

ALBOURNE PARISH [2022]

Minutes of the meeting of the Annual meeting of the electors in the Parish of Albourne

held on: Tuesday, 24th May 2022, at 7.30 p.m. via the Zoom platform

Present: **Albourne Parish Councillors:** Cllr Graham Stafford – Chairman, Cllr Jerry Butler, Cllr Di Smith, Cllr Nikki Ernest, Cllr Joy Parks, Cllr Suzi Sawyer, Cllr John Drew.

Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk).

1 local resident (being an elector of the Parish).

1. Chairman's introduction and review of the previous year.

The Chairman opened the meeting, and although things are slowly improving, referred again to the difficulties of the past year, due to the ongoing pandemic. The Parish Council had continued to meet remotely via the Zoom platform, and been able to carry on with its business in a more or less full way. However, it was anticipated that face to face meetings could resume shortly, with the appropriate safety measures put in place. He thanked all Parish Councillors and the Clerk for their work and support over the past year. He also thanked Councillors Joy Dennis (WSCC) and Councillor Judy Llewellyn-Burke for their attendance at Parish Council meetings, and for their support on issues that affected the Parish over the year.

2. Minutes of Annual Parish meeting held on 6th May 2021.

These were unanimously approved, and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

3. Reports from WSCC and MSDC Councillors.

There were no reports as neither Councillor was present.

4. HGV/ Traffic issues/Village Gateways.

Cllr John Drew gave his report. Work to address traffic calming (the provision of the Village Gateway signs), and the speeding issues on Albourne's roads is ongoing, and the Parish Council is engaging with West Sussex County Council on all these matters. The deployment of the Speed Indication Device is having some effect in terms of reducing speeds, and the data being gathered is very important in order to support of the Traffic Regulation Order application regarding the speeding issues along the B2116 Henfield Road. There have also been a number of accidents along this stretch of road, which prove the point. He also referred to the efforts being made by the Parish Council to

reduce unnecessary road signage clutter, and to remove the outdated signs on the B2118 London Road.

5. Planning issues/District Plan.

Cllr Nikki Ernest gave her report. The Parish Council has responded to 42 planning applications over the course of the year. The review of Mid Sussex's District Plan is ongoing, and the Parish Council is keeping very much abreast of the issues. The proposals include a major development in and around Albourne, which the Parish Council is responding to. The redevelopment of the former Hazeldens garden nursery was allowed on appeal, even though the Parish Council spoke against the application, and MSDC was also not in favour of the proposal. The Parish Council has also been monitoring a number of planning enforcement matters, where activities are not in accordance with planning permission.

6. Trees/hedges/footpaths/Millennium Garden.

Cllr Suzanne Sawyer gave her report. The trees in the Recreation Ground need attention, and this has been reported to MSDC. The Parish Council in conjunction with the Woodland Trust is intending to plant a number of trees in response to the Queens Green Canopy Jubilee scheme, and the consent of the appropriate authorities for their location is ongoing. She touched on the issue of Ash tree dieback, and urged everyone who has a concern about trees, to report them to the Parish Council. On the other matters, Cllr Joy Parks gave her report. Generally, the footpaths and hedges are in a reasonable condition, but ongoing issues are reported as and when they arise. Residents are encouraged to report any problems to either the Parish Council, or preferably directly to WSCC's Public Rights of Way (PROW) Team. There is a lot of maintenance work going on in the Millennium Garden in order to improve its appearance, e.g. the provision of a new bench, and more regular cutting back of excess vegetation. The land known as the Common Copse in the Street has been cleared and replanted by the Parish Council. There is a concern about dog waste on footpaths, and the Parish Council is in communication with the District Council as to how things can be improved. The Parish Council is trying to increase dog waste collection, and has sourced a new bin for Church Lane (on the corner by the footpath).

7. Village Hall/Social Group/Pop up Pub report.

Cllr Jerry Butler, as the Chairman of the VH Management Committee, gave his report. The last year has seen a return to a more normal pattern than the previous one, as Covid rules have been relaxed. Of course, the virus is still around and we are following guidelines from various organisations regarding the Village Hall's use. This is the reason for this meeting being held via Zoom, as we cannot regulate the potential number of attendees. **Finance** - we are fortunate in that our income (from hirers) has returned to a level much closer to pre-pandemic levels. At the same time, our expenditure has risen with the cost of energy being the main reason. As you are all aware, this year the costs have sky rocketed with more to come in the autumn. With this in mind we will be reviewing costs and hire charges at our next meeting at the end of this month. **Projects CCTV** – this was installed at the end of July last year. Care was taken that the privacy of dwellings around the village hall was protected. Fortunately, we have not needed to access this system for any antisocial behaviour. **Flooring** – in August last year, we replaced the flooring in the Village Hall. The old flooring

was starting to break up after being down for over 40 years. The old flooring contained asbestos fibres so had to be removed by a specialist prior to the new flooring being laid. **Soffits and Fascias** – the old ones were starting to look extremely tired and also contained asbestos so it was decided to have these replaced with a uvpc alternative. This was completed earlier this month and greatly improves the look of the hall. **Broadband** – In April we finally managed to get broadband installed in the Village Hall for our hirers. This was after almost 6 months of trying. We went down this path as over the last couple of years hirers have asked if it was available including MSDC for elections. **Garage** – After much discussion it was agreed that it is impractical to repair the roof so will need to be taken down and removed by a specialist contractor as it the roof contains asbestos. It was decided not to replace it at this time. The only items in the garage that will be retained are the trestles tables which will be housed elsewhere. **Future Project** – the windows of the Village Hall are in need of maintenance and at least one of them has ‘blown’. Quotes will be sought for this work. **Social Projects** - the Albourne Arms had to cease when the pandemic struck and will be re-opened at some time later this year depending on the current situation regarding Covid. **Vacancy** – there is still a vacancy for a co-opted member of the committee but there has been no interest so far. **Lastly** My thanks go to the other members of the committee for their support and help over the last year, plus Jenny Gratton (Treasurer) and Jo Nolan (Bookings Secretary) who have kept the Village Hall running so smoothly.

8. General session for the public.

No issues were raised.

9. Chairman’s concluding remarks and close.

Finally, the Chairman thanked all for attending, and he encouraged villagers to attend Parish Council meetings if they can, as the contribution and input from residents is very important.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.

SIGNED.....Graham Stafford (Chairman)