

## **WESTHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at 7.00pm on Monday, 17 January 2022

At the Amenity Hall, Stone Cross School, Adur Drive, Stone Cross, BN24 5EF

Before the meeting started Councillor heard a presentation from the Steve Wennington of Hailsham Active outlining the benefits of improving and utilising Adur Park for the benefit of residents and users.

### **Present:**

Cllr D Upton (Chair), Cllr R Mayfield, Cllr N Beaney, Cllr F Durling,  
Cllr K Farley, Cllr C Hanson, Cllr J Hayward, Cllr J Jones, Cllr P Baldwin  
Wealden DC Cllr R Cade  
Also at meeting: S. Sanders (Clerk)

### **298. To agree the Deputy Chair takes charge until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2022**

(a) To note the resignation of the Chair of the Council and to agree a leave of absence for Cllr Haffner

Councillors noted that Cllr Upton would take charge of Council meetings until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2022.

**Proposed: Cllr R Mayfield**

**Seconded: Cllr C Hanson**

**Unanimous agreement**

**Resolved: that Cllr Upton would take charge of Council meetings until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2022.**

**(a) To agree a leave of absence to Cllr Haffner**

The item was discussed and agreed

**Proposed: Cllr N Beaney**

**Seconded: Cllr C Hanson**

PAGE

NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

**Unanimous agreement**

**Resolved: that Cllr Haffner take a leave of absence until April 2022**

**298a. Apologies**

ESSC Cllr D Shing,

WD Cllrs P Doodes, A Snell, A Douglas

Westham PC Cllr D Axell

**299. Declarations of Interest**

None

**300. Questions from members of the public on matters on the agenda**

WD Cllr Cade had a question from a member of the public regarding an item in the following Wealden District Council Report.

A number of residents have contacted Cllr Cade about the problems that have been created by parking in Peelings Lane, Westham. There have been a number of near misses as parking is carried out on both sides of the road with larger vehicles unable to pass. This causes large vehicles to use the grass verge which is now eroding in places.

A resident has asked that wooden stumps be placed towards the edge of the grass verge to stop vehicles using the verge. Unfortunately, these would not be allowed to be used as the verge was the property of East Sussex County Council.

After a short discussion it was advised that the resident be asked to contact their County Councillor and East Sussex County Council Highways and ask if they can adopt the verge outside their house. Sturdy shrubs could then be planted to alleviate the situation.

**301. To receive a report from Wealden District Council**

Cllr Cade informed the Council on the latest position on benefits and grants. He had circulated a document that outlined all the changes in the system. If any Councillor or a resident that needed help then they were asked to contact him directly.

Cllr Cade then spoke of the general problems with parking in Peelings Lane particularly at school 'dropping off' and 'picking up' time. Currently Wealden District Council does not operate 'decriminalisation of parking' in Wealden and parking obstructions are dealt with by the police.

**PAGE**

**NAME**

**SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

**302. Draft Minutes of the Full Council Meeting 15 November 2021 to be agreed by Council**

The Minutes for the above meeting had been previously circulated to Councillors.

There were no comments from Councillors so it was agreed to accept and adopt the Minutes of 15 November 2021

**Proposed: Cllr F Durling**

**Seconded: Cllr R Mayfield**

**Unanimous agreement**

**Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2021 be agreed**

**303. Butchers Field consultation review by the Advisory Group**

**Recommendations arising from the review for agreement by Council**

The Advisory Group supplied Councillors with the findings of the consultation which included:

- Ideas from the public included children's playground, car park, orchard, meadow, sheep grazing and grazing and meadow.
- The position of the field within a conservation area
- The best way of increasing safe public access to Butcher's Field, currently excluded due to risk from sheep carried disease. These carry a serious risk to health.
- Including other suggestions such as some fruit trees at a later date.
- The Field boundaries need attention.
- Meadows would need to be mown and a grazier to provide sheep.
- Impact on residents bordering the field. Possibility of person proof hedges will be considered to retain security of residents' properties.

It was decided that dividing the fields into grazing and meadow areas would provide a safe, quiet recreational space for the public whilst maintaining the obvious pleasure people get from observing sheep and lambs in the field.

Councillors then discussed the findings.

The Group felt that the potential of Butchers Field as a wildflower meadow was not being met and although the sheep that were currently in the field were popular an opportunity to rewild a special green space was being missed.

The group informed Councillors that they were advising not to renew the lease on the whole of Butchers Field.

**PAGE**

**NAME**

**SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

Various options were discussed including offering the current grazer 60% of the field with the other 40% planted native with wildflowers. The grazer would be asked if he wanted to continue grazing with 60% of the field and be prepared to mow the other 40% as required.

A substantial amount of fencing would be required in the field to carry out this split.

Finally, it was decided to recommend in principle that:

- (i) A 60% /40% split of Butchers field be agreed in principle
- (ii) An estimate of the amount of fencing required for the split should be sought

**Proposed: Cllr C Hanson**

**Seconded: Cllr J Jones**

**Majority Agreement - one abstention**

**Resolved:**

- (i) A 60% /40% split of Butchers field be agreed in principle**
- (ii) An estimate of the amount of fencing required for the split should be sought**

### **Hobney Rise Advisory Report**

Councillors discussed the condition of the field and the problem with fly tipping. It was decided that a letter that would be circulated in the area asking residents to be aware of rubbish being discarded in the playing field.

### **304. To agree the Budget and Precept for the Financial Year 2022/23**

Papers on these matters had been previously circulated. Members then reviewed the financial information provided by the Clerk

#### **(i) Draft Budget 2021/22**

Councillor Mayfield thanked the Clerk for her work on the draft Budget and noted that there would be a 0% increase in the Annual Budget the same as last year. A number of Councils have set increases in their Budget and although inflation is now increasing the Council have enough capacity to cover any rises this year. Also, it was decided that a number of earmarked reserves be set for future projects. The draft Budget was then proposed.

**Proposed: Cllr R Mayfield**

**Seconded: Cllr K Farley**

**PAGE**

**NAME**

**SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

**Unanimous agreement**

**Resolved: That the Annual Budget for 2022/23 is agreed**

**(ii) Precept 2021/22**

The Precept for £160,169 was proposed by

**Proposed: Cllr R Mayfield**

**Seconded: Cllr K Farley**

**Unanimous agreement**

**Resolved: That the Precept for 2022/23 will be set at £160,169 with a 0% increase**

**305. Financial Items recommended for approval:**

**(a) Agreement of Expenditure for October and November 2021**

The Clerk had previously circulated copies of Income & Expenditure and Balance Sheet for the year to 30 November 2021. There were no comments.

**Proposed: Cllr J Hayward**

**Seconded: Cllr R Mayfield**

**Unanimous agreement**

**Resolved: That the above expenditure for October and November 2021 is approved**

**(b) Transfer of Council Bank Account to Metro Bank for online banking requirements**

Cllr Mayfield explained that it had been agreed some time ago to transfer the Council Bank Account to a bank that would provide payment by online banking. The Council still used cheques for all payments but it was becoming increasingly difficult for the Council to buy services and goods as many companies did not accept cheques.

Metro bank appeared to offer all the services required by the Council so Councillors were asked to agree the transfer.

**Proposed: Cllr J Jones**

**Seconded: Cllr F Durling**

**PAGE**

**NAME**

**SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

**Unanimous agreement**

**Resolved: That Westham Parish Council transfer the bank account to Metro Bank for online banking requirements and that the Parish Clerk Susan Sanders and the Chair of Finance Cllr Robert Mayfield should be signatories**

**(b) Internal Auditors Interim report – Autumn 2021**

Councillors had previously received a copy of the report. There were no questions so Council was asked to approve the report.

**Proposed: Cllr J Hayward**

**Seconded: Cllr C Hanson**

**Unanimous agreement**

**Resolved: That the Internal Auditors Interim Report – Autumn 2021 is noted and agreed**

- 306. To resolve to exclude members of the press and public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960) - Not required**

**The meeting closed at 20.50 hrs**

**PAGE**

**NAME**

**SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

