

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2024]

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 5th March 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)

In attendance: Iain McLean; Parish Council Clerk (via remote means), Councillor Imelda Spencer (via remote means), Councillor Joy Dennis (WSCC) for part of the meeting, Councillor Geoff Zeidler (MSDC) for part of the meeting, and four members of the public.

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- (2024/021) - Councillor JD formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** Cllr Imelda Spencer was not able to be at the meeting in person, and the reason was accepted.
 - (2024/022) – Declarations of interest.** Councillors JD and SS declared a non pecuniary, non substantial interest in the Wickwoods planning application below, as both are members of the Club.
 - (2024/023) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** (i) It was noted that the District Plan Regulation 19 consultation closed on 23rd February. A representative from WILD confirmed that they had submitted a response to MSDC. A Planning Inspector will now be appointed to examine the Plan. Going forward, WILD will be deciding on the work and preparation that will be needed for the next steps. Social media still needs to be used to get the message out to residents, and to encourage donations to help fund outside advice. Albourne Connected was volunteered as a one way of doing this, and it may be that local press outlets could also be contacted, e.g. the Hurst Parish magazine. Fund raising was also discussed and it may be that the Friday night Albourne Arms (village pub) could assist (ii) it was reported that there has been another road traffic accident on the B2116, and the warning sign at the junction with Truslers Hill Lane is still in the hedge. WSCC need to deal with this, and under item 5 below, Cllr JD (WSCC) agreed to pursue the matter with relevant officers.

4. **(2024/024) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th February were duly approved and will be signed off, as a true record, by the Chairman as soon as possible.

5. **(2024/025) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Joy Dennis (JD), and MSDC Councillor Geoff Zeidler (GZ).** **Cllr JD** reported that WSCC has responded to the Regulation 19 process and found the District Plan to be unsound, based on highways and education issues. WSCC is leading an effort to deal with water and flooding issues in the County. WSCC budgets have been set for the next financial year. Recent high rainfall has exacerbated highways issues, with major debris and gully problems. It has affected the maintenance schedule. A lot of funding is going into improving local bus services. Secondary school places have been announced and all have been offered. Cllr JD (APC) raised the issue of the much delayed meeting with Adam Denby (WSCC) to discuss all the outstanding traffic and highway issues. Cllr JD will look into this. Cllr SS raised the problem of potholes and sunken drains, and these need to be reported on the WSCC website reporting page. Cllr JP asked about some tarmac testing that had been taking place at the junction of the B2116/B2118, as it was uncertain what this was all about. Cllr JD said that she would check the situation. **Cllr GZ** reported that MSDC has balanced its budget for next year and this has been agreed. Council tax is going up by 2.95 %. It is proposed to increase parking charges in some areas and to extend them to evenings and weekends, subject to further consultation. It is likely that rates reform and the rebalancing of the regime will mean that there is less money coming into MSDC. It was noted that the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework will cannot apply to the District Plan, given how far it has progressed. The exceptional circumstances qualification is about need, not the housing requirement. However, the examination process may lead to some improvements in the Plan. There is an appeal in Fulking, regarding a traveller’s site, and this may have some ramifications, because as the definition of travellers may change, the need for such sites could increase. Although taken up by the Clerk, GZ will pursue the re-siting of the re-wilding area in the Recreation Ground, and also the garden rubbish fly-tipping, which is still there, despite having been reported last September.

6. (2024/026) – Planning and traffic matters.

6.1 Two 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
AE/DM/23/2382 - Wick Farm House, Truslers Hill Lane	Replacement of one existing barn and the erection of a second barn. Change of use to class B8 storage and distribution use. (Amended plans and planning statement supplement).	Albourne Parish Council notes that the application seeks to deal only with the look of the building, but does not address any of the concerns raised in our previous response, such as the proposed use, access, and traffic issues. We must therefore continue to register our objection to this application.
SDNP/24/00510/FUL - Wickwoods Country Club	Refurbishment of the existing pool terrace and pool building,	Albourne Parish Council has no

and Spa, Shaves Wood Lane	new sauna and the development of an external spa garden and associated works.	objections to this application.
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6.2 Cllr JD reported that the meeting with Adam Denby (WSSC) in order to discuss the various highway and traffic issues (including the progress of the Traffic Regulation Order) is still outstanding and as above, Cllr JD (WSSC) will try and progress this.

6.3 Issues around the draft District Plan had been covered as above, although it was noted that both Horsham's District Plan and the Crawley District Plan are both at similar stages as Mid Sussex's, (i) on the public meeting with WILD held on 8th February, this has been covered under item 3 above, (ii) the Parish Council's Regulation 19 response has been submitted and is posted on the Parish Council's website. Cllr JS was thanked for all his hard work in ensuring that the response was put together and submitted in time.

7. (2024/027) – 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
£577-45	Clerk's salary + on costs (February)	West Sussex County Council
£54-00	Chairs training - Cllr John Drew	Mulberry & Co
£219-02	Dog bin collection – annual charge	Mid Sussex District Council
£152-99	Annual fee for the Zoom license	Zoom (reimbursement for Shane Axtell)
£2,580-00	Advice on flooding issues for the purposes of input to the Regulation 19 consultation on the District Plan	Townsend Water Engineering Limited
£750-00 *	Consultancy services for preparing the response to the Regulation 19 consultation on the District Plan *	M J Egan *

* Following the Council's agreement in January to use consultants and outside help in putting together the response to the Regulation 19 consultation, and on a point raised by the Chair, this invoice was in effect approved by Council as an ex-gratia payment for the work carried out, given that in the urgent circumstances of the consultation deadline, no formal appointment could be finalised.

7.3 The decision taken under delegated authority, in view of the urgency, to reimburse Councillor Shane Axtell for the 2024/5 annual Zoom subscription, as shown on the above invoices list, was noted for the record.

8. (2024/028) – 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) the Village sign has been taken down and is in the process of being refurbished, (ii) the Black locust plant along the footpath by the Village Hall has been cut back by MSDC, but the mother tree in a private garden needs to be dealt with as otherwise the problem will re-occur, (iii) it was noted that the Walnut tree near the Village Hall needs cutting back, (iv) the new goalposts for the Recreation Ground are due to be installed and MSDC has been provided with information to aid this, (v) the Clerk will chase up the progress of the improvement to the streetlights schedule, (vi) Cllr SA and Dan Smith have made some good progress with the issue of providing separate, work email addresses for Councillors, and this is ongoing, (vii) the Parish Council continues to investigate flooding problems in the Parish, with a view to applying for Operation Watershed funding, (viii) the local Speed-watch programme continues to gather valuable data, which will help address the speeding concerns along the Parishes roads.

9. (2024/029) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters. There were none, as any such matters had been raised in the context of item 8 above, or elsewhere in these minutes.

The meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

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

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 2nd APRIL 2024 @ 7.00 p.m.