

PEVENSEY PARISH COUNCIL
The minutes of the COUNCIL MEETING held online
on 9th March 2021 commencing at 7.00PM

Present: Councillors: Lowton (Chairman), Gibson, Howard, MacKinnon, Peasgood, Pursglove, Turner, Beck, Geary, Buckley and Beaney.

Wealden District Councillors: Doodes

S Mosedale (Clerk).

2 members of the public

Cllr Lowton welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting of the council and reminded attendees of the meeting protocols.

304. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Rabbitts, District Cllrs Cade and Clark and County Councillor Liddiard.

It was **RESOLVED** that Council would accept Cllrs Rabbitts apologies for this meeting. Motion was unanimously agreed.

305. Disclosure of interest

Nothing was declared.

306. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 2nd February 2021 were read, confirmed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Pursglove, seconded by Cllr Beck and approved by all present who had attended the previous meeting.

307. Co-option of casual vacancies.

There was one candidate who applied the councillor vacancy. The candidate's statement was circulated to Council prior to the meeting.

The candidate gave a short presentation on his background and reasons for wishing to become a Councillor.

Council then had the option to ask the candidate any questions.

The Chairman thanked the candidate for his presentation and asked him to leave the meeting, so Council could discuss the application and form a vote.

The candidate left the meeting at 19:04

A vote was taken, and the Chairman announced that the candidate was duly co-opted onto Council.

The Clerk will arrange a meeting to have the Declaration of Acceptance of Office signed.

308. Local Police Issues

The Clerk had nothing to report.

Members reported the following.

- There had been an incident of fly tipping at the Priory Court hotel. The Police have been made aware and have agreed to deal with the matter.
- There have been a few incidents of cars using the Pevensey Memorial hall car park at night for suspected drug use. The incidents had been reported to the police. However, the Clerk will chase this up with the local Inspector.

309. Open Forum

There were two members of the public present at the meeting.

One member, who is a member of the Allotment Society, provided Council with the following update.

The allotment society have had approval from ESCC to lay an experimental pathway along the footpath to provide protection along the main footpath from the Waverley Gardens entrance. A suitable product has been laid and the appropriate fact sheets have been forwarded to ESCC. ESCC have asked that appropriate signage is displayed explaining that it's an experimental surface and maybe slippery. He went on to say that a request has been sent to the Clerk, asking if the Parish Council would provide and pay for the signage along the pathway.

The Chairman thanked the member for his helpful summary and explained that Council will be discussing this matter under agenda item 314 and it will be dealt with as a separate item.

A member of the public joined the meeting at 19:13

310. County Councillor's report

Cllr Liddiard was unable to attend the meeting and a report was not sent.

311. District Councillors' reports

Cllr Doodes provided an update which included:

- WDC have confirmed that the council tax for the next financial year has been frozen and there will not be an increase.
- The Hub is still operating well and is being well used. The regular updates for town/parish councils are well received and provide as much information as possible. The website is also regularly updated and provides lots of information.
- Many of WDC staff are still working from home. However, there's reduced staff working in the office. There has also been a need to move staff from their regular positions to other departments, this is due to some departments being overwhelmed and overrun with extra work due to the pandemic. The legal department has been affected with an increase in house purchases and the diversion of staff has helped with the searches being sent out more swiftly.
- WDC, together with other authorities, lobbied government to make sure that all applications received before the end date of the stamp duty reduction, were dealt with even though the completion of them was after the end date. The lobbying by all local authorities have managed to get an extension of time for the stamp duty reduction.
- The benefits team has paid out 48 million pounds since the start of the pandemic and has provided help to over 6,500 local businesses. Since December WDC have paid out 5.4 million pounds in relief and discount on business rates. Following the Chancellor's speech there has

been more schemes coming through. However, these include completed caveats and criteria attached to them. Grants are available to people who qualify and details can be found on the WDC website and the benefits teams are available to provide help.

- At the Full Council meeting held last week, the Covid 19 restart and recovery plan update was published and can be found on the website.
- The housing department have been working closely with other agencies to provide help to patients who suffer with dementia and can be discharged home from hospital. WDC have been checking that the services are still in place, any trip hazardous, as well as cleaning the properties. The idea is help those manage being at home as well as freeing up the beds in hospitals.
- The electoral services are preparing for May 6th which is proving to be a real challenge. However, WDC are rising to the challenge and preparing for the extra measures required due to the Covid restriction.
- Very few complaints have been received. However, the complaints that have been received are about supermarkets not adhering to the Covid guidelines. This has been taken up with the local MP and the local environmental health department. Inspection in all the supermarkets and food outlets are being done and help and advice is being provided.
- There has been a slight increase in fly tipping. It was made clear that reporting fly tipping to WDC street scene team immediately will help prevent more fly tipping being attracted.
- Cllr Doodes is coming to the end of her two year term as Chairman of WDC. Unfortunately, due to the current Covid restrictions Cllr Doodes has had to cancel her reception. However, she will still be thanking those who have helped WDC over the last two years.

Members asked if there will be information in the guidance as to when the council start to advertise the Dine Well in Wealden campaign, with regards to the high street regeneration scheme.

Cllr Doodes will take this matter up with WDC and ask if details can be circulated to Councils so that it clear.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Doodes for her report. He went on to thank her on behalf of the Parish Council for all her hard work whilst she has been Chairman of Wealden.

312. A request for an exemption for a leave of absence from Council Business

The Chairman explained that this agenda item will be deferred until agenda item 325 public exclusion.

313. Clerk's Update

The Clerk provided updates on the following, including agenda items from the previous meetings.

Annual Parish Council meeting and Annual Council Meeting

The Coronavirus Act which gives Councils the ability to hold virtual meetings is due to expire on 7 May 2021. As it stands the government will not be extending this act. Community halls also cannot hold public meetings until after 17th May which is Step 3 on the Road map out of lockdown. However, numbers for the indoor use will be limited until the 21st June 2021.

The Annual Council meeting needs to be held in May and the Parish Council had agreed to hold the Annual Council Meeting on the 11th May. However, due to social distancing in place making face to face meetings difficult for most also as some people are not yet vaccinated, which could be a H&S issue to insist on physical meetings.

Advice from SSALC is to consider moving the ACM to between 1 and 7 May if possible. Therefore, the Clerk recommended that Council consider moving the Annual Council meeting to 4th May to comply with the current rules.

Some members suggested that the meeting be moved to a later date as they preferred to hold the meeting face to face rather than on zoom.

Other members felt due to limited numbers that would be allowed in the two villages until after 21 June, it would be too risky for Council to hold a face to face meeting.

The Chairman explained his preference would be to have a face to face meeting. However, the Council's ability to hold zoom meetings will end on the 7th May and the likelihood of Council finding a venue to hold May's Council meeting later in the month is limited, if at all. Which means that council may not be able to comply with the law and hold the annual Council meeting, to which they elect the officers.

The Chairman urged, under the circumstances council shouldn't take the risk that they end up not being able to hold a zoom meeting and not being able to meet in person because of Covid restrictions. Therefore, proposed to accept the Clerk's recommendation.

Council **RESOLVED** to accept the Clerk's recommendations to move the date of the Annual Council Meeting to the 4th May. Proposed by Cllr Lowton, seconded by Cllr MacKinnon. Carried 9/2 with Cllrs Beck and Beaney against.

The Clerk then recommended that the Annual Parish Meeting which would have been held on the 11th May be deferred until next year, due to the same reasons as previously stated.

Members had no comments.

Therefore, Council **RESOLVED** to accept the Clerk's recommendation and defer the Annual Parish Meeting until next year. Proposed by Cllr MacKinnon, seconded by Cllr Geary. Motion was unanimously agreed.

- **Agenda 288** – Street Lights in Waverley Gardens – The order has been placed with ESCC. The columns, lanterns and delivery time from when the supplier gets the order is approximately 6-7 weeks (can be longer in these current times). Once ESCC have the materials in their stores ESCC will get the works programmed. It's still estimated at around 8 to 10 weeks for the lights to be installed. A letter has been sent to residents.
- **Agenda 228** – It was agreed in the meeting held on the 1st December 2020, that a small working group to be assigned to look at detail and design for a new website and the quotes provided. As we are coming into the new financial year and a group still needs to be assigned.

The Chairman invited Councillors who wanted to be part of the working group to contact the Clerk directly.

- **Agenda 294** – Litter pick 20th March – Due to the current restriction still being in place on the 20th March, it is recommended that the first litter pick be deferred to a later date.

Council agreed to defer the litter pick to a later date to when the restrictions have eased.

Members also felt that more communications could be advertised that the council could provide litter picking equipment to residents wishing to use them.

Following updates

- The year end Shut down has been arranged for Tuesday 6th April – This will be done virtually
- The Internal Audit – Year End 20-21 has been arranged for Thursday 29th April 21 – This will be done virtually.
- The Clerk will be on annual leave from the week of the 22nd March due to a house move. However, she will still be contactable if urgent.

A member of the public left the meeting at 07:48pm

314. Quotes to install signage in the Recreation Grounds

The report on the quotes to install signage had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

The Chairman explained there are two parts to this paper. One being the signage for the recreation grounds and the other part is the signage for the allotments.

Cllr MacKinnon summarised the report and the reasoning behind the report. She went on to say that the final designs still needs to be finalised and this will be brought back to Council.

Members **noted** the report and sent comments prior to the meeting. Members expressed their appreciation for the amount of work and time that has put into this so far.

The Clerk summarised the report involving the quotes for the allotment signs.

The allotment society confirmed they would be willing to install the signs.

The Chairman expressed that Council should be supportive of this request to help the allotment society and council budget does allow for this expenditure.

Therefore, council **RESOLVED** to supply and provide the allotment society with the warning signs. Proposed by Cllr Pursglove, seconded by Cllr Geary. Motion was unanimously agreed.

315. Disposal of Grass Cuttings from the Sports Field.

The Chairman explained this item was discussed in a previous meeting with the sports club, as they have offered to cut the field, but don't have anywhere for the cuttings. Complaints had been received by councillors and members of the public about cuttings being put in the ditches.

Some members raised concerns by putting grass cutting in the ditches could cause them to be blocked as they have been put there to help with drainage. However, the question on drainage in the sports field was unclear.

Other members couldn't see an issue with grass cutting being sporadically placed in specific areas of the ditches. Members could see the benefits of the sports club cutting the grass, not just for themselves, but the public to and felt Council should help where possible.

Therefore, it was agreed that Council need to seek answers from the Water Level Management Association about the ditches and drainage within the sports field, before a decision could be made.

This agenda item will be added to April's Council meeting.

316. Census Support Update

Cllr MacKinnon provided the following update to council with regards to the Census Support.

- The Census letters have been issued.
- The Census Support Centre at the Ethel Wood Centre is now open with advertising.
- There have been 12 interactions with the support team and people who have used the centre are very grateful for the help.
- The ONS have confirmed the support centres can have face to face appointments as it is viewed as an essential service.
- Councillors are urged to encourage people to use the support centre.
- If residents haven't received a letter. The support centre can generate an access code.
- Other members have been helping with publicity for the Census to advertise it on social media. This has revealed that Council's own Facebook site needs considerable revision, which means a new Facebook site is required. This will incorporate the new logo and the branding the Council are working on.

The Chairman thanked the volunteers.

317. Update on maintenance work required in Coast Road Recreation Ground.

The Clerk advised council that there were a few issues raised from the ROSPA report taken last year, which are now being addressed. She went on to say that two new baby cradles for the swings have been order and will be replaced. Also, the rope walk needs repairing and this being looked at by one of the Council's contractors.

Cllr MacKinnon added that she is working to get another bid into the National Lottery to upgrade the play equipment in Wallsend Road. This is planned to be submitted in April.

318. Defer Dog Show to 2021

Cllr Howard explained due to the uncertainty and reluctance with the 3rd party support, staffing and visitors willing to attend events post Covid. It would be wise that council defer the event until 2022.

Council agreed to defer the dog show.

319. Plans

No plans received.

320. Correspondence

The Clerk reported on the following correspondence.

- An email was received from the Officer Manager to Huw Merriman inviting a representative from the Parish Council to attend a couple of meetings with the Environment Agency and Natural England.
The first meeting is concerning the overdevelopment of land close to the levels on both the Wealden and Rother sides and the impact on the levels and the SSSI of increased housing numbers. The meeting has been arranged virtually for the 19th March between 1pm – 2pm. The Chairman urged councillors who wished to represent council at this meeting to contact the Clerk.
The second meeting is to be arranged in May either the 21 or 28 and concerns the Pevensey Bay Flood defences contract which ends in 2025.

As previously agreed, Cllr MacKinnon will represent council at this meeting. The Clerk will send the details.

- The Clerk circulated an email from WDC with regards to the increase of the charges at Sea Road Car Park following a review of local car parks. It has been agreed to add a 2nd tier of charges and increase the daily charge.

The Chairman expressed a view that within Wealden District, there is only one other car park that charges in Wealden. He went on to say that Wealden has previously explained there is no street parking enforcement because Wealden provide free parking to support local business. However, Sea Road is seen as tourist car park and WDC have an enforcement element to prevent people overstaying.

Therefore, the Chairman felt that Council should resolve to campaign and lobby for Sea Road car park to become free. It will also provide support to local businesses.

The majority of members agreed with the Chairman's view and added additional concerns about the increases, which would exacerbate the car parking difficulties in the area.

However, a couple of members felt that modest charges were still required to keep the car park maintained in a good order.

Council resolved this in two parts.

A vote was taken for the proposal to accept the increases. Proposed by Cllr Beaney, seconded by Cllr Peasgood. Not carried 3 for and 7 against. With Cllr Buckley abstaining.

A seconded vote was taken to not accept the proposed increases charges to the car park. Proposed by Cllr MacKinnon, seconded by Cllr Howard. Carried 7/1 with Cllr Beaney against. Cllrs Peasgood, Buckley and Geary abstained.

Therefore, the Chairman proposed that council start to lobby that the charges in Sea Road car park are removed in their entirety as stated above. Seconded by Cllr Pursglove. Carried 8/2 with Cllrs Peasgood and Beaney against. Cllr Geary abstained.

- A resident reported that the Oyster House at 153 Coast Road has been fully demolished. The resident had reported this to WDC. The enforcement team are aware and are investigating. Cllr Clark is also aware.
- A resident called as he was concerned that the dog bags were to be reduced and rationed. He asked if Council would consider asking the local shops if they would be willing to sponsor the dogs bags to increase the amount.
- A resident requested if Council would consider putting in Sand Boxes next year during to the cold period.
- A request has been submitted to the Pollution Control Officer to revisit the Beach Tavern site as its becoming overgrown and unsightly. The officer will look into the matter and will write to the developer if he feels it warrants him to do so.

321. Matter of Urgent Public Safety (MUPS)

Members reported the Cinque Port village signs, especially the sign located on the boarder of Westham is particularly wobbly and has rusted through.

The Clerk will chase the County Councillor to see if ESCC will replace the posts.

322. Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman thanked members for their perseverance with using zoom. However, he went on to say he is looking forward to when the meetings can resume face-to-face.

The Chairman updated Council with the issues highlighted about the vehicle parking on the grass verge outside the half pipe. The Chairman has spoken with the owner and requested he park elsewhere to prevent the grass verge being damaged.

The Clerk will report the damaged verge to ESCC.

Lastly, Cllr Cade has provided an update on the Caravan in Church Lane. The occupier has been given temporary accommodation and has been advised that the caravan needs to be removed by the 8th March. If it was still there after this date it would be classed as abandoned and will be removed by ESCC Highways enforcement team.

A member of the public left the meeting at 8:41pm

323. Orders of Payment

Cllr Beaney declared a pecuniary interest under this item.

The listing appears at the end of these minutes as an integral part. Proposed Cllr. Pursglove seconded Cllr. Beck to accept the figures as presented.

Council **RESOLVED** to accept the figures as presented. Motion was unanimously agreed. Cllrs Beaney abstaining.

324. Advisory Officers reports

- **Sea Defences and Water Management** – Cllr Peasgood reported there had been lots work on the beach to tackle the of erosion on the beach. Cllr MacKinnon reported the next Water Level Management Association meeting is scheduled for June.
- **St. Wilfrid's Hall** – Nothing to report.
- **Ethel Wood Community Centre** – A meeting has been arranged for the 24th March and the condition survey will take place in due course.
- **St. John's Trust** – Nothing to report.
- **Sports Club** – Cllr Lowton reported a meeting took place on the 22nd February with Council members and the Treasurer and Chairman of the Sports Club. Unfortunately, no one from the football club attended. It was a very positive meeting and the club support the work with the grant and bids that councillors are doing to improve the facilities. The MOT still hasn't been put down, due to the mud and the amount of dog walkers using it.
- **WDALC** –. Nothing to report.
- **Memorial Hall** – Nothing to report other than what has already been mentioned.
- **Tree Warden** – Cllr Beaney reported a tent has been spotted behind the wooden bus shelter in Wallsend Road. The Clerk will follow this up with WDC.

Member of the public left the meeting at 8:50pm

325. Public Excluded to discuss negotiations regarding the sale of Council Land at Holy Rood.

It was **RESOLVED** that in accordance with Standing Order 3 (f) and the Public Bodies (Admission to

Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, the public and press were excluded from the discussion of the following item.

312. A request for an exemption for a leave of absence from Council Business

This item was deferred from earlier.

The Clerk read an email from the councillor requesting a leave of absence from Council business. The Clerk went on to say that Council must either resolve to agree or disagree to waive the six-month attendance rule due to the reason previously mentioned.

Therefore, council **RESOLVED** to agree to waive the six month rule as requested by the councillor for the reasons mentioned previously. Proposed by Cllr Lowton, seconded by Cllr Beaney. Motion was unanimously agreed.

326. Update on negotiations regarding the sale of Council land at Rood.

The report had been circulated with the agenda to councillors.

The Chairman summarised the report. Members discussed the offer and recommendations as stated in the paper. One member felt that an additional overage clause should be added to the deeds if a sale was agreed.

A proposal was put forward to add an additional overage clause to the sale of the land, which would mean that Council would need to renegotiate with the purchaser. This proposal was not seconded. Therefore, the proposal was not carried.

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the offer stated within the paper for the sale of the land and ask the Clerk to proceed with arranging the sale of the land on behalf of Council. Proposed by Cllr Lowton, seconded by Cllr Peasgood. Carried 10/1 with Cllr Beaney against.

327. Quotes for Fence repairs/replace in Wallsend Road

Cllr Beaney declared a pecuniary interest under this item and left the meeting at 9.08pm

The report had been circulated with the agenda to councillors.

Before the Clerk summarised the report. One member asked if Council wanted to obtain a further quote for the fence around the play equipment to include a, wooden coloured picket fence, or wait until the bid for the national lottery had gone in.

Members felt that the fencing is in a dire state and requires attention.

The Clerk summarised the report.

Members discussed each quote and recommendations as stated in the paper. Members also felt that a fixed price should be obtained to prevent any surprises once the job has been completed.

Therefore, council **RESOLVED** to accept one of the quotes and contractors provided within the paper. Proposed by Cllr MacKinnon, seconded by Cllr Geary. Motion was agreed. With Cllr Pursglove abstaining.

The Clerk will speak with the contractor and arrange for the works to commence.

328. Public invited back into the meeting.

The Council **RESOLVED** to welcome the public and Cllrs back to the meeting.

The public and Cllr Beaney was welcomed back to the meeting.

Date of next meeting will be on Tuesday 13th April 2021 via Zoom.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.23 pm.

DRAFT