



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST WOOD VILLAGE COUNCIL held on Tuesday 6th March, 7.56 pm at the Council Meeting Room.

PRESENT: Cllrs B Phillips (Chairman); R Bright, 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.

614. County and District Councillors' Reports

Responsibility of

- a. County Councillor Jacquie Russell started by saying that she had tried to find out from Pene Mather (Local Transport Improvements Officer) when the outstanding work to the newly painted zigzag and yellow lines for School Lane/Hammerwood Road would be completed and therefore, when the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) would be enforceable; she was waiting for a response. It was noted that the Clerk had also been chasing this and was also awaiting a response. Referring to the issues with roadworks and the length of time utility companies were taking to complete works, Nathan Elvery (West Sussex County Council (WSSC) Chief Executive Officer) had agreed that the current system was inadequate and was looking at charging tariffs and the effectiveness of court procedures.

Cllr Russell updated members following her recent meeting with Metrobus regarding School Transport and the lack of travel discounts available for Ashurst Wood students. She said that Metrobus were reluctant to support a student discount scheme. Since the withdrawal of the 3 in 1 discount card there were now fewer students using the service which suited them and meant that they did not have to put on an extra bus. She said that she found this astounding and it was difficult to argue without more data on the number of students who would actually use the bus service if a new scheme was introduced. However, her colleague, County Councillor for the Imberhorne ward, had a different issue with the bus route from Crawley Down to Imberhorne and was looking at using funds from section 106 to address this. The next County Local Committee (CLC) meeting had been rescheduled from 1st March to 21st March; Debra, Director of Education (WSSC) was expected to be attending and would answer questions. Before the meeting, at 6.00 pm, there would be a session to talk about the new funding mechanism being proposed by WSSC to replace the current small grants scheme (Community Initiative Fund/CIF).

Members then raised concerns to Cllr Russell regarding WSSC's response to the snow last week and implementing the Winter Management Plan. It had been surprising that WSSC had issued instructions not to instruct contractors to clear the snow and that the gritting to roads had not been adequate. Cllr Russell agreed. She said that she had seen the response to WSSC Highways from the Clerk and the East Grinstead Town Council Clerk. The snow situation was different across the county, but this was not an excuse and the East Grinstead area had been particular bad compared to Horsham.

District Councillor John Belsey said that following the recent discussion by the Public Services Committee regarding removal of the hedges at the children's

play area at John Pears Recreation Ground, he would now take the feedback to Robert Anderton (Divisional Leader – Commercial Services & Contracts) for a landscape assessment. He also mentioned that he would like to look at ways for the play equipment at the Recreation playground to be upgraded; in the absence of section 106 he had discussed with the Clerk about the possibilities of the Village Council helping with fundraising and then Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) to provide match funding.

Referring to the District Plan, Cllr Belsey said that the Secretary of State had overturned a couple of appeal decisions, this included up to 200 dwellings at Hill Place Farm, East Grinstead. The impact of these decisions may affect the inclusion of the new site at Hassocks. Otherwise, there were no further updates on the Plan.

b. Public Questions

Cllr Belsey asked if there was going to be the annual Litter Pick this year. The Clerk and a member of the public advised that the St Dunstan's Church would be running the event again, but a date had yet to be confirmed.

A member of the public voiced concerns with potholes in East Grinstead; Cllr Russell noted.

615. Apologies for absence

None.

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

None.

617. Chairman's Announcements

Cllr Phillips said that the 'come talk to your councillors' at 7.00 pm prior to full Council meetings had been trialled for about a year and had seen very little interest so he was proposing to discontinue them; they could be reinstated if needed.

618. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Council Meeting held on 6th February 2018

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

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

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

a Planning Committee

The meeting held before the Council meeting, 6th March was noted.

b Public Services Committee

The minutes of the meeting on 20th February were received.

To receive the following resolutions:

- i. to support the proposal for the basketball court extension 10x15m with two hoops and line markings for two halves at John Pears Recreation Ground (note: the works will be managed by MSDC)**
- ii. the expenditure of up to £300 to purchase a petrol strimmer, replacement nylon strips, appropriate PPE and petrol can.**
- iii. War Memorial - it was agreed that work should start as soon as possible and:**

- to instruct the Contractor to commence work subject to MSDC confirming planning permission was not needed
- to request support towards the shortfall from the local Royal British Legion branch
- resolved the expenditure of up to £3,280 which included the grant of £2,460 from the War Memorial Trust payable upon completion of the work

It was noted that War Memorial would be covered under agenda item 10.

- iv. to support the request from MSDC to remove the hedging at the John Pears playground, removing three of the four sides of hedging and to leave the side to the car park protected by the hedge

c Youth Club

In addition to the Clerk's report. Cllr Lindsay said that she would like to thank the Revd. Angela Martin for helping at Youth Club with the recent Banana Split Challenge activity; it went down really well and the young people had lots of fun making and eating their banana splits. The Youth Club Management Committee had held a meeting on 8th February to discuss fundraising opportunities as a lot of the Club's equipment was tired and needed replacing. Fundraising starts on Sunday 18th March with a car wash activity at the Village Centre car park.

d Events Working Group – Ashstock Saturday 7th July

Cllr Loveday said that the Councillors had organised a fantastic Quiz Night on 19th February which had raised over £900; this would go towards the costs of staging Ashstock. The Events Working Group was due to meet next on 12th March and would confirm various arrangements such as sound and evening entertainment.

621. Clerk's report

The Clerk's report was received.

- a **To note: the Clerk will be attending a Risk Management training workshop on 20th March**

Noted. The Clerk advised that the workshop was now 14th March.

- b **To note: the Assistant Clerk will be attending a first aid at work training course on 9th May**

Noted.

- c **To note: an internal training/awareness session for Councillors on the new General Data Protection Regulations will take place on 8th March**

Noted.

622. Finance

- a **Accounts to pay**

The accounts paid from 7th February to 5th March 2018 **were ratified**; the FairFX prepaid debit card accounts payments from 7th February to 6th March **were ratified**; and the accounts payable for 6th March **were approved by the Council**. The file of invoices was available to be viewed.

Clerk

- b **To receive the income and expenditure report up to 6th March**

The Alpha income and expenditure report was received. There were no questions. Cllr Phillips added that there was very little difference to the end-of-year projected view as reviewed previously on the Excel spreadsheet dated 15th January.

623. War Memorial

- a **To approve the expenditure of £3,270 for the War Memorial renovations and cleaning work. The War Memorials Trust have awarded a grant of up**

to £2,460 (75% of the cost) payable upon completion of the work and a satisfactory completion report; the shortfall of up to £810 would be funded by the Village Council (Public Services Committee 20th February)

Cllr Phillips said that the cost for the cleaning and renovations to the War Memorial would be £3,270. The War Memorials Trust (WMT) had awarded a grant of up to 75% of the cost, £2,470. The Clerk had approached the Royal British Legion to ask if they would consider a contribution towards the shortfall, but their rules had changed and they only supported military organisations. Cllr Phillips said that the Council held £500 in its reserves and could use its general reserves to meet the shortfall. Members unanimously **resolved to fund the shortfall of £810 for the War Memorial cleaning and renovations using the War Memorial reserves budget (£500) and the general reserves (£310)**. It was noted that this would be for the 2018/19 expenditure.

Clerk

624. Annual Village Meeting – Tuesday 24th April: to agree the agenda and to set a date to review the content

The outline proposed agenda for the Annual Village Meeting (AVM) was received: Minutes of the last AVM; Introductions from the Chairman of the Village Council and report on the financial year 2017/18; Presentations from the Conservators of Ashdown Forest and South East Coast Ambulance Service and Community Defibrillators; Projects and Events 2018; Would you like to be a Councillor; WSCC Highways question and answer session; General question and answer session. Cllr Phillips said that this would be the last AVM before the elections in 2019 and therefore thought that it was appropriate either the Clerk or a Councillor should speak on being a Councillor. Cllr Judge volunteered to speak about being a councillor if no-one else came forward.

Cllr Phillips said he would circulate a date to discuss planning the presentations.

BP

625. Village Centre Development / Car Park resurfacing

a To note: a specification is being prepared for the office and meeting room heating requirements and quotes will then be obtained

Cllr Phillips said that it was accepted that the heating would need to be electrical heaters and as soon as the specification had been prepared, quotes would be obtained. Members said that that the process had become too complicated and heaters needed to be installed sooner rather than later. He reminded the meeting that it was not just heaters, but adding air extraction for the toilet, heating in the toilet, timed running of the existing ventilation system to stop condensation.

BP

b To receive a summary report on the options for resurfacing the Village Centre car park and to consider the most suitable

Cllr Phillips referred to a paper he had prepared which outlined what had been done to date, the options and three estimates from different contractors. This was to be presented to the Village Centre Trustees on 7th March. It was noted the budget had been agreed (2018/19), but that the actual expenditure would be resolved once the final details and final quote had been confirmed.

c To consider the initial quotes, agree the contractor and to seek a firm estimate and specification

Members considered the estimates. There was some discussion over the different specifications quoted and the details such as the edging were yet to be confirmed. Cllr Loveday pointed out that the estimate prices in the document would change once the specification requirements were finalised and the contractor was invited back to quote. Cllr Forbes pointed out that it

was not known if planning permission was needed and advised that the quote be sent to MSDC planning department for advise as soon as possible. Cllr Bussell said that she was very concerned over the state and safety of the car park and that this project needed to be completed as soon as possible. She added that the Trustees were equally concerned and keen to have the car park resurfaced. She added that she hoped that the trustees would confirm their contribution at its meeting (7th March).

BP

626. School Transport update

Cllr Phillips thanked Cllr Russell for her earlier update. He asked for a volunteer to make representation at the next CLC meeting on 21st March. Cllrs Lindsay and Forbes said that they would both attend; Cllr Judge said that she would try to also attend the meeting. Cllr Lindsay said that the number of Sackville students from Ashurst Wood was already known (79) and therefore could assume the potential number of students that would use the bus. She also said that under the old 3 in 1 discount scheme, families on a reduced income did not have to pay for the card. Cllr Judge said that she thought that student numbers using the bus would be higher in the Spring term when parents would be less likely to step in and drive their children to school.

KL/JF/CJ

627. To approve the expenditure of up to £1,200 (from office furniture budget (4070)) to purchase either a television and laptop suitable for public viewing of the online planning applications

Cllr Phillips said that as of 1st April all planning applications would only be available to view electronically and therefore, the Council needed to make provision for how best applications could be presented for residents to view. Following discussions at last month's Council meeting, Cllr Phillips had prepared a paper with a proposal to purchase a 65 inch smart television, a new laptop and the associated fixings and wireless adapter. Members discussed and **resolved the expenditure of up to £1,250 to purchase a television, laptop, wireless adapter and fixings for use for public viewing of planning applications.**

Clerk

628. To reconsider membership of Sussex Surrey Association of Local Councils (SSALC)

Cllr Phillips reminded members of what Sussex Surrey Association of Local Councils (SSALC) membership offered: access to its website which had useful information and updates, including National Association of Local Council (NALC) Legal Topic Notes; emails from SSALC; discounts to its training courses and seminars (non-members pay twice the fee). SSALC had advised that membership for 2018/19 would be £520.99 (SSALC fee £425.02 and NALC fee £95.97). An example of training courses which Councillors and office staff might attend include: Councillors briefing (member £60, non-member £120), Chair's Networking day and a Clerk's Networking day (member £80, non-member £160); Introduction to Social Media (member £60, non-member £120). Assuming one person attended each of these, the cost as non-members to the Council would be £560. This would be halved as members, plus the annual membership fee of £520.99. He asked Members what they wanted to do. Members discussed and agreed that the SSALC courses were interesting and useful, though Councillors could also now attend the courses run by Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC). Cllr Wailes added that the SLCC were proactive with keeping up to date. The Clerk said that SSALC was the professional body for Councillors and who they would need to seek representation from if needed; the SLCC was the professional body for

Clerks and provides associated services. Cllr Bright asked about other areas of support SSALC offered for example providing a locum Clerk. Cllr Forbes said they did and the Council had used this service previously, but the Council now had an Assistant Clerk. Members concluded that they did not believe SSALC offered value for money. However, it was noted with the elections in 2019 that SSALC membership should be reconsidered and suggested the Council reconsider its position when viewing the 2019/20 budget. The Clerk was asked to add an item to the November Council agenda.

Clerk

629. To consider attending of SSALCs forthcoming training events

Members were asked to advise the Clerk of any SSALC courses which they may like to attend.

ALL

630. To consider supporting for a third year the Great British Tennis Weekend 2018 providing free access to the tennis courts at John Pears Recreation Ground – Weekends: 12/13th May and/or 21/22 July

Members unanimously agreed to support the Great British Tennis Weekend 2018 providing free access to the tennis courts at John Pears Recreation Ground for a third year during weekends 12th-13th May and 21st- 22nd July. Cllr Lindsay reminded members this was subject to MSDC's support also. The Clerk was asked to confirm with MSDC.

Clerk

631. Winter Management Plan and the response to recent snow conditions by West Sussex County Council

Members discussed the recent colder weather and snow and the instruction by WSCC Highways not to implement its winter management plan. Members agreed that for Ashurst Wood there had been one day when snow ploughing could have been implemented. Cllr Phillips said that he had spoken to the contractor for clearing the roads. He had been ready to snow plough, but WSCC had instructed him not to. Cllr Phillips asked if the Council should consider paying the contractor directly to plough the village minor roads during extreme weather conditions and to grit them if needed. Members agreed and referred this to the Public Services Committee to consider the expenditure, the additional grit salt supplies and the process of when and how to implement.

Clerk

632. Consultations

a East Sussex County Council – Household Waste Recycling Sites, have your say: opened 22nd February, closes 15th May 2018

The consultation was noted; it was suggested members respond individually.

ALL

633. To receive reports from Councillors who have attended outside bodies

Cllrs Bright and Forbes had attended the Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils (MSALC) Conference on 23rd February.

634. List on Clerk's report, correspondence previously circulated

Received.

The recent accident on the A22 which had taken out the light column again was noted.

635. Any Items for reporting or inclusion on future agenda

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and how Councillors conduct Council business over emails

Clerk

Public Services Committee:



- To consider bollard options and costs for the War Memorial
- To review the condition of the grass verges in School Lane and to reconsider options to prevent further deterioration
- To review the Maypole Road/School Lane junction

636. Date of next meeting - Tuesday 3rd April 2018

Meeting closed: 21:19

Chairman.....

Date.....