

WESTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF

20th March 2017

held at The Amenity Hall, Stone Cross

186 Present

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

County Councillor M Pursglove, Mr Simon Marks (Montagu Evans), Mr Andrew Hodgson Welbeck), Mr Jonathan Tarbatt (Claque), Mr Ben Thomas (i-Transport) and Mr Chris Sterlock (Claque), A Stevens (Clerk) and two members of the public were also in attendance.

187 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G Parsons, and were accepted by those present. Apologies for absence were also received from District Councillors L Clark and D Dear.

188 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 20th February 2017 were read, confirmed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

189 Welcome and signing in of New Councillor

The Chairman introduced and formally welcomed Mr Walker to the Parish Council. Mr Walker duly signed the Acceptance of Office, the Register of Interests and the Summons to Attend Meetings Forms.

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

All matters' arising were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

191 Disclosures of Interests

There were no disclosures of interests nor were there any changes to the Register of Interests

192 Simon Marks from Montagu

Mr Simon Marks (Montagu Evans) and Mr Andrew Hodgson (Welbeck) talked about plans to build 90 houses in Dittons Road.

Welbeck is seeking outline permission for the dwellings which are included in the revised Local Plan and have been supported in principle by Wealden District Council.

They described the main issues affecting the site and showed councillors drawings of the proposed development which will include;

- an on-site pond to deal with surface water drainage.

- access off Dittons Road away from the 1066 Way.
- a walkway to Bluebell Barn Nursery.
- landscaping.
- a wooden natural looking play area and a seating area.
- a mix of Affordable Housing and three, four and five bedroom housing.

In answer to Councillors questions they confirmed;

- the drainage pond will be near the play area but it will be safe. A Management Company would be responsible for both.
- the pond will be able to cope with the drainage requirements.
- there will be a crossing point over the 1066 Way.
- they are talking to Highways about providing a safer pedestrian crossing point between Dittons Road and Polegate.
- they hope to submit the planning application in July but it may be pushed back to August or September. The latest nitrogen results may affect their plans. They may have to prove this development will not affect the Ashdown Forest.
- Southern Water says it has the capacity to cope with this development.

193 Reports from the County Councillor

County Councillor Pursglove said he has attended various meetings at ESCC. The meetings provided updates on various services including Broadband, Education and Transport. A copy of County Councillor's Report is available from the Parish Clerk.

194 Report from the District Councillors

District Councillor Clark sent two written reports which provided updates on the following;

- The Wealden Local Plan
- Roadside litter
- Homelessness
- Domestic violence
- Policing
- Parking
- Standards Committee
- Highways
- Business Rates
- Spring Clean Up Day.

A full copy of District Councillor's Report is also available from the Parish Clerk.

195 Questions from Members of the Public

Mr Dawson asked what the procedure is to fill a Parish Council vacancy. The procedure is;

When a Councillor resigns between elections they write to the Clerk who notifies the Monitoring Officer at the District Council. The resignation takes effect immediately. The District Council then provides a Notice of Vacancy to the Parish Council who then display the Notice in the Parish.

Within 14 days of the advert if ten or more electors ask for an election it must be held. District will notify the Parish Council. The Parish Council will not be able to co-opt.

If there is still a vacancy after 14 days from the closing date the District Council notifies the Parish Council who may then co-opt.

The Parish Council then adds this to the agenda of the next meeting, the agenda is displayed on the notice boards and on its website and residents may apply to be co-opted.

The Parish Council follows this procedures when any Parish Councillor resigns.

County Councillor Pursglove then left the meeting.

The meeting was then re-opened.

196 Reports on Committee Meetings held

Councillors resolved to adopt the Minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on the 13th March 2017 and accepted the recommendations made.

Councillor Comerford asked if there is an update about the barn referred to Enforcement. There is not.

Councillor Saxby asked why the price to repair the ecobond is not more precise. Councillor Garner explained that it will not be known until the work starts, whether it will take one or two days.

197 Reports from Outside Meetings

Councillors Saxby reported on the latest Patients' Planning Panel Meeting and said;

- The Practice now has its full quota of nurses.
- The Paramedic is to be employed full time from the end of March.
- There is still a shortage of Doctors.
- The IT System (which is used by all the Practices) is changing and double prescriptions will be issued in the meantime.
- Patients who move out of the area can no longer stay with the Practice.

Councillor Stevens attended the Parish Planning Panel Meeting at Wealden on the morning of the 20th March. The Revised Local Plan which was due to be submitted to Full Council on the 22nd March has now been delayed until May or July because officers are waiting for the results of two important surveys.

The main points in the revised Plan are as follows;

- The housing numbers have been significantly reduced because reports show the nitrogen levels in the Ashdown Forest have soared.
- Applicants applying for Permitted Development Rights will now have to check their proposals are habitat efficient.
- The District Council is now having to write to people it gave pre-application advice to, and let them know the changes.
- Applications may now not get permission when they would have before.
- The Pevensey Levels are also being monitored but so far the readings are not too bad.

198 Westham Pond

Councillor Stevens spoke to Sussex Police about the parking problems reported in Peelings Lane. The Police say there is little they can do because the District Council will not consider

Decriminalisation so Councillor Stevens will talk to the Fire Brigade to see if they can help. It will also be an agenda item at the next Safer Wealden Partnership Meeting.

199 Tree Report

Councillors considered the Annual Tree Report and resolved to accept the price submitted by Chaffins for the 'amber' and 'green' works.

200 Finance Report

Members resolved to accept the accounts to the 2nd March 2017 and appointed Mr Peter Frost as the Internal Auditor for the financial year 2016/2017.

The Clerk suggested Councillors might like to consider replacing the two plastic bus shelters in the Parish with wooden ones to match the ones provided by developers.

She also told those present that the work to provide planters on the roundabout at Mimram Road has been postponed because contracts are being reviewed so the contractors are unable to commit to a three year contract at this stage.

201 To consider supporting the Celebration Weekend Tea in Hankham

Residents in Hankham would like to hold a Celebration Tea to celebrate the life and work of Jo Cox MP. The tea is being organised to 'help bring communities together' and is planned to take place at Hankham School on 17th June 2017. It is particularly pertinent to Hankham where Ian Gow MP was killed.

Westham Parish Council agreed that if the event goes ahead it will in principle meet the costs of employing the Caretaker for the day which but it will need actual details of the cost before making a final decision.

202 Beaulieu Drive

Westham Parish Council has been approached by a resident who would like to put up yellow 'slow children' signs on lamp posts in Beaulieu Drive.

Councillors agreed to monitor the situation to see if there is a problem there and said they will report back to the next meeting.

203 Questions from Parish Councillors

Councillor Durling asked if there was any feedback following the meeting with David Massheder, Wealden's Tree Warden, at Peelings Lane. The Clerk said Mr Massheder does not see any reason why the more significant trees can't be given a TPO but he will need to do a bit more data collection and produce a suitable plan.

She also reminded Councillors about Water Week. Community Pond Events are planned throughout the area with a day in Pevensey and Westham on Wednesday 29th. The Clerk reminded Councillor Durling that any events taking place in or around the pond will need a risk assessment carried out, Parish Council permission and adequate insurance.

Councillor Marshall said the Adur Park ownership sign in the Park needs repositioning. The Clerk will ask contractors to do it when they repair the ecobond.

204 Planning Applications

The following planning application was considered;

WD/2017/0293/F – Blenheim, Dittons Road – Division of existing dwelling to form two self-contained dwellings. Councillors questioned why applications appear regularly for this site but no development ever takes place. They objected to the application by nine votes to three on environmental grounds because they understand no new building can take place now because of the overall effects on the Ashdown Forest.

They also asked if Wealden District Council has a policy on wood burning fires and whether or not there are any areas they are exempt from.

There being no further business, this meeting closed at 8.35pm.