

HERSTMONCEUX PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Herstmonceux Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 18 January 2010 in Herstmonceux Village Hall, Herstmonceux.

Present: Councillors Mrs J. Angear, D. Creasey, K. Game, M. Goodsell, W. Gower, B. Naish, M. Rice, J. Tate, K. Wheatley, Mrs I. Willson.

10.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor N. Lyon and East Sussex County Councillor W. Bentley.

10.02 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 December 2009 having been circulated. It was then resolved that the minutes be approved, adopted and signed as the correct record, proposed by Councillor K Wheatley, seconded by Councillor M Goodsell. All councillors in favour.

10.03 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

The Homestead, Windmill Hill – this property flooded again in December and January. Southern Water and Pollution Control at WDC have been informed. Southern Water has advised the resident and the Parish Council that it is hoped that work to install a non return valve on the pipe will be carried out at the beginning of the new financial year in April 2010.

10.04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

10.05 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 £ 1211.92 (copy attached) proposed by Councillor M. Goodsell, seconded by Councillor J. Tate. All councillors in favour. A Statement of Account for the period 1.10.09 – 31.12.09 was circulated to all councillors.

10.06 ESTIMATES

The Council having received and discussed a detailed copy of the Annual Estimates, recommended a Precept of £59,600, an increase of 1.58% on the level of precept in the current year. The meeting discussed this recommendation and the RFO answered further questions arising from the Annual Estimate report. The meeting **RESOLVED** to levy a Precept on Wealden District Council in the sum of £59,600 for the financial year 2010-11, proposed by Councillor D. Creasey, seconded by Councillor J. Tate. All Councillors in favour.

10.07 DOCTOR'S SURGERY

Nothing further to report.

10.08 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The rental properties at North Lodge, Herstmonceux were advertised for bids to Wealden District Council from 8-13 January 2010. Details on the Shared Ownership properties will be available soon from the Town and Country Housing Group. The Parish Councillors would like to view the properties when they are completed.

10.09 HERSTMONCEUX REGISTER

The clerk will order another 1000 copies of the register.

10.10 CLERK'S REPORT

Correspondence

1. WDC – informing the Council that the Affordable Housing at North Lodge, Herstmonceux is being advertised in the Homemove magazine on 8 January 2010

and the bidding period is from 8-13 January 2010. **Advertisements were placed on notice boards in the parish, in the Village Information Centre and on the parish web site.**

2. WDC – Housing Benefit leaflet.
3. WDC – details of changes to refuse and recycling collections due to recent bad weather. **Displayed on notice boards and in Village Information Centre.**
4. SLCC – membership renewal form. **It was RESOLVED to renew the clerk’s membership, proposed by Councillor D. Creasey, seconded by Councillor K. Wheatley. All councillors in favour.**
5. RoSPA – notification of playground and skateboard inspection in June 2010.
6. Southern Water – response to letter re flooding at the Homestead, Windmill Hill.
7. Mrs Salvage – informing the Council that her property was flooded again on 15.01.10. **Southern Water and WDC Pollution Dept. informed.**
8. Councillor P Doodles – details of Corporate Plan consultation.
9. Mr Tuppen – informing the Council that there are still sign posts in Coombe Close after road maintenance was carried out in the autumn. **Reported to ESCC Highways.**
10. Mr Short – copy of objections to planning application WD/2009/2469/F Cobwebs, Stunts Green, Herstmonceux.
11. ESCC – details of the Public Rights of Way Survey. **Copied to Councillor J Tate.**

Circulars

1. The Clerk.
2. Clerks and Council Direct.
3. English Rural Housing newsletter.
4. ESCC School Travel Plan Newsletter.
5. RH Garden Services.

10.11 REPORTS

Finance and General Purposes

Minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 12 January 2010. Present: Councillors J Angear, D Creasey, K Game, W Gower, N Lyon, B Naish, J Tate, K Wheatley and I Willson.

Apologies were received from Councillors M Goodsell and M Rice.

12.01.10: The RFO presented the 2010-11 Estimates to the F&GP Committee, after having discussed these with the Chairman and other Councillors, and answered questions in respect of the effect on the Tax Base and subsequent Council Tax banding charges. The Finance and General Purposes Committee recommends that a Precept of £59,600 be levied for 2010/11, an increase of 1.58% over the current year’s level of Precept; proposed by Councillor Tate, seconded by Councillor Creasey. All Councillors in favour.

A finalised version of the annual estimates is available for distribution at Full Council, or on request by any Parish Councillor.

The F&GP Committee agreed that the annual estimates needs to reflect a ‘wish list’ of projects that the Council needs to consider and set out in a rolling program for the future covering capital projects (new equipment etc), improvements and maintenance to its recreational facilities, and its other parish services. This program needs to be factored into the Council’s cycle of work during its financial year and should be discussed and costed by the various committees and Parish Councillors, with responsibilities, and fed into the annual estimate cycle in each year. This is the first year that the Council has followed this procedure, following the F&GP recommend of 2008/09.

The matter of the management of the recreational facilities is to be discussed at a special

meeting of the Ground Committee at which the RFO is to attend. The estimates, as presented, included some items for the extension to the existing facilities at Lime Park, but there was need to discuss possible further capital projects surrounding the relocation of Herstmonceux Bowls Club to Lime Park and the improvement to the football pitch. The cricket and stoolball facilities on the recreation ground needed to be reappraised and the installation of the wooden posts to one, two, or three sides of the village green to keep vehicles off the grass and appropriate signage needed to be discussed and factored into a program of works. Outstanding are discussions on the possibility of the Parish Council recouping a proportion of its grounds maintenance charges by charging organised sports clubs & other organisations for the use of sports facilities (pitches etc). There was a certain amount of urgency as to decide on the level of any charges to be made for the use of the pitches etc, as these need to be notified to the sports clubs involved prior to 1st April 2010, and, in addition, the wording of appropriate agreements with those clubs and casual users of the facilities need to be agreed upon

The F&GP Committee was concerned at the level of provision to cover anticipated water charges at the Allotments site. Parish Councillors questioned the fact that the water charges were being paid by the Parish Council and not by the allotment tenants. The Clerk was asked to investigate and ensure that the water used was not covered by the tenancy agreement or that pre discussions with Members of the Allotments Society did not indicate that water charges were to be paid by the allotment holders. The RFO stated that he was willing to read the water meter each month to ensure that the amount being charged to the Parish Council, by Mr Love, was an accurate reflection of the water supplied. The first year of operation of the allotments facility that it was not self-financing, as anticipated, but there would be a shortfall of approx £430.

The possibility of the current doctor's surgery becoming vacant in the next two years gave rise to a short discussion of the need to ensure that the surgery would be returned to its former layout on vacation, and to its general maintenance and any alteration required prior to its possible re-letting in future. The Clerk was of the opinion that the level of rental income would fall from the current level of £10,000 per annum to approx £5,000 per annum in future. The RFO had not included any rental income from 2012-13 onwards, in the estimates, at this point of time.

Planning

Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 12 January 2010 in Herstmonceux Village Hall.

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

Apologies were received from Councillors M Goodsell and M Rice.

One member of the public attended.

Application: WD/2009/2639/F

Applicant: Mr Culbert

Location: 1 All That Cottages, Victoria Road, Windmill Hill.

Description: Proposed first floor and roof extension.

Parish Council Comments to Wealden District Council: The Council supports this application. However, it considers that the first floor bathroom window should a fixed and obscured window.

Application: WD/2009/2469/F - Miss Elliot, co applicant for application WD/2009/2469/F Cobwebs, Stunts Green, Herstmonceux spoke in favour of the application. The Council discussed this application but no decision was taken as the Council was informed the one of the neighbours wishes to make comments on this application.

This application was previously delayed, as the paper work was incomplete. Unfortunately due to the Christmas period and recent bad weather the neighbour had not been informed that the application was now complete.

Applicant: Mr A Thomas and Miss Elliot

Location: Cobwebs, Stunts Green, Herstmonceux.

Description: First floor extension and alterations. Replacement detached three bay garage.

Parish Council Comments to Wealden District Council:

Application: WD/2009/2479/F

Applicant: Herstmonceux Pre-School

Location: Herstmonceux Village Hall, Hailsham Road, Herstmonceux.

Description: Proposed covered play area.

Parish Council Comments to Wealden District Council: The Council fully supports this application, which will enhance the facilities for Herstmonceux Pre School. Herstmonceux Village Hall Management also fully supports this application.

Correspondence

1. Mr Bassingthwaite – comments on application WD/2009/2469/F Cobwebs, Stunts Green, Herstmonceux.
2. WDC – letter from Mr K Williams in response to continuing correspondence with the Parish Council on various planning issues. Councillors were extremely concerned at the rather curt tone of the letter from Mr Williams. After some discussion it was agreed to ask the clerk to draft a letter of response to Mr Williams and also to send a letter to the Chief Executive of WDC expressing their concern at the responses from WDC.
3. WDC – re e-planning proposals. Herstmonceux Parish Council has volunteered to trial the e-planning scheme with three town councils and five other parish councils. More information to follow in the near future. Councillor D Creasey or K Game wish to attend any training on the scheme.
4. WDC – re application WD/2009/2117/F Tranquillity, Stunts Green, Herstmonceux. An amended application was considered by WDC in November 2009. However, details of the original application were detailed on the Planning Consent Notice sent out to the Council and displayed on the WDC web site. A correct notice has now been sent to the Parish Council. The Parish Council is very concerned that it was not informed of the amended application and that the incorrect consent details have been circulated. The clerk was asked to write to Mr Williams, Head of Planning and Building Control.
5. WDC Enforcement – informing the Council that planning permission is not required for the erection of sheds at Greenaway Fruit Farm, Stunts Green, Herstmonceux as the site is leased to the Parish Council for use as an allotment site.
6. Herstmonceux Bowls Club - WAS Architects have been instructed by the Bowls Club to draw up pre application documents to present to WDC for the proposed relocation of the Bowls Clubhouse and rink to Lime Cross Recreation area. The documents will be submitted to the Parish Council for approval.

Ground Committee

- A Committee Meeting will be held on 25.01.10.
- The quotations for the mesh fencing at Denefield Green were considered. The councillors agreed that it would prefer post and rail fencing at the site. The clerk will obtain three quotations.

Street lighting

Nothing to report.

Highways and Traffic

- The clerk was asked to write to ESCC and request that all the potholes, which have been caused or made worse by the recent bad weather, be repaired as soon as possible with particular attention to the A271.

- Requests have been received from residents for grit bins. A County Conference for town/parish councils and ESCC has been suggested by Uckfield Town Council to discuss all issues about highway/pavement cleaning and maintenance. The clerk will contact Uckfield Town council expressing support for a conference.

Footpaths

- Wartling Parish Council reported a large hole on one of the footpaths near Herstmonceux Castle. The area has been fenced off to protect footpath users.
- Copies of the Rights of Way Survey will be circulated to all councillors.

Children and Young People

No report.

Information Centre

No report.

East Sussex County Councillor

- Councillor Thomas thanked the Parish Council for responding to the recent East Sussex Fire and Rescue survey.
- The Flood and Marine Bill - legislation has been passed which ensures more accountability from the water authorities. County Councils will become responsible for clearing surface water flooding, more staff will be needed.
- The Marine Bill and Sea Fisheries Bill will affect broader issues in East Sussex.

Wealden District Councillor

No report.

Tree Warden

Nothing to report.

Emergency Plan

- The meeting at Herstmonceux C of E Primary School scheduled for 8.01.10 has been postponed until 12.02.10 due to the bad weather.

Wealden District Association of Local Councils

No report.

Allotments

- The councillors were concerned at the water meter charges. The clerk will contact Herstmonceux Allotment Association to ask if the water meter can be checked regularly to ensure that it is not leaking.

Herstmonceux/Varangeville

A fundraising raclette supper evening will be held on 6 February 2010.

10.12 AGENDA

Chairman.....

Date.....2010.