

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2024]

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 2nd April 2024 at 7.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr John Drew (JD) – Chairman
Cllr Joy Parks (JP) – Vice Chairman
Cllr Di Smith (DS)
Cllr Suzanne Sawyer (SS)
Cllr Shane Axtell (SA)
Cllr John Spencer (JS)
Cllr Imelda Spencer (IS)

In attendance: Iain McLean; Parish Council Clerk (via remote means), and five members of the public.

- (2024/030) - Councillor JD formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** Councillors Geoff Zeidler (MSDC) and Councillor Joy Dennis (WSCC) had both sent apologies.
- (2024/031) – Declarations of interest.** Councillors JD and SS declared a non pecuniary, personal, non prejudicial interest in the Wickwoods planning application below, as both Councillors are members of the Club.
- (2024/032) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** There were no issues raised.
- (2024/033) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th March were duly approved and will be signed off, as a true record, by the Chairman as soon as possible.
- (2024/034) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Joy Dennis (JD), and MSDC Councillor Geoff Zeidler (GZ).** There were no reports as neither Councillor was present. However, Councillor Karen Healy from Fulking had been briefed by Cllr JD regarding the Wickwoods planning application below, and she confirmed that in the light of the traffic concerns, Councillor JD would be prepared to support a Traffic Regulation Order for a reduction in speed along Shaves Wood Lane. It was noted that the application may be called-in, so that it will go to a full planning Committee rather than be dealt with under delegated officer authority, and also that responses should concentrate on the planning issues rather than concerns about increased Club membership.

6. (2024/035) – Planning and traffic matters.

6.1 One planning application was considered, and the plans and relevant policies presented and discussed. It being proposed by Cllr IS and seconded by Cllr SS, the Council therefore **RESOLVED to comment to SDNPA as follows:-**

PROPERTY	PROPOSAL	AGREED RESPONSE
SDNP/24/00484/FUL - Wickwoods Country Club And Spa , Shaves Wood Lane	Erection of structure containing three padel courts and associated flood lighting.	<p>Albourne Parish Council objects to this application on a number of grounds-1. We disagree with the proposition that no noise assessment study is required. Unlike the two padel courts, which are the subject of an existing consent, these proposed additional courts will be situated outside. It is well understood that padel tennis is a much noisier sport than ordinary racquet tennis, since there are potentially more players, and the balls bounce off hard surfaces.2. We disagree with the proposition that no travel plan or transport assessment is required, and that the proposal will have no effect on traffic, or parking. We are aware that the car park at the premises is often at capacity, and that visitors may have to park on a narrow, countryside lane, which currently has a 60 mile speed limit and is frequently used by horse riders and cyclists. 3. There has been no proper or full appraisal regarding the affects of the additional flood lighting to be provided, and in any event, the Parish Council is not in favour of any such lighting, as it goes against the Dark Skies initiative of both the SDNPA, and the Council's own Neighbourhood Plan. In previous applications, the Parish Council has generally requested that whatever the proposal may be, there should be no flood lighting.4. There is no impact statement or ecology survey on how the proposal will affect local wildlife in the area, given the likely noise</p>

		<p>intrusion and light pollution potential. For example, we are aware that this is an area of significant bat activity. In conclusion, we are of the view that the proposal breaches a number of the Authority's planning policies, and that because there is insufficient information on transport (car parking and access), noise, light pollution, and wildlife, we would urge that the application be refused.</p>
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6.2 Cllr JD reported that he had at last, met with Adam Denby (WSCC) in order to discuss the various highway and traffic issues (including the progress of the Traffic Regulation Order). A letter of complaint has been submitted to WSCC about the way the Parish Council's application has been dealt with. The scheme has also been resubmitted. ON the school parking issues, a meeting has been arranged with John Cunningham (WSCC) and others on 11th April to take these forward. It was thought that a representative from the School should attend. Finally, it was noted that some of the contractor's items that had been left from the work to the B2116/B2118 junction have been collected, but others still remain. The relevant grit bins can be filled, but the Parish Council needs to make the arrangements itself. This was agreed by members in terms of the logistics of how best to complete this task.

6.3 The review of the District Plan is ongoing, and there was a very substantial response to the Regulation 19 consultation. It is anticipated that these will be available to view on MSDC's planning website shortly. The appointment of the Planning Inspector is awaited. The Clerk reported that the planning application for the Certificate of Lawful Development to use an existing incidental building as an ancillary residential building at Truslers Well, Truslers Hill Lane (under reference DM/24/0183) has been approved by MSDC.

7. (2024/036) - Flooding issues in the Parish. The Parish Council has collated a number of flooding issues within the Parish, which need to be investigated and dealt with, possibly by applying for Operation Watershed funds from WSCC. A meeting has been arranged with an adviser, Steve White, on 11th April to discuss how best these matters should be approached, and to look at contractor know how for these tasks. The parties will have a walk round the Village prior to the meeting in order to view the various flooding areas.

8. (2024/037) – Wellcroft Green (Inspired Villages). A number of issues had been noted by, or reported to the Parish Council by residents (i.e. the purpose of the new gate, the new manhole cover, and the piling works, which are quite noisy and intrusive). It was therefore agreed that Cllr IS would take these up with Inspired Villages.

9. (2024/038) – Finance report and matters.

9.1 The financial summary and the Bank reconciliation for the month, were received, noted, and approved.

9.2 The invoices were presented for payment, and it **was RESOLVED to agree and to make the following payments:-**

AMOUNT (2023/24)	PROCUREMENT	PAYEE
£577-45	Clerk's salary + on costs (March)	West Sussex County Council
AMOUNT (2024/25)		
£243-93	WSALC and NALC annual subscriptions 2024/25	West Sussex ALC Limited
£53-42	Payroll admin charges for half year (1/10/23 -31/03/24)	West Sussex County Council

9.3 The outturn budget for the financial year end 2023/24 was received, noted, and approved. This shows that the Council had spent just over 60% of its budget, but that many of the budget heads were contingent on events, and so may well end up being unspent. It was noted again that electricity costs for the street lighting have continued to go up.

9.4 The Clerk reported that the internal audit to be carried out by Mulberry and Co. for the financial year 2023/24, will take place on 13th May 2024 (and will be carried out remotely).

9.5 It was noted that because neither income nor expenditure for the financial year 2023/24 exceeded £25,000 the Parish Council can (as for the last three years) certify itself as exempt from a limited assurance review (i.e. the requirement to submit a full set of financial papers for external audit). The Council therefore **RESOLVED** to accept the Clerk's recommendation to proceed accordingly. The Clerk will check to see whether there is any limit on the times that the Parish Council can so self certify.

9.6 The Council **AGREED** (with SS proposing and JD seconding) a request for a £325 grant to the Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance Service. It was noted that the request had been for £350, but the Council felt that £325 was a reasonable increase on last year, when a similar request had been funded at £300. It was noted that the Council does have a small budget for grants, but that only a few requests are received. The Clerk will look into how better the availability could be advertised.

10. (2024/039) - Annual Parish meeting. The annual Parish Meeting of Electors is to be held in the Village Hall on Tuesday, 7th May 2024 at 7.30 p.m. It was agreed that this should be made a bit more informal than in previous years, and the Clerk will take this on board in finalising the Agenda. The arrangements for advertising the meeting were also discussed and agreed. It is hoped that the meeting will be made available on the Zoom platform. The Clerk will investigate the possibility of holding both the annual Parish Council meeting (currently scheduled for 14th May), and this meeting on the same evening, and will report back.

11. (2024/040) – Hedgehog highway project. It was decided not to join this project at the present time, as Albourne is a fairly open, rural area, with a good hedgehog population. It

was therefore felt that the initiative was good for more urban areas, but that the Parishes situation did not need any further assistance, so would be best left alone.

12. (2024/041) – Current issues. Cllr JD went through the rolling list of actions that had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, and this is attached for the record. The main points were (i) Operation Speedwatch is still ongoing, and the Speed Indication Device is due to be moved, (ii) the reason for the gate to and from the School in the Millennium Garden, which is often left open, needs to be investigated, (iii) it had been confirmed by MSDC that the new goal posts for the Recreation Ground would be provided and installed by them (as soon as ground conditions allow), (iv) MSDC had agreed to move the re-wilding area from the Recreation Ground, and would decide on the replacement area for it as soon as possible.

13. (2024/042) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters. Cllr DS reported that the Walnut tree outside the Village Hall had been trimmed back, and looked good. A slight change to the colour for the painting of the doors at the Hall was discussed and agreed, but in line with what the Village Hall Management Committee had agreed. Cllr JP suggested that another Silent Soldier be acquired for the Millennium Garden, and it was agreed to put this on the Agenda for the next meeting. There is an issue with some overhanging branches, but Cllr SS said that she was aware of the location, and is dealing with the matter.

The meeting closed at 8.52 p.m.

SIGNED.....John Drew/Joy Parks
Chairman/Vice Chairman

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 7th/14th MAY 2024 @ 6.00/7.00 p.m.
(TBC)