



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF ASHURST WOOD VILLAGE COUNCIL** held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019, 7.45 pm at the Council Meeting Room.

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Rebecca Roberts (Acting Clerk)

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 8**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

**1. a. County and District Councillors Reports**

Responsibility  
of

County Councillor Jacque Russell sent her apologies.

District Councillor John Belsey sent his apologies along with a report. He advised that the playground monies for John Pears had been approved up to £80k. His suggestion to extend the car park at John Pears was met with a positive response, but the issue will be funding and it is likely to be a longer term project.

7.46pm – 2 members of the public arrived

Cllr Belsey reported that the EDF development had been rejected by MSDC's Planning Committee and that the application for Dirty Lane had been withdrawn. The consultation for the draft Site Allocations Development Plan Document starts at the end of the first week of October and is open for at least 6 weeks – land south of Hammerwood Road is the only site being put forward in Ashurst Wood.

Cllr Belsey wanted to highlight that he was sorry to hear of the continued anti-social and criminal behaviour in the village and he has written to Katy Bourne (Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner) about this and will share any updates with the Council. He also spoke at the Police and Crime Panel meeting in Lewes, specifically talking about Ashurst Wood. It is understood that some of the local offenders may be on a youth offender rehabilitation programme which has 5 intervention points.

**b. Public Questions**

Members of the public spoke about the recent anti-social behaviour and criminal damage that has been going on in the village for the past few months. Points raised included:

- How long does the Parish Council think residents should put up with this behaviour without intervention? One resident had five nights of abuse and anti-social behaviour
- The offenders have been spoken to by the police, but they are not paying any attention
- Are Social Services involved?
- Residents know that the police are doing their best, but they lack resources and to them, these are minor offences, but they are not to the residents on the receiving end of the abuse.
- Some of those involved do not live in the village. Can they be banned

as they bring alcohol, gather at the Rec using bad language in front of younger children and setting a bad example

- There is no point on replacing broken windows as they will just break them again

7.56pm – one member of the public arrived.

- Residents were concerned that the offenders' behaviour would only get worse if they weren't stopped.

Members suggested that residents and the Council should continue to report every incident to the Police and impress on them how important it is to the village that this is resolved.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Cllr 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**

None

**4. Chairman's Announcements**

None

**5. To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of the Village Council held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019**

The minutes were **approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct account of the meeting**

**6. Recorded meetings**

**Resolved:** members resolved to delete the recording of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Members agreed to bring item 15 forward in the agenda, in the interests of those members of the public attending.

**15. To discuss the on-going vandalism and anti-social behaviour**

Cllr Draper felt that just because the current issues in the village are being discussed at the highest level, this does not mean that they will be resolved. There is concern that residents will take matters into their own hands. Cllr Draper proposed to arrange a Public Meeting where the Police could attend, listen to residents' concerns and give some reassurance.

**Resolved:** Members agreed to ask the Police to attend a Public Meeting.

Clerk

8.17pm – 2 members of the public left

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

**a. Planning Committee**

Minutes for the meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> September were received. It was noted

that the application for the EDF/Wealden House site for 54 flats had been refused at committee and that the Dirty Lane application had been withdrawn.

**b. Youth Club**

It was reported that the Youth Club had started the new term with the new Youth Leader and assistant Youth leader.

**c. Events Working Group (EWG)**

i. The date of Ashstock 2020 is confirmed for 11<sup>th</sup> July. High Gain Event Services will operate the staging, lighting, power and staffing of these. They will also run the bar. Mid Sussex District Council have confirmed that the Village Council can hire John Pears Field and Pavilion free of charge, as admission to the event is free.

ii. Christmas Market –

Cllr Loveday has contacted Doves Barn Nursery and arranged to purchase the Christmas Tree which will be put up the weekend before the market. Transport for the tree has been arranged. Volunteers are needed to help put up the tree. Cllr Loveday will be Father Christmas and three volunteers have agreed to run the barbeque.

Cllr Loveday

**8. Clerk's report**

The Clerk's report was received. It was noted that the electrical report for the hall and the Council's premises had been received and that some work would need doing.

clerk

**9. Finance\*\***

**a. Accounts to pay\*\***

The accounts payable from 5<sup>th</sup> September to 3<sup>rd</sup> October **were approved by the Council**; The file of invoices was available to be viewed.

**b. To receive RBS income and expenditure report up to 3rd October**

The RBS/Alpha income and expenditure report was received

**c. To approve the expenditure of up to £500 for the Christmas Market as previously budgeted**

**Resolved:** Members approved the expenditure

**10. To consider electronic bus signs** this had previously been on the agenda in December 2018. Information was gathered about 2 types of electronic signs. A former Councillor had been in correspondence with WSCC, but further information was still awaited. It was agreed that the Clerk would follow up with Liz Robbins at WSCC.

Clerk

**11. To receive an update** on the new tennis court access system

It was reported that the Tennis Club were disappointed that there was no further news on the gates to the courts and have asked the Village Council and Cllr Belsey to make enquiries to see what is holding this up.

Clerk

**12. To review and approve** the draft Winter Management Plan for 2019/20

Clerk

so that it can be submitted to West Sussex County Council. Cllr Forbes had updated the report. She mentioned that the list of grit bins in the audit was not the same as that in the report. The village will be reliant on the winter management service provided by West Sussex Highways. The roads in the village appear to have been moved to priority 3 for gritting and clearing, whereas they used to be priority 2. The budget for WSCC Highways has been halved and as a result we will see a reduction in the services offered this winter. Highways will not pay a local contractor to help with snow clearance unless they have public liability insurance. Members have previously discussed paying a contractor directly, provided the Council's Insurers will provide cover. The Clerk has written to a local contractor but has had no response.

Clerk

The handyman has completed the grit bin audit. Grit bins are only filled at the start of the season and the handyman keeps an eye on the levels and tops the bins up from the Council's spare supply as needed. There are 4 roads, as yet unnamed that will not be gritted by Highways this season.

Cllr Lee attended the Mid Sussex Emergency Planning Group (EPLG) meeting and will forward the minutes once he receives them.

It was agreed to send the Winter Management Plan to West Sussex Highways.

**13. To receive an update on the purchase of CCTV**

Clerk

Cllr Lee reported that a CCTV engineer will come to the office the following week for a site visit. It was agreed to obtain quotes for fencing with a push bar release in the panels, to prevent people gaining unauthorised access to the back of the hall/office and stores. It was also agreed to contact the Trustees of the Village Centre to see if they would be happy to share the costs. The issue of lone workers was also raised.

**14. To consider celebrations for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day**

Cllr Draper informed the Council that there had been a tea dance in period dress for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day and that this could be repeated on 8<sup>th</sup> May. Other ideas included a war time quiz. It was agreed that a Councillor or other volunteer should organise any event, as the council could not currently commit more staff time. It was noted that East Grinstead will be running events and that perhaps the village could join forces with them.

VJ Day was also discussed but as the Council is already planning Ashstock for July, an August celebration would be too soon after.

It was agreed that any interested Members would get together to discuss possible VE Day celebrations and any ideas to be brought to the next meeting.

Clerk

**15. Discussed after item 6**

Clerk

**16. To consider the purchase of badges for Councillors and staff**

Cllr Forbes produced a mock-up of a metal name badge with magnetic fastening. The design can be simple and costs approximately £17.

It was agreed to put this on the agenda for the Finance and Administration Committee.



8.50pm – 4 members of the public left

Cllr Lee

**17. Consultations:**

**MSDC Site Allocations Development Plan Document**

MSDC were required to produce a site allocation document by the District Plan Inspector. There are no new employment sites allocated in Ashurst Wood but there is one housing site, which is 'land south of Hammerwood Road' proposed for 12 units. Other submitted sites are not proposed for allocation. The site that has been allocated was reviewed with the Neighbourhood Plan and this site is in addition to the allocated sites in the Neighbourhood Plan. Ashurst Wood is currently meeting our housing requirements, but if suitable sites are identified, they have to be considered. The Village Council will be invited to respond to the Consultation and there aren't many grounds for objection. The landowners had previously suggested providing some allotments on the site and it was agreed to contact them to ascertain whether there was still the possibility of having allotments on the site as well as housing.

Clerk

8.56pm – 2 members of the public left

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

Cllr Lee attended the Mid Sussex Emergency Planning Group (EPLG) and reported that in the event of Brexit, MSDC now has 5 incident liaison officers and that there are 1,000 more border force agents. Advice was given not to panic buy fuel if there becomes a shortage and that 6 weeks' worth of medicine had been stockpiled.

Winter management was also discussed and that grit lorries were down from 23 to 18 and it was confirmed that 4 roads in Ashurst Wood will not be gritted this winter.

Cllr Lee will attend the next EPLG meeting and forward the minutes of the last meeting.

**Items of correspondence**

Correspondence previously circulated – Received

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

**None**

**Date of next meeting – 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

Meeting closed: 21:03pm

Chairman.....

Date.....