

# **Herstmonceux Parish Council**

## **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 21 March 2016**

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, , East Sussex County Councillors Mr W. Bentley, Mr L. Keeley and Wealden District Councillor Mr A. Long.

65 members of the public attended.

Councillor Mrs J. Angear welcomed residents to the meeting.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16.03.15 were approved, proposed by Mr W. Gower, seconded by Councillor Mr M. Goodsell. All in favour.

### **Matters Arising**

None.

### **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the Annual Parish Meeting:

It is a great pleasure to see so many people at the Parish Meeting. I know that some of you are here for a special reason which we will come on to after the business of this evening.

I would like to thank Janet McInnes, the Parish Clerk, for trying to keep us in line, Simon Goacher, the Finance Officer, for keeping our finances in order and Stephen Nash, the Vice Chairman, for his continued support. I would also like to thank the past and present councillors for their input and support.

In May we held a parish election and from this we had six new councillors and five existing ones. I suddenly found myself as Chairman for the year. I will not pretend that it hasn't been a challenging year incorporating existing and new ideas.

We have changes and made new committees. The Building Development Committee was formed after permission was given for new houses at Lime Cross and Lime Roughs. This Committee has co-opted four members of the parish to work with the Council. It was formed to work with Wealden District Council, the developers and other agencies so that the Parish Council can obtain the best options for style and mix of housing from any development in the parish. It can also work on resolving the on-going problem with the sewage overflow in Victoria Road, Windmill Hill and in Herstmonceux Village. I am pleased to announce that we have our first meeting with Wealden tomorrow.

We have a new office at the Information Centre which has been a great success. I would like to thank the Information Centre Management Committee for their co-operation as Parish Councillor Surgeries are held in the Centre from 10am-12 midday on the last

Saturday in the month. Two councillors are available to receive information about any concerns or praise relating to council business.

The allotments continue to be well-supported and there is a waiting list for plots.

In December 2015, the Council voted to continue the Neighbourhood Plan for the parish. Hopefully you all completed your survey.

A great concern of residents is dog fouling, both on the pavements and especially on the recreation ground and football pitch. The Council has installed dog waste bins and dog owners should note that it is an offence to allow your dog to foul in public places and not to clean it up. Children, from the school, play on the recreation ground and I understand that teachers have to clear the mess before the children can go out to play. This is not acceptable and perhaps responsible dog owners can be on their guard and name and shame those dog owners who are not so responsible.

In the past year, I have had the pleasure of being invited to meet Hugh Merriman our MP who was very supportive of villages. I also met Lord Herstmonceux - in fact how many people know we have a Lord Herstmonceux? He is a charming gentleman from the military.

As most of you know Janet McInnes, the clerk is retiring on 31 March 2016. We are currently interviewing for the new clerk; from 1 April 2016, a locum clerk will be in place until a new clerk is appointed.

Thank you. Councillor Mrs J. Angear

### **Finance Report**

- The Finance Officer presented a copy of the financial report for the year ending 31.03.15. A copy is attached to the minutes.
- There were no questions on the report.

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

Printed leaflets with the reports from ESCC Councillor W. Bentley and ESCC Councillor L. Keeley are attached to the minutes.

### **Wealden District Councillor**

- i. WDC Councillor Mr A. Long reported that there is considerable government pressure for more housing in Wealden District which causes concern across the District.
- ii. Two applications have Outline Approval for development at Lime Cross and Lime Roughts in Herstmonceux, the Parish Council should work with the developers to achieve the greatest possible benefit for local residents.
- iii. A consultation of the review of boundaries is being undertaken and the Parish Council should ensure that it records its views on the proposals.

## **Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan - presentation by Ms F. Bayo on the results of the survey carried out from 19.02.16 - 05.03.16**

- i. Ms Bayo reported that the results of the survey will be added to the earlier survey when the report goes forward to the Independent Examiner later in the process of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- ii. She gave a short presentation on the survey; issues highlighted were green spaces, design of housing, problems with sewage overflow, parking and public transport.
- iii. A copy of the report is available on the parish web site [www.herstmonceuxparish.org.uk](http://www.herstmonceuxparish.org.uk) or contact the Parish Clerk at the Parish Office, 4 The Old Forge, Gardner Street, Herstmonceux, East Sussex BN27 4LG or [clerk@herstmonceuxparish.org.uk](mailto:clerk@herstmonceuxparish.org.uk)

## **Points raised in the Parishioners Open Forum**

- i. Mr W. Gower, expressed his serious concerns about the subsequent actions of councillors elected at the May 2015 elections. It appeared that the councillors wished to change the way in which the Parish Council worked which has impacted and shown little respect for the Council's procedures as set out in the local government framework, the Council Meetings, the courtesies to fellow councillors as required at Council Meetings, the respect for the Council's Officers, the working relationship with outside organisations and the service provided to the local parishioners.  
He noted that Herstmonceux Parish Council has previously had an excellent working relationship with outside bodies and other councils in the area but these relationships have been damaged or are now under pressure.  
He hoped that there will be a change of attitude by these councillors and that the Council can move forward and serve the long term interests of the community for which it was elected.
- ii. Mrs A. Nash expressed concern about the poor state of the commemorative planter outside The Old Post Office, Gardner Street, Herstmonceux which she feels is disrespectful to the people who served in the war. She noted that in the Parish Council Minutes in 2015, it was recorded that Herstmonceux Business Association would take over responsibility for the planter and arrange that it was kept planted. However, this has not happened and Mrs Nash asked the Council to ensure that something was done this year. Councillor Mr M. Bradshaw (Chairman of the Business Association) confirmed that he would make sure that the planter was maintained.  
**NB** On 22.03.16 Councillor Bradshaw announced his resignation from the Business Association as from April 2016. Mr and Mrs M. Barden from Bella Fleur Floristry and BTS Taxis have volunteered to take over the maintenance of the planter with immediate effect.

## **Retirement of Mrs J. McInnes, the clerk to Herstmonceux Parish Council**

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J. Angear thanked Mrs McInnes for her work for Herstmonceux Parish Council over fifteen and half years. She appreciated the work and commitment to Herstmonceux Parish Council.

Three former chairman of Herstmonceux Parish Council, Mr J. Bingham, Mr J. Crouch and Mr W. Gower also expressed their thanks to Mrs McInnes and presented flowers and vouchers to her.

*Mrs McInnes gave a short report on her time as clerk to Herstmonceux Parish Council:*

*I have worked as clerk to Herstmonceux Parish Council for over 15 years; with four elections and many different councillors.*

*I studied the work and processes of council business and presented the portfolio to allow the Council to achieve Quality Status.*

*I have enjoyed meeting and working with people from a wide range of organisations.*

*My motivation is that Herstmonceux Parish is a fantastic community which is the envy of other parishes. I have been lucky to meet so many people and organisations in the parish.*

*The Council works to provide facilities and opportunities for its parishioners. As individuals, neither the councillors or officers are important and it is probably true that many parishioners would be unable to name former councillors or the past clerks.*

*However, what people do remember is the achievements of the Council. Over the past 15 years, these include:*

*Allotments*

*New surgery and pharmacy*

*Support for the Fire Station*

*Skateboard Park - and the extension organised by young people*

*Purchase of Denefield Green - a green space for parishioners*

*Multi Use Games Area - with a tennis court, five-a-side football and netball pitches*

*Village of the Year - the Council worked with the Gardeners Club and beautiful floral displays were created across the village*

*Village Voices - a project recording and filming the lives of people in Herstmonceux and a French village*

*Queen's Jubilee events*

*Purchase of Lime Cross Recreation Area for the community*

*Parish Plan - reviewed twice leading to work on the Neighbourhood Plan*

*Support for Twinning Association*

*Planning for new facilities for scouts, bowls and football clubs*

*Close working relationship on many issues with Sussex Police*

*I give my best wishes to the council and future councils and look forward to hearing about the continuing achievements of the Council for this amazing community.*

Councillor Mrs J. Angear thanked residents for their contributions to the Parish Meeting and for the help from Mrs Charlton, Mrs Nash, Mrs Wheatley for arranging the refreshments at the meeting and Mr Gower in hosting the start of the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.