

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2024]

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 9th January 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 Imelda Spencer (IS)
Cllr John Spencer (JS)

In attendance: Iain McLean; Parish Council Clerk (via remote means), Councillor Geoff Zeidler (MSDC), and 5 members of the public.

- (2024/001) - Councillor JD formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** Councillor Joy Dennis (WSCC) had indicated that she might be able to attend the meeting later on, as she was going to be at a different meeting earlier.
- (2024/002) – Declarations of interest.** Cllr JD declared a personal interest in the planning application for Old Orchard below (DM/23/3138) as his property neighbours the application property. Otherwise there were none.
- (2024/003) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** (i) A representative from WILD asked about the Regulation 19 consultation process on the draft District Plan, and mentioned a guide that people could use to make their responses. The main issues relate to flooding, drainage and transport. There is to be a residents meeting in Sayers Common Village Hall on 8th February, and this will be widely advertised. It is important that the Parish Councils take charge of the process, and be community led. MSDC and developers need to be challenged. It was noted that Regulation 19 is about the soundness and legal compliance of the Plan, e.g. has it been positively prepared, and can it be justified. Responses need to focus on these issues. The consultation starts on 12th January and ends on 23rd February. Banners will be put up in the Village advertising this. (ii) A resident raised an existing flooding issue on the B2116, which is being looked at by Cllr SA in connection with ongoing Operation Watershed research. The gullies and ditches need clearing, and the Council will pursue this with WSCC. Any escape of sewage into properties should be referred to the Environment Agency.

4. **(2024/004) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th December 2023 were duly approved and will be signed off, as a true record, by the Chairman as soon as possible.

5. **(2024/005) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Joy Dennis (JD), and MSDC Councillor Geoff Zeidler (GZ).** Cllr GZ referred to his January written report as circulated to Councillors. The main point is that the revised District Plan has been approved by MSDC, and the process now proceeds to the Regulation 19 consultation. This will start on 12th January and last for six weeks. The revised National Planning Policy Framework published a couple of days later and made clear that there was no basis on which MSDC could rely on it in order to reduce its housing targets; and that the Government Department was taking action against Planning Authorities who had not progressed their Plan making. On the re-wilding area, MSDC is happy to look into moving it, given the concerns around its proximity to the Recreation Ground, but it would need to be guided on where to locate it. Councillors DS and JP agreed to look into this. There was no report from WSCC as Cllr JD was not present.

6. **(2024/006) – Planning and traffic matters.**

6.1 Four planning applications were considered, and the plans and relevant policies presented and discussed. It was therefore ***RESOLVED to comment to MSDC as follows:-***

PROPERTY	PROPOSAL	AGREED RESPONSE
DM/23/2990 - Curtains Cottage, The Street	Rear single storey extension, moving of west elevation front entrance door and insertion of window next to entrance door.	Albourne Parish Council has no objections to this application.
DM/23/3000 (Listed Building Consent) - Curtains Cottage, The Street	Rear single storey extension, moving of west elevation front entrance door and insertion of window next to entrance door.	Albourne Parish Council has no objections to this application.
DM/23/3115 - 10 Wellcroft Cottages, Church Lane	Proposal to extend the existing bathroom by replacing the current dormer and building a larger one.	Albourne Parish Council has no objections to this application.
DM/23/3138 - Old Orchard, Henfield Road	Proposed front porch extension to include level access and formation of wheelchair accessible wet room.	Albourne Parish Council has no objections to this application, and would want to express its support for it.

6.2 Cllr JD has received a confusing message from WSCC Highways concerning the Traffic Regulation Order for speed limit reductions. The message advises the rejection of the

request for a 20mph zone from the junctions with the B2118 and The Street but makes no mention of the other requests for reductions to 30 mph between the Truslers Hill Lane and Twineham Lane junctions or the 40 mph request for the remainder of the B2116. JD is organising a further meeting with Adam Denby (WSCC) to discuss this, along with all the other traffic and highway issues that have been referred to WSCC, and upon which responses are still awaited.

6.3. Cllr JS reported that a further joint meeting with Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common, and Twineham Parish Councils, in order to discuss the approach to the response to the District Plan Regulation 19 consultation, is being arranged for February. It will be important to find common ground. It is also proposed to appoint a consultant to advise on some of the planning issues, e.g. flooding risk and drainage issues.

7. (2024/007) – Finance report and matters.

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

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

AMOUNT	PROCUREMENT	PAYEE
£427-83	Clerk's salary + on costs (December)	West Sussex County Council
£31-51	Christmas drinks after December meeting	Albourne Village Hall
£40-00	Data protection fee renewal (annual payment)	Information Commissioner

7.3 The proposed budget for 2024/25 was considered and discussed. It was proposed that the budget for dealing with the District Plan is increased, given the current situation, and the possible need to fund expert advice. Overall however, the budget has decreased slightly. On this basis it was **RESOLVED** to agree the budget as recommended by the Clerk.

7.4 The tax base for Albourne Parish for 2024/25 was noted and considered. It has gone up very slightly from the current year. However, after discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to keep the precept for 2024/25 at the same level as for 2023/24 (£15,022), and the Clerk was authorised to respond to MSDC accordingly (by the deadline date of 31.01.24).

8. (2024/008) – Hedge at Hunters Mead. The ownership of the hedge has been re-examined, and it is possible that it is actually the responsibility of MSDC. Their legal Department is currently looking into the matter. The issue of plugging the gap remains an option, but any decision and action will now depend on the ownership situation. Whilst on this subject, it was reported that MSDC has had the new goalposts for the Recreation Ground delivered, and these should be installed shortly. MSDC also has a new hedge cutting contractor, and the Parish Council will wait to see how this works out – for example, the hedge on the B2118 along the Recreation Ground needs trimming.

9. (2024/009) – Report from Village Hall Management Committee. Cllr DS gave her report. The main points are (i) a Vice Chair has now been elected (Cllr SS), (ii) Dave Robson

has been appointed as the third co-opted member of the Committee, (iii) there is a new handyman arrangement in hand for small, routine and quick jobs that need doing in the Village Hall, (iv) the issue of the number of chairs needed for the Hall was discussed, and a decision to procure a further rack of 32 was taken, (v) the garage is now virtually empty of items.

10. (2024/010) – 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. Some of the issue have been updated as below.

11. (2024/011) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters. Cllr JS referred to the need to review and update the Neighbourhood Plan, although this will not take place until the District Plan review is complete. The Council will need consultancy advice and assistance from a planning expert, and JS has someone in mind. However, formal quotes will need to be sought in due course. Cllr JP confirmed that regrettably the new dog bin in Church Lane has been removed and is now stored in the Village Hall garage. Cllr SS reported that the broken gate from the Recreation Ground to Barn Close had been repaired by MSDC. Cllr DS mentioned the need to top up the salt/grit bins, and their contents status is being looked into. The issue of the toxic Black Locust plant invading the new Beech hedge along the safer routes to school footpath is back again, and it really needs removing rather than merely cutting back. The Clerk will take this up with MSDC. The use of separate emails is ongoing, but Cllr SA and Dan Smith have also been looking into this, as it is similarly an issue for the VHMC. Cllr SS raised the issue of potholes on the roads, and highlighted a few particularly bad examples. These need to be reported directly to WSCC via their website on "report a pothole on-line".

The meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.

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

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 6th FEBRUARY 2024 @ 7.00 p.m.