

HERSTMONCEUX PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of Herstmonceux Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 15 February 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, Mr M. von Barnholt Krag and East Sussex County Councillor Mr L. Keeley. Mrs J. McInnes, the Parish Clerk and Mr S. Goacher, the Finance Officer were in attendance.

16.02.01 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from ESCC Councillor W. Bentley.

16.02.02 MINUTES

- i. The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2016 had been circulated. It was **RESOLVED** to accept that the minutes be approved, adopted and signed as a correct record, proposed by Councillor Mr S. Nash and seconded by Councillor Mr I. Stewart. All Councillors in favour.
- ii. The minutes of the Extraordinary Full Council Meeting held on 2 February 2016 had been circulated. It was **RESOLVED** to accept that the minutes be approved, adopted and signed as a correct record, proposed by Councillor Mrs J. Alder and seconded by Councillor Mrs H. Kenward. All Councillors in favour.

16.02.03 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.

16.02.04 DISPENSATION REQUESTS

None.

16.02.05 FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

The meeting was presented with the Payment of Account Report and accompanying vouchers. It was **RESOLVED** to authorise expenditure totalling £8,894.75, proposed by Councillor Mr M. Goodsell, seconded by Councillor Mr S. Nash. All councillors in favour.

The Finance Officer brought the following matters to the attention of the Council:

- i. Society of Local Council clerks (SLCC) - will remain as professional advisors to parish clerks but will form a Trade Union - the Association of Local Council Clerks. There will be a separate subscription to be paid by individual clerks but the cost of membership will be reduced.
- ii. Sussex Association of Local Councils (SALC) has informed the Council that a recent item on the BBC re Parish and Town Councils' Precepts was misleading and included out of date information.
- iii. Pension Regulator - the starting date for auto enrollment on a pension scheme is 1.02.17. The new clerk for the parish may wish to take up a pension scheme and so the matter will be discussed at the next Finance and Personnel Meetings.

16.02.06 HERSTMONCEUX VILLAGE HALL THE ACCESS ROAD TO HERSTMONCEUX VILLAGE HALL, HERSTMONCEUX HEALTH CENTRE AND THE PHARMACY

- i. The Village Hall Management committee has asked for an update on the work on the variation of the lease in respect of the access road.
- ii. The Clerk will contact Wellers Hedleys to request that they act for Herstmonceux Parish Council and the clerk has requested details of Dr Simmons solicitors.

16.02.07 HERSTMONCEUX NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- i. AirS forwarded a draft survey for the Steering Group to consider for Herstmonceux Parish. The completed draft survey has been circulated to all councillors for approval. It was proposed by Councillor Mrs H. Kenward, seconded by Mrs J. Alder to approve the survey. All councillors in favour. The clerk will arrange to have the survey printed.
- ii. It was agreed that the survey will be posted to all households in the parish. The envelopes are prepared and the surveys will be put into the envelopes on 16.02.16 - volunteers to help should come to the Village Information Centre at 7.30pm. The Chairman thanked all volunteers who have already helped in the preparation of the survey envelopes.
- iii. The results of the survey will be presented at the Parish Meeting at 8pm on 21 March 2016 in the main hall in Herstmonceux Village Hall.
- iv. Councillor Mr S. Nash will circulate information about the survey on Facebook, proposed by Councillor Mrs H. Kenward, seconded by Councillor Mrs J. Alder. All councillors in favour.
- v. The clerk will send information about the survey, collections points and the presentation of the information gained from the survey to the March Parish News, the Council newsletter, school newsletter, web site and local newspapers.

16.02.08 STANDING ORDER REVIEW UPDATE

- i. The Standing Orders Review is on-going but is taking longer than expected and the Working Group will not make any recommendations until the April Full Council Meeting.
- ii. The next meeting of the Working Group will be held on 10.03.16 and following that meeting a draft copy of the proposed of Standing Orders will be circulated to all councillors.

16.02.09 COUNCILLOR SURGERIES

- i. The first councillor surgery was held on 30.01.16 and one member of the public attended who raised the problem of the lack of parking in the village. Another resident raised the need for a bank in the village.
- ii. The Council understands that more banking services will be available from the Post Office in Herstmonceux. Councillor Nash will obtain more information and report to the next Council Meeting. Any information could be circulated in the next newsletter.
- iii. It was agreed that more advertising is needed for the councillor surgeries. It was agreed that three posters are needed, one each for Herstmonceux, Windmill Hill and Cowbeech. Councillor Bradshaw volunteered to contact Hugh Potter at Dragon Signs and to seek quotations and report back to the Council.

16.02.10 Streets Ahead

- i. Ms Zoe Clarke and Ms Michelle Gray from Wealden District Council(WDC) gave a short presentation on the Streets Ahead Scheme.
- ii. The project was set up to enable WDC to support the shops in the towns and villages in Wealden.

- iii. Surveys have been done over the past two years which recorded the type and number of shops in each area. The results of the surveys were circulated to councillors and the information is also available on the Wealden web site.
- iv. it was noted that shops are changing to reflect changes in consumer spending habits.
- v. Streets Ahead want to support shops' best practice in towns and villages, work with other towns and villages to introduce best practice in all areas.
- vi. Results from the surveys indicate that shops need to use all mediums to advertise.
- vii. Street Ahead has used social media very successfully to advertise a Christmas window project and tourist attractions as a means of attracting customers to shops and businesses and the team is keen to involve more towns and parishes.
- viii. Streets Ahead can provide help and advice on how to make the best use of any advertising to increase visitors to Herstmonceux Parish.
- ix. Information has been gained from the Hailsham Forward project e.g. - use of QR Codes (the scheme where customers can scan information on businesses and shops), improve and clean up empty shops and advertise the benefit of free parking etc
- x. Other schemes are supported by Streets Ahead such as:
 - a. Branding - action to support shops in a particular area e.g. a scheme where Pevensey/Pevensey Bay/Westham Councils have created a logo for the three parishes, improved the retail outlets and created a Heritage Trail with maps giving information to visitors.
 - b. The Pub is the Hub is another initiative to use local pubs to be a focus for village activities. The former tenant at the Brewers Arms had started working on the scheme but the pub has new tenants who are establishing their business.
 - c. There will be a presentation about the Pub is the Hub from 11am - 1pm on 19 April 2016 at the Reid Hall, Boreham Street.
- xi. The Streets Ahead Team noted that there is a Business Association in Herstmonceux and Councillor Bradshaw, the Chairman of the Business Association, will meet with them in the near future and report back to the Council.
- xii. The Chairman thanked Ms Clarke and Ms Gray for their presentation and suggested that the Council will ask them to come again in the summer of 2017 for a further update; Herstmonceux Parish is keen to work with the Street Ahead Team for the benefit of the shops and businesses in Herstmonceux Parish.

16.02.11 The Queen's 90th Birthday Celebrations

- i. A Tea Party will be held at Herstmonceux Castle on Sunday 12 June 2016.
- i. The event is being arranged by the Friends of Herstmonceux Castle and Bader International Study Centre.
- ii. A committee will be set up to organise the event - Councillors Mrs J. Angear and Mr B. Naish have volunteered to represent the Parish Council on the committee and Mr K. Stevens will represent Wartling Parish Council.
- iii. The Friends Committee has already contacted the WDC Play Scheme and PGL at Windmill Hill to ask representatives to attend.
- iv. Herstmonceux WI has arranged a special event for older residents on the Queen's actual birthday on 21 April 2016 - residents from the Lunch Club, Ray and Sheldon, the Bingo club and Extend have been invited to attend a tea party from 3-5pm in Herstmonceux Village Hall.
- v. Clean for the Queen - the project to clean up the country in time for the Queen's Official Birthday in June 2016.16.
- vi. Zurich Insurance will cover the event and will need details of the number of council members and members of the public taking part.

- vii. it was noted that residents in Cowbeech carry out regular litter picking events in Cowbeech and a local resident already cleans along the main road from Windmill Hill to Herstmonceux.
- viii. It was proposed by Councillor Mr I. Stewart, seconded by Councillor Mrs J. Alder to arrange a litter picking event on Sunday 22 May 2016. Councillor Mr S. Nash will arrange for litter pickers, yellow jackets, bags and gloves etc
- ix. Commemorations - an event has been arranged by Wartling History 30 June 2016 to commemorate the Battle of the Somme. The clerk will contact the Wartling Society to find out more information and report to the next meeting.

16.02.12 Grants - to discuss whether Herstmonceux Parish Council wishes to apply for grants from the Wealden Strategic Partnership or Tesco Bags of Help Scheme.

- i. The Tesco Bags of Help - the Council agreed that it did not want to take part in this scheme.
- ii. Wealden Strategic partnership - the Parish Council cannot apply for funds but has circulated the information to local groups, clubs and societies.

16.02.13 Street Lighting - to discuss the report from ESCC that five street lighting columns in the parish are dangerous and need immediate attention: two in Dales Close, Windmill Hill, one in Middle Way, Herstmonceux and two in Dacre Road, Herstmonceux.

- i. ESCC has submitted estimates for the replacement columns using similar lanterns as necessary to the existing.
- ii. The Council discussed the option of installing new LED lights but this will mean that there would be a mixture of lighting types which may not be aesthetically pleasing.
- iii. The Finance Officer reported that the Council has not adopted a policy to replace the street lights with LED as it is waiting for the proposal with details of the recommended lighting, costings and a programme of works from the Street Lighting Committee.
- iv. It was agreed that as the identified lighting columns are dangerous, they must be replaced as soon as possible. It was proposed by Councillor Mr M. Bradshaw, seconded by Councillor Mr I. Stewart to accept the quotation of approximately £5,500 including VAT to install new columns and lights as necessary. The Finance Officer will draw up the Works Orders.
- v. The Council had entered into a flexible tariff with the Laser Team at Kent CC in 2014 for energy procurement. It was agreed to continue with a flexible tariff for 2016 -2018 with a new agreement from 1 October 2016, proposed by Councillor Mr S. Nash, seconded by Councillor Mr B. Naish. All councillors in favour.

16.02.14 CLERK'S REPORT AND UPDATE

Update

None.

1. Mrs J Underhill - copy of letter sent to the Planning Inspectorate re Mr K. Cornwall's appeal against the WDC decision to refuse planning permission for four dwelling on land adjacent to James Avenue.
2. Action in rural Sussex - information about a Neighbourhood Planning Event from 10am - 3pm 9.03.16 in the Meridian Hall, East Grinstead. Councillors Mrs J. Alder and Councillor Mr S. Nash expressed an interest to attend.
3. WDC - informing the Council that a decision on whether to register the Merrie Harriers as a Community Asset will be made by 28.03.16.
4. BBC Flog it- will be at Herstmonceux Castle on 11.03.16.
5. ESCC SLR Meeting re Highways issues is scheduled but will be postponed until

April 2016. The clerk will arrange a new date.

6. Mrs A. Woodward - comments on parking on the pavement outside the school. **A draft response will be circulated to councilors for approval.**

16.02.15 REPORTS

Committees

- i. The Council discussed a report from an informal meeting of parish councillors to review the committee structure.
- ii. It was agreed that the Council should have a formal discussion on the proposal for the committee structures and to accept the report from the informal meeting is not the proper process. The matter will be discussed at either the March or April Full Council Meeting, proposed by Councillor Mr I. Stewart, seconded by Councillor Mr M. Bradshaw. All councillors in favour.
- iii. It was agreed that until the Council has discussed the matter, the schedule of meetings as detailed in the report will remain in place.

Finance Committee

[Please click here for the minutes of the Finance Meeting held on 2.02.16](#)

[Please click here for the minutes of the Extraordinary Finance Meeting held on 22.02.16](#)

Reference item 4.02.16 (Finance Meeting held on 2.02.16)

The Chairman brought to the attention of the meeting an email received from Wellers Law Group in response to the Parish Council's letter of complaint of 21 December 2015. The email sets out that Ian Davison had confirmed that the underlease had been a difficult and protracted matter, but had also confirmed that he had kept the Parish Council informed. The accounts rendered had given the Parish Council an opportunity to raise any queries, and that the Parish Council are aware of the amount of time taken to bring the matter to the satisfactory conclusion, resulting in a tenancy. Wellers Group had taken the Clerk's letter of 21 December as a 'comment' rather than as a complaint, and asking the Parish Council for "...the desired outcome the Council wants from your letter?".

The meeting discussed the content at some length, and **RECOMMENDS to FULL COUNCIL** that the Finance Officer draft a letter from the Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council setting out all the relevant financial facts, stating that the matter was not dealt with properly in accordance with the Wellers Group 'Terms of Business', and asking what the Wellers Group would offer the Parish Council to draw the matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

Proposed: Councillor Stewart; Seconded: Councillor Bradshaw; All in favour.

The complaint and the proposed letter, drafted by the Finance Officer, were discussed at the Full Council Meeting:

- The clerk noted that Herstmonceux Parish Council had worked with Wellers Hedleys for many years and had received both formal and informal advice.
- She recommended that as the reasons for the complaint had been set out in previous correspondence to Wellers Hedleys, the Council should try and resolve the issue as quickly as possible.
- A short letter noting that Wellers Hedleys and Herstmonceux Parish Council had both missed opportunities to resolve the matter and a proposal on the amount that the Parish Council is prepared to pay, may help to bring the matter to an end.

- The Council did not support the clerk's recommendation and proposed that the recommendation from the Finance Committee be accepted.
- It was proposed that all the recommendations in the Finance Meetings held on 2.02.16 and 22.02.16 be accepted proposed by Councillor Mr M. Bradshaw, seconded by Councillor Mr M. Goodsell. All councillors in favour.

Planning Committee

The following planning applications were discussed:

Application: WD/2015/2296/F

Location: Brent Farm, Under Road, Herstmonceux.

Description: Conversion of agricultural buildings and partial rebuild to provide four dwellings and associated ancillary building and parking provision

Parish Council comments to Wealden District Council: The Council objects to this application:

- It considers that the proposed four dwellings are an overdevelopment of the site - the Parish Council notes that WDC has already approved three dwellings at the site and it considers that this is adequate density for the site.
- The vehicle access has poor visibility.
- Under Road is a single track road in a rural location and the site is on a corner.
- The Council supports the ESCC recommendation for the size of the parking spaces provided at the site.

Application: WD/206/0061/FA

Location: Simon Turner Refrigeration, The Garage, Cowbeeck.

Description: Removal of conditions.

Parish Council comments to Wealden District Council: The Council supports this application as it wishes to support a local business.

Committee Reports

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

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

Highways

Chilsham Lane - there are still problems with potholes.

Butlers Lane - there are still problems with potholes and a power pole is leaning at an angle.

Footpath - the footpath at Lime End Farm, Church Road needs public footpath marker posts.

Communications - newsletter circulated to all councillors was approved.

ESCC

- ESCC Budget set 3.99%
- ESCC Councillor Keeley is concerned at the impact of the proposed reduction in funding for services on the mental health of vulnerable people and older residents. He also expressed concern for the impact on mental health of all residents of higher rents and mortgages.
- He is opposed to the sale of ESCC buildings which he considered could be used for other services.

- Councillor Mr B. Naish expressed concern that the extra 2% will not be used for care services.

Emergency Planning Committee

The report is being updated and will be circulated to all councillors at the March Council Meeting.

Herstmonceux Village Hall

- The Management committee is concerned at the delay in drawing up the Variation of the lease.
- AGM - the Chairman is Mr C. Thompson, the Secretary is Mrs S. Charlton and the Treasurer is Mr I. Stewart.
- At the end of 2016, the Village Hall will become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
- The Finance Officer attended the Village Hall AGM - he expressed concern that the Balance Sheet presented at the AGM does not include an item re unpaid grants. The grant awarded by the Parish Council in 2011 for the windows had been spent (with the Council's permission) on urgent repairs to the drainage system. However, a subsequent grant for windows is not reflected as a grant in the financial documents. The Finance Officer advised that the Council should bring the matter to the attention of the Village Hall Management Committee - the matter was referred to the next Finance Meeting on 5 April 2016.

16.02.16 ITEMS FOR AGENGA

- The Council Meeting will be held at 7pm as it will be followed by the Parish Meeting at 8pm. The Full Council Meeting will be held in the lounge in Herstmonceux Village Hall and the Parish Meeting will be held at 8pm in the main hall.
- The Chairman will arrange refreshments for the Parish Meeting.
- As the Parish Clerk is retiring on 31 March 2016 leaving - past councillors will be invited to attend the Parish Meeting.
- The car parked in the garden at the Listed Building Belle Vue, Gardner Street, Herstmonceux - the clerk was asked to seek more information from WDC Planning to enquire if Listed Building Consent is required for a change (i.e. creation of new parking space) to a Listed Building site.

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