

ITCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Monday 25th September 2023 in the David Francis Room of the Village Hall

Present: Cllr Penny Simpson – Chairman
Cllr Richard French
Cllr Brian O'Connor
Cllr Ross Dye
Cllr Sarah Peay
Cllr Alan Strudley
The Clerk Jan Critchley
County Cllr Amanda Jupp
District Cllr Tricia Youtan
District Cllr Kasia Greenwood

111 Apologies for Absence were received from Cllr James Sheppard.

112 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.*

The Chairman declared a personal interest for when DC/23/1327 is discussed as the planning application has been submitted in the name of her husband Chris Simpson on behalf of the Barns Green Playing Field and Village Hall Trust.

113 Minutes of the last Meeting to be approved

The Minutes of the last meeting on 24th July 2023 had been circulated ahead of the meeting.
The Minutes were approved, accepted and signed by the Chairman with one abstention.

114 To consider any matters arising from the last Meeting that are not on this Agenda.

1. Minute 102:1 Flooding under the Railway Bridge. The Clerk reported that she has no more to report on this matter, but will chase up Network Rail again.

Action

2. Minute: 102:2 – Village Hall Roof. The Clerk said that she had received a letter from Paul Harding, Chairman of the Village Hall Committee which had been circulated ahead of the meeting. The Parish Council had pledged to give the Village Hall Committee a total of £43,500 towards the cost of refurbishing the whole village hall roof of which £36,900 has been drawn at the July meeting. This letter now requests that the Parish Council consider releasing the remaining £6,600 to enable the Village Hall Committee to increase its depleted reserves so that they can ring fence funds for the proposed solar panels scheme if needed. All agreed so a cheque for £6,600 to be drawn later this evening.

Action

115 Open Session for Members of the Public –

The Chairman welcomed Paul Allen, Alan Peers and Chris Simpson to the meeting. Paul Allen addressed the Parish Council first by saying that he and Alan were here at the meeting to represent the local residents who live around and near Sumners Ponds and he said he had a few questions to ask the Council, but beforehand he said he wanted to reassure and explain to the Council what they are trying to achieve. He said that the residents had accepted a long time ago that the development will go ahead and conditional planning permission was given by HDC. He said that they are not trying to disrupt, obstruct or delay the development, be it the commercial or residential one. In fact, the sooner it starts the sooner it will be completed. Paul said that what the residents are trying to achieve is to ensure that the disruption, which could go on for anything up to two years, is mitigated and reduced to a minimum. He thought that the whole parish will be disrupted to some extent, but residents close to the site will be disrupted more so. The other matter is the safety of residents which is very important including road users and pedestrians on and off-site. There has also been a lot of public money spent on the road and pavements by Sumners Ponds, and more recently the village crossroads and it is important to see that these do not get damaged by traffic coming in and out of Sumners. It is also important to see that the Developer is compliant and undertakes the terms and conditions. Ideally, we would have liked to work with the Parish Council on this, because we felt and still feel that this is the ideal way forward, but I know the Parish Council disagreed with this so we accept that decision. Paul said that he had three questions to ask the Parish Council: The Chairman said that if the Parish Council can't answer the questions now, they would be minuted and the Parish Council would get back to Paul before the next meeting. Paul asked firstly that when anyone writes to the Parish Council, how is that going to be logged, monitored and communicated back to residents and to the wider community and when the Parish Council get updates from the Developers about what they have done in the last month and what they are intending to do in the next month, how is that going to be conveyed back to the community in a timely manner. Paul said that he and the Chairman had a discussion

by email about possibly using the BIG MAG, but that might delay the communication and if discussions are held regularly at meetings then the minutes are not approved until the next meeting so therefore this would also cause a delay in communication so Paul asked again, how is the Parish Council proposing to communicate on a timely basis and get clarity on the residential development. The Chairman said that she will liaise with the Developer Sigma once they come into the picture. The Chairman said that if anyone emails her, she will email back directly and then it is up to that person to pass on the information. The Chairman said that every time she receives an update on the development, she will put it on the Parish Council Facebook web page and will let everyone know on the Barns Green and Itchingfield Facebook web page that information can be found on the Parish Council Facebook web page. If this is not sufficient that the Clerk can request another tab be put on the Parish Council website. The minutes will also include the updates at the following meeting. Alan Peers said that he concurred with everything that Paul had said, but was disappointed that we haven't heard anymore about the Traffic Management Plan. The Chairman said that this has been delayed because of the Section 106 Agreement has taken so long to go through. This is due to lack of staff at HDC and not the fault of the Developer. As soon as the Section 106 has been agreed then we will receive the Traffic Management Plan.

Chris Simpson then addressed the Council. Chris said that he is Treasurer of the Playing Field Trust Committee. Chris said that they have two major projects going on. One is the installation of an Outdoor Gym on the Village Green, for which S106 Money has been applied for to do this as there was £13,500 left from the Ashmiles development. The Committee has now had confirmation from HDC that they will grant this money for the Outdoor Gym which will just about cover the costs. Chris said that he would like to give his thanks to the Parish Council as the Committee wouldn't have got the S106 Money if the Parish Council hadn't given its support. The second project is the Footpath and Trim Trail Project to give access to everyone to the Arboretum which will cost around £25,000. Again, our thanks go to the Parish Council for supporting us who has already pledged £8,500 to this project. Planning permission has been submitted for this footpath and is coming up for consideration at this meeting with the determination date being 31st October 2023. Chris finished by saying that he is here to answer any questions that the Councillors may have. The Chairman thanked all the members of the public for their succinct addresses to the Council.

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

1. New Applications

DC/23/1327 – Simpson. Barns Green, Playing Field and Village Hall Charitable Trust. 5 Muntham Drive, Barns Green, Site address, Land adjacent to Barns Green cricket field known as Jubilee Field including the arboretum. Works for proposed permeable path to Jubilee Field for access to and around existing Arboretum.

Itchingfield Parish Council cannot recommend this planning application the way it is presented. The Barns Green Playing Field and Village Hall Charitable Trust need to request that Savills re-submit the planning application with the correct information before it can be considered.

DC/23/1571 - Mr Eric Mariani, Marlands, Plumtree Cross Lane, Itchingfield – Fell 1 x “Copper Beech,
Itchingfield Parish Council has no objections so recommend this planning application for approval.

DC/23/1577 - Mr and Mrs Scriven, 32 Sycamore Rise, Barns Green - Proposed conversion of existing garage to habitable space including new pitched roof with front dormer roof extension.

Whilst Itchingfield Parish Council has no issue with the proposed conversion per se, the property has a very short parking area in front of the garage which from our observations and supported by the photo montage in the supporting documents does not give space for even a Fiat 500 to park without obstructing the nominal pavement, so the required two spaces for this property rely on the garage and the allocated space by the side of the garage to comply with planning regulations. The three community spaces opposite the property are just that and cannot be used to compensate the loss of the garage parking space. WSCC Highways also commented on this shortcoming. Therefore, Itchingfield Parish Council has no further comments.

DC/23/1022 - Mr and Mrs Gates, Littlefold, Bashurst Hill, Itchingfield - Erection of a swimming pool and associated landscaping around.

Itchingfield Parish Council has no objections so recommend this planning application for approval.

DC/23/1626 – Mr. & Mrs Lee – Hook Farm House, Itchingfield Road, Itchingfield – Variation of Condition 1 of previously approved application DC/21/1000 (Demolition of existing single-storey stables building. Construction of a part single-storey building to accommodate yoga studio, meditation room, first floor home office, stable and store, with associated hard and soft landscaping works) to allow for amendments to the approved plans.

Itchingfield Parish Council would only support this planning application on the assurance that the new building remains incidental to the main building.

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Reports by County and District Councillors

County Cllr Amanda Jupp gave the following report:

1. Amanda started by saying that she was delighted to see that the new pathway at the crossing is now complete and looks really good. The Chairman said she would contact the Headteacher about arranging an opening for the new crossing. The Clerk said she had been contacted by a resident about possibly putting a marking on the road from the Village Hall Car Park down to the playground so that it notes that pedestrians are walking down. The Clerk to send an email to Amanda with some more details. Action
2. WSCC has received some money from central government to fund electric vehicle charges, so her question to the Councillors was whether to would like some in the village and if so where would you like them to be sited? Amanda said she would send the details of who to contact.to the Clerk. Action
3. School Buildings - With regard to concerns about school buildings containing the concrete known as RACC, WSCC have already completed a review of its records for all the schools we maintain. None were identified from the records as containing any indicating RAAC construction but as a further precaution a physical inspection has been commissioned of all county council-maintained school blocks constructed between 1930 and 2000 to check for any RAAC materials. This survey work across 114 maintained schools will follow the DfE guidance as updated on 30 August 2023. If any RAAC construction materials are identified then further detailed examinations will be commissioned to determine the condition, associated risk, and any required mitigation. In addition to the maintained schools, we have initiated a parallel process for other WSCC owned buildings constructed within this time period. Trusts that run academy schools are responsible for the maintenance of their buildings.
4. Grow Digital West Sussex – free digital support for businesses. Free, in-person digital growth support for West Sussex businesses was launched during August. [Grow Digital West Sussex](#) will begin delivery during September with a series of all-day events at six locations across West Sussex. The programme will provide workshops, networking and access to 1:1 mentoring for small businesses in West Sussex. The programme is being supported by the County Council and the West Sussex district and borough councils. The programme aims to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to increase their efficiency, reduce costs and win new customers. For full details on the events, including dates, locations and how businesses can register, please visit [Eventbrite](#).
5. Children’s Vaccinations. Parents are being encouraged to check if their children are up to date with their vaccinations. This can be done by looking at the NHS vaccination schedule on www.westsussex.gov.uk. If children have missed their vaccinations, parents can contact their local GP surgery to arrange an appointment.
6. Hedge cutting and ditch clearing. Autumn is a good time to cut back roadside hedges as well as clear any ditches on your property so that water can be free flowing, thus reducing the possibility of flooding.
7. UKHarvest Community Food Hubs. In collaboration with Biffa and UKHarvest we hold 7 Community Food Hubs (one in each district and borough) each month. Community Food Hubs are open to all residents and are designed to help rescue food from suppliers that would otherwise go to waste. The hubs are child friendly and allow residents to access affordable food, learn low-cost cooking options and find support on a range of social issues. For a full list of West Sussex supported food hubs please visit our [website](#).
8. Guidance for businesses and business owners ahead of fire safety legislation change. West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) is urging businesses and building owners to ensure they are prepared for new fire safety legislation which comes into force from next month. From 1 October 2023, the new fire safety legislation will come into effect which includes new duties for businesses and buildings owners. The new legislation will apply to all non-domestic premises as well as the communal parts of residential buildings. Changes to this legislation have been introduced through the Building Safety Act 2022 and represent the next phase of the Government's fire safety reform programme. The main changes under the legislation include:
 - Responsible persons will need to record both fire risk assessments and fire safety arrangements in full, regardless of the size or purpose of the business or premises.
 - Enhanced requirements for cooperation and coordination between responsible persons in premises where more than one is present.
 - Provision of information to residents setting out the risks from fire within their building and the fire safety measures provided to keep them safe.
9. Increase recycling in West Sussex. Last year residents helped to reuse or recycle over 200,000 tonnes of waste, helping the County Council to reduce the amount of general waste produced. People are asked to continue to help us recycle as much as possible, especially black plastic pots, tubs and trays, empty aerosols. Please remember that items for recycling should be clean, dry and loose, not tied up in plastic bags.

District Cllr Kasia Greenwood gave the following report:

1. There are two funds I wanted to make the Parish Council aware of. Firstly, the Community Climate Fund, which

is a grant available to local community groups, enabling them to take action to reduce carbon emissions. The idea is to support new projects that benefit the wider community. Some examples of successful applications are a Scout Group that got funding for a rain water harvesting system, Barns Green Primary School for solar panel installation, and a church that installed new cycle racks.

Further information on the Community Climate Fund, including information on how to apply can be found here: <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/climate-and-environment/community-climate-fund>

I have also been given contact details for two officers who can help with applications, so please do get in touch if you'd like that information.

2. Secondly, the Cost of Living Support Fund is a grant for organisations working to help those most affected by the cost of living crisis. This includes schemes that help support people living in food poverty, help with fuel poverty, providing financial support including debt advice, providing access to services and meeting people's basic needs.

Information on the Cost of Living Support Fund, including details for how to apply, can be found here:

<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/community/grants-for-community-projects/cost-of-living-support-fund>

3. And finally, there is a Jobs and Skills Fair taking place on Saturday 30 September at the Drill Hall, Horsham from 10-2. This brings local employers and job seekers together and we have over thirty exhibitors attending, with over 300 jobs on offer.

District Cllr Tricia Youtan gave the following report:

1. Tricia asked first whether the Parish Council had been advised of the 3-way traffic light control at the entrance to Lyons Road and both directions of the A264 due to the new entrance being constructed for the Broadbridge Care Village. The Clerk confirmed that she sent through the notice from Landbuild to the Cllrs on 18th September 2023.
2. Tricia said that another Care Home which is being proposed for in Slinfold is going to appeal on 18th October 2023.
3. Tricia said to be aware of asking for too much help with traffic calming because Slinfold now looks like it has now got far too much and it is now quite dangerous.
4. Finally, Tricia said for the Parish Council to look out for Improvement Grants for Villages on the Government website.

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Highways, Local Traffic and Roads - Cllr Richard French gave the following report:

1. Richard said that he has established having a monthly call with James Strachan and had a call on the 10th August. He told James that the pothole situation has radically improved as potholes that had previously been repaired badly are now being repaired more cohesively and are lasting longer. The 'Right First Time' initiative is going ahead.
2. Richard said that he had followed up with James about Speed Monitoring. James said that he has seen the results and they are supportive of reapplying for a speed limit of 40mph on Bashurst Hill and West Chiltington Lane from Toat Hill Garage up to New Road, so Richard will resubmit the application, refer to the traffic survey analysis and also suggest that the WSCC look at the entirety of West Chiltington Lane which has the same characteristics. County Cllr Amanda Jupp said that she will contact Billingshurst Parish Council and suggest to them to apply for a 40mph limit on the part of West Chiltington Lane from New Road up to the A272 as it is in their parish and then it becomes consistent. **Action**
3. Cleaning of Drains - when Richard contacted WSCC they were going to clear them in the Summer. However, a group of volunteers have walked around the village and the drains are still clogged up. James Strachan's response was to say that they cannot do anything until they receive photos showing the drains water logged and the water level above the road. Alan Strudley said that he has photos from when he reported the drains being blocked over a year ago in Trout Lane. He will send them to Richard. **Action**
4. Flooding under the railway bridge – we already have a reference number and Richard has now submitted two photos of when it was flooded so hopefully action will be taken soon. Cllr Amanda Jupp suggested that the Council write to Michelle Hume reporting all the roads in the parish that flood regularly so that the gullies can be cleared on a yearly cycle in those areas as WSCC will prioritise areas that flood due to silted up drains. The gullies in Plumtree Cross Lane along both sides of the road are due to be cleared on the 5th or 6th October.
5. The railings have now been replaced at the crash site in Two Mile Ash Road. However, the remaining car debris was not removed but Terry Jones who lives nearby cleared this. County Cllr Amanda Jupp will follow this up. **Action**
6. Richard said he wanted to reinforce comments about the crossing and pathway. This project has been executed in a text book fashion and is a great improvement.
7. Richard said that at the Annual Village Meeting there was interest expressed in forming a Community Speed Watch Group by a couple of people. Richard said he has spoken to Sussex Safer Roads and they are willing to hold a Teams Meeting for anyone who wants to find out about forming a Community Speed Watch Group. Richard has put a notice in the September issue of the BIG MAG to let people know about this and asking

people to contact him, but no one has contacted him so far. The Chairman suggested we put something on our website.

Action

8. Dog Barking Bend – speeding. Richard said that he has been trying to contact Southwater Parish Council over several months and the Parish Council's response is that it doesn't take action as regards commissioning measures around speeding or traffic management which is surprising for a large Parish Council. However, Southwater Parish Council will support us if we were to put forward a proposal so this is what Richard said he would do. Cllr Alan Strudley said that white lines would really help at Dog Barking Bend as it is so dangerous on the bends. County Cllr Amanda Jupp said she will follow this up.

Action

9. SID's - no more updates.

119 Finance – All payments for approval since 24th July 2023.

1. There are fourteen payments to be paid

£64.50 to Barns Green Village Hall in respect of rental for Annual Village Meeting on 10th July 2023 and Parish Council Meeting on 25th September 2023.

£57.00 to EE Home Broadband in respect of the Internet Service for August and September 2023.

£78.50 to N Francis Electrical Limited in respect of replacing faulty light fitting in the Red Kiosk.

£378.00 to Moore in respect of the Parish Council Audit for year ending 31st March 2023.

£40.00 to Roy Tingley in respect of the strimming of the verge by the level crossing.

£37.96 to HDC in respect of the emptying of the Dog Bin for October, November and December 2023.

£20.00 to HALC in respect of the Annual Subscription from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

£102.50 to Marks and Spencer in respect for the gift voucher and card for Pat Cochran.

£89.99 to Currys in respect of a monitor as part of the Parish Council IT upgrade.

£200.00 to Pete Cochran in respect of Litter Warden duties for August and September 2023.

£2,292.06 to the Clerk comprising of £1,082.55 salary for August 2023 and £63.48 expenses and £1,082.55 salary for September and £63.48 expenses.

£2,000.00 to Itchingfield Parochial Church Council in respect of maintenance and upkeep of the churchyard as agreed at the December 2022 meeting.

£1,940.00 to Barns Green Playing Field and Village Hall Trust in respect of £1,340.00 towards Public and Employees Liability and Trustee Insurance and £600.00 towards the maintenance of the playground, as agreed at the November 2022 meeting.

£6,600.00 to Barns Green Village Hall Committee in respect of the remaining part of the agreed grant. See Minute 114:2 above.

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

2. External Auditor Report and Certificate 2022/23 – The Clerk read out the report as follow:

"On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with the Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met."

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority: We note that the Council has provided several 'No' responses to the assertions in Section 1 – Annual governance Statement as has the Internal Auditor to the Control Objectives on their report. Explanations have been provided that the Council is still working on its systems to bring the remaining matters into line during the current year.

Cllr Alan Strudley said that this report was a great result.

3. The Clerk presented the Cllrs with a Bank Reconciliation as at 25th September 2023.

120 Correspondence

1. The Clerk reported that she has received a thank you card from Pat Cochran thanking the Parish Council for the gift token.
2. The Clerk reported that she had received an email from Michelle Worsey at HDC stating that HDC's Chief Executive Jane Eston has asked if it would be possible to come along to one of our Parish Council meetings in the not too distant future. The Clerk to send some dates of our meetings.
3. The Clerk said she had been contacted by Nick Yeo regarding a public footpath diversion order which the Clerk had circulated ahead of this meeting. Nick would like the Parish Council's comments on the diversion or whether the Parish Council had any objections. The Parish Council did not have any objections so the Clerk will complete the form and return to Nick.

Action

121 Update on the Footpath, Trim Trail and Outdoor Gym

The Clerk had received two letters from Ben Woodman, Chair of the Barns Green Trim Trail and Outdoor Gym Committee which is part of the Barns Green Playing Field and Village Hall Trust Committee. The Clerk had circulated these letters ahead of the meeting. The Parish Council has already pledged £8,500.00 towards the cost

of the Trim Trail Pathway, but the committee has incurred extra costs and in the second letter Ben explained what these extra costs are: £336.00 for bramble clearance, £298.00 for planning permission and £1,020 fees to Savills. Cllr Sarah Peay said that with regard to the fees from Savills, if they haven't actually done what the committee asked for regarding the planning application, should they not correct it without any further fees? Chris Simpson said that the committee wouldn't pay the fees until they are happy with what has been submitted. The Chairman suggested that if this Parish Council agreed to pay the total or a proportion of these three extra amounts, then she said she would recommend that the Barns Green Trim Trail Committee should actually withhold the Savills fees until such time as the planning application is submitted with the correct information. Cllr Sarah Peay proposed that the Parish Council give the Trim Trail committee a grant of £1,654.00 to cover the extra costs with the recommendation that the committee withhold the Savills fee of £1,020.00 until Savills submit a corrected planning application. Seconded by Cllr Brian O'Connor and agreed unanimously. A cheque for £1,654.00 was then raised.

**Cheque
drawn**

122 Public Rights of Way Seminar – Report from Cllr Sarah Peay

Cllr Sarah Peay had attended this Seminar back in June and had circulated her report to all Cllrs ahead of this meeting. Sarah said that it was an informative meeting and her report can be used for reference when discussing Public Rights of Way. There was a discussion regarding funding for PROW's especially important in the parish at the moment with the proposed Trim Trail. However, it was noted that funding cannot be applied for until planning permission has been granted.

123 Any other Business – items to be advised before the meeting.

1. The Chairman said that she will put an item in the BIG MAG about how to contact the Parish Council especially important with the Sumners Development coming up. The Chairman will put contact details for both herself and the Clerk, Parish Council website and Parish Council Facebook page details. This information will go into the BIG MAG each month.
2. Sumners Ponds to go on the agenda each month and when the building actually starts, the Chairman said she will invite either Lee Goosens or the Sigma Homes representative to attend our meetings.
3. The Clerk to request from Vision ICT that the Parish Council website comes at the top of the page ahead of any other website of a similar name when you do a search engine.
4. Cllr Brian O'Connor said that he thought that the Run Barns Green event went very well.

Action

124 Date of Next Meeting - Monday 23rd October 2023. There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.25pm.