

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2013]

Minutes of the meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 3rd December 2013, at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllr Meg Price, Chairman (MP)
Cllr Graham Stafford, Vice Chairman (GS)
Cllr Mick Gratton (MG)
Cllr John Gooch (JG)
Cllr Elaine Makey (EM)
Cllr Nikki Ernest (NE)
Cllr Barry Compton (BC)

In attendance: Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk) and 7 members of the public.

- 1. (2013/172) – Chairman formally opens meeting and receives any apologies for absence.** Apologies were received from Councillor Peter Griffiths (WSCC). Jim Couling (Bartletts) was also unable to attend for item 6.
- 2. (2013/173) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** The issue of the responsibility for street lights was raised, and the matter clarified. This was a split responsibility between WSCC, and the Parish Council depending on ownership. An issue relating to the publication of the Agendas was raised, and the matter clarified. It was confirmed that the Agendas were on the notice-board and on the website at least 3 working days before the meeting.

David Heron from Vortal Properties Limited gave a further presentation on the proposals for the former Hazeldens nursery site. A copy of his presentation is available on request, but he expressed his disappointment that the Parish Council had indicated that it was too premature to engage with the Company at this point. Cllr MG explained the criteria for the selection of sites under the neighbourhood planning process, and why this site had been rejected. His comments were supported by all Cllrs.

- 3. (2013/174) – Declarations of interest.** BC declared a substantial, pecuniary interest in item 13 on the Agenda (Operation Watershed - specific) as he was the owner of the property involved. Otherwise, there were none.

4. **(2013/175) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th November 2013 (as amended in correspondence) were approved and signed, as a true record, by the Chairman. Updates: There were none that would not be coming up on the Agenda.

5. **(2013/176) – Speed Watch.** Jim Stobart, Road Safety /ASD Co-ordinator, Road Policy Unit, Sussex Police, gave a presentation on operation Crackdown. He encouraged the Council to use the new website, and the reporting form for careless and inconsiderate driving, abandoned vehicles, and anti-social driving. **A link to the website should be put on the Council's website.** It was also agreed to consider at the January meeting, inviting the local police officer to a future meeting to discuss reviving the local Speed Watch monitoring process.

6. **(2013/177) – Millennium Garden.** This item was deferred in view of the absence of John Couling from Bartletts (Tree Surgeons).

7. **(2013/178) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Peter Griffiths and MSDC Councillor Sue Seward.** No reports were received, as neither Councillor was present on this occasion. The Clerk had not received any response to the email to Councillor Sue Seward regarding attendance at PC meetings, and was asked to pursue the matter further.

Action:	Clerk
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8. **(2013/179) – Operation Watershed (General issues).** The Parish Council needed to decide on its procurement strategy for the drainage works in the Parish. However, it was felt that more information was needed before firm action could be taken. Cllr GS agreed to obtain a copy of what Balfour Beatty are doing for the money. It was noted that Fulking PC had used a different contractor. It may be that the PC could tap into WSCC's approved list. **It was resolved to obtain a quote from Balfour Beatty and two other contractors.** Cllr GS agreed to provide details of other possible contractors to the Clerk.

Action:	Cllr GS/Clerk
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9. **(2013/180) – Project Updates.** On the clapperboards, the work was still projected for the second weekend in December. On the notice-boards, the replacement had been collected for the refurbishment work, though there was still quite a bit of work to do on it. It was confirmed that the Parish Council had agreed that the dilapidated board outside Western Cottages could be taken down and removed. On the High Cross finger-post the position, as previously reported by the Clerk, was noted. On the footpath and diversion issue, the Clerk had not

received any substantive response from WSCC (other than acknowledgements and case reference numbers) and so would continue to chase the matters up further.

Action:	Clerk
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10. (2013/181) – Winter Maintenance Management Plan 2013/14. Cllr GS introduced this item. It needs to be established which roads Mark Lee will grit and/or clear, and exactly what he had agreed to do. The public liability issue in terms of insurance needs to be checked. The Clerk confirmed that he had written to the Clerk at Poynings PC, but Cllr GS clarified that Mark was acting in a private capacity as a local farmer, not as Chairman of Poynings PC. The Clerk needs to check with the Clerk at Twineham PC (Frances Jones) as to the gritting status of Twineham Lane. It was noted that the Gospel Hall would be able to help with some local issues if required. Cllr GS confirmed that the 6 winter kits had been received from MSDC. **It was resolved that 1 should be located in the Church (Cllr JG dissenting), 2 in the Village Hall, 1 in the School (if the School would like to have one), and the remainder to be held by Cllr GS.** The insurance advice from AON needs to be placed with the Plan. The Clerk was asked to write to SSALC regarding the insurance position, and the possible liability issues of using local volunteers for snow/ice clearance.

Action:	The Clerk/GS
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11. (2013/182) – Planning matters).

11.1 One planning application was considered, and the plans discussed. It was **resolved to comment to MSDC by the deadline date as follows:-**

APPLICATION/PROPERTY	PROPOSAL	AGREED RESPONSE
AE/13/03904/FUL – Land adjacent to Magnolia House, Henfield Road	Amendments to approved Plan 12/01896/FUL – Residential development of four dwellings	Given the existing approval, and having considered the proposed changes, APC has no further comment other than to recommend that the previously applied approval conditions be applied to this application, with the important addition of a condition relating to the window

		treatment (fixed and obscured) on the west side of the bungalow to protect the amenities of 7 Holders
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11.2 Cllr MG reported on recent planning decisions (see also communications from the Clerk). There was concern about a particular planning matter (the approved residential development at Softech House) and compliance with some of the pre-commencement conditions. Councillor MG will draft some wording, so that the Clerk can take the matter up with MSDC. The Neighbourhood Plan scoping report for the Sustainability appraisal has been drafted, and circulated by MG. The Clerk will put this on the website. It will come back to the January meeting for approval of the next stages. It was reported that the South Downs National Park has also objected to the recent wind turbine planning application.

11.3 Cllr NE reported on the recent meetings regarding the new market town proposal by Mayfields. The discussions had centred on what the Town and Parish Councils could actually do. It had also discussed the raising of funds issue. Stephen Hoyles (the Clerk at Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common) had circulated some advice, which indicated that for those Councils that could exercise it the new general power of competence could be used. It was noted that Cllr NE and Anthony Watts-Williams from LAMBS had met with the Head of Economic Promotion and Planning at MSDC (Claire Tester). She is happy to include a representative in the next set of District Plan inspection meetings, however she requested a single representative, rather than one from LAMBS and a second to represent the Parish Councils in the inter Parish meeting group. Given the delay in the examination process it was agreed that this would be discussed with Claire Tester when the revised examination dates are known. Cllr NE also referred to the House of Commons localism debate instigated by the two local MPs (Nicholas Soames and Nick Herbert) on the issue, and confirmed that she has a note of the debate if anyone would like to have a copy.

It was resolved that the Parish Council should continue its involvement with the inter Parishes Group in order to continue to voice its concerns over the new market town proposal; that representation should be through Cllr NE; that the Council should not contribute financially to any request for funding, but that it would urge people as individuals, to contribute to the LAMBS fighting fund if they wished to do so.

The Clerk was asked to put the LAMBS website link on the Council's website.

12. (2013/183) Property Issues. On the Rectory issue, Councillor MG will help Peter Griffiths draft a letter to the Land Registry in order to protect the rights of other

possible ownership claims. The other issues set out on the Agenda were still ongoing.

Action:	MG/Clerk
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13. (2013/184) – Finance report.

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

13.2 Invoices were presented for payment, and it **was resolved to agree and to make the following payments:-**

AMOUNT	PROCUREMENT	PAYEE
£3,756-64	Operation Watershed compensation monies due to Barry Compton from WSCC	Barry Compton
£42-12	Second half year payment for payroll administration 2013/14	WSCC
£321-55	Clerk's salary plus on costs (October 2013)	WSCC

(Note: the resolution on the first payment was the subject of a separate debate (see minute 2013/186 below, and a vote.)

13.3 **It was resolved to make a donation of £400 as a contribution towards the maintenance of St Bartholomew's Churchyard in accordance with the agreed budget.**

13.4 Having regard to the internal audit advice, **it was resolved to amend the Annual Return in accordance with the requirement/recommendation of the external auditor to amend the position of the status of the trust funds responsibility, and to authorise the Chairman to initial the amendment accordingly (which was duly done after the meeting).**

14. (2013/185) - Operation Watershed (specific). The written advice of the internal auditor was noted. This was to make the payment, provided that the Council's concerns and discussions were carefully noted and/or minuted. Councillors re-iterated their unease and discontent with how the matter had been handled by WSCC, and the apparent irregularity of the proceedings. However, after detailed discussion, **it was resolved to authorise the appropriate payment to Barry Compton subject to (i) the payment from WSCC to APC and to Barry Compton from APC be shown separately in the accounts as extraordinary items, (ii) that the matter should be**

taken up further with senior officers at WSCC (copy to Cllr Peter Griffiths), (iii) the issue be further pursued with SSALC, and (iv) OW monies should be appropriately ring-fenced so as to be seen outside the mainstream budgetary position.

The above resolution was proposed by Cllr MP, and seconded by Cllr GS. The motion was won on a show of hands by 5 votes in favour, with 1 abstention (Cllr EM).

(Note: In accordance with his declaration of interest above, Cllr BC left the room for the duration of the item and so took no part in the proceedings).

Action:	Clerk
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15. (2013/186) - Village Hall. The asbestos report had been done. The repair to the drain had been attended to. The floor was due to be done later in the month. Cllr GS had replaced the outside lights. On the loft insulation, a grant of £500 had been achieved, and it was decided that the contract would be placed with RSI. Clearance of the squirrels' nests in the roof cavity still needs to be done. The cavity wall work would be deferred. The internal lighting issue is being progressed. These matters would be the subject of further reports at the Village Hall Management Committee meeting in January. It was also noted that the name of the Bank account had been successfully changed in order to help the funding process.

16. (2013/187) – Model Standing Orders. **It was resolved to agree and to adopt the 2013 model NALC standing Orders, subject to the amendments made to the version as circulated by the Clerk prior to the meeting, and to the inclusion of a general provision relating to new Councillors' training.** The Clerk would finalise accordingly, and provide paper copies to all Cllrs at the next meeting.

Action:	Clerk
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17. (2013/188) – Clerk's report. There was nothing further to report on this occasion.

18. (2013/189) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters. Cllr GS is still dealing with the anti social behaviour issue with the police. Cllr EM mentioned the issue of the bins not being emptied at Barleycroft, and questioned why this keeps occurring. The previous issue of the bin collection vehicles being too big to access the area was referred to. Cllr EM will monitor the situation, and if happens again will bring to the PC's attention, so the matter can be taken up officially with MSDC. Cllr MG reported that the Village Show was in profit from 2013, and that no sponsorship for next year's Show would be required. Cllr MP wondered whether a leaflet drop requesting winter maintenance volunteers would be appropriate, but it was felt that

this needed to be deferred, pending the receipt of the further information requested above.

The meeting closed at 9.50 p.m.

SIGNED.....Meg Price/Graham Stafford
Chairman/Vice Chairman

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 7th JANUARY 2014 @ 7.00 p.m.