



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST WOOD VILLAGE COUNCIL held on
Tuesday 7th June 2022, 7.00 pm at the Council's Meeting Room

PRESENT: Cllrs Forbes (Chair), Draper, Haite, Lee, Spoor and Tyrrell

IN ATTENDANCE: Rebecca Roberts (Clerk), Samantha Booker (Assistant Clerk) and **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** 1

ABSENT: Cllrs Loveday, Owen & Phillips

1. a. County and District Councillors' Reports

County Cllr Russell was unable to attend the meeting, so sent her apologies, together with a written report:

Extending the path on the Wall Hill Bend

Just to note that I have seen Brian's (Cllr Phillips) emails with respect to his meeting with Richard (Speller) at the end of April so I am assuming the Village Council are dealing with this matter directly now. Can I confirm if there is any further update with respect to;

- Contact being made with the owners of Hounds Cottage
- Richard contacting WSP with respect to drawing up a proposal for the path extension?

Richard is currently on leave so I am unable to ascertain the latest but if there is anything you require from me let me know.

Platinum Jubilee Waste Disposal Issue

Just to advise that I have raised this issue with the Cabinet Member and the Waste team following my discussions with the site manager at Imberhorne on Friday. It appears that waste for a community event is not classed as household waste and has to go over a weighbridge. By all accounts the site manager originally would not accept it as AWVC were not on the system. I spoke with him and advised I would be speaking to the Cabinet Member which I did. When I rang him back he had had a change of heart and took the waste anyway, deciding to record it manually. Why he couldn't have done that in the beginning I do not know and I apologise for the temporary inconvenience. Fortunately we resolved the matter swiftly.

**Current and Forthcoming Roadworks in the East Grinstead and Ashurst Wood area
College Lane**

There are currently ongoing roadworks on College Lane which I would avoid as they appear to be experiencing signalling problems causing a backlog of traffic down Blackwell Hollow out onto the A264.

Turners Hill Road

Up and coming roadworks concern the Turners Hill Road from the junctions with Brooklands Way roundabout to Imberhorne Lane 13/6 to 14/10 where a 24hr road closure will be in place. Similarly along West Hill from the junction of Brooklands Way and Queens Rd 22/8 to 14/10 to Lay 600 metres of new pipes with associated services and connect to existing main.

Children's Services Update

The County Council has had all 5 of its homes that are open now inspected by Ofsted. There is a 6th home ready to open but staff recruitment across the board is a national challenge at present thus it has taken longer than anticipated to get the 6th home open.

Of the 5 homes inspected, 4 are rated Outstanding and 1 is rated Good. The home rated Good fell into a slightly different category being the only home that was forcibly closed by Ofsted in 2018. Being forcibly closed meant it had to register as a completely new home. Given it has only been open 9 months there is not enough data/evidence to rate it higher than Good. Of the 4 homes rated as Outstanding, 3 have been open the entire time and 2 were closed by WSCC to undergo an extensive refurbishment programme. There are around 2500 children's homes nationally where only 16% receive an Outstanding rating. Phase 2 of the residential upgrade is now underway with Phase 3 in the planning stage. Overall the council has committed £11.3m investment in its in-house residential services.

Ofsted Monitoring Visit

Shortly before the announcement by the DfE regarding the decision to allow West Sussex to keep control of its Children's Services, the service had its 5th of 6th monitoring visits which centred on our corporate parenting (children we care for). The report was our most positive to date and can be read in full on the website. Our 6th and final monitoring visit is due in September and will centre in Children on Child Protection Plans and Children in Need. This final monitoring visit will give us our best indication as to how we are likely to be rated in our full inspection due early next year. I will enclose the link in the covering email for this update.

Youth Justice Inspection

The service also received a youth justice inspection and the report is due to be published 22nd June. Until then it is embargoed. I will forward on the report once it is published.

Cllr Belsey also sent his apologies and the following report:

a report came to Cabinet yesterday that Swan Mead on Queens Road in EG (the tired looking building which used to house Age UK) is going to be put forward for planning permission for 6 units of temporary accommodation of which there is not enough of in and around East Grinstead. It is hoped planning permission will be obtained this year.

You will also be aware that some of the hedge came down yesterday between 98-104 Maypole Road. I spoke with the owner today and the works are all in line with the planning permission and the hedge will be replanted with native British species to give a greater visibility splay for cars exiting the driveway.

b. **Public Questions** – A resident made comment on item 11a and reported that he and other residents he had spoken to were very keen to see the introduction of gym equipment on John Pears Field. Comments were also made on the pie charts presented at the Annual Village Meeting on speeding through the village. It was felt that speeding was indeed an issue and the charts weren't representative. Hammerwood Road experiences a lot of speeding as does Woods Hill Lane, particularly in the evening.

2. **Apologies for absence** – Cllrs Loveday, Owen & Phillips; apologies were received and **resolved; the reasons were accepted**
3. **To receive Declaration of Interests from Members in respect of any matter on the Agenda**
Cllr Forbes declared a personal interest in item 8a and Cllr Tyrrell declared a personal interest in item 7c as the club Chair.
4. **Chairman's Announcements** – Cllr Forbes thanked everyone who had worked on the Queen's Platinum Jubilee event – the day was a huge success, enjoyed by many.
5. **To confirm the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Village Council held on 3rd May 2022**– the minutes were **approved** and were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate account of the meeting.
6. **Clerk's Report** – the Clerk's report was received and noted.
7. **To receive the minutes of Committees and reports from working groups and to consider any matters arising:**
 - a. Planning Committee – the minutes were received and noted from 3rd May 2022
 - b. Finance & Administration Committee – Nothing to report
 - c. Youth Club – Cllr Tyrrell reported good numbers attending the club and the stall at the Jubilee event did well, raising £47
8. **Finance**
 - a. **Accounts to pay**
The accounts payable from 1st to 31st May 2022 totalling £7,510.83 were **ratified and approved by the Council.**
 - b. To receive the RBS income and expenditure report up to 31st May 2022 – the report was received and noted.

- c. To receive the bank reconciliations for May 2022 – the reconciliations were received and noted
- d. To ratify the expenditure of Jubilee T-shirts at the cost of £129.60 – **Resolved**; members approved the expenditure
- e. To ratify the expenditure of £1,100 for the headline band – The Madhatter’s Tea Party for the Jubilee – **Resolved**; members approved the expenditure.
- f. To ratify the expenditure of £127.03 for the PPL/PRS music licence – **Resolved**; members approved the expenditure
- g. To agree overtime for the Clerk & RFO for the Jubilee event – 9 hours each over two days totalling £279.63 – Members discussed and agreed that 9 hours was insufficient for the hard work done and they wished to pay the Clerk and RFO for 12 hours each; **Resolved**; members approved 12 hours
- h. To ratify the expenditure of £755.71 for the third year of the Council’s insurance policy through BHIB with Aviva running from June 2022 until 31st May 2023 – **Resolved**; members approved the expenditure

9. Annual Governance and Accountability Return

- a. **To receive the Internal Auditors Report** – the report was received and circulated. It was noted that the Council should have a Reserves Policy – Cllr Forbes will draft the policy. The report will go to the External Auditors.
- b. **To review and approve the annual governance statement for 2021/22** – the Chairman read aloud each of the annual governance statements. The Council **approved the statements 1-8; statement 9 was not applicable.**
- c. **To review and approve the accounting statement for 2021/22** – the end of year accounting figures were presented to the Council for approval; total balances carried forward were **£70,253**. The Council **approved the accounting statements for 2021/22; the Chairman signed the end-of-year return**

10. To consider Grant Applications

- a. To consider an application by the Forest Row Community Fridge Foodbank who request £500 to provide food and personal hygiene products – **Resolved**; members agreed to pay a donation of £250, but the Foodbank is encouraged to apply again in the future.
- b. To approve a donation of £150 to Sussex Community Support for their volunteering at the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Event – members discussed and decided to make the donation £200 instead – **Resolved**; members agreed to a donation of £200

11. Public Services

- a. To agree a proposal for outdoor gym equipment at John Pears and to approve a budget – Cllr Forbes reminded members that we invited quotations from 3 providers, but only received quotes from 2. Plans and quotes have been circulated and officers at Mid Sussex District Council have been supportive of the proposal. Public consultation has shown support for the idea as well. **Resolved**: Members agreed in principle to proceed with the project and to accept the quote from Proludic, subject to approval and clarification of the process from Mid Sussex District Council, and agreed a budget of £20,000
- b. To approve the budget for the repair of the Street Snooker base - members looked through the 3 quotes that had been obtained and **resolved** to set the budget at £4,000.
- c. To receive an update on the Wall Hill substandard footpath – Cllr Phillips has tried to contact the owner of Hounds Cottage to see if the hedges can be cut back to widen the road on the bend.
- d. To receive an update on Traffic calming/Road safety – Cllr Forbes noted that the Clerk had prepared a spreadsheet summarising responses to the questions. Cllr Forbes will add the comments to the spreadsheet and also prepare a report for consideration by the Council at a future meeting.

12. Events – to receive reports and updates about the following event:

- a. Queen's Platinum Jubilee Thursday, 2nd June 2022 – it was agreed that the event went extremely well, with good weather. Having the Community café operating from the pavilion was good, especially as the room was cool and therefore a welcome relief from the heat outside. The music was great throughout the event. It was noted how professional the staging team was and the sound was second to none.

13. **Consultations** - None

14. **To receive reports from Councillors who have attended outside bodies** – Cllrs Haite and Tyrrell attended a virtual Planning training meeting

15. **Items of correspondence** - Previously circulated.

16. **Items for reporting or inclusion on future agenda:** Road safety survey

17. **Date of next meeting** - 5th July 2022

Meeting closed: 8.10pm

Chairman.....

Date.....