

ITCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Monday 24th July 2023 in the David Francis Room of the Village Hall

Present: Cllr Penny Simpson – Chairman
Cllr James Sheppard – Vice Chairman
Cllr Richard French
Cllr Brian O'Connor
Cllr Ross Dye
The Clerk Jan Critchley
County Cllr Amanda Jupp
District Cllr Tricia Youtan
Alex Nicholson, Chairman of the Governors, Barns Green Primary School
Alan Peers- member of the public

98 Co-option and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Ross Dye was Co-opted onto the Parish Council and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

99 Apologies for Absence were received from Cllr Alan Strudley, Cllr Sarah Peay.

The Chairman announced that it is with regret that she is accepting Cllr Sanjeev Joshi's resignation from the Council due to ill health.

100 Declarations of Interest - Members are reminded to make any declaration of personal and/or prejudicial Interest that they may have in relation to items on the agenda. No declarations were given.

101 Minutes of the last Meeting to be approved

The Minutes of the last meeting on 26th June 2023 had been circulated ahead of the meeting. The Minutes were accepted and signed by the Chairman.

102 To consider any matters arising from the last Meeting that cannot wait until the next meeting.

Minute 82:1 Flooding under the Railway Bridge. The Clerk reported that she has chased up Network Rail as it has now been two months since the Parish Council reported about the damaged guttering under the railway bridge that needs repairing.

Action

Minute: 83 – Village Hall Roof. At the last meeting the Parish Council pledged to give the Village Hall Committee £43,500 towards the cost of refurbishing the whole village hall roof. The Clerk that she has received a formal letter from Paul Harding, Chairman of Barn Green Village Hall stating "Stage 1, expected on or about 28th July is after the delivery of materials and erection of access scaffold. The Village Hall will make the payment without the need of a contribution from Itchingfield Parish Council. Stage 2, expected on or around 8th August is when the roof is battened and felted. This payment to the contractor will be made up of £2,580 from the Village Hall and £14,340 from Itchingfield Parish Council. Stage 3, expected on or around 25th August is when the works are completed. The payment to the contractor is £22,560 and the Village Hall requires Itchingfield Parish Council to provide this full amount". Therefore, a cheque for £36,900 will be drawn later this evening. The remaining amount of £6,600 to be called upon if necessary to pay for any contingencies.

Action

103 Open Session for Members of the Public – The Chairman said that she had invited Alex Nicholson, Chairman of the Governors of Barns Green Primary School, to attend the meeting this evening to update the Cllrs regarding the contribution the Parish Council is going to give to the school to celebrate the King's Coronation. Alex said that he had received a plan for the proposed 'Enchanted Coronation Garden' which included a 'Stone Circle' and Garden Furniture. However, the details of the quote appeared to be rather vague so it was proposed by Cllr Brian O'Connor that the Parish Council agree in principle to a grant of £2,000 providing a detailed specification and a financial statement is submitted. Seconded by Cllr Richard French and agreed unanimously. County Cllr Amanda Jupp suggested that it would be a good idea to produce a site plan to show where the 'Garden' will be sited and Amanda also suggested that the school look into contacting the WSCC regarding grants for trees and scrubs.

Alan Peers said that he was at the meeting as a follow-up to the Annual Village Meeting when a question was raised from the floor about forming a liaison resident group like the one which was formed when the Ashmiles development was built. The Chairman said that this subject will be discussed under Any Other Business.

District Cllr Tricia Youtan arrived at 8pm.

Planning Applications – Circulated to all Cllrs ahead of the meeting.

1. New Applications

DC/23/1298 - Mr and Mrs J Chadwick. Half Acre Cottage, Bashurst Hill, Itchingfield - Demolition of existing dwelling. Construction of replacement dwelling with detached garage, driveway and altered access.

Itchingfield Parish Council recommends this planning application for approval.

DC/19/1897 - Site address; Wellcross Farm , Five Oaks Road, Slinfold, West Sussex -Deed of Variation to modify planning obligation DC/19/1897. Removal of provisions requiring implementation of pedestrian access across river. To provide contributions (£50,000) for relevant improvements to bridleway 1630 in lieu of a bridge crossing the River Arun which parties have agreed is not feasible.

Itchingfield Parish Council has no comments.

DC/23/1153 -Mr Gates, Littlefold, Bashurst Hill, Itchingfield - Construction of an earth bund running 149 metres parallel to the A264 inside of the field allowing a gap for the footpath and then continuing to the corner of the field and running 31 metres across towards Bashurst Hill Road.

Itchingfield Parish Council is unable to make a decision as there is insufficient information given on this planning application.

DC/23/1365. Validated 13/07/2023. Mrs Dawn Martin. Barns Green Primary School, The Hordens, Barns Green - Prior approval for the installation of roof mounted solar PV.

Itchingfield Parish Council recommends this planning application for approval.

DC/23/1235 - Land to the north of Hilltop Country Park, Emms Lane, Brooks Green - Change of use of the land from agricultural to the use as a holiday caravan park for 47 static caravans for holiday use from 1st February to 5th January.

Itchingfield Parish Council objects to this creeping development citing the following reasons: -

1. The development is on the border with Itchingfield Parish Council.
2. It is contrary to the Itchingfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan policy regarding encroachment on strategic gaps and poor overall design.
3. It is overdevelopment in an essentially semi- rural area.
4. Poor vehicular access.
5. There are objections from HDC Principal Planning Officer and HDC Environment Health and Licensing, regarding water neutrality.
6. It will further overload the nearby sewage processing plant which currently serves all the BUAB of Barns Green and properties in the Emms Lane, Trout Lane and Cross Lane areas.
7. *The Applicant owns adjoining land which is already occupied by these "holiday" structures and further land now acquired extends up to Cross Lane (which has an access into Cross Lane, Barns Green) giving the likelihood of further applications within Itchingfield Parish.*

Therefore, Itchingfield Parish Council strongly objects to this planning application and recommends it for refusal.

EN/23/0328 – Compliance Case – Marlands Lodge, Plumtree Cross Lane, Itchingfield – Alleged pre-Commencement Condition 3 attached to DC/21/0918 relating to garage foundation design has not been discharged.

Cllr Brian O'Connor said that he would report back on this compliance case once he has looked at it.

Reports by County and District Councillors

County Cllr Amanda Jupp gave the following report:

Carriageway Patching and Repair – Itchingfield Road, Westons Hill and Fulfords Hill in Itchingfield are due to be closed from 27th July 2023.

New Crossings – Muntham Drive, Sandhills Road, Two Mile Ash Road – Work starts today 24th July until 5th September 2023. It is proposed that there will be a Grand Opening with the children walking down from the car park to school which will coincide with a press release.

Children's Vaccinations - Summer holidays are here so this is a great time to make sure children's vaccinations are up to date and it is never too late to catch up on vaccinations that they have missed. Making sure your child has their vaccinations at the right time, and before they start school, gives them the best protection against unpleasant and often serious diseases. Check the NHS vaccination schedule on our website and if you think your child has missed any of their vaccinations contact your GP practice.

Increase recycling in West Sussex - Last year residents helped to reuse or recycle over 200,000 tonnes of waste, helping us reduce the amount of general waste produced in the whole of the county. We are asking people to continue to help us recycle as much as we can, especially materials such as black plastic pots, tubs and trays, empty aerosols, and other items that can go in special collections at home such as small electricals. In a recent survey 48% of respondents admitted to throwing items in the general waste bin because they were unsure if they could be recycled or not. Recycling should be: Clean - free from food and drink leftovers - a quick rinse will often do. Dry - keep your recycling bin lid shut – soggy paper and cardboard cannot be recycled and can stick to other items or clog up machinery when sorted. Loose – not tied up in plastic bags, as the machinery cannot sort these.

Horsham Fire Station and Training Centre - Our West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service reached a huge milestone

when its new state-of-the-art training centre and fire station in Horsham became operational last week. The multi-million-pound site is the first of its type in the county. Named Platinum House, it replaces the previous fire station in Hurst Road, which was built in 1968. The training centre has been designed to support the County Council's aims to become carbon neutral with features including:

- live fire training facility that emits smoke back into the environment as clean air
- solar panels and electric vehicle charging points
- air source heat pumps that provide heating.

Help to grow your business - Businesses in West Sussex are invited to benefit from new in-person digital growth support that will be touring the county from September. Workshops and mentoring will be provided free to businesses, with the aim of helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to increase their efficiency, reduce costs and win new customers. The Grow Digital West Sussex programme will provide businesses with expert guidance on improving digital capabilities, give people an opportunity to connect with other business owners and enable them to opt in to one-to-one mentoring.

District Cllr Tricia Youtan gave the following report:

1. Tricia reported that Wellcross development has paid £50,000 towards improvement of footpath and bridleway as their plan to construct a footbridge over the river had been vetoed by the Environmental Agency. Tricia said that she felt it a great pity they had not been more proactive in supporting the Parish Council's objections at the Appeal when the Inspector overturned decision to refuse the application. The footpath is property of WSCC and runs through woodland and to turn it into a more accessible path will destroy hard pressed wildlife that lives there.
2. Tricia reported that Liberal Councillors and their leader were now trying to find a way of delivering an acceptable Local Plan which would fit in with their manifesto promises to reduce housing in places where the Neighbourhood Plans did not include them. HDC now has 8 Green Party Councillors who are opposed to green field development which Tricia says she too must object to.

106 Highways, Local Traffic and Roads

Cllr Richard French gave the following report:

1. SIDs - the 28-day statutory site notice period has passed. Richard said that he has not received from James Strachan of WSCC Highways a report of any representations, so James will shortly be sending s11e forms for signatures. Richard will begin commissioning the mounting posts installation and line up revised quotes/leadtime for SIDs unit options now available, with a view to selection and ordering shortly after.
2. Bashurst Hill speed strips - James Strachan recently commented that he is planning to obtain and analyse the measurement data in the next week or two, which would then give us the updated picture on speed, as an input to resubmission for the BH speed limit CHS proposal
3. Pothole roadside marker proposal - having met with James Strachan, Chris Nye and Amanda Jupp to discuss this a few weeks ago, they explained that they had reviewed the proposal, but for a multitude of reasons (safety regulations, statutory, administrative, workload) could not approve it, whether by WSCC personnel or by Parish volunteers. They did however tell me about the 'Right First Time' trial which looks set to become the norm county-wide, and which would then see sawn-repaired potholes becoming the norm, not the exception. This augurs well for much more resilient road repairs.
4. Crash site in the dip/bend on Two Mile Ash - a job to replace the now-missing railings has been scheduled to be completed in August
5. Drains - specifically Two Mile Ash-Trout Lane-Cross Lane-Emms Lane: have followed up with Adam Bazley of WSCC Highways. He has briefed James Strachan on status - plan for JS and RF to have a catchup meeting on Highways topics next week
6. From Village Meeting - i) Big Mag - short piece drafted to summarise VM talking points, and reemphasise the need to report speeding and antisocial driving ii) Community Speed Watch - after a further request for contact on this, Steve Connell of Sussex Safer Roads will contact RF next week to discuss setting up briefing for residents who are potentially interested
7. Southwater Parish Council /Dog Barking Lane bends and speeding - Richard he has contacted Luisa again to nudge for follow up by Southwater Councillor members

107 Finance – All payments for approval since 26th June 2023.

1. There are ten payments to be paid
£22.50 to Barns Green Village Hall in respect of rental for Meeting on 24th July 2023.
£28.50 to EE Home Broadband in respect of the Internet Service for July 2023.
£25.00 to Roy Tingley in respect of the strimming of the verge by the level crossing.
£25.20 to Treetop Design and Print in respect of the A! poster for the Annual Village Meeting.

£647.47 to John Lewis in respect of a computer and hard drive.

£17.81 to Amazon in respect of six hi-visibility jackets.

£100.00 to Pat Cochran in respect of Litter Warden duties for July 2023.

£1,157.25 to the Clerk comprised of £1,082.55 salary for July 2023 and £74.70 expenses.

£36,900.00 to Barns Green Village Hall Committee in respect of a grant towards the village hall roof refurbishment.

£1,058.19 to HMRC in respect of employers and employees tax for April, May and June 2023.

It was proposed by the Chairman to accept and approve the payments, seconded by Cllr Brian O'Connor, agreed unanimously.

108 Correspondence

1. The Clerk said that she has heard from our Litter Warden Pat Cochran, who has been our Litter Warden for over six years and she said that unfortunately she cannot continue due to health issues. However, her husband Pete, who has helped her over the years is willing to continue as our official Litter Warden. This was welcomed by all Cllrs. It was proposed by Cllr James Sheppard that we give Pat a leaving gift voucher of £100 for all her hard work over the years, seconded by Cllr Richard French and agreed unanimously.
2. The Clerk said that she has received a letter from our Internal Auditor Mulberry & Co. stating that they are increasing their hourly rate from £60 to £65 per hour due to the increased costs incurred by the business.

109 Any other Business

Cllr Richard French said that during the Annual Village Meeting, Paul Allen raised the idea of having a liaison group to follow the build of the Sumners Pond Development. Cllr Richard French then handed out a document which explained how Cllr Richard French proposed this group would work. The Chairman said that this is assuming that the Parish Council agree to a liaison group and that matter should be decided before the document could be discussed. The Chairman asked why a separate group is needed and not the Parish Council? Cllr James Sheppard asked what is the purpose of the group and who does the group report to? Cllr Richard French said that the group would generate minutes which the Parish Council would receive. County Cllr Amanda Jupp said that a liaison group was formed with the Ashmiles development and it worked very well. The Chairman said that the situation was different as it was more a financial thing to get the school etc. County Cllr Amanda Jupp disagreed and said the group worked with the developer so that the community got what it wanted. The Chairman agreed, yes it got a school and houses and a substantial amount of money. The Chairman said that she wanted to know what this group will do that the Parish Council can't do? Cllr Richard French said that it will give direct participation from parishioners. The group will not just be people who are adjacent to the development, but people from other parts of the village. The Chairman said that she didn't wish the Parish Council to be undermined by another group and didn't think it was necessary. The Chairman said that she has already explained this to Cllr Richard French in a previous conversation. The Chairman said that it is the Parish Council's responsibility to be the formal conduit and she said that she feels as Chairman that it would be remiss of the Parish Council to delegate to another group. Why would we delegate what is our job to do? Cllr James Sheppard asked why, if members of the group feel so strongly, they didn't put themselves forward as Parish Councillors. The Chairman said that we currently have a couple of Casual Vacancies on the Parish Council. The Chairman said that she understands that there are a group of people that live very near the site that are quite concerned, probably more concerned than people that live further away. The Chairman said that there is nothing to stop these people forming their own group, they could go direct to the developer and not involve the Parish Council. The Parish Council will continue to be in contact with the developer. Alan Peers attended as a member of the public and raised that question of about controlling the traffic when there are queues of HGV's waiting to go into the site. It seemed the most urgent matter was to get a Traffic Management Plan approved. Amanda said that she has worked in the past in property and with developers and the idea is to work with developers, get them on your side to get what is best for the community. She said her worry was that once there was a Traffic Management plan in place, it will only work if monitored. District Cllr Tricia Youtan said she didn't think a liaison group was necessary because this is what a Parish Council is for. This is a very small active village and if residents have got concerns, they will raise it with the Parish Council, but it is a good idea for a Site Manager to attend Parish Council meetings. The Chairman thought that was a good idea too. Cllr Richard French said that if the Chairman was adamant about the Parish Council having responsibility at the exclusion of the non-council parishioners, would six Cllrs be willing to meet with the developer once a month as well as Parish Council duties. The Chairman suggested inviting Lee Goossens to our meetings. District Cllr Tricia Youtan said the proposed group will undermine the Parish Council. The Chairman said that she had asked at the Annual Village Meeting whether residents didn't trust the Parish Council to look after the parish with regard to this development. County Cllr Amanda Jupp said that there would be better communication if a group met less formally than attending a Parish Council meeting. The group would ensure that the developer takes into account what the community wants. The Chairman said that this Parish Council is perfectly capable of working with the developer. County Cllr Amanda Jupp said that the Parish Council has the power to make a sub-committee. County Cllr Amanda Jupp said that there is a Traffic Management

Plan that should be put in place. This development is going to have an impact on most roads in and out of the village. The main thing is to keep the developer aware of this impact. The Chairman said the Parish Council can do this. The Chairman said that this is all dependent on what the developer is prepared to do and I understand at the moment that they are only prepared to talk to the Parish Council. The Chairman said that the Parish Council has more power to control traffic issues than a private group. Cllr Brian O'Connor said that although the Parish Council only meets once a month for a meeting, it still functions throughout the month so if there are interested parties all they have to do is contact the Cllrs and the Cllrs will take whatever measures are needed to sort things out. Alan Peers said that we have to see the Traffic Management Plan. County Cllr Amanda Jupp said to bear in mind that not all Traffic Management Plans go according to plan so you have to keep a close eye on this especially with the number of vehicles coming and going and the way in which some HGV's are driven. The Chairman said that the whole of this discussion may well be academic and she read out a letter from Lee Goossens to Paul Allen which she had been copied into:

"We feel the most effective way to maintain a dialogue on the progressive development at Sumners Ponds is via the Parish Council. We have found this worked very well with both the development at Marlands as well as the promotion of Sumners for development through the Neighbourhood Plan. This would ensure all resident's concerns and views are represented and addressed through the correct and established channels. That said any individual who has a concern is of course able to drop Sigma Homes, Simon Smith or myself (Lee Goossens) an email at any time."

The Chairman concluded the debate by saying that she will make it her job to contact the developers tomorrow morning 25th July 2023 to ask for a Traffic Management Plan and ask for it to be forwarded to WSCC. County Cllr Amanda Jupp will pass it onto the correct person.

Action

The Chairman suggested that the residents form their own group and either contact the Parish Council or the developers directly with any concerns.

Cllr Richard French will also ask if there are any of the residents who would like to come onto the Parish Council.

Action

110 **Date of Next Meeting** - Monday 25th September 2023. There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.40pm.