

HERSTMONCEUX PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Herstmonceux Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 16 February 2009 Village Hall, Herstmonceux.

Present: Councillors J Angear, K Game, M Goodsell, W Gower, N Lyon, M Rice, J Tate, K Wheatley and I Willson. East Sussex County Councillor R Bentley was also present.

Two members of the public attended.

The Responsible Financial Officer, Mr S Goacher and Mrs J McInnes, the clerk were in attendance.

09.13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors D Creasey, B Naish and ESCC Councillor R Thomas.

09.14 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2009 have been circulated.

It was then resolved that the minutes be approved, adopted and signed as the correct record, proposed by Councillor K Game, seconded by Councillor N Lyon.

09.15 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Web site – the new web site is now live although there is more information to be added.

Freedom of Information Publication Scheme – a copy of the scheme is available on the web site and copies circulated to all councillors.

09.16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Goodsell – re minor maintenance work on the Recreation Ground and other Council sites.

09.17 FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The meeting having been presented with the Payment of Account Report and accompanying vouchers, authorised expenditure totalling £14,697.38 (copy attached) proposed by Councillor J Tate, seconded by Councillor I Willson. All councillors in favour.

09.18 DOCTOR'S SURGERY

Nothing to report.

09.19 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Work is continuing. The council has received details of work to be carried out on the oak tree, Tree Preservation Order TM/2009/0016/TPO at the site.

09.20 ALLOTMENTS

- The draft Tenancy Agreement and Rules and Guidelines that have been circulated to all councillors and representatives from Herstmonceux Allotment Association were approved, proposed by Councillor J Tate, seconded by Councillor K Wheatley. All councillors in favour. They will be sent out to allotment applicants later in the week.
- Work on clearing the roots will take place on 21 February.
- It is hoped that the pipes and water tanks can be installed in the next two weeks.
- The clerk will obtain quotations for a notice board for the site.

09.21 PARISH PLAN REVIEW

The following report detailing the recommendations from the review was circulated to all councillors.

Parish Plan

A number of the points for action are outside the Parish Council's remit and the information gained from the survey will be passed to the appropriate bodies. In particular, East Sussex County Council, Wealden District Council, the Primary Care Trust and Stagecoach buses.

Environment and Housing

Recommendation: The Parish Council notes that a percentage of residents who responded would prefer not to have any development in the parish. Concern was also expressed at development into the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty either for housing or employment. The remaining responses indicated a wide range of opinions on possible areas of development and opposition for areas not to be developed.

The Parish Council will support small scale developments in the parish and expect to be closely involved with discussions on possible locations. It opposes any change to the parish boundary of Herstmonceux and development into the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty without further consultation with Wealden District Council.

Type of housing preferred

Recommendation: The Parish Council will support developments of mixed housing with units available to buy, to rent or available under a shared ownership scheme. The Parish Council will support a development of sheltered housing. Priority must be given to local residents for housing association rentals and sheltered housing.

Amenities and Public Services

Recommendation: The Parish Council will take the following actions:

Cycle paths – it will contact East Sussex County Council (ESCC) about the provision of marked cycle routes in the parish.

Drainage, sewerage – it requests that Wealden District Council provides detailed information from South East Water and Southern Water to show that the existing infrastructure can cope with any proposed developments. **The Council asked the clerk to inform Southern Water on the problems of regular flooding at a property in Windmill Hill and ask for details of action planned to resolve the problem. (See Clerk's Report part one - item 9)**

Primary school – it will contact ESCC to express serious concerns at the present overcrowding in the school. The Parish Council will also request that the impact of possible extra housing on school admissions over the next 10 -20 years be considered and investigations into a new school be given priority.

Public transport – it will contact Stagecoach to ask that consideration is given to increasing the frequency and extending the times of the bus service. **Councillors requested that particular note is made of the lack of a Sunday service.**

Recycling facilities/litter collection – it will contact WDC and request an improvement in recycling facilities, particularly plastics and an improvement in kerbside recycling. It will also request information on the schedules of the emptying public litter bins more litter picking to be carried out in the parish.

Pedestrian crossings, roads, speed limits – it will contact Sussex Police to request enforcement of existing speed limits in the parish and to target cars that are regularly parking on the pavements, particularly in West End and through the centre of the village. It will also contact ESCC Highways and request for information on the possibility of installing a 20mph speed limit in the vicinity of the school during the school peak times in the morning and afternoon.

Surgery – it will contact the Primary Care Trust expressing its support for the expansion of the surgery. Details of other possible services mentioned in the questionnaire will be forwarded to Dr Simmons.

Public Safety

Recommendation: The Parish Council will contact Sussex Police to ascertain the costs involved of part funding extra hours for the Police Community support Officer.

The Parish Council will contact East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service expressing its support for the service.

Public Toilets

Recommendation: The Parish Council will consider the request from WDC on the provision of public toilets in Herstmonceux.

The RFO asked WDC Councillor to obtain more information on the proposal to ask the Parish Council to take over the responsibility of the running the public toilets in Herstmonceux.

Leisure Facilities

Recommendation: The Parish Council will note the comments from residents in its review of the facilities and equipment provided.

Parking and Transport

Recommendation: The Parish Council will contact WDC on the provision of parking in Herstmonceux.

Community bus

Recommendation: The Parish Council will make enquiries in to the possible provision of a community bus.

Street Furniture

Recommendation: The Parish Council will review the provision of street furniture in the parish.

09.22 HERSTMONCEUX REGISTER

The review is ongoing.

09.23 CLERK'S REPORT – PART ONE

Correspondence

1. Herstmonceux C of E School newsletter.
2. WDC – invitation from WDC Chairman to visit the parish. **It was agreed to invite Mrs Wilson to the April Council Meeting.**
3. Allotments – applications to erect sheds from Mrs B Welch, Mr R Angel, Mr R Portnell, Mr and Mrs R Noakes; applications for an allotment from Mr M Shurmer and Mrs J Polyblank. **Shed applications agreed, allotment applications put on the waiting list.**
4. ESCC – copy of letter to Hellingly Parish Council informing them that copies of the posters "Kill your speed, not a child" can be supplied.
5. ESCC – requesting the Council's views on a request from residents for the installation of a bus stop clearway at Windmill Hill. **Agreed.**
6. WDC – details of work to be carried out on an oak tree at North Lodge, Hailsham road, Herstmonceux.
7. Action in Rural Sussex – informing the Council of the launch of the Village of the Year Competition for 2009.
8. ESSC – informing the Council that the Local Transport Plan Progress Report is available on the ESCC web site.
9. Mrs Salvage – expressing concern at the regular flooding of your land at Windmill Hill.
10. East Sussex Fire and Rescue – thanking the Council for its comments on the Risk Management Plan.
11. ESCC – copy of Diversion Order for Public Bridleway 15a and b.
12. ESCC – copy of letter sent to Mrs Bishop about the signs at Coopers Croft, Herstmonceux.
13. Mr Adams – details of playground inspections offered.
14. District Valuer – details of valuations of Village Hall for rent review discussions.
15. Mr Wootton-Whitling – requesting details of the Council's complaint's procedure. **Forwarded.**
16. Mr Taylor - requesting information on the Council's comments on the requirement for fencing at Denefield Green. **The clerk has contacted Mr Taylor.**
17. Friends of Herstmonceux C of E School – requesting the use of the recreation ground for a fete on 4 July 2009.
18. JPB Fencing – details of services offered.
19. Mrs M Meaden – expressing concern at the number and speed of coaches travelling along Victoria Road, Windmill Hill.
20. Mr Willis – details of allotment services offered.

Clerk's Report – part two

Correspondence

1. WDC – informing the Council that the appeal in respect of the planning application at Drummers Warehouse, Herstmonceux will be heard at the Boship Hotel, Hailsham at 10am on 22 April 2009.
2. Mr and Mrs T Green – informing the Council that they will not be arranging a Dog Show this year. **Letter of thanks sent for all their work on the Dog Show and other community events over the past few years.**
3. Grey Matters – newsletter.
4. WDC – informing the Council that it will be undertaking a Housing Needs Survey in Wealden between March and September 2009.
5. WDC – informing the Council that there will be a Stakeholders Event on 9 March 2009 at the Council Offices, Hailsham to discuss homelessness in the District.
6. Rural Services – newsletter.
7. Mr K Stevens, Wartling Parish Council – copy of comments on the proposed new bus stop at Windmill Hill.
8. Sussex Police – details of recent fatal crashes and request for information.
9. PCT – details of new Walk In Health Centres in Eastbourne and Hastings.
10. ESCC – details of bridge repairs on New Bridge Road, Herstmonceux and details of necessary road closures.
11. Mrs J Stubbings – application for a shed on her allotment garden. **Approved.**

09.24 REPORTS

Planning

Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held at 8pm on Tuesday 10 February 2009.

Present: Councillors J Angear, D Creasey, K Game, M Goodsell, W Gower, N Lyon, B Naish, J Tate and I Willson.

Apologies were received from Councillor K Wheatley.

Application: WD/200/0029/F

Applicant: Mrs J Grant

Location: Southlea, Stunt Green, Herstmonceux.

Description: Extension to existing dormer.

Parish Council Comments to Wealden District Council: No objection.

Application: WD/2008/3142/F

Applicant: Mr N West

Location: Thorn Cottage, Cowbeech Hill, Cowbeech.

Description: Erection of garage.

Parish Council Comments to Wealden District Council: The Parish Council strongly objects:

- It has the appearance and construction of a domestic structure.
- The application refers to a previous 1992 application, which has no relevance to this application.
- The proposed garage is an overdevelopment with rooms above the garage.
- The drawings indicate a timber-clad structure and the application states that materials match existing – the existing garage is a brick building.

Application: WD/2009/0017/F

Applicant: Mrs Winsome Fisher-Thomas

Location: 4 Dales Close, Windmill Hill.

Description: Single storey extension with pitched roof over to front of existing building to form study and porch.

Parish Council Comments to Wealden District Council: The Parish Council objects:

- The proposed extension would be an intrusive overdevelopment to the front of the property.
- It would be out of keeping with the neighbouring properties

Planning Consents received from Wealden District Council

1. WD/2008/2741/F Brookside, New Road, Herstmonceux – single storey extension to infill between detached garage and house, construction of conservatory to rear.
2. WD/2008/3063/F 3 The Ridgeway, Herstmonceux – garage extension.
3. WD/2008/2947/F 23 Fairfields, Herstmonceux – proposed first floor and roof extension internal alterations.
4. WD/2008/2919/F Hillbrow Bungalow, Trolliloes, Cowbeech – erection of replacement dwelling and detached garage.
5. WD/2008/2953/F 16 Monkey Puzzle Close, Windmill Hill – single storey rear conservatory.
6. WD/2008/2417/F Lime Cross Nursery, Herstmonceux – horticultural sales building, tearoom, offices and toilets – revised scheme.

Planning Refusals received from Wealden District Council

1. WD/2008/2320/F and WD/2008/2321/LB 3 Elm Cottages, Windmill Hill - to demolish existing rear extension and replace with new extension incorporating new utility and shower room. Replace existing machine made tiles with weather boarding in keeping with number 4.

Correspondence

ESCC – application from Robins of Herstmonceux for Certificate of Lawfulness for an Existing Use. This is an amended application, showing a reduction in the area used. Councillors J Angear Declared an Interest as she is a friend of the applicant and M Goodsell Declared a Prejudicial Interest as he is a neighbour of the applicant.

The Parish Council made the following comments:

Reference WD/585/CMCL Robins, Chilsham Lane, Herstmonceux

I refer to your letter of 28 January 2009 concerning the application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for Existing Use at the above site.

Herstmonceux Parish Council wishes to express its concern at the statement 7.12 in this application. It states that the applicant considers that the Parish Council's response to the previous application for Certificate of Lawfulness for Existing Use as an Inert Waste Transfer Station is supportive of the approach adopted in the application.

The Parish Council wishes to repeat its concern it does not consider that a Certificate of Lawfulness for Existing Use could be approved at the above site, as the current level of activity has not been carried out at the same level on the site for the past ten years.

The Parish Council wishes to make the following comments on the above application:

- We do not dispute that work has taken place at Sandbanks, Chilsham Lane over the past ten years. However, it is not as extensive as the application suggests.
- The aerial photograph dated July 1991 shows no commercial activity in the Area Y and the photograph dated 16 June 1999 merely shows activity relating to the storage and distribution of soil, lime and chalk. Photographs dated June 2004 indicate that between 1999 and 2004 activity on the Area X increased although there is no sign of the storage and repair of plant and machinery or site for administration as stated on the application.
- The Parish Council repeats concerns as expressed by local residents that work has expanded over the site over the last two to three years.
- Neighbours have noticed an increase in activity on the site with an increase in lorry traffic up West End from Herstmonceux and down Chilsham Lane over the past two to three years. The Council notes that there has been an increase in the number of lorries licensed at the site over the ten year period. The Council also understands that ESCC Highways has previously expressed concern at the use of Chilsham Lane by heavy traffic in respect of another application further along Chilsham Lane.

- Complaints from residents, particularly in West End and Chilsham Lane suggest that there has also been an increase in machinery noise over this period which can be heard in Herstmonceux village. A mobile crusher has been used intermittently but it appears that in recent years the use has intensified and this has become a primary activity on the site.

The Parish Council therefore considers that on the balance of probability the work now carried out at the site is more extensive than the work carried out over the last ten years. It considers that it would be inappropriate to grant a Certificate of Lawfulness for Existing Use.

Finance and General Purposes

Minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 10 February 2009.
Present: Councillors J Angear, D Creasey, K Game, M Goodsell, W Gower, B Naish and J Tate.

Apologies were received from Councillor K Wheatley.

Contract for mowing recreation areas in the parish

Councillor Gower circulated a chart (attached to this report) showing details of the three quotations from Agrifactors, Pocock and Kent County Council.

The quotations were discussed in detail but a decision was deferred until the Full Council Meeting. Councillors wished to know whether Mr Hoad wishes to submit a quotation for any part of the work. He has carried out ground maintenance for the Council for several years. 16 February 2009 Full Council Meeting – the clerk informed the Council that Mr Hoad had submitted the following quotation for cutting Denefield Green - £40 per cut on a fortnightly cut basis. This quotation is more expensive than Kent CC as detailed below.

It was proposed to accept the quotation from Kent CC, proposed by Councillor J Angear, seconded by Councillor M Goodsell. All councillors in favour. The cutting of Denefield Green will be put on hold as the paperwork transferring the green from WDC to Herstmonceux is not yet complete.

The RFO recommended that the grass cutting contracts should be renewed annually.

Contract for installing water pipes and tanks at the Allotment Site at Greenaway Fruit Farm, Stunts Green.

Councillor Gower circulated a chart (attached to this report) showing details of the three quotations from CWS, Trenchline and Beeney. After discussion it was proposed by Councillor Goodsell, seconded by Councillor Tate to accept the quotation from Beeney. All councillors in favour.

Skateboard Park

- A donation of £200 has been given via Mrs Blunden towards the new skateboard equipment.
- The new equipment should be installed within the next two to three weeks, weather permitting.
- The clerk will complete the Evaluation Report with the SK8 Massive Group.

Photocopier Exchange

Fuss3Solutions has suggested that the photocopier should be exchanged for a newer model. The monthly rental will remain the same. It was proposed by Councillor Creasey, seconded by Councillor Goodsell to agree to the exchange. All councillors in favour. A router has been connected to the office computer. This means that the new photocopier can be connected to the computer in the office to allow printing to be done more quickly. The Council agreed that it has no objection to the Village Hall computer used by the Booking Clerk to also be connected to the photocopier.

Street Lighting

EDF has recently withdrawn from contracts supplying electricity to street lights. The Council has investigated quotations from other suppliers:

Southern Electricity - £4,290

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) - £3,300

It was proposed by the RFO that the Council should accept the quotation from ESCC. All councillors in favour.

Ground Committee

- Councillor D Creasey will check on whether there is still a problem with moles on the recreation ground.
- Lime Park Field – bricks and rubble need clearing from the site before the mowing season starts.
- The access gate to Lime Park field is not wide enough for the gang mower and an access gate is needed for pedestrians. The clerk will contact ESCC. Councillor M Goodsell will obtain prices for a 12-foot gate and a pedestrian gate.

Street lighting

Nothing to report,

Highways and Traffic

There are a large number of potholes after the recent bad weather – these have been reported to ESCC.

Footpaths

The fence along side footpath 20A has fallen over – the clerk will contact the owners.

Children and Young People

Nothing to report.

Information Centre

Nothing to report.

East Sussex County Councillor

- ESCC has set a budget with a 3.5% increase.

Wealden District Councillor

- WDC has set a budget with a 3.5% increase which is lower than the proposed 3.9%. Funding of approximately £660,000 will be needed from the reserves. It is possible that services will have to be cut in 2010/11.
- A recent planning decision by WDC has received a lot of negative publicity. The Planning Department is working with the applicant on a new application.

Tree Warden

Nothing to report.

Emergency Plan

Nothing to report.

Wealden District Association of Local Councils

No meeting.

Village Hall

The AGM scheduled for 3 February 2009 was cancelled due to the bad weather

09.25 AGENDA

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