

WESTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF

21st November 2016

held at The Amenity Hall, Stone Cross

112 Present

Councillors K Stevens, G Garner, K Saxby, N Beaney, F Durling, A Lovell, J McClarty, J Blaker, R Perrin, P Marshall, G Parsons and T Bruce.

District Councillor L Clark, A Stevens (Clerk) and four members of the public were also in attendance.

113 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T Comerford, and were accepted by those present.

Apologies for absence were also received from District Councillor D Dear and County Councillor M Pursglove.

114 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 17th October 2016 were read, confirmed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

115 Clerk's Report on Matters' Arising from the Previous Meeting

All matter's arising were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

116 Disclosures of Interests

No disclosures of interests were declared, nor were there any changes to the Register of Interests.

The meeting was then suspended.

117 John Kelly from Wates Developers - to provide an update on the development proposed on Land at Friday Street Farm

1: The background of Wates, the Company.

Wates is a national construction and development company. It is a family run business and specialises in housing development in the south east of England. Wates prides itself on genuine engagement, high quality design and place making.

2: The site location.

This development is north of Pennine Way, south of the railway line. The remainder of the farm is to remain as open farmland.

3: Main Feedback to Date.

The main concerns were about the infrastructure (schools, traffic, flood risk and waste water treatment, the Access and the Visual Impact).

4: Schools.

Wates is conscious of the pressure on school places at primary and secondary levels and had offered to provide a new primary school but ESCC said it would prefer to see local primary schools expanded instead.

5: Traffic and roads.

The main traffic concerns were traffic speeds, pedestrian safety and traffic congestion on major roads and junctions.

Wates is offering to improve;

- Lion Hill – the capacity of the signalised junction.
- Friday Street – with pedestrian crossings. The junction to Pennine Way could be also be improved.
- Pennine Way – with speed reduction measures, pedestrian crossings.
- the Willingdon Drove/Larkspur Drive junction.

6: Flood risk.

The development is located outside the flood risk area, surface water run-off will be carefully controlled through on-site storage and this will ensure that adjoining property will be at no greater risk of flooding.

7: Waterwater treatment.

Wates is conscious of waste water capacity issues in South Wealden and is actively engaged with Southern Water and the Environment Agency. They propose to provide an on-site package treatment works at least 50m from existing and proposed dwellings.

8: Access.

The main access will be from Pennine Way and will be accompanied by speed reduction measures and pedestrian crossings. The Public Right of Way will remain on the existing alignment and new residents will use the existing farm track only on foot, not by car.

Carnforth Crescent will be used by emergency vehicles only, in the unlikely event the main access is blocked.

9: Visual impact.

The new development will be located to the west which is the least prominent in the wider landscape. Building on higher ground has been avoided and trees and hedgerows to the existing field boundaries have been retained.

10: Next steps.

Wates will now send out a newsletter to update local residents and continue to engage and consult locally.

Further pre-application discussions with Wealden District Council, Eastbourne Borough Council, East Sussex County Council, Southern Water and the Environment Agency will take Place.

Wates will make submissions to Wealden to inform the draft Local Plan.

11: Questions.

In answer to Councillors questions, Mr Kelly confirmed;

- Wates is working with the infrastructure providers so it can make contributions towards the increased demands on local services.
- They do not know if or when the waste water issue will be resolved but he said the housing market cannot stand still and wait because people need housing and it is also needed to sustain the economy.
- Housing figures are given out by the Office of National Statistics.
- The final application is expected to be submitted to Wealden in 2017.
- Wates will look at alternative routes to see if they can avoid sending construction traffic through Westham High Street.
- He will consider the possibility of providing cheaper housing to doctors to attract more to the area.

Councillor Lovell said he understands that Wealden District Council is contesting the housing numbers because it has a significant amount of land which it cannot build on, for example the South Downs National Park, Pevensey Levels and the Ashdown Forest.

Councillors felt that the diagrams presented were misleading because they do not show the Uplands Farm development.

The Chairman then thanked Mr Kelly for attending and Mr Kelly left the meeting.

118 Reports from the County Councillor

There was no report from the County Councillor on this occasion.

119 Report from the District Councillors

District Councillor Clark read from her report in which she said the following;

- Wealden District Council is on target to make a surplus this financial year. It will still need to raise the Council Tax and will provide an explanation in due course.
- Wealden District Council is still retaining free parking in its car parks. Decriminalisation would cost £300,000 a year to enforce.
- Wealden has reportedly built 10% of the country's council housing. Parish Councillor's queried the figure and asked District Councillor Clark to check it.
- There are 8 homeless people living on the streets in the District so the District Council is considering providing a half-way house.
- The Dementia Alliance is now well under way and has many events taking place.

- Wealden is one of 18 councils to receive grant funding to promote Smart Energy Meters. Full details can be found on the Wealden District Council website.

120 Questions from Members of the Public

There were no questions from members of the public on this occasion.

The meeting was then re-opened.

121 Reports on Committee Meetings held

Councillors resolved to adopt the Minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on the 14th November 2016 and accepted the recommendations made.

Councillors resolved to adopt the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on the 14th November 2016 and accepted the recommendations made. As a result Councillors resolved the precept for 2017-2018, subject to any late government legislation, will be £149083.

122 Reports from Outside Meetings

Councillor Saxby attended the latest Patient's Planning Panel Meeting at Stone Cross Medical Centre. The Centre now employs a Paramedic to take the strain off of Doctors.

Councillor Blaker attended the latest Stone Cross Memorial Hall Meeting. Issues with the ceiling continue but the Trustees are pleased to report they now have a new Treasurer and a new Trustee.

Councillor Parsons attended the latest Pevensey Town Trust Meeting. The new Charitable Incorporated Organisation has been agreed. Members plan to have the outside wall rebuilt in the summer.

123 Neighbourhood Plan/Community Asset Register

Councillors discussed the advantages and disadvantages of registering assets on Wealden's Community Asset Register and agreed they would not like to add any. In light of this decision, and with the delay of the revised Local Plan, they agreed this item will now be removed from the agenda.

123 Business Plan

Councillor Stevens sent an email to all Councillors to ask them what they would like the Parish Council to achieve over the next three to five years and six have now replied. The rest are happy with existing plan. Councillor Stevens will now collate their responses and the Working Party will meet in January to produce a 'wish list' which will be turned into a report for the Full Council Meeting.

124 Westham High Street – Hanging baskets will be placed on seven lamp posts unless any representations are made to ESCC by 1st December.

125 Speedwatch

At the last meeting Councillors **resolved** to form a new Speedwatch Team. There were subsequently only three volunteers which is not enough to form a team so this item will now be removed from the agenda.

126 Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise from the nation that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly. The Covenant is a national responsibility involving government, businesses, local authorities, charities and the public. Councillors **resolved** by eleven votes to one to support the Covenant with the following amendments;

2.1 Add 'in the community' after '*seeking to support the employment of veterans young and old and working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP), in order to establish a tailored employment pathway for service Leavers....*'

2.1 Delete '*seeking to support our employees who choose to be members of the Reserve forces, including by accommodating their training and deployment where possible*'.

2.1 Delete '*offering a discount to members of the Armed Forces Community*'.

127 Traffic Commissioner's Report

Councillors were disappointed the Traffic Commissioner granted the application by Countyclean Environmental Services Ltd to vary its licence to allow one additional trailer to be kept at its operating centre at Chilley Farm in Rickney Lane. They accept his hands were tied because there had been no planning application in place and had previously asked the Clerk to contact the Head of Planning at Wealden to confirm whether or not they had been granted planning permission.

A retrospective application has since been received and was considered with the other Planning Applications at the end of this meeting.

128 Hailsham Road

Councillors **resolved** to support the request from Sharnfold Farm to support a move to reduce the speed limit to 40mph along the whole length of the B2104, and to extend the 30mph limit in Stone Cross from where it is now at Sharnfold House for safety reasons.

129 Consultation Exercise by BT to remove three telephone boxes in the Parish, one at Lion Hill, one opposite number 2 Hankham Street and one at Westham Railway Station.

Councillors considered each telephone box in turn and **resolved** to;

- support the proposal to remove the phone box in Hankham – a move supported by Hankham Neighbourhood Watch. There were no objections.
- support the proposal to remove the phone box at Lion Hill. There were three objections.
- object to the removal of the phone box at Westham Station because it is a widely used station and the number of calls exceeds the 12 classed as 'reasonable need'.

130 Questions from Parish Councillors

Councillor Saxby asked if the Parish Council has any input into Neighbourhood Watch because all the information they send out, is gridlocked. The Clerk will see if she can do anything to help.

Councillor McClarty asked what Councillors thought of the questionnaire sent out by the Westham Conservation Group in response to the Wealden Local Plan. Councillors confirmed they had seen it.

Councillor Bruce asked if the Parish Council can give the Litter Picker a gift at Christmas to thank him for doing such a good job. Councillors agreed to give him a £25 gift voucher using the General Power of Competence.

Councillor Stevens noted a recent Operation Blitz exercise only had one call over a six week period. Councillors suggested it might be that the public have lost confidence in the Police.

131 Planning Applications

The following planning applications were considered;

WD/2016/2492/F - 66 Castle View Gardens, Westham – Proposed extension at the front. Westham Parish Council has no objections to this application on any planning grounds.

WD/2016/2623/F - 10 Pride View, Stone Cross – Erect first floor addition at rear - Westham Parish Council has no objections to this application on any planning grounds.

WD/2016/2243/F - Downsview Cottage, Peelings Lane – Single storey rear extension - Westham Parish Council has no objections to this application on any planning grounds.

WD/2016/2549/F - Woodlands, Hankham Street – Proposed replacement of single storey outbuilding - Westham Parish Council has no objections to this application on any planning grounds.

WD/2016/2609/FR – Chilley Farm, Rickney Lane – Retention of B1 offices, together with the retrospective change of use of the yard and agricultural building for storage of vehicles and machinery in association with Countyclean Environmental Ltd –

Westham Parish Council objects to this application because;

- the lane is simply not suitable for 44 tonne vehicles, it is far too narrow, the surface is already breaking up and the site is on a level 2 flood plain. The Traffic Commissioner said in his report he was surprised the applicants had planning permission.
- Councillors agree the first part of item 6.3 in the Traffic Report is incorrect. This application poses an even greater risk to the safety of walkers, cyclists and other road users.
- Whilst Councillors accept the Farm is above sea level, the barn is not.

There being no further business, this meeting closed at 8.45pm.