

## **WESTHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

### **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF**

19<sup>th</sup> November 2018

held at Westham Village Hall, Westham

133 Present

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

County Councillor D Shing, District Councillor L Clark, A Stevens (Clerk) and forty two members of the public were also in attendance.

134 Apologies for Absence

Councillor P Marshall sent apologies for his absence which were duly accepted by the Parish Council.

135 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018 were confirmed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chairman

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

The Parish Council has now received a Community Infrastructure Levy payment of £14214.05. Councillors will consider ideas on what to spend it on at the next Full Council Meeting.

137 Disclosures of Interests

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

138 Reports from the County Councillor

There were no reports from the County Councillors on this occasion.

139 Report from the District Councillors

District Councillor Clark deferred her report until the next Full Council Meeting.

140 Questions from Members of the Public

Residents;

- Asked where the Draft Pond Management Plan is on the website. The Draft Management Plan is on the home page under 'Draft Management Plan'
- Questioned the reliability of the Parish Council's Ecological Assessment 2018 and asked if the Ecologist's reports were 'crossing over'. The Parish Council's Ecologist stands by his report but said the suggestion he mentioned deer droppings was a claim made by a reporter.

- Felt the Draft Pond Management Plan is an Ecologist Report and suggested improvements.
- Asked why the Pond was only partially de-silted. This was answered later on in the meeting.
- Why the Parish Council did not appear to protect the eels. The eels were protected and the contractor had consulted with the Environment Agency.
- Asked why more silt wasn't removed at the shallow end as it could have exposed an inlet pipe. The silt from the shallow end is expected to move down when the pond settles. Councillor Garner explained the inlet pipe would not have been fitted that low down even allowing for any silt level build up, and excavation work has failed to find any evidence of a pipe there. Wealden District Council is now understood to be looking at alternative locations for the blockage. Mr Belcher said the Council's contractors said there was a pipe and the Parish Council told them to fill it in. No such instruction came from the Parish Council and the Parish Council will take this up with its contractors.
- Disputed the contractor's experience in this field. The contractors are accredited to the Environment Agency, are experienced in de-silting ponds and have the specialist skills necessary in the circumstances related to this pond.
- Asked why the Parish Council only partially desilted the pond, and how it asked for tenders without knowing how much silt was in the pond. The Parish Council took advice from the Environment Agency and the County Archaeologist and the contractors had a 'ceiling' to work too. Cost and archaeological reasons restricted the work.
- Asked why the Parish Council did not cut back the trees first. Work to the trees is expected to form part of the future Management Plan.
- Why the Parish Council used a de-silting method which was not approved by the County Archaeologist. The County Archaeologist did support the method used and would have stopped the work, if he had not.
- Asked if the Parish Council was satisfied with the work that had been carried out. This was covered later on in the meeting.
- Are the people who said the Pond now needs de-silting, the same people as those who originally said it didn't. The dry weather went on for longer than expected and the water levels dropped further so the Parish Council took the opportunity to carry out the work whilst the water level was low so the pond could hold more water in future.

The meeting was then re-opened.

#### 141 Reports on Committee Meetings held

Westham Parish Council resolved to adopt the draft Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> November and resolved to accept the recommendations made. The recommendations were as follows;

1: The following grants will be awarded in 2019-2020;

Westham Village Hall	£1500.00
Stone Cross Mill Trust	£ 450.00
Cuckmere Community Bus	£ 100.00
Wealden CAB	£ 200.00
	_____
	£2250.00

2: Councillors resolved that subject to any late government legislation, the precept for 2019-2020 is £158102 to help keep the precept in line with predicted expenditure.

142 Reports from Outside Meetings

Councillor Saxby attended a Hankham School Council Meeting and was impressed by the respect shown.

Councillor Stevens attended a Meeting with Sussex Police. The Police and Crime Commissioner is considering another increase in the precept. Councillor Stevens noted that whilst the number of burglaries has increased the figures now include shed break ins and one of the reasons the increase in precept may be needed is because the police has to meet its own pension shortfalls.

143 Westham Pond

It was noted that 27 eels were removed and returned to the Pond when the work was finished. Fish were also removed and returned.

Councillors discussed whether or not to remove more silt but agreed to let the pond settle and review the situation once it has. The silt from the lower end is expected to move down once the pond has settled.

Councillors resolved to set up a Westham Pond Working Party. The Working Party will;

- draft its own Terms of Reference and bring them to Full Council for approval.
- Redraft the Pond Management Plan, taking into account any appropriate suggestions made by residents and councillors and bring it to Full Council for approval.
- Monitor the Pond and bring any recommendations back to Full Council.

The Working Party will consist of Councillor Durling, Councillor Bruce, Mr Evan Jones (a local ecologist) and two others, Councillor Durling will let the Clerk know who the two others will be in due course.

144 Play Parks

Councillor resolved to appoint Councillor Walker to look at the possibility of providing a new play park in Castle Bolton. Councillor Walker will talk to residents and contractors and bring suggestions back to the Full Council.

Councillors had previously considered the latest Risk Assessment for Adur Park. Councillor Garner looked into the recommendations made and as a result Councillors resolved to put a soft play surface on the existing sub base of the adult exercise area at a cost of £1900.

145 Street Lighting Structural Tests

East Sussex County Council has tested the street lights in the Parish and found twelve in Westham are in need of replacement. The cost to replace each is £2100 plus VAT. Councillors resolved to proceed with the work and find out if a discount is available if all the work is carried out at the same time. The cost of the work will be met from reserves.

146 Butcher's Field

Councillors resolved to;

- Plant two silver birch, two rowan and a hazel tree in Butcher's Field. The trees are being donated by the Queen's Commonwealth Canopy Project and will be planted on 14<sup>th</sup> December at 3pm. The MP, a representative from Sainsbury's (who are paying for the trees) and the Woodland Trust will also be in attendance. The trees will have cages fitted to protect them from the sheep.
- Councillors resolved to accept the offer from the County Archaeologist to carry out a free geophysical survey at Butcher's Field.
- Councillors considered providing a play park at Butcher's Field but resolved to leave the field as it is. They resolved not to provide a play park there because it would be alongside a busy road. They were also worried that the play park would attract older children playing ball and it will also cause a nuisance to neighbours. It was noted that there is also a covenant on the field which binds the Parish Council to; 'not to do or suffer anything upon the said land and premises which may be or become a nuisance annoyance damage or disturbance to the Vendors or their assigns or tenants.'

One councillor abstained from voting.

Whilst Parish Councillors accept there is a need for a play park in the village, it was noted that the plans for Fairfield Farm include a play park and the plans for Uplands Farm include a playing field.

#### 147 Questions from Parish Councillors

Councillor Beaney asked who is responsible for the pavement and gardens at The Linkway. Councillor Bruce confirmed that the residents are.

Councillor Lovell asked expressed concern that ESCC is withdrawing its free bus passes for older and disabled residents and he asked how by doing so it will save £8m. Councillor Stevens will ask at the next ESCC Strategic Partnership Meeting.

Councillors agreed the office will be closed from the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018 to 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 for the Christmas break.

Councillor Saxby said Hankham Village Society is providing a Christmas tree in Hankham this year. Westham Parish Council has previously agreed to donate £150 to the Society, Westham Village Hall and Stone Cross Memorial Hall for Christmas trees if they would like to have one.

#### 148 Planning Applications

The following planning applications were considered;

WD/2018/2309/LDE - Merrilees, Dittons Road, Stone Cross, BN24 5ET - Continuation of implementation of planning permission WD/2016/2326/RM (Reserved Matters pursuant to WD/2015/0965/O and WD/2016/0295/FA (Demolition of existing single dwelling to be replaced by two detached dwellings)). – Westham Parish Council has no reason to object to this Certificate of Lawful Development.

WD/2018/1643/F - 10 Pevensey Park Road, Westham, BN24 5HN - Demolition of existing garage. New two storey side extension including garage/store – Westham Parish Council has no objections to this application on any planning grounds.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20pm.

