



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST WOOD VILLAGE COUNCIL

held remotely on Tuesday 1st September 2020, 7.00 pm using Zoom

PRESENT: Cllrs Forbes (Chair), Phillips (Vice-Chair), Arnott, Draper, Haite, Spoor and Tyrrell

IN ATTENDANCE: Rebecca Roberts (Clerk), Sam Booker (Assistant Clerk/RFO) and Mid Sussex District Cllr John Belsey, **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** 1

ABSENT: Cllrs Lee and Loveday

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

1. a. County and District Councillors' Reports

County Cllr Russell sent her apologies, but submitted the following written report:

LOCAL ISSUES

- I submitted a proposal to the Highways Department regarding potential use of Emergency Active Travel funding to repair the pavement along the A22 from the junction of Hammerwood Rd by way of incorporating shared cycle/footway as suggested by the Highways Manager. Unfortunately the government then announced a change in policy for shared cycle/footways in that they should no longer be implemented, so unfortunately this proposal cannot go forward. I have raised this with the MP and asked her to provide a response from the Department of Transport (DfT) on this matter. This does not only affect proposals but also schemes agreed and currently awaiting implementation (i.e. Chichester to Emsworth shared footway/cyclepath). Apologies this is not a good outcome.
- I am still waiting for Richard Speller to contact AWVC to have a meeting with Councillors/myself re the laying of a substandard path along Wall Hill Rd to John Pears field. This has been agreed in principle but requires a meeting.
- Tables and Chairs licensing has now passed to Districts and Boroughs to implement due to a recent change in legislation. This is expected to be in place until September 2021. Prior to this change the County Council agreed to waive any licensing charges until March 2021 and it is anticipated that Districts and Boroughs will honour this agreement.
- Roadworks:
 - SGN 1st to 18th September – Multi-way signalling Wall Hill Rd
 - WSSC 4th September Lewes Rd, Safety Defect Repair – Two-Way signalling

CHILDRENS SERVICES

- Continues on its improvement journey with the appointment of permanent assistant directors into Corporate Parenting, Quality Assurance and Children's Social Care – start dates October and November 2020.
- The Commissioner is to provide an update to the members of the County Council this Thursday, in lieu of the fact that we have been unable to have our scheduled monitoring visit from Ofsted due last May. This is being done by kind agreement with the Commissioner in order to assist in giving Members an external view of the progress of the service.
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). The situation of Kent CC has been much in the press of late so I thought I would give the position of West Sussex CC at this time. Currently West Sussex CC has assisted Kent CC by taking in 6 UASC since June and is only 1 in 4 authorities to

answer their plea for help. West Sussex CC also voluntarily works with the National Transfer Scheme run by the government to assist other authorities but has to balance this with its own intake from Gatwick. We currently have 75 0-17yr old UASC. Using the formula provided by the government with respect to how many UASC we would be expected to assist (0.05% of population of 0-17yr olds in the County circa 176.5k) our total would be 88 so we are not far away from that total and doing all we can to help others as well as ensuring we can meet our own statutory responsibilities.

OTHER PORTFOLIO MATTERS:

• POP UP CYCLE LANES

East Grinstead A22 Felbridge to Lingfield Rd scheme was approved by the DfT for Tranche 1 funding and is due to commence works this month. Tranche 2 funding which is designed to look at permanent schemes is being considered and asides my request above, I have also put forward for a cycle lane implementation from the McIndoe Statue in the High Street to Sackville School. This has been requested by the Cycle Forum and I await to hear the outcome in due course.

• EDUCATION

Class sizes on the return to school

- The guidance on class sizes for September published on 7 August states that *for the autumn term, maintaining consistent groups remains important but schools may need to change the emphasis on bubbles within their system of controls and increase the size of these groups.*
- *In secondary schools, and in the older age groups at key stage 4 and key stage 5, the groups are likely to need to be the size of a year group to enable schools to deliver the full range of curriculum subjects and students to receive specialist teaching. If this can be achieved with small groups, they are recommended. **At primary school, and in the younger years at secondary (key stage 3), schools may be able to implement smaller groups the size of a full class. If that can be achieved, it is recommended, as this will help to reduce the number of people who could be asked to isolate should someone in a group become ill with coronavirus (COVID-19).***

The wearing of face coverings in secondary schools and colleges

- There is no requirement for the general use of masks or face coverings in school. Whilst some flexibilities have been suggested on the use of face masks in our secondary schools and colleges, the government's view is that schools are low risk environments and that, where risk assessments have been undertaken and appropriate measures are in place to manage students in learning bubbles and organise safe movement around the school, there is no case for the general use of face coverings in school
- The government's own guidance states that schools may consider the use of face coverings by students *where* the school has difficulties in managing movement **in communal areas** within the school. In areas of local lockdown only is it suggested that secondary schools and colleges should ask students to use face coverings and, only then, when children and young people are moving and circulating in communal areas
- Students and staff should not be wearing face coverings when they are in classrooms (unless agreed through individual risk assessment), or undertaking physical activity
- It is for secondary schools and colleges to determine through its own safety risk assessment planning whether there are any communal areas where they believe the wearing of face coverings is warranted.
- It is recommended that children in our secondary schools and colleges use face coverings on public transport and they are encouraged to have face coverings on local authority provided

school transport where appropriate.

District Cllr Belsey reported that leisure centres in Mid Sussex opened today, 1st September.

The core base at the new John Pears playground has been laid ready for the new top surface. The bases for a couple of the frames are also in. However the contractor is awaiting the delivery of the main castle/slides which are due the first week of September. Once the playground is finished, it will be open to the public with social distancing guidelines in place

b. Public Questions – Karen Lindsay, Chair of the Youth Club Management Committee and the Ashurst Wood Community Tennis Club attended the meeting to update members on the current situation with the two clubs, covering items 9 and 14 on the agenda. Youth Club continues to be closed following guidance from the National Youth Association (NYA) and because Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) are not hiring out the pavilion at John Pears. MSDC have completed risk assessments, but there are no dates for reopening. Karen attended a zoom meeting led by Sussex Clubs for Young People to meet with other Youth Workers and go through current guidance. This was followed by a meeting with Cllr Forbes and the Clerk to discuss any plans or policies that would be needed. The latest national guidance is currently that indoor activities should be for a maximum of 15 youths and only if social distancing can be achieved; this probably would not be possible in the pavilion. A risk assessment will be drawn up by Karen, the Village Council and the Youth Workers which will then be shared with MSDC. Sackville school will be teaching in bubbles of year groups, so it would be wise to open for specific year groups each week, rather than to mix year groups.

Karen informed members that when MSDC reopened the tennis courts, the Ashurst Wood Community Tennis Club was temporarily disbanded because of problems with members booking for free. In late July, Stuart Brown agreed the club could restart and it now has a healthy, but slightly lower than usual, number of members signed up until 2021 under a new household rate of £50 which has proved popular. The courts continue to be booking online only and the key is in a safe at the courts. Thanks to Cllr Belsey, there is a new tennis net on order. On 1st September, Karen had a meeting with MSDC and the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) regarding moving to the new booking system, Clubspark on 1st October 2020. This is either online or an app and much more user friendly than the current MSDC system. Clubspark also links with members accounts, but can be used by non-members too. The new gate has been delayed due to Covid-19, but has not been forgotten about. Once the gate is installed, the Clubspark booking system will directly link to it.

2. **Apologies for absence -** County Councillor Russell and Cllr Lee; 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 7th July 2020 –** the minutes were **approved** and signed by the Chair as a true and correct account of the meeting.
6. **To receive the minutes of Committees and reports from working groups and to consider any matters arising:**
 - a. Planning Committee – the minutes were received from 14th July and 4th August 2020. It was noted that there have been several residents objecting to the proposed phone mast, application DM/20/2559. West Sussex Highways have requested more information and will visit the site.
 - b. Finance & Administration – no minutes to receive

- c. Public Services – no minutes to receive
 - d. Allotment Working Group – no reports
 - e. Youth Club – currently closed due to Covid-19
 - f. Events Working Group (EWG) – no reports
7. **Clerk's Report** – the Clerk's report was received and noted. In particular, it was noted that the Council will need to apply for Remembrance Day road closures from now on.
8. **Finance**
- a. **Accounts to pay**
The accounts payable from 1st July 2020 to 31st August 2020 totalling £8921.62 were **ratified and approved by the Council. The RBS income and expenditure report up to 31st August** were received and noted.
 - b. **To agree the expenditure of £911.60 + VAT including magnets and delivery for a replacement noticeboard** – resolved; members approved the expenditure
 - c. **To agree the expenditure of £125 + VAT for an additional CCTV camera** to cover the entrance of the Village Centre building; resolved; members agreed the expenditure.
 - d. **To agree the expenditure of £148.19 + VAT for a slim-line replacement grit bin** – resolved; members agreed the expenditure and noted that the bin would be ordered in green and will be a direct replacement for the broken one on the corner of Maypole Road/Box Lane and that the bin would not be re-sited.
9. **To consider the future of the Youth Club** – members noted that the salaries of the Youth Workers were still being paid. As reported by Karen Lindsay above, the Youth Club cannot currently meet at John Pears Pavilion. Members agreed to keep Youth Club under review.
10. **To review the storage of the Football Club's goalposts at John Pears** – it was noted that there have not been any complaints from residents regarding the position of the goals storage. The football club have been informed that the goals are stored entirely at their own risk. Members have no objection to the continued storage of the goals at John Pears.
11. **To discuss website compliance** – Websites of Public Sector Bodies must comply with accessibility regulations by the 23rd September 2020. The Clerk obtained 2 quotes from companies who can supply a compliant website. SALC recommend a company called Aubergine. Members agreed to obtain a free 'accessibility audit' and it was agreed to refer the matter to the Finance and Administration Committee.
12. **To receive an update on the Three Crowns** – a meeting will take place between Star Pubs and the Village Council on 9th September via Zoom. The meeting was requested by the Village Council to establish what the brewery is doing about appointing a new operator. The general state of the site will also be discussed.
13. **To discuss the need for a cycle lane from Ashurst Wood to Sackville School** – Cllr Draper informed members that she has complained to West Sussex Highways about the state of the footpath on the A22 Lewes Road. As reported by Cllr Russell above, the proposal to incorporate repairs as part of shared cycle/footway was unsuccessful due to a change in Government policy.
14. **To receive an update on the Tennis Court access system** – as stated in Public Questions, on 1st September, Karen Lindsay had a meeting with MSDC and the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) regarding moving to the new booking system, Clubspark on 1st October 2020. This is either online or an app and much more user friendly than the current MSDC system. Clubspark also links with members accounts, but can be used by non-members too. The new gate has been delayed due to Covid-19, but has not been forgotten about. Once the gate is installed, the Clubspark booking system will directly link to it.

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15. **To discuss repairs to the office roof** – The Assistant Clerk/RFO had received two quotes to replace 6 tiles missing from the office roof (a third contactor failed to provide a quotation). Both quotes were for £150 + VAT. Members **resolved** to agree the expenditure and leave the decision of the contactor to the Assistant Clerk.
 16. **To confirm the schedule and dates of meetings for the ensuing year** –Cllr Phillips and the RFO would set a date for the Finance and Administration Committee in October 2020. It was agreed that Council meetings would continue remotely on the first Tuesday of the month for the time being.
 17. **Consultations** – the Village Council has received the MSDC Draft Site Allocation document. The Village Council had previously responded to the document and the response is noted as an objection. It was noted that Policy SA26 (Hammerwood Road site) has the incorrect size of the site and that a new access from Yewhurst Close had been proposed. There is already concern about this access from residents and members would request the original access from Hammerwood Road be reinstated. Members agreed to submit another comment to MSDC and reiterate that Ashurst Wood has no residual requirement for new housing.
 18. **To receive reports from Councillors who have attended outside bodies** - None
 19. **Items of correspondence** - Previously circulated.
 20. **Items for reporting or inclusion on future agenda** – Cllr Arnott requested that an article be written in the next newsletter reminding residents not to drive down Phoenix Lane as a cut-through; there is a sign stipulating that the lane is not suitable for vehicles.
 21. **Date of next meeting** - 6th October 2020

Meeting closed: 8.04pm

Chairman.....

Date.....