

WESTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held at 7.00pm on Monday, 16 January 2023

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

Present:

Cllr D Upton (Chair), Cllr P Baldwin, Cllr N Beaney, Cllr L Comfort, Cllr F Durling,

Cllr M Fairweather, Cllr C Hanson, Cllr J Hayward, Cllr R Mayfield

WDC Cllrs R Cade, ESCC Cllr D Shing

Also at meeting: S. Sanders (Clerk)

Members of the public: one

406. Apologies

WDC Cllr P Doodes, WPC Cllr D Axell, Cllr K Farley

407. Declarations of Interest

None

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

A member of the public asked the Wealden DC Councillor about the cost of carrying out the Community Governance report in the Westham Parish area.

409. Draft Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting 19 December 2022 to be agreed

The Minutes for the above meeting had been previously circulated to Councillors. There were no questions.

Proposed: Cllr R Mayfield

Seconded: Cllr C Hanson

Unanimous Agreement

Resolved: that the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 19 December 2022 be agreed

410. Reports from ESCC / Wealden District Councillors:

Cllr Cade informed Cllr that Cllr Doodes was unable to attend the meeting as they had split the attendance so the Parish Council meetings held tonight could be attended.

Cllr Cade outlined the outcome of the Community Governance review (CGR) which included a consultative ballot between the 1 -30 November. The Wealden District Council Audit, Finance and Governance Committee met on 11 January 2023 where a final decision was made to retain Westham Parish Council as a whole. Also, it was agreed to hold a short consultation to move one Councillor from Westham ward to the Stone Cross ward for a better balance of representation. A recording of the meeting can be found on the Wealden District Council website.

Cllr Cade was told of concern due to tree and shrub cutbacks in Peelings Lane, Stone cross connected to a new development on land behind St Luke's Church. Wealden DC had been asked to explain why this invasive work had been carried out and who was responsible.

Cllr Cade said he would try to find out what had happened and why this work had been carried out without any notification.

ESCC Cllr Daniel Shing told the meeting that the County Council had published their Budget Plan for 2023/24. There would be a Council Tax increase of 2.99%. This would cover an increase in the Adult Care budget. Confirmation of this increase would be made in early February.

Cllr Shing said that the County Council was willing to top up salt bins in the area but there would be a cost

Cllr Shing was asked by concerned Councillors about the above development and the impact it would have in the area to traffic using already overly used roads.

Included with this development plans had been submitted to erect a number of bus shelters on sites that Parish Councillors thought totally unsuitable and asked for more

information on how the decisions to site these bus shelters were made without any communication to the Parish Council.

Cllr Shing was asked to arrange for a ESCC Officer from Highways attend the next Westham Parish Council meeting in February.

411. To agree the Budget and Precept for the financial year 2023/24

Councillors were supplied with copies of the draft Budget for the year 2023/24. Councillors agreed that the Budget figures would remain the same as last year with a 0% increase in the Precept. The Precept request stays at £160,169.

After a short discussion it was agreed to approve the Budget for 2023/24.

Proposed: Cllr R Mayfield

Seconded: Cllr N Beaney

Unanimous Agreement

Resolved: That the draft Budget for 2023/24 and Precept is request for £160,169 is agreed

412. Recommendation to accept a quotation for a new play area fencing and surfacing

Following on from the December meeting Quotations had been sought from companies for new surfacing and fencing for the children's play area in Adur Park.

A further quotation for fencing had been received and was circulated to Councillors.

This contained more information and various options about surfacing the play area.

Councillors favoured Option A but further investigation of the site and a report was needed before a final decision was made.

It was agreed to approve the fencing in dark green and self-closing gates in yellow for the play area.

Proposed: Cllr R Mayfield

Seconded: Cllr N Beaney

Unanimous agreement.

Resolved: It was agreed to approve the fencing in dark green and self-closing gates in yellow for the play area.

413. Section 106 Agreement for the Hailsham Road development

The Clerk circulated a number of documents regarding the siting of bus stops / shelters close to this new development.

After a lengthy discussion Councillors were surprised that the Parish Council had not been consulted about the siting of these bus stops / shelters by ESCC Highways, Wealden DC Planning department. They expressed concern and asked ESCC Councillor Daniel Shing if he would invite an officer from the Highways Department to attend the next meeting to answer questions about the siting of the bus stops and the assumption that the Parish Council would take ownership of the shelters.

At another site on Rattle Road, Westham a wooden bus shelter will be removed to facilitate the opening onto Rattle Road from a new development. The developer had asked the Parish Council if when the shelter is removed it could be placed at another site. The original shelter would not be returned to the original site and the proposed new site for the bus stop would not be wide enough to fit the shelter.

414. Financial items to be agreed

(i) Income and Expenditure Reconciliation reports for December 2022

The financial statements were circulated at the meeting

Proposed: Cllr R Mayfield

Seconded: Cllr C Hanson

Unanimous Agreement

Resolved: that the above Financial Income and Expenditure Reconciliation Reports for December 2022 be approved and signed

(ii) Bank Statements for December 2022

These finance documents were circulated at the meeting to Councillors.

Proposed: Cllr R Mayfield

Seconded: Cllr C Hanson

Unanimous agreement

Resolved: that the above Financial Income and Expenditure Reconciliation Reports for December 2022 be approved

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

There were no confidential items to discuss

The meeting closed at 20.50 hours