

WESTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at 7.00pm on Monday, 20 April 2022

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

Present:

Cllr D Upton (Chair), Cllr R Mayfield, Cllr N Beaney, Cllr F Durling, Cllr D Axell,

Cllr K Farley, Cllr C Hanson, Cllr J Hayward,

ESCC Cllr D Shing, Wealden DC Cllr R Cade

One member of the public

Also at meeting: S. Sanders (Clerk)

Before the meeting started Nicola Fenner of Sussex Police spoke about violence against women and girls and a new initiative that had been launched to help tackle the problem. It was called Safe Space Sussex had been launched with a new phone app that was the concept of Katie Bourne the Sussex Police Commissioner. She explained the concept of a 'Safe Space' and how local businesses were being encouraged to take part in the scheme. Anyone who felt in fear of violence could enter a business that displayed the 'Safe Space' sign and find shelter. She then welcomed questions from Councillors.

327. Apologies

WD Cllrs P Doodles, A Douglas, A Snell

328. Declarations of Interest

None

329. Questions from members of the public on matters on the agenda

None

330. Draft Minutes of the Full Council Meeting 21 March 2022 to be agreed by Council

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

Cllr Beaney and Cllr Hayward said that they had not abstained at the March meeting but had voted against the Minutes. They asked that this be corrected. There were no other comments from Councillors so it was agreed by majority to accept and adopt the Minutes of 21 March 2022.

Proposed: Cllr R Mayfield

Seconded: Cllr C Hanson

Majority Agreement

Agreed: Cllrs D Upton, R Mayfield, D Axell, K Fairly, C Hanson, F Durling

Against: Cllrs N Beaney, J Hayward

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2022 be agreed

331. Co-option of a Councillor for the Westham Ward of the Parish Council

One candidate had put themselves forward for co-option for the above ward. Mr Mark Fairweather introduced himself to the Council and gave a brief outline on why he wanted to be a Parish Councillor.

Councillors were happy to accept Mr Fairweather on to the Council and after signing the Declaration of Acceptance Mr Fairweather was invited to join the Councillors.

332. Update on the Community Governance Review by Wealden District Council

Cllr Cade informed Councillors that there was at present no update on the Community Governance Review. The new Project Officer had started work earlier in April so was yet to issue any reports. Also, a tender would be sought for a company to carry out the consultation for the next nine months at least.

He then spoke of the preparations that were being made to welcome Ukrainian refugees to the Wealden area. There were around 964 refugees arriving in the area with a number of sponsor families ready to take them in. In addition, there were a number of local groups working to match the sponsors with the refugees. Cllr Cade said that safeguarding checks were of the most importance when placing refugees in households and this was taking time to complete.

As ESCC Cllr D Shing was present the Chair asked if he would like to give a short update on County Council affairs.

There would be a re-introduction of household support and all details could be found on the Wealden DC website.

Finally, he gave an update on the imminent bin strike that would affect all the Wealden area. He said it was a fast-moving situation and everyone should check the Wealden DC website for current information.

333. Financial Items for discussion and recommended for approval:

(a) Financial update for March 2022

The Clerk updated Councillors on expenditure for March 2022. She pointed out the amount of money that had been spent on tree maintenance and preservation in the Stone Cross area in the last year. The work had been required due to the lack of maintenance in the previous years.

(b) Update on the Metro Bank account

Cllr Mayfield informed Councillors that the process was ongoing and he and the Clerk was meeting with the bank on Friday to finalise the opening of the account.

(c) Renewal of Insurance for 2022

The Clerk told Councillors that she had received three options for the renewal of the Parish Council insurance from June 2022. The first was for one year, the second for three years and the third for five years.

After a short discussion it was decided that the preferable choice was for three years.

Proposed: Cllr C Hanson

Seconded: Cllr R Mayfield

Unanimous agreement

Resolved: That the insurance cover for the Parish Council be renewed for three years from June 2022.

334. Application for Grant Funding from Westham Village Hall

The village hall committee have applied for grant funding for the renewal of the hall flooring.

The application form for funding had been circulated to Councillors for their consideration.

After a number of questions, the Councillors asked the Clerk to contact the village hall committee for clarification before funding could be allocated.

The Councillors considered awarding £1,000 but needed further clarification before the funding was given.

The Clerk would report back once she had further information.

Proposed: Cllr C Hanson

Seconded: Cllr D Upton

Unanimous agreement

Resolved: That in principle Westham Village Hall be awarded £1,000 grant funding for flooring after further clarification of Councillors questions

335. Council Agreement for Councillor participation on the Wealden Parish and Town Councils working group against over development

The WGAOD is being led by Chiddingly Parish Council Working Group on Over-Development – and so far, comprises 39 of the 42 parish and town councils in Wealden.

Cllr Hanson went to a meeting they held on 8th April, which was also attended by Ann Newton (WDC) and Nick Daines (CPRE). At the meeting there was an overwhelming feeling amongst delegates that the planners are working too closely with developers, that once land is built on it can never be reclaimed, and that infrastructure is not being put in place to support the level of development – particularly roads, schools and GP services. Points were also made about the wrong type of houses being built (profit for developers not meeting local need).

After Cllr Hanson had answered questions, it was agreed that Cllr Hanson should attend the Group on behalf of Westham Parish Council.

Proposed: Cllr R Mayfield

Seconded: Cllr J Hayward

Unanimous Agreement

Resolved: That Cllr Hanson attend meetings of the Wealden Parish and Town Council working group against over development

336. Adur Park update

The Clerk said that she had met with two of the advisors that have been helping Cllr Baldwin with all access track that was planned for Adur Park. They supplied documents that could be used for a tender package to be advertised widely.

Councillors were given copies of these documents for information as this item would be on the May agenda with a recommendation for approval.

- 337. To resolve to exclude members of the press and public** (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

Proposed: Cllr D Upton

Seconded: Cllr R Mayfield

Unanimous agreement

- 338. Staffing Issues**

Councillors reviewed a number of staffing related matters

The meeting closed at 20.50hrs

