

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2014]

Minutes of the meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 2nd September 2014, at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllr Meg Price (MP) - Chairman
Cllr Graham Stafford (GS) – Vice Chairman
Cllr Mick Gratton (MG)
Cllr Nikki Ernest (NE)
Cllr Barry Compton (BC)
Cllr Heather Jordan (HJ)

In attendance: Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk), and 6 members of the public.

- 1. (2014/306) – Chairman opens meeting and receives any apologies for absence.** No apologies for absence had been received.
- 2. (2014/307) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public.** There were none at this stage of the meeting.
- 3. (2014/308) – Declarations of interest.** MP declared a personal interest in the planning application at 8.1 below, for Spring Cottage, Church Lane, as the applicant is an immediate neighbour.
- 4. (2014/309) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 1st and 15th July 2014 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. (2014/310) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Peter Griffiths, and MSDC Councillors Gordon Marples and/or Sue Seward.** As neither Councillor was present at the meeting, no reports were given.
- 6. (2014/311) – Vacancy on Council.** It was noted that Councillor Elaine Makey had resigned from the Parish Council on 28th August due to pressure of other commitments. MSDC had been informed under the required legal procedure. If no election is called within the statutory timeframe, the Parish Council will seek to make an appointment by co-option. Elaine Makey (who was present at the

meeting) was formally thanked for all her work for the Parish Council since she became a Parish Councillor.

7. (2014/312) – Travellers incursion onto Recreation Ground on 8th August.

The Parish Council had dealt with a great number of telephone calls. There had been a good response by MSDC and the police, and the legal process had worked well, and at good speed. It was noted that the steel posts protecting the entrance gate had been installed. There was concern about 4 other possible entrance points. A request for a lockable cross-bar had also been made, but MSDC had yet to respond. MG will be collecting a set of keys for the posts. There was a discussion on the best way of securing the site, and there would need to be ongoing liaison with MSDC. GS and MG were particularly thanked for their efforts on that day.

8. (2014/313) – Planning matters.

8.1 Three planning applications were considered, and the plans and relevant policies discussed. It was therefore **resolved to comment to MSDC as follows:-**

APPLICATION/PROPERTY	PROPOSAL	AGREED RESPONSE
AE/14/02737/TCA – Spring Cottage, Church Lane	T1, T2 and T3 – Horse Chestnuts - fell	Decision made already by MSDC – no objections (MSDC misread request for extension).
AE/14/02859/PDADW – The Oaks, Henfield Road	Application for determination as to whether prior approval is required for change of uses of 2 agricultural buildings to become 2 residential units.	Albourne Parish Council believes that the holding was not in sole agricultural use on 20 th March 2013. However, the history of the site is not entirely clear, and it is submitted that before the application is determined, the applicant should submit all appropriate evidence to the Planning Authority in order for it to be satisfied on this point.
AE/14/02945/FUL – Gessings, Henfield Road	First floor extension. Conversion of bungalow to house. Existing footprint to remain the	Albourne Parish Council raises no objections in respect of this application, subject to conditions on

	same.	surface water drainage, use of obscured glass in 1 st floor west facing windows, and high quality materials to be used.
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As regards the second application above, there was a good deal of discussion and debate about whether or not the holding was in sole agricultural use on the date prescribed by the Order. From local knowledge and a history of the site, a number of Councillors believed that the property had been used for commercial purposes. The applicant denied this, and reiterated that the buildings had been in agricultural use. However, it was clarified that the Order required the whole of the holding, not just the relevant buildings, to have been in agricultural use.

8.2 On the Neighbourhood Plan, MSDC has advised that because of a lack of some clarity over maps, and some issues over the statutory consultation bodies, the Regulation 14 consultation needs to be repeated. One advantage is that it will allow some changes to be made to the Plan. The plans have been re-done, and MG is more or less ready to go. It was noted that this will need new flyers, publicity, and 2 more open sessions in the Hall.

8.3 On the Albourne Equestrian Centre, Cllr Peter Griffiths needs to comment on the BSF application. MG will investigate the planning history, with reference to the caravans on site. It needs a scrutiny of activities, and the Clerk was asked to write to the Planning enforcement Officer at MSDC.

8.4 On Black Barn, MG has met with the owner of the property and discussed the options going forward. It was too late to put the site forward in the NP, but on the principles based assessment, it would have been ruled out anyway. The owner may well put in planning applications, and APC would have to deal with them in the normal way.

8.5 On Downsview Cottages, MG reported that the Clerk had received a response from MSDC, which indicated that the Parish Council would not be involved, as the naming procedure applied only to roads, not to buildings.

8.6 On the recent Old Rectory planning decision (consent), MG will be taking up the issues with the Head of Planning at MSDC in order to understand why the points APC made seem to have been ignored. It was agreed that MG and the Clerk would compose a suitable response on behalf of the Council.

8.7 The Clerk reported on a number of planning enforcement matters (i) Breechlands – planning application made, (ii) the Mill – planning application invited in order to

regularise the breach, (ii) boundary treatment at Softech House – documents promised. All these matters are referred to in previous minutes. MG will assist the Clerk with the details, which MSDC has requested regarding Wick Farm (caravans).

Action:	Cllr MG/Clerk
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9. (2014/314) – Finance report.

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

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

AMOUNT	PROCUREMENT	PAYEE
£44-00	Neighbourhood Plan – printing	Action Press
£59-39	Reimbursement of miscellaneous costs, e.g. postage	Graham Stafford
£673-68	Clerk’s salary and on costs (July, August)	WSSC
£18-99	Reimbursement of paper and ink relating to NP	Mick Gratton
£72-00	Grass cutting over summer x 2	Barcombe Landscapes Limited

(The payment of two urgent invoices in July, one for Heritage Finger-posts for £925, and the other for MTS Cleansing Services Ltd for £2,562 (from the Operation Watershed grant) as approved in correspondence was formally noted.)

10. (2012/315) – Licensing of the Village Hall – possible “pub” night. The Clerk reported that a Premises License would be needed in the name of the PC, and there would have to be a designated premises supervisor. The cost would depend on the hours of opening. MP explained that the idea was to have such an occasion each Friday night, as a means of bringing the community together. Further feasibility work would be needed and no decision could be taken at this meeting. It was agreed that GS would try and gauge opinion in the Village, and canvass views.

Action:	Cllr GS
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11. (2014/316) – Recreation Ground at High Cross. The Clerk reminded the Council about the email he had received from MSDC. It was believed that the ground was rented by Mr Debenham at a peppercorn rent. The land was principally for the former Council cottages, but was available to others as well. Ideally, APC would like to

continue with the arrangement, and the annual cost of some £200 was not considered excessive. MG will try and locate a copy of the Agreement, and the Clerk will if necessary respond to MSDC accordingly.

12. (2014/317) – Surfacing on A23. Cllr NE referred to the disappointing response received from the Highways Agency dated 29th July, which she had circulated to the Council. It was noted that MSDC Environmental Health Department may be able to help with a noise nuisance survey along the road. If so, this would need to be done in close consultation with the Parish Councils affected, as to the timing and prevailing weather conditions. NE would let the Clerk have a list of those PCs who wanted to support APC. The Clerk would write to MSDC in order to see what help might be available.

Action:	Cllr NE/Clerk
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13. (2014/318) – Operation Watershed. It was reported that work now needs to be done to address the problems revealed by the survey work carried out by MTS Cleansing. A plan showing where ditching work needed to be done in Church Lane was circulated. Some of the work is being paid for directly by WSCC, but the balance of the grant needs to go towards the rest. Cllr BC has sought 3 quotes, but only one has been received within a reasonable time, from Edburtons. However, the tender needs amending to take out the ditching route that goes over private land. There was a discussion as to whether the PC should now contract with Edburtons on this basis. Whilst BC was reluctant to do so, given the lack of apparent interest on the part of the other contractors approached, the Parish Council **resolved to try and obtain the 3 quotes asked for, even if this meant going wider.** If by the end of September, no responses had been received, then the PC would act on that basis. It was therefore agreed that the matter be deferred until the 7th October meeting. It was also agreed that the priority was to spend money on Parish problems, rather than private landowners, although any balance could be used for private landowners on a one off basis, and provided it was clear that such owners were then entirely responsible for any flooding issues thereafter. GS said that it may be appropriate to apply for a grant from the second tranche of OW monies that WSCC is making available.

Action:	Cllrs GS/BC
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14. (2014/319) – Risk Assessment. After a brief discussion, **it was formally resolved that the revised Risk Assessment document, as reviewed by Councillors, and circulated by the Clerk, be formally approved and adopted.**

15. (2014/320) – Village Hall Management Committee representation and sole Trusteeship of the Village Hall. In the light of Elaine Makey's wish to remain on the

Village Hall Management Trust Committee, the Council formally co-opted her onto the Committee, as a non-Councillor member. It was noted that it was open to the next meeting of that Committee, to formally elect Elaine Makey back to the Chair. Although a number of views had been received, principally from the Clerk and Action in Rural Sussex, it was agreed to defer the Sole Trusteeship matter to a future meeting, although it was noted that the VAT re-claim issue by the Parish Council is the main issue regarding the structure of the Trust.

16. (2014/321) – Project and other updates. It was confirmed that the replacement clapperboard at Church Lane has at long last been completed. However, the fencing still needs to be done, and Cllr MP is chasing this up with WSCC Highways. MG is still waiting for the quote for the maintenance work at the Millennium Garden. HJ mentioned about the tree work in the Garden, and it was noted that John Couling had said that he would be doing this at no cost to the Council, as part of a local project (see previous minutes). MG had the issue of the minor damage to the rail in the car park in hand.

Action:	Cllrs MP/MG
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17. (2014/322) – Police engagement with the Parish. Cllr GS confirmed that he had had a telephone call from Sussex Police about the effectiveness of local policing in Albourne. He had responded that this had been quite poor over recent years, and local PCSOs were rarely in evidence. It was noted that there was still no response on attendance at a Council meeting to take forward Operation Speed-watch, and that speeding, and use of the roads by an ever increasing number of heavy lorries, was a major issue. If it would help, members of the Council would be prepared to meet the PCSO outside of the scheduled Parish Council meeting times in order to discuss all these issues. The Clerk was asked to try and take this forward.

Action:	Clerk
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18. (2014/323) – Clerk’s report. The Clerk reported the correspondence he had had with a local person (not Albourne) about the Parish Council recognising the achievements of James Starley, who had lived in the Village, and who had invented the differential bicycle gear. The PC would continue to look into this, but MG noted that there is in fact a plaque at the address where the inventor had lived, in his memory. The Clerk also referred to the dog waste bin correspondence he was having with Cllr Sue Seward at MSDC. It was noted that there was only one such bin in Albourne at the Recreation Ground. The Clerk would continue his efforts, at the request of a number of residents, to try and obtain a few more, although it was noted that the collection of the waste was the main issue in terms of cost.

19. (2014/324) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters. GS mentioned another dog attack on livestock. NE asked about planning policy on “garden creep”. People seemed to be utilising agricultural land for domestic activities without consent. The Clerk was particularly asked to pursue the issue at a property in Henfield Road (swimming pool). The next inter Parishes meeting on “Mayfields” was on 30/09/14. Cowfold is now on board. It was reported that the Truslers Hill Lane grass triangle is being eroded, and it needs to be kerbed. Need to raise the issue with WSCC Highways. MP raised the issue of the inappropriate road signs outside the Village, which had been an ongoing issue. She agreed to take this up with WSCC Highways. She mentioned the SDNPA meeting on 23/09/14, and MG said that he hoped to attend. It was noted again with some concern, that there was no MSDC Councillor representation at the meeting, although the problems were fully understood. HJ said that the survey for the Oak at the end of Church Lane had been done. A TPO was not going to be appropriate, but it was not a danger, and there is no serious damage to the tree. The PC needs to be vigilant however, as there is still a possibility that it could be felled. MG reminded everyone about the Village Show on 6th September.

A few further issues were raised regarding the need to trim back footpath vegetation at two sites: (i) B2118, west side footpath near Butts Cottages and Softech House, and (ii) between Softech House and the bus shelter. It was also reported that when the verge grass cutting was done, the risings were not being collected and taken away, so they were spread all over the paths/pavements. The Clerk will pursue these issues with WSCC and MSDC respectively. MG will report the state of the road surface at Barleycroft. Roadside hedge cutting is not being done properly, and is leaving a big mess – for example only one side is being done.

The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.

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

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