

WESTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at 7.00pm on Monday, 18 March 2024

at The Amenity Hall, Stone Cross School, Adur Drive, Stone Cross BN24 5EF

Present: Cllr P Baldwin, Cllr L Comfort, Cllr F Durling, Cllr M Fairweather, * Cllr C Hanson, Cllr R Mayfield, Cllr P Quanstrom, Cllr D Upton*

(* denotes WDC Councillors)

WDC Cllr C Primett, 1 member of the public

Also at the meeting: S. Sanders (Clerk)

101. Apologies

ESCC Cllr D Shing, WPC Cllr D Axell, WPC Cllr K Farley, WPC Cllr A Taylor

102. Declarations of Interest

None

103. Questions from members of the public

There were no requests from members of the public to speak

104. Draft Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 19 February 2024 to be agreed and confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair of the Meeting

The Minutes had previously been circulated to Councillors. They were agreed and signed as a correct record by the Chair of the Council

Proposed and Seconded

Unanimous agreement

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 19 February 2024 be agreed and signed

105. To receive information and raise any questions to ESCC / Wealden District

Councillors present

Cllr Primett spoke about the Draft Local Plan had now gone out for public consultation. The nearest location to view the plan for Westham and Stone Cross residents was Polegate or Hailsham. The dates and locations had been widely published.

It was commented by Councillors that there was a lack of provision to view the Draft Local Plan at in person drop-in sessions in the Westham / Stone Cross area. Westham Village Hall would no doubt be available for viewing the Draft Local Plan on required dates if the committee had been contacted.

The consultation will run for eight weeks.

Cllr Fairweather informed Councillors that the Wealden District Council proportion of the Council Tax requirement was 2.99%. The vast majority of the Council tax bill was made up of increases from East Sussex County Council, The Fire Service Authority and the Police Authority.

He then spoke of the Draft Local Plan and said he would be present during part of the consultation hours at the drop-in session at Hailsham and Polegate.

106. Update to Council on the following projects

(i) The all access, all weather path at Adur Park

Everything is in place for the path to be finished. The Council has been informed that the contractors are waiting for the weather to improve before finishing the path. Hopefully with better weather forecast this week the end might be in sight and the path finished within the next ten days.

A Councillor asked if the adult gym equipment could be checked as some of the pieces were showing signs of wear. The Clerk informed them that play inspection contractors would be contacted and asked to check the equipment.

(ii) Surfacing of the play area in Adur Park

According to information supplied by the contractors 'wet pour' cannot be laid in wet weather. The ground has to be dry for it to adhere correctly.

A number of dates for laying the surfacing have had to be postponed in the last few months. Hopefully, the weather will improve in the coming few weeks.

(iii) Installation of fencing along the Friday Street / Lion Hill boundary of Adur Park

A new fence along the Friday Street boundary of Adur Park. The work to install the fence started on Wednesday 13 March and was finished by 15 March. There will now only be a pedestrian entrance into the park from Friday Street. A new gate is on order and will be fitted as soon as it arrives. Various fence types had been suggested and it was decided that security fencing was the preferred choice. It is no higher than 1.2 metres so will not be intrusive to visitors entering the park. The stone block is still in place at the previous entrance.

107. Removal of the recycling facilities at the rear of the Tesco premises, Mimram Road, Stone Cross

The recycling bins have been taken away permanently because of the amount of fly tipping that has taken place in the immediate area.

The area is constantly having to be cleared up so the decision to permanently remove the bins was taken.

This is not a decision taken lightly but the site was an absolute mess and took a time to clear up.

The Parish Council were not consulted about the removal of the bins.

Wealden District Council have stressed that they can recycle most things at the kerbside and the need for recycling bins on car parks or other areas is reduced.

Councillors asked if the recycling clothes bin situated at the Wealden District Council car park in Peelings Lane, Westham could be re-sited at the Tesco car park, Stone

Cross. This would free up a parking space that could be used by the Westham Village Hall.

108. Update to the Council regarding repair work taking place in the parish by the following companies

(i) East Sussex Highway work – various locations

There is much concern amongst Councillors about road works being advertised and then not carried out. This was causing issues for residents who had made different arrangements to access their roads.

The East Sussex County Councillor Cllr Daniel Shing will be contacted to find out what is happening and why advertised road works fail to materialise.

Also, out of date signs are left tied to lamp posts, trees and not collected.

(ii) Southern Water – Rother Avenue / Hamble Road (Pylon Field)

Major works by Southern Water will be carried out around the pathway in Rother Avenue to the Hamble Road field.

This is taking place on the public footpath off Rother Avenue, Stone Cross, BN24 5ET. They anticipate all the work on the new sewer will be completed by June 2024.

They have written to customers in the area to let them know what is happening. They may notice additional vehicle movements and activity in the area during our work. There may be generators and some noisy machinery but we will try to minimise any inconvenience.

They are on site from 7am but not starting any noisy work until 8am. They are aiming to finish each day by 5pm but sometimes we may need to work extended hours and occasionally at weekend.

To keep everyone safe, there is traffic management in place on Rother Avenue and footpath closures while this is happening.

(iii) UK Power Networks work to pylons situated in Hamble Road / Pylon Field

UK Power Networks have written to the Council with regards to the replacement of the insulators on towers PXB3 and PXB4, which are situated

on land registered to the Council at Hamble Road, Stone Cross. They need complete access to the towers in the pylon field. Vehicular access to the towers is required in addition to walking access,

The works are scheduled to take place during the period of April 2024 – June 2024.

109. Arrangements for an inspection of Butchers Field, Westham

A discussion took place between Councillors over the maintenance needed on Butchers Field during this year. It was agreed that an inspection should take place shortly to view the field and fencing. It was agreed that the inspection report should be sent to the field grazer for his consideration.

Some work had already been discussed and this included:

Western Edge work – ivy and overgrowth to be strimmed off the stone wall as soon as possible so that the resident can access the wall

North side of the field – brambles to be cleared annually. This included blackthorn and bramble branches

Fencing - all overgrowth should be cut back so it is behind the fencing

The Clerk said that arrangements will be made for grounds maintenance contractors to cut back the ivy and overgrowth by the stone wall as soon as possible. Also, a tree damaged in a winter storm would cut back. Trees in Butchers Field would be inspected for any damage over winter.

110. Financial Items recommended for approval

(i) Reconciliation Reports for January and February 2024 for approval and resolution

The reconciliation reports were agreed by Council and signed by the Chair of the Council

Proposed and seconded

Unanimous agreement

Resolved: That the reconciliation reports for January and February 2024 are agreed

(ii) Bank Statements January and February 2024 to be approved

The bank statements were approved by Council and signed by the Chair of the Council

Proposed and seconded

Unanimous agreement

Resolved: That the bank statements for January and February 2024 are agreed

111. To resolve to exclude Members of the Press and Public (Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960

112. There was no confidential business for discussion

The Meeting closed at 8.15 pm