



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST WOOD VILLAGE COUNCIL held on Tuesday 4th December, 7.45 pm at the Council Meeting Room.

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Caroline Leet (Clerk)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 3

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

795. County and District Councillors' Reports

Responsibility of

- a. County Councillor Jacque Russell apologised for missing some recent meetings. She opened with reference to the Section 106 sustainable transport money and discussions which had been going on with West Sussex County Council (WSSC). Subsequently, the Village Council had had discussions regarding their preferences for directing this money, including the possibility of real time electronic bus stop signs. Members discussed the electronic bus signs and the Wall Hill Road bends which had been the Council's preferred project to direct the s106 money. However, Richard Speller (WSSC Mid Sussex Highways Manager) had since confirmed that the Wall Hill Road bends was proving difficult due to the DDA (Design and Disabled Access Regulations) i.e. it cannot be built to full standard. However, the real time electronic passenger information should meet the s106 sustainable transport criteria. Cllr Russell suggested a meeting be arranged with her and the Council to discuss in more detail.

19:47 Cllr Judge joined the meeting.

Cllr Russell gave an update on the School Transport issues. Since the February meeting with Metrobus, WSSC and Metrobus had been looking at several school transport issues, including Crawley Down students attending Imberhome School and Ashurst Wood students to Sackville. Using some s106 funding, there was an agreement in principle between County and Metrobus which included a scheme similar to the old 3in1 discount card. The details were yet to be finalised and as soon as she had further details she would advise the Clerk. Cllr Samways asked if this included the Compass buses. Cllr Russell said she would ask the question.

Referring to the Winter Management Programme, she said that this was up and running. In despite of issues with the procurement process for a new contractor; the existing contractor Balfour Beatty would complete the current programme. There were no up and coming local roadworks on the current schedule of works to report.

Finally, she mentioned the Crowdfunding scheme; applications for the next County Local Committees (CLC) meeting (5th February) closed on 14th January. There was £29k of unallocated funds available.

District Councillor Belsey said Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) was finalising the budget to be presented to Council at its end of December meeting. As soon as he knew more about allocation of funding for the playground equipment and the possible new tennis court access system he

would advise the Clerk. Referring to the Gatwick Airport Draft Master Plan 2018 consultation, he said MSDC would be submitting a response. The current passenger volume at Gatwick was 45million; under the new proposals this was likely to increase to 70million. MSDC's main concern in the report was that it did not make enough reference to the impact to the infrastructure and lack of funding.

Cllr Wailes mentioned at a recent meeting he had attended, the view presented had been that the catchment would be the M23 corridor with traffic coming from Heathrow.

Cllr Russell added that the Gatwick consultation was on the agenda for the next WSCC Council meeting (14th December) and was available to watch on the live webcast.

b. Public Questions

None.

796. Apologies for absence

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

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

None.

798. Chairman's Announcements

Cllr Phillips thanked the Councillors, Clerk and Assistant Clerk for their efforts with the Christmas Market which had been a great success. He mentioned the Ashdown Conservators Parish Liaison meeting on 12th December, neither he nor Cllr Wailes could attend; Cllr Bright would attend.

799. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of Meeting of the Village Council held on 6th November 2018

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

800. Recorded meetings: to approve deletion of recording – *meeting 4th September*

Members **resolved to delete the recording of the meeting held on 4th September 2018.**

801. 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 6th and 20th November were received.

b Finance and Administration Committee

The minutes of the meeting 20th November were received.

To receive the following recommendations were received:

i. to amend the Financial Regulations for the bank reconciliations (2.2) to include reconciling the bank balances with the balance and reserves report.

Members **approved the changes to the Financial Regulations (2. Accounting and Audit) 2.2 to include reconciling the bank balances with the balance and reserves report.**

ii. to amend the Financial Regulations (10.1 and 10.2) to no-longer have purchase orders; 10.2 is deleted with 10.3-10.5 renumbered to

Clerk

10.2-10.4.

As all payments were already evidenced in writing by a receipt, invoice and/or order and as recommended by the internal auditor, members **approved to change the Financial Regulations (10. Orders for work, goods and services) to no-longer have individually numbered purchase orders so to delete 10.2 and 10.3-10.5 renumbered to 10.2-10.4.**

Clerk

iii. to adopt the draft revised Retention Policy

Members **resolved to adopt the new updated retention policy.**

Clerk

iv. to adopt the draft Special Leave Policy

Members **resolved to adopt the Special Leave Policy.**

c Youth Club

Cllr Lindsay referred to the Clerk's report: weekly attendance was between 16 and 24; Revd, Angela Martin had visited the Club and played a popular phone game; using the funding from the Police and the Community Café, the Club had purchased new equipment including beanbags, cooking equipment, speaker, games, folding goal posts and footballs, craft activities such as pom-pom making, clay art, glass painting. The Club's AGM was on 12th November. The last session for 2018 was Wednesday 12th with the Christmas party.

d Events Working Group - Christmas Market, 30th November 2018

Cllr Bussell said the Christmas Market had been a very successful village event with all ages attending; she added that opening the market at 2 pm allowed easier access for the elderly and people with wheelchairs. Based on the door entry fee, over 200 people had attended plus children (in excess of 100) and stall holders; the event had taken £952 making a surplus of £411 (not including the staffing costs). Members discussed the expenses for the event which had included the purchase of two new gazebos to provide cover to the side access to allow the Council's meeting room to be used. Cllr Phillips voiced his issue with the expenses exceeding the budget of £400. He reminded the meeting that only a full Council or Public Services Committee meeting, could authorise a spend that would cause a budget code to exceed its budget. Cllr Judge pointed out that the barbeque and soft drinks expenses had been included (£87) which wasn't normally included as was run by another group, but this year the Council had been raising funds for Ashstock 2020. Cllr Bright said that he did not think the barbeque money should be allocated to Ashstock 2020 and perhaps the gazebos should be allocated to a different expenditure code as they were now Council assets. Cllr Forbes noted the grotto attendance had been lower than in previous years and therefore made a loss against the grotto toys expenditure. Cllr Phillips concluded the event was very good for the village. He asked Cllrs Bright and Bussell to investigate if there was a more appropriate code to allocate the gazebos and the barbecue costs.

802. Clerk's report

The Clerk's report was received.

a To consider the expenditure and frequency for window cleaning of the office; budget of up to £100 per year

This item had come from the Finance and Administration Committee meeting who had suggested possibly outsourcing some of the handyman's tasks to allow him more time to get on with other village maintenance work. Cllr Judge said that she did not understand why the Handyman could not also clean the office windows and questioned the need to outsource any of the tasks especially, when the Handyman's full hours were not being achieved. Cllr Phillips expressed his concern that the gutters had not been cleaned since the completion of the building and that this could eventually lead to blocked

downpipes and drains. Members discussed at length and agreed to keep the window cleaning and gutters for the Council office with the Handyman's role.

b East Grinstead Town Mayor's invitation to a Christmas Service at St Swithun's Church, Sunday 23rd December, 11.30 am. To consider who will attend

No one was available to attend.

803. Finance

Accounts to pay

a The accounts paid from 7th November to 3rd December 2018 **were ratified**; the FairFX prepaid debit card accounts payments from 6th November to 4th December **were ratified**; and the accounts payable for 4th December **were approved by the Council**. The file of invoices was available to be viewed.

b To receive the RBS income and expenditure report up to 29th November
The RBS/Alpha income and expenditure report was received and dated 28th November. There were no questions.

Clerk

804. To receive further details on possible electronic bus stop information and indicative costs

Following on from the November Council meeting when Members had shown an interest in reinvestigating the possibilities of real time electronic bus stop signs. Cllr Samways presented information on the different types of electronic displays available, including post or shelter mounted types with some indicative costs. To summarise, he said there were two feasible types, the cheapest was £3,300 and the more expensive £5,400; both of these would be plus fixtures, fitting and power costs. The overall expense would be quite high. When the Council had looked at this before there had been no possibility of funding, other than the Council's own resources; however, it appeared that the s106 Sustainable Transport money should meet the criteria. Members discussed the number of electronic signs needed. There are seven bus stops in the village and Cllr Samways was suggesting four, Cllr Bright thought three would be enough. Cllr Lindsay said that the mobile phone app was very good and was certainly used by the younger generation. Cllr Samways said Liz Robbins (WSCC Team leader, ITS and Traffic Monitoring Officer) had indicated that if the Council was interested they would look at the feasibility, site suitability and obtain a quote. Members agreed that they would like to continue looking at this further and asked Cllr Samways to request more accurate costs.

JS

805. To receive the budget and precept recommendations for 2019/20 from the Finance and Administration Committee**

Cllr Bright said that the Finance and Administration Committee had considered the draft budget and was proposing a precept increase from £67k to £68k, a £1,000 increase. He went on to say that at this time, the Council did not have any significant specific projects, and with no Ashstock in 2019 this would make a saving of approximately £3k on staffing; the Office Facilities reserves ((5007) had included funding for possible hallway heating, though he did not think this would be necessary. Also included was the possible new tennis court access project, although this would be predominately funded by MSDC. The carry-forward end of year figure would be £35,103 (or £395 increase on the last year).

Cllr Forbes noted the Office equipment (4070) had allowed £1,500 for new computer screens; she voiced her issues with this and was not convinced this was necessary. Cllrs Phillips and Wailes both argued it would make an

improvement to the conditions, safety and productivity as documents would not need to be printed when being referenced. Cllr Phillips said that a proposal would be presented to the Council before this expenditure was actually approved.

Cllr Phillips noted that the Council's training budget (4010) had been increased from £1k to £2k to allow for new councillors training as it was an election year. Subscriptions (4026) had not included membership to Sussex Surrey Association of Local Councils (SSALC), but if the Council was to renew its SSALC membership, this meaning the Council would be eligible to training at members rates, the training expenditure would be less than budgeted (approximated by £600) and the subscription expenditure would be over budget by the corresponding amount. Cllr Phillips also mentioned Salaries (4000), with the inflation and pay increments, basic salaries would increase in April by approximately 2% to 4%, depended in staff positions on the pay scale.

20:35 Cllr Belsey left the meeting

Looking at the Council Tax calculations for a band D property, assuming that the Tax Base remained unchanged, the proposed precept to £68k would be a 1.49% increase or £1.34 yearly increase. The precepts for MSDC, WSCC and the Police were not yet confirmed. Members **agreed the draft budget and to recommend a precept increase from £67,000 to £68,000**. The draft budget would be displayed on the Council's website and the budgeted approved at the Councils February meeting.

Clerk

20:38 Cllr Belsey re-joined the meeting.

806. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) – regular agenda item

Cllr Wailes referred to the new updated Retention Policy, which had mentioned the Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 (the 2003 Act). This required a local council which published works in print (this included pamphlets, magazines or newspaper, maps, plans, charts or tables) to deliver, at its own expense, a copy of them to the British Library Board. He said that he had contacted the Legal Deposit Office who had confirmed that the Council was obliged to send, within one month of publication, one copy of each of their publications to the British Library for archiving. They automatically archived UK websites and this already had a lot of the requested information.

807. Winter Management: To receive an update on the snow clearance contractor and the WSCC Winter Management offer

Cllr Phillips referred to the Clerk's report noting the arrangements and the trigger mechanisms for snow clearance had been confirmed with Mark Eichner. However, WSCC were yet to send him the agreement. Cllr Forbes questioned if it was right that the Council had to pay Mr Eichner (the contractor) direct and then seek reimbursement from WSCC for snow clearance which they triggered. Cllr Phillips confirmed.

808. To receive a report on the results of the recent speed survey near Rockaway House, Lewes Road (A22)

Cllr Phillips presented a summary of the speed survey results from the October speed survey near Rockaway House, Lewes Road. All weekdays had a similar pattern, so he had used a single date to analyse the volumes and speeds for the northbound and southbound traffic. He had also taken a summary for the traffic at the Worsted Lane site which had a permanent traffic

data monitoring point. In short, and to conclude over a 24 hour period and showing the speed at 85th percentile (the point which WSCC Highways use to measure), Rockaway House northbound volume of vehicles 8339, speed 38.9mph; southbound volume 7043, speed 40.0 mph. When compared to Worsted Lane, traffic volume was about 2,000 more travelling southbound, and the speed in both directions was within 2 mph lower. Cllr Samways noted the volume of traffic differences travelling north and southbound. Cllr Forbes commented on the speed which was high enough for WSCC Highways to consider if there was an issue. Cllr Phillips said that more than 50% of the traffic was travelling within 35 mph and the Police had previously said that they supported 40 mph on the A22. Members agreed they needed to consider what they would like to see done to help control speed at this point.

809. Grants

Members received two grant applications. It was noted that one grant had been awarded this financial year and they had a remaining budget of £500.

a Ashurst Wood Primary School

Members discussed the application from the Primary School requesting funding to replace the curtains in the school hall. Cllr Judge supported the application and said that the curtains were in desperate need of being replaced. Cllr Lindsay said that whilst she fully appreciated the funding issues schools had and would normally support an application, she questioned if curtains was the right thing for the Council's funds. Members discussed; there was support for the local school and they acknowledged the financial pressures that schools were under especially, with the funding restrictions from the County authority. However, they said that they would prefer to support an application where there would be an educational enhancement and could not see how curtains met its grant policy criteria. Cllr Jacque Russell was sympathetic to the school's request and mentioned that WSCC had an £11m funding gap in next year's budget and it was sometime difficult to differ between what was a statutory and discretionary obligation for the funding. She offered to look into the Crowdfunding scheme which had taken the place of the County Local Committees (CLC) grants scheme. She would advise the Clerk if the school or the PTA could consider making an application. Members agreed not to award a grant for this application.

Clerk

b Ashurst Wood Short Mat Bowling Club

Members resolved to support the application from the Short Mat Bowling Club and awarded a grant of £100 towards the cost of new wooden bowl sets (£300 per set).

Clerk

810. Consultations

a Gatwick Airport: Draft Master Plan 2018 (including making best use of existing runways). Closing date 10th January 2019

Members viewed pictures of the Gatwick runway and emergency runway and discussed the proposed increase with passenger numbers and planes (approx. 30%). The main concern raised was that the report did not tackle the issues with infrastructure. Cllr Phillips noted that, unless the flight paths were changed, there was unlikely to be any increase aircraft movements over Ashurst Wood. He asked if anyone was able to prepare a response on behalf of the Council. Members agreed to just note the consultation.

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

The Clerk's report noted the recent Cluster Group meeting attend by the Clerk and Assistant Clerk. Cllr Phillips had attended the East Grinstead Mayor's



Civic Service at St Swithun's on 23rd November and reported that it had been a good opportunity after the service to network with other councils.

812. Items of correspondence

a List on Clerk's report, correspondence previously circulated

Received.

813. Any Items for reporting or inclusion on future agenda

None.

Cllr Lindsay mentioned MSDC had contacted her as the Ashurst Wood Tennis Club secretary to complete a question on outdoor sports which had been looking at sports facilities in the district. Following confirmation from the Clerk that it was a genuine questionnaire, she had responded confirming the tennis courts at John Pears Recreation Ground were underutilised and this was evidenced when compared to usage of other facilities at the site.

814. Date of next meeting - Tuesday 5th February, 2019

Meeting closed: 21:12

Chairman.....

Date.....