

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2023]

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 9th May 2023, at 7.00 p.m.

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

In attendance: Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk) via remote means, and three member of the public.

- 1. (2023/043) - Election of Chairman for the ensuing municipal year.** This being the first meeting of the Parish Council for the new Council year, nominations for the office of Chairman of the Parish Council for the Council year 2023/24 were called for. Councillor John Drew was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Sawyer and **SECONDED** by Councillor Axtell. There being no other nominations, **Councillor John Drew** was duly and unanimously **ELECTED** to serve as Chairman of the Parish Council for the Council year 2023/24.
- 2. (2023/044) – Councillor JD then formally opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and received apologies for absence.** Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Imelda Spencer, and the reason accepted. Apologies for absence had also been received from Councillor Geoff Zeidler (MSDC), who was elected to the new Mid Sussex District Ward of Downland Villages (of which Albourne Parish is a part) at the elections held on 4th May 2023.
- 3. (2023/045) – New Chairman signs Declaration of Acceptance of Office.** Councillor Drew will sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, in the presence of the Clerk, who will also sign and date the document, as soon as possible.
- 4. (2023/046) – Election of Vice Chairman for the ensuing municipal year.** Councillor Drew, having duly taken the Chair, called for nominations for the office of Vice Chairman of the Parish Council for the Council year 2023/24. Councillor Joy Parks was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Smith and **SECONDED** by Councillor Sawyer. There being no other nominations, **Councillor Joy Parks** was duly and unanimously **ELECTED** to

serve as Vice Chairman of the Parish Council for the Council year 2023/24.

5. **(2023/047) – Declarations of interest.** There were none declared on this occasion.

6. **(2023/48) - Casual Vacancy on the Parish Council.**

To note that because there were only six nominations for the Parish Council election on 4th May 2023 (the Council's constitution being seven Councillors), there is an immediate Casual Vacancy on the Council. The Clerk reported that one person had expressed an interest in being co-opted and it was agreed that if no one else comes forward by the date of the next meeting, that person would be invited to the meeting on 6th June 2023, when the Council can consider, and formally resolve to agree the co-option.

7. **(2023/049) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** None were raised at the meeting.

8. **(2022/050) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4th April 2023 were duly approved and will be signed, as a true record, by the Chairman, as soon as possible.

9. **(2022/051) – 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.

10. **(2022/052) - Appointment of the Village Hall Management Committee**

(VHMC). Under its constitution, it was **RESOLVED** that the VHMC for the municipal year 2023/24 should comprise a membership of Councillors Smith, Sawyer, Axtell and Spencer (leaving one vacancy for filling by the Parish Council at a later date if possible). It was noted that the appointed co-opted representatives on the Committee are currently Mick Gratton, and Eve Gerhold, with a vacancy for the third place, now that Shane Axtell (previously co-opted) is a Parish Councillor. These appointments will be confirmed at the next VHMC meeting at the end of June.

11. **(2022/053) – Planning matters.**

10.1 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/23/0811 - Albourne Equestrian Centre, Melrose Farm, Henfield Road *	Retrospective application for change of use of a mixed-use site comprising of equine, trailer and caravan training to include use of the hard surfaced area to the North of the existing indoor riding barn as space for vehicle storage. *	Albourne Parish Council strongly objects to this application, as the proposal is contrary to a number of policies in the Mid Sussex District Plan, given the nature of the proposal, and its countryside location. These are DP 12 - Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside. The proposal to store a considerable number of

		<p>vehicles in an equestrian centre in no way enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and is entirely anomalous with the main function and purpose of the site for rural activities. Notwithstanding DP12, the proposal is incompatible with the requirements of DP14 - Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy. The proposal will not contribute to the rural economy, and is of such a scale as to be in breach of the express provisions of that policy. DP29 – Noise, Air and Light Pollution. The expansion of the business to include a substantial car storage area, with any number of vehicle movements, will have an adverse affect in terms of the objectives of that policy. In terms of transport policies, the proposal will add even more pressure to the existing rural road structure, with vehicle transporters and other heavy goods vehicles using the roads, thereby increasing the noise and vibration to properties along the B2116 Henfield Road. Furthermore, the proposal is in clear breach of Albourne's Neighbourhood Plan policy, ALC1 Conserving and enhancing the character of the area, and is outside the objectives of policy ALE1. In summary, the proposal is completely unsuitable and inappropriate for a rural, countryside setting. By way of comment on the background, we understand that the previous permission for the trailer training was only granted because it was very small in scale (i.e. up to 10 vehicles) and had some connection with the equestrian centre, since it was primarily aimed at training for drivers of horse trailers. This proposal is for a fivefold increase in vehicle</p>
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		storage. The Parish Council has previously observed 40/50 vehicles parked on the site. We are also aware of people waiting around the Village whilst their vehicles are serviced on this site. There does not appear to be any mention of this additional, unauthorised activity in the application. The application should be refused. *
AE/DM/23/1029 - North Park Farm, Church Lane	Proposed engineering operations to infill slurry and dirty water lagoons and revert land to agricultural grassland. This is an application to establish whether the development is lawful. This will be a legal decision where the planning merits of the proposed use cannot be taken into account.	Albourne Parish Council is not aware of any legal obstacles to the proposal, and would not in any event wish to raise any objections to the application.

** Note: In view of the fact that the deadline for the response is prior to the date of the meeting, this application was been dealt with under the delegated authority provisions of Standing Orders.*

11.2 Cllr JD asked whether the meeting with Richard Speller's (WSCC) replacement in order to discuss all outstanding highway and traffic issues (including the state of the current Traffic Regulation Order application) had been arranged. The Clerk said that it hadn't yet, and would refer the matter again to Cllr Joy Dennis (WSCC). JD mentioned that Cllr Spencer is leading on the Speed-watch programme, and now that there are sufficient volunteers, training dates with the Community Police Officer are being arranged. Finally, he confirmed that the batteries (which last about 3 years) for the Speed Indication Device need replacing, and two quotes have been obtained. The lowest price at £126 is to procure them on the internet, and Cllr JD proposed, and Cllr JP seconded that the Parish Council accept the quote. On that basis the Council duly **RESOLVED** to agree the recommendation.

11.3. On planning enforcement, the issues at the Equestrian Centre have now been superseded by the planning application, and the outcome is awaited. The progress of the review of the District Plan may now depend on further Government policy announcements, and also the new political structure of the District Council following the elections on the 4th May 2023.

12. (2022/054) – Finance report and matters.

11.1 The financial summary and the Bank reconciliation for the month, were received, noted, and approved. It was noted that the first half of the annual precept for 2023/24 in the sum of £7,511 has been received from MSDC, and should be on the next Bank Statement. It was

also noted that following issue of the invoices, four of the six allotment fee payments for 2022/23 had already been made.

11.2 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 (April)	West Sussex County Council
£34-39	Equipment for the PC's laptop computer	Jerry Butler (reimbursement)
£20-00	Grass cutting in Millennium Garden x 1	Brian Truran
£240-87	Annual subscription to WSALC and NALC 2023/4	West Sussex ALC Limited
£49-50	Street light repair - Column M Church Lane	Streetlights
£217-33	Payment 1 of 2 – annual street lighting maintenance contract	Streetlights
£945-42	Annual Parish Council Insurance cover - premium	Arthur J Gallagher & Co

11.3 On the Parish Council's annual insurance arrangements for 2023/24 it was **RESOLVED** (with Cllr JD proposing and Cllr SS seconding) to accept the recommendation from the broker, Arthur J Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited, to accept the quote from Hiscox Insurance at the annual premium sum of £945-42, including IP tax and all fees. The Clerk will therefore arrange with the broker to put the Parish Council on cover as from the renewal date of 6rd June 2023 for the year ahead accordingly.

13. (2020/055) – Current issues. (i) Cllr JP mentioned the ongoing issue of fly-tipping. She reported that the items dumped on the bend on the B2116 had mainly been removed, but there was still some rubbish dumped on the B2118 just below the traffic lights on the east side of the road. These matters were first reported back in February. The Clerk will chase this up with MSDC, and if necessary raise the matter with Cllr Geoff Zeidler, (ii) on the gap in the hedge at Hunters Mead, Adie Rowe has been approached for a quote to plug the gap, and this is awaited. The spring clear up at the Millennium Garden is also expected soon, (iii) on the basketball net fittings in the Recreation Ground, it was noted that the plastic clips are prone to snapping with use, and a better solution is required. The Clerk will raise this with MSDC Parks Department.

14. (2020/056) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters. Cllr JP had raised the issues stated above. Cllr SS reported that the post to the shutting gate to Barns Close from the Recreation Ground has rotted away and needs replacing. The Clerk will raise this with MSDC as it is believed to be their responsibility. Cllr DS confirmed that the problem of the gap in the new fence alongside the footpath at the Village Hall has been rectified by WSCC.

The meeting closed at 7.40 p.m.

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

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 6th June 2023 @ 7.00 p.m.