



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST WOOD VILLAGE COUNCIL** held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> September, 8.03 pm at the Council Meeting Room.

**PRESENT:** Cllrs B Phillips (Chairman); M Bussell, J Forbes, C Judge, K Lindsay, D Loveday, J Samways and D Wailes.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Caroline Leet (Clerk)

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** 4

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

**738. County and District Councillors' Reports**

Responsibility of

- a. Cllr Phillips gave County Councillor Jacquie Russell's apologies. (A report was received and circulated after the meeting. Of note: she had met with West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Officers on 12<sup>th</sup> July to look at ways pedestrian safety could be improved, in particular focussing on the safe passage for school children to and from school).

District Councillor John Belsey gave an update to Councillors on the EDF/Wealden House planning application for 71 dwellings. He had attended a recent Design and Review Panel meeting; he said the scheme would not be accepted in its current form due to its encroachment on the ancient woodland, no outside space or balconies and the Panel did not think the scheme was right for the site.

The Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) was about to start preparing a draft budget and he had been invited on to the preparation Group. He confirmed he would mention the need for play equipment in the village.

He said that he was working with Cllr Lindsay and the Clerk to support improvements for tennis court access and a meeting was planned for 18<sup>th</sup> September.

A local resident had been in touch with him with regards to making the footpath from John Pears to Wall Hill Road disable access friendly with a slope and not steps. MSDC has said that it would not be impossible, but could be quite challenging. They had suggested that he attend the Public Services Committee meeting.

BP

Finally, there had been quite a lot of Traveller incursions in East Grinstead over the summer period. There were lessons to be learnt from the Police and Council perspective. They were looking at a programme for prevention and to understand the police powers as to when and when they could not move Travellers on. Otherwise, they had to go through a court process which can take several days.

BP/MB

Cllr Forbes asked Cllr Belsey to enquire about the application for Willow Trees and Spinney Hill.

**b. Public Questions**

A resident referred to item 14 on the agenda, disability access at East Grinstead Station and thanked the Council in advance for its consideration.

Also, he said back in 2009 he had been part of team at MSDC to look at Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL); as per the 2011 Localism Act. However, MSDC, as yet, did not have a CIL policy which means that the Village Council was likely to miss out on this income, especially when the houses in the

Ashurst Wood Neighbourhood plan were likely to be imminent. He went on to say that in Mid Sussex, most of the parishes had Neighbourhood Plans. They will all miss out on the 25% CIL money which would be paid direct to parishes rather than to MSDC under the current s106 scheme. The calculations show that these potential sums involved were significant.

His question to the Council was: are the parishes working together to persuade MSDC and members to introduce CIL and what is the Village Council and other parishes doing to persuade MSDC to have a CIL policy.

Cllr Forbes said that we had always been told by MSDC 'wait until the District Plan (DP) is through'. Enquiries had been made to MSDC, but they always replied, 'they were dealing with the DP and CIL will be after this'. She agreed that it did appear that there was no progress. Cllr Belsey said his understanding was that MSDC would be looking at this after the DP and said that he would approach MSDC for an update. Cllr Phillips said that he would have the item added to the next Cluster meeting.

A second resident and Forest Row Parish Council (FRPC) Councillor said that he had seen the agenda item 13, Burial fees. He explained the reasoning of FRPC's proposal for the arrangement to be for one year and to be reviewed, was due to the complexity of this matter: 1) they were in the ecclesiastical parish and two civil parishes; 2) the maintenance costs were not easy to separate from other costs; 3) the complexity of space as the area was starting to get full and FRPC were currently trying to negotiate some new land. The one year proposal was partly to allow a review of the costs, but also going forward with regard to the land.

**739. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Bright's apologies were received and **resolved; the reason was accepted.**

**740. To receive Declaration of Interests from Members in respect of any matter on the Agenda**

Cllr Phillips declared a personal interest with item 9a, accounts to pay; mileage expenses.

**741. Chairman's Announcements**

Cllr Phillips gave his apologies for the Council meeting 5<sup>th</sup> November; Cllr Samways, Vice-Chairman, was available to Chair the meeting. Cllr Phillips advised that he would be available to attend this year's Remembrance Service and the laying of the Wreath.

**742. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Annual Meeting of the Village Council held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2018**

The minutes were **approved as a true and correct account of the meeting.**

**743. Recorded meetings: to approve deletion of recording – *there were no recordings currently being held.***

**744. To receive the minutes of Committees and reports from working groups and to consider any recommendations arising:**

**a Planning Committee**

The minutes of the meetings on 28<sup>th</sup> June, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> July were received. The meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> September was noted.

**b Youth Club**

**i. To approve the expenditure of £694 plus vat to purchase for the Youth Club a new multi games table and a football table**

**Members approved the expenditure of £694 for a new multi-use games table and football table which was covered by a donation.**

Cllr Lindsay reported the Youth Club would re-open for the new term on 12<sup>th</sup> September. The Club was currently full to capacity with 32 existing members and seven expected new Year 7 students; there was now a waiting list. With Brendan Joyce recently stepping down as a weekly volunteer the Club was looking for new helpers. Chris Loveday was continuing as a weekly volunteer with Alice Tyrrell and Karol Stockly also continuing to help as volunteers with some sessions. Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September: 10 am to 12 noon, Youth Club members would be running another car wash fundraiser. Local PCSO Steve Skerman had submitted a grant to the Police on behalf of the Club to help upgrade the cooking and other equipment.

Cllr Phillips asked if anyone had come forward for the youth leader vacancy; Cllr Lindsay replied no, but Caroline Leet was willing to continue for the time being.

**c Events Working Group – Ashstock Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July**

**i. Financial result for Ashstock, including allowance for staff hours**

Cllr Bussell reported that Ashstock had made a small surplus, but that this had not taken account of the staffing cost which was approximately, £2,000. This raised the question is Ashstock/events part of the office/council role? Members briefly discussed Ashstock. It was unfortunate that the Football World Cup had clashed with the event and had affected the attendance. The weather had also been extremely hot and may have had an added impact. However, overall the event was successful with a lot of positive feedback received. Many of the youth performers had already said they would be keen to play again next year; there had been a lot of people dancing; and there had been no trouble. Details would be discussed by the Events Working Group (EWG) debriefing which Cllr Phillips said was scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> September.

**ii. Sports Day feedback**

Cllr Lindsay said that 14 children had attended this year's Sports Day; 20 had been booked, but for various genuine reasons some had not been able to attend. The day had been a great success. Lester from East Grinstead Athletics Club (EGAC) had once again done a terrific job organising taster athletic events, especially, as he was without his helpers. All of the children had been extremely well behaved and had a great time. Thanks were also due to Will and Noah Roberts, Rebecca Roberts (Assistant Clerk) and Cllr Bussell for their help. Finally, she said the EWG needed to consider if it was worth continuing with the event or reviewing its format.

**iii. Christmas Market 30<sup>th</sup> November**

Cllr Phillips reported that the office had started preparations.

**745. Clerk's report**

The Clerk's report was received.

**a To note: The Annual Return for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 has been returned from the external auditor and the Notice of Conclusion was published on 21<sup>st</sup> August**

Noted.

**b Neighbourhood Planning: Policy and Practice briefing Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September; £195 per person or £145 per person if 2 or more attending. To consider sending a representative and approve the expenditure**

Members agreed to send the Clerk and a councillor to the Neighbourhood Planning: Policy and Practice briefing and **resolved the expenditure of £290.**

Clerk

- c To note: Remembrance Service Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> November. A Wreath will be gifted in return for a donation of £17.00; to consider increasing this amount as last year we gave £25**

Members resolved to increase the donation to The Royal Legion for a Wreath to £25.00.

Clerk

- d To consider a Beacon for the Beacons Light Ceremony 11<sup>th</sup> November, 7.00 pm and to also:**

- i. To consider the expenditure of up to £360 to fund a Beacon**

Cllr Loveday said that he had located the Council's Beacon used for the Jubilee.

- ii. To consider submitting a grant to the MSDC Grants Panel**

In view that the Council already had a Beacon there was no need to apply for a grant.

Members discussed if they should be organising a ceremony for the lighting of a Beacon as part of the end of World War 1 centenary celebrations. Members agreed that it did not have the capacity to organise, but if a local organisation were prepared to organise an event, then they were welcome to borrow the Council's Beacon.

Clerk

Cllr Samways said that a Risk Assessment would be required.

#### **746. Finance**

- a Accounts to pay**

The accounts paid from 4<sup>th</sup> July to 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018 **were ratified**; the FairFX prepaid debit card accounts payments from 4<sup>th</sup> July to 4<sup>th</sup> September **were ratified**; and the accounts payable for 4<sup>th</sup> September **were approved by the Council**. The file of invoices was available to be viewed.

Clerk

- b To receive the RBS income and expenditure report up to 28<sup>th</sup> August**

The RBS/Alpha income and expenditure report was received. There were no questions.

#### **747. To receive an update on the War Memorial**

Cllr Phillips said the centre pillar had been cleaned in August together with the paving around it. The contractor, Burslem, was expected to complete the repairs to the sandstone wall and dais in September.

#### **748. Village Centre Development / Car Park resurfacing**

- a To note: the car park resurfacing is complete**

Cllr Phillips said he was pleased with the resurfacing of the car park which now looked very smart.

- b To consider purchase of a new sign for the village Centre Car Park (Hall and Council)**

Members resolved the expenditure of up to £200 for a new sign for the car park at the Village Centre, format and wording to be agreed with the Village Hall Trustees.

BP/Clerk

- c To receive an update on the office/meeting room heating and consider a revised maximum spend ceiling**

Cllr Phillips referred to his report which provided a synopsis of what had happened with the heating and the research which been carried out. Of the four contractors who had come back with an interest to quote only two had provided initial quotes. All four were reissued with an updated specification and so far only one had submitted a revised quote. However, from the information obtained it was clear that the budget to replace the heating needed to be increased from £2k to £4k. Following some discussion, Members resolved an increased budget of £4,000.

- d To appoint a contractor for the office and meeting room heating system (Contractors names are confidential until a decision and appointment is confirmed)**  
Members resolved the appointment of the contractor who had submitted the most recent quote based on the revised specification.  
Members suggested that the heating be installed as soon as possible.

BP/Clerk

**749. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**

Cllr Wailes reported that the Clerk had carried out a significant paper clearance over the summer period and work on the electronic data files was underway. A review of the Data Audit would take place and that from what he could see the Council was compliant.

DW/Clerk

**750. Burial fees: To approve a contribution towards the cemetery maintenance costs of Forest Row Cemetery to Forest Row Parish Council of £400 for cemetery maintenance costs and in return Ashurst Wood residents (in the civil and ecclesiastical parish) would pay single burial/cremation plot fees. This arrangement would be one year and to be reviewed**

Cllr Phillips said that this had been discussed and agreed in principle at the last Council meeting. Forest Row Parish Council (FRPC) was now confirming the proposal. Members resolved the expenditure of £400 to FRPC as a contribution towards the cemetery maintenance costs of the Forest Row Cemetery; in return Ashurst Wood residents (in the civil and ecclesiastical parish) would pay the same fees as Forest Row residents for burial/cremation plots. This arrangement would be one year and to be reviewed

Clerk

The Clerk was asked to confirm with FRPC.

**751. To consider writing to 'Disability Access – East Grinstead Area', in support of their campaign to improve access to the far platform at East Grinstead (platform 1)**

Cllr Phillips provided a summary of an email received from a resident on behalf of 'Disability Access – East Grinstead' regarding access issues at East Grinstead Train Station highlighting access problems and more so since the introduction of Thameslink trains; the number of trains arriving and departing from Platform 1 had increased. The access to platform 1 was by a footbridge; those who are unable to negotiate the steps needed to attract station staff for assistance to access over the tracks (which are near the Blue Bell Railway end). Network Rail wanted to put forward East Grinstead as one of the stations for funding from the next tranche of 'Access for All at Stations' Government grant monies for 2020 – 2024, but required the evidence that there was a need. Members discussed and **agreed** that there was an access and safety issue at East Grinstead and also when there was no station staff to help. Cllrs Phillips and Samways agreed to prepare a response for the Clerk to send to Disability Access.

**752. Consultations**

**a Tandridge Local Plan: 2033 consultation (regulation 19) – closing date 10<sup>th</sup> September**

Consultation was noted.

**b Publication of the Wealden Local Plan – closing date 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

Consultation was noted.

**753. To receive reports from Councillors who have attended outside bodies**



Cllr Judge had been invited by the Primary School as a representative of the Council to attend their production of Lion King in July. She apologised to the Council on behalf of the school who had said they were not aware of the correct protocol for inviting Councillor/s representation.

Cllr Phillips had attended the Cluster meeting with the Clerk and Assistant Clerk on 31<sup>st</sup> July. Minutes were available.

**754. Items of correspondence**

**a List on Clerk’s report, correspondence previously circulated**

Received.

Cllr Bussell mention the resurfacing works for A22/East Sussex boundary and through Forest Row could have an impact on the scheduled speed survey near Rockaway House, Lewes Road. Members agreed and asked the Clerk to arrange for the survey date to be changed.

**755. Any Items for reporting or inclusion on future agenda**

None.

Cllr Lindsay said the Geoff Bussell was pleased to have received the Council’s nomination for this year’s Mid Sussex District Council’s Chairman’s Community Service Awards. At the Council’s September meeting, Members had agreed to nominate Mr Bussell who had volunteered his time and skills over seven years as treasurer to the Youth Club and for the village’s flower displays at Dors Patch and the War Memorial.

Cllr Phillips mentioned that the Council did not have a bereavement policy and suggested that this should be considered by the Finance and Administration Committee.

**756. Date of next meeting - Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October**

Meeting closed: 21:10

Chairman.....

Date.....