should be shared three-ways between the Parish Council, Dr Simmons and the Management Committee of the Village Hall. However, the Management Committee expressed concern that in the future when maintenance is required the Management Committee may not have sufficient funds to meet their share of the costs. It would, therefore, need to come to the Parish Council for financial help.
- The Clerk will now contact Wellers Hedleys and ask them to act for the Parish Council in respect of the legal work on the lease variation.
- The Village Hall AGM will be held at 7.30pm on 8.02.16, Mrs M. McBurney, the current Chairman and Mr G. McBurney, the current secretary will be standing down.

#### **16.01.08 HERSTMONCEUX NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

- Herstmonceux Parish Council has engaged the professional services of Ms F. Bayo, from Action in rural Sussex. Ms Bayo gave a short presentation on the next stages of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- AirS has experience in Sussex working with 16 councils across the county.
- A Steering Group of parish councillors will be formed and specific Terms of Reference and Register of Interest will be set out.
- Consultations, Open Days, surveys etc will be carried out to inform residents about the Plan.
- A Sustainability Assessment and a Strategic Environmental Assessment may be needed following advice from WDC.
- Work will inform a Draft Plan which will be available for a six week public consultation.
- Results will be analysed by AirS and this may result in changes to the Plan and a further six week consultation.
- The Plan will then be submitted to WDC who will arrange the independent examination and the referendum.
- Ms Bayo informed the Council that she would send draft documents for the Steering Group to consider e.g. Terms of Reference, survey, schedule of Plan etc
- She will attend the first Steering Group Meeting on 27.01.16

#### **16.01.09 STANDING ORDER REVIEW UPDATE**

- The Standing Orders Review is on-going and the recommendation from the Working Group will be presented to the February Council Meeting.
- The next meeting of the Working Group was subsequently arranged for 4.02.16

#### **16.01.10 VILLAGE PLANTERS UPDATE**

- The installation of Village Planters will be undertaken by Herstmonceux Business Association.

#### **16.01.11 COUNCILLOR SURGERIES**

- A copy of the report document for recording parishioners' questions was circulated to all councillors.
- Councillors Mrs J. Angear and Mr M. Bradshaw will be available for parishioner consultations from 10am to 12 midday on 27.01.16 at the Village Information Centre.
- Councillors Mrs J. Angear, Mrs J. Alder, Mrs H. Kenward and Mrs C. Stirling-Reed will be available for the next session on 27.02.16. This will be an Open Day for the Neighbourhood Plan - copies of the Parish Plan Survey will be available to complete and residents can drop off completed surveys.
- The following Councillor Surgeries will be on 26.03.16 - Councillor Mr I. Stewart will attend, and 30.04.16 - volunteers needed.

#### **16.01.12 CLERK'S REPORT AND UPDATE**

##### Update

#### **Queen's Birthday Celebrations at Herstmonceux Castle 12.06.16**

- The Friends Committee has contacted PGL and the WDC Play Scheme to attend.
- Clean for the Queen Project will be investigated and reported at the next meeting.
- Clearing the bank adjacent to Buckwell Rise and the main road - Councillor Mr S. Nash has obtained a quotation of £220 plus VAT to clear the bank properly of scrubby undergrowth and then replant with low growing flowering shrubs. The trees do not need cutting. Councillor Mr S. Nash propose that the site is cleared and a letter sent to residents whose houses back on to the area to inform them of the work.

#### **Herstmonceux Primary School Meeting**

- Herstmonceux Primary School invited the Chairman and Vice Chairman of

the Parish Council to meet representatives of the School Management Team to discuss the Council's proposal to update the car park at the rear of the school for use by school staff. This would free up parking spaces in the public car park to be used by visitors to Herstmonceux.

- The Deputy Head, Mrs K. Russell and the Chairman of School Governors, Mrs V. Stutt, advised the Council that it is not possible for staff to enter the school by a rear gate as there is no security facility on this gate and it is not possible to link a system to the existing system.
- The School Management Team suggested that they will contact Herstmonceux Village Hall to see if parking can be arranged there and a Walking Bus set up.
- The School Management Team will ask staff to consider their parking arrangements in order to free up some parking spaces.
- It was agreed by the School Management Team and the Parish Council that regular meetings will be held once a term between the School and the Council. The clerk will contact the school to arrange the next meeting.
- The Council asked the clerk to request that an article is put in the next school newsletter to remind parents and carers of children that irresponsible parking outside the school on yellow lines and on the pavements is causing an obstruction to pedestrians. There is a particular danger to people who have mobility problems or poor sight.

#### **Car park in the garden of Belle-Vue, Gardner Street, Herstmonceux**

Councillor Mrs J. Alder reported that the matter had been reported to WDC who have advised her that there is no planning issue with this parking space. The only problem is the vehicular access to the parking space which is immediately adjacent to the bus stop. She has reported the matter to ESCC Highways.

#### Clerk's Report

1. Herstmonceux Village Hall Management Committee - informing the Parish Council that the committee agrees to the proposal that it is responsible for a third of any future maintenance of the access road. The Hall AGM will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 8 February 2016.
2. WDC - election costs for May 2015.
3. WDC - report from the WDC Remuneration Panel for Councillor allowances for 2016/17.
4. Mr Gallifant, Parish Web Master - comments on the proposed new web site.
5. Herstmonceux School Newsletter.
6. Southern Water - response to the Parish Council's email about the sewage overflow in Victoria Road, Windmill Hill.
7. Lime Park Heritage Trust - copy of letter sent to Mr Lant, Chief Executive of WDC.
8. ESCC - confirmation of the Parish Council's response to the Minerals and Waste Consultation.
9. Mrs B. Styles - copy of the Department of Transport Cycling and Walking Strategy.
10. ESCC - copy of the Stay Well this Winter Scheme in East Sussex.
11. SALC - information about the Three Counties Devolution Bid to the Government.
12. Mr Jupp - requesting information about the Parish Council's view on seeking funding for traffic calming in Cowbee.
13. Mr Cornwall - requesting copies of the Parish Council Complaints Procedure and the Code of Conduct.
14. NALC - asking the Council if it is taking part in the Queen's 90th Birthday Celebrations.
15. Wealden Strategic Partnership - details of project funding available.
16. Community Rights Programme - informing the Council that its application for a grant has been successful.
17. ESCC - seeking the public's views on library opening hours.

### **16.01.13 REPORTS**

#### **Committees**

The clerk will circulate a schedule of meetings as recommended from the Working Group.

#### **Finance Committee**

[Please click here for the minutes of the Finance Meeting held on 5.01.16](#)

#### **Planning Committee**

[Please click here for the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 18.01.16](#)

#### **Committee Reports**

[Please click here for the January Committee Reports](#)

The following items were brought to the attention of the Council at the Council Meeting:

#### **Ground Committee**

- Cricket Club application for a grant from Sport England for the refurbishment of the practice nets - the Council has confirmed to Sport England that it owns Herstmonceux Recreation Ground and would accept any monies granted for the refurbishment.

#### **Personnel**

- A leaflet, supplied to all councillors who had attended Sussex Association of Local Councils councillor training sessions, which detailed the position, status and role of the clerk was circulated to all councillors.
- The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J. Angear circulated a letter to councillors reminding them of the information in the leaflet about the position, status and role of the clerk. This information also applies to the Finance Officer.

#### **East Sussex County Councillor**

- The setting of the Budget is a challenging process.
- The proposal for Budget will be published in the near future - Full Council will decide at the February Council Meeting, it is expected that the increase will be 3.99% including 2% Adult Social Care Levy
- East Sussex is very popular place to live and this adds pressure to services, particularly for older residents.
- Other services are very important to a large number of residents across the County e.g. roads, schools, libraries etc report in due course.
- In answer to a question from Councillors, Councillor Bentley advised the Council that Support Care Services are not all outsourced, there is also support from Voluntary Service. School building is the responsibility of government as all new facilities will be Academies.
- East Sussex County Councillor L. Keeley expressed his concerns at the proposed cuts but particularly those in Mental Health Services nursing and apprenticeships for young people.

### **16.01.14 ITEMS FOR AGENDA**

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