

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2022]

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 5th April, 2022 at 7.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Graham Stafford (GS) – Chairman
Cllr Nikki Ernest (NE)
Cllr Jerry Butler (JB) – Vice Chairman
Cllr Di Smith (DS)
Cllr Joy Parks (JP)
Cllr Suzanne Sawyer (SS)
Cllr John Drew (JD)

In attendance: Iain McLean; Parish Council Clerk (via remote means), Councillor Joy Dennis (West Sussex County Council) from 7.40 p.m., and two members of the public.

-
- 1. (2022/001) - Councillor GS formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** There were no apologies for absence.
 - 2. (2022/002) – Declarations of interest.** Cllr NE declared a personal interest in the planning application for Gunners Cottage, as her property neighbours the subject property. Cllr SS declared a personal interest in the Allotments item, as she is an allotment plot holder.
 - 3. (2022/003) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** None were raised.
 - 4. (2022/004) – Approval of Notes.** The notes of the informal Parish Council meeting held on 1st March 2022 by remote means were duly noted and approved.
 - 5. (2022/005) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Joy Dennis (JD), and MSDC Councillor Judy Llewellyn-Burke (JLB).** JD gave a comprehensive report on her arrival at the meeting. Main points were (i) there is a new and more effective way (machinery) of dealing with mending roads and pot holes being rolled out. The issue of clearing gullies continues to be challenging, given the higher frequency of heavy rain events. The A2300 re-opens officially on 8th April 2022. There is still much pressure on school places leading to bulge classes in some cases. There may be implications for Albourne School. The Ash die back tree removal project is ongoing.

20,000 trees have had to be felled. WSCC officers are seeking proper quotes for the removal of the redundant road traffic signs, as the current costs are too high. WSCC has an extensive programme of installing cycle routes pursuant to their obligations, but Cllr NE thought that where they are not much used, it is a shame to be taking out green highway verges, as this leads to unnecessary urbanisation. The fence near the Village Hall is still down, and JD will chase this up. Cllr JP raised the issue of the need to improve the white lining on roads, and highlighted where these need re-doing in Albourne.

6. (2022/006) – Planning matters.

6.1 Three planning applications were considered, and the plans and relevant policies presented and discussed. It was therefore **RESOLVED to comment to the South Downs National Park Authority and MSDC as follows:-**

PROPERTY	PROPOSAL	AGREED RESPONSE
SDNP/22/01134/MPO Eastwood Farm, Shaves Wood Lane	Removal of restrictive covenant associated with Section 52 Agreement attached to Mid Sussex planning approval AE/009/86, which requires the dwelling to be occupied in conjunction with the use and occupation of the whole of the land as an agricultural unit.	Albourne Parish Council has no comments on this application, subject to the applicants being able to prove to the satisfaction of the Authority, the justification and reasoning for removing the restrictive covenant.
AE/DM/22/0118 The Old School, Church Lane	Timber framed outbuilding to be open at ground floor for the storage of garden machinery, equipment and logs with a habitable roof space with dormer windows for use as a home office / study with a retrospective change of use of part of land to side and rear of the property serving eastern driveway with front gate and parking area to within the residential curtilage (amended description 25/02, Tree Protection Plan and Full Application Form received 08/03)	Albourne Parish Council has no reason to change its previous response, but re-iterates the importance of ensuring that the area of land that is to be converted from agricultural to domestic use is clearly delineated and marked out.
AE/DM/21/4006 Gunners Cottage, Henfield Road	Erection of Private Stable block and sand school. Provision of temporary site access for construction purposes and change of use of land to dual equestrian / agricultural use. (amended description 23/03)	Albourne Parish Council repeats its response to the original application. <i>"In principle, the Council has no objections to this application. However, we note that there appears to be no application to change the use of the subject land from agricultural to equestrian use. In the light of this, and in terms of any future</i>

		<p><i>applications, it needs to be quite clear what the lawful planning use of any part of the land is, and particularly in this case, which part of the field is proposed for conversion. In the absence of this information, it is our view that the application should be corrected and re-advertised. However, if the matter is to be dealt with, and if planning consent is granted, we would recommend the following conditions are attached- (1) that there is no external lighting for the sand school, (2) that the development is for private use only, (3) that any change of use should be limited to the stable block and sand school only, (4) that the mature Oak tree adjacent to the proposed site, is properly protected, (5) as a safety precaution, all construction vehicles should be required to approach the site along the B2116, from a westerly direction, (6) that the temporary access for the construction, should be removed once the development is completed.”</i> We comment additionally (a) that despite our original response above, there is still no clear red line demarcation of which part of the land is to be the subject of a change of use. There needs to be a clear definition of the land that is to be converted to equestrian use for the purposes of implementing the proposal, (b) the Parish Council is concerned to note that substantial work has already started on the site before the application has been determined, including where the entrance to the temporary road has been widened, the removal of a portion of hedging. This was not mentioned in the original application. The concern was reported to the Enforcement Team, but it seems that no action has been taken, nor the work</p>
--	--	--

		stopped. (c) With regard to proposed condition 6 above, we note that the access road appears to be too substantially constructed to be merely temporary. It should be clear that any conversion to permanent use must require a separate planning application.
--	--	--

Note: For the Gunners Cottage application, Cllr NE in accordance with her declaration of interest above, left the room, and took no part in the discussion.

6.2 Cllr JD reported that the signs for the Village Gateways had been delivered and installed. The TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) for the Council's Traffic Management Scheme has been resubmitted on 28th March 2022. JD thought it odd that a paragraph asking for specific justification of a scheme has been taken out, but this had been worked into other areas of the application. There is still no update from WSCC on the redundant road traffic signs, despite it being nearly a year since the on-site meeting with officers. Cllr JD (WSCC) did later comment on this in her presentation (see above). The SID (Speed Indication Device) machine continues to be moved around the Village, and the data analysed. A stalwart of the project Roger Clifton-Moore, is leaving Albourne, and the Clerk was asked to write to him, in order to thank him for all his work towards the success of the project.

6.3. There were no reports or updates to make on this occasion.

7. (2022/007 – Finance report and matters.

7.1 The financial summary and the Bank reconciliation for the month, were received, noted, and approved. Two further late invoices were added to the list, and approved for payment.

7.2 The invoices were presented for payment, two further late invoices having been presented for payment since the list was circulated , and it **was RESOLVED to agree and to make the following payments:-**

AMOUNT	PROCUREMENT	PAYEE
£427-83	Clerk's salary + on costs (March 2022)	West Sussex County Council
£20-00	Grass cutting in the Millennium Garden (March)	Brian Truran
£79-00	Wild flowers for re-planting the Common Copse area	Boston Seeds (reimbursement for Joy Parks)
£300-00	Grant to Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance service	KSS Air Ambulance Charity
£211-21	Annual grounds maintenance High Cross 2022/23	Mid Sussex District Council
£143-88	Renewal of Zoom License for 2022/23	Zoom Video Communications (reimbursement for Jerry Butler)
£238-32	WSALC and NALC subscriptions 2022/23	West Sussex ALC Limited

£47-74	Payroll admin charges for half year (1 of 2)	West Sussex County Council
£52-79	30 MPH signs for the Village Gateways	Road Signs Direct (reimbursement for John Parks)
£351-27	Ditto	Action Group Signs

7.3 The end of year outturn budget monitoring report for the period 01.04.21 to 31.03.22 was noted and approved. The Council has spent about a half of its budget for the year. It was noted that many of the budget heads are contingent on events, and so may not need to be used. A few budget heads had overspent, such as the energy supply budget for the street lighting, which reflects the big rise in energy cost experienced by individuals and businesses alike. Also, the budget for the maintenance of the Millennium Garden has overspent, but this merely reflects the considerable work that the Parish Council has carried out to the Garden over the year in order to enhance and improve its image.

7.4 It was noted that the internal audit to be carried out by Mulberry and Co. for the financial year 2021/22, will take place on 12th May 2022 (and will be carried out remotely).

7.5 It was noted neither income nor expenditure for the financial year 2021/22 exceeded £25,000. Therefore it was **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation from the Clerk that (as for last year) the Parish Council certify itself as exempt from a limited assurance review (i.e. the requirement to submit a full set of financial papers for external audit). In that event, no fee is payable.

7.6 It was **RESOLVED** to agree a request for a £300 grant to the Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance Service.

8. (2022/008) - Allotments. (i) It was noted and confirmed that the northern plot will be split into two halves (as for the middle and southern plot), now that the plot holder has given up the tenancy of the whole. The Clerk will send details to the Chairman. (ii) It was agreed that the Parish Council will address the issue of the state of the fencing around the allotments, and will seek quotes for repairs. (iii) The request from a plot holder was considered, but it was noted that the mowing of the grass pathways between the allotment plots is the responsibility of the plot holders under the terms of their tenancy Agreements. Nonetheless, the Parish Council will ask if Brian Truran, who mows the Millennium Garden, could take on this additional work. However, if so, the cost would have to be recovered from the six plot holders as an addition to the annual tenancy fee.

Note: For this item, Cllr SS in accordance with her declaration of interest above took no part in the discussion.

9. (2022/009) - Footpath post. The Council considered a request from the Gospel Hall to replace the post on the footpath from Church Lane in order to prevent unauthorised vehicular access. Although this is mainly a matter for the Public Rights of Way (PROW) Team at WSCC, and the landowner, it was agreed that the history of the path needs to be investigated further in conjunction with PROW. The Clerk will write to the Gospel Hall accordingly and continue to liaise with PROW as appropriate.

10. (2022/010) - Annual Parish Meeting. The arrangements and agenda for the annual Parish Meeting of Electors, along with the issue of whether to hold in the Village Hall, or via the zoom platform, on Tuesday, 3rd May 2022 at 7.30 p.m., were discussed. The latter is legally possible, because the meeting is not a Parish Council meeting. It was agreed that the preference might be to hold a hybrid meeting, so that people can either attend in person if they so wish, or by remote means. It is hoped that JB will be able to update the Council on whether the Village Hall has had the necessary broadband installed by then in order to enable remote attendance from the Village Hall. It was therefore **AGREED** to defer the decision until then, but in the meantime to revise the date of the meeting to the 24th May 2022, in order to give time for proper preparation for the meeting, whatever the final decision is. Cllr JB reported on the way-leave issues and discussions between Open-reach and Plus-net, but the hope is that the broadband installation might take place on 7th April 2022. However, previous such dates have come and gone.

11. (2022/011) - Delegated Decisions. The delegated decisions taken since the last official meeting in December 2021, on the grounds of urgency, under the provisions of Standing Orders, were noted. It is a requirement that the list is published for the public record, and this is attached to these minutes as a separate document.

12. (2022/012) – Current issues. Cllr SS updated on the Jubilee tree planting scheme. It was **AGREED** that following the quote that had been obtained, to commission PHB to carry out the underground cables scan before planting. The “abandoned” car in the Street, which had been the subject of correspondence with the PCSO, should now be reported under Operation Crackdown. It was noted that the car is taxed, but has no valid MOT, and may not therefore be insured. The Clerk will pursue this further.

13. (2022/013) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters.

Cllr DS noted that the kissing gate to the Recreation Ground had been put back by MSDC, but it was not a good job. A local resident had fixed it. The fly-tipping/rubbish issue at Barn Close needs to be reported to MSDC. The gap in the hedge still needs to be resolved. The VH notice board is a bit wobbly at the moment, but replacements are very expensive, and it was thought better to try and repair it for now. George Hammond could take this on, subject to his availability. Cllr JP noted that the gap in the hedge opposite Ernest Doe (where the tree came down) needs sorting. The Clerk will take this up with MSDC. It was **AGREED** that the quote from Connick Tree Care to cut back the tree stump in the Recreation Ground, following work to protect a Larch tree, should proceed. It was noted that it can't be ground out. Cllr JD reported that the broken down fence on the Recreation Ground opposite Magnolia Court needs replacing. The risks of the Parish Council doing the work itself, which is a temptation, given how long these things take to get done, were discussed, but it was decided to report this matter on to MSDC, which the Clerk will do. Cllr JB reported that a new cleaner for the Village Hall had been appointed. The restoration/replacement of the soffits and fascias at the VH will be done on 5th May 2022.

The meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.

SIGNED.....Graham Stafford/Jerry Butler
Chairman/Vice Chairman

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING BEING THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING: TUESDAY, 10th MAY 2022 @ 7.00 p.m. *(It was noted that*
Councillors SS and JD will not be able to attend.)