

WESTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held at 7.00pm on Monday, 20 February 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,

Also at meeting: S. Sanders (Clerk)

Members of the public: seven

416. Apologies

WDC Cllr P Doodes, ESSC Cllr D Shing

417. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Hanson and Cllr Comfort declared a Personal Interest in Item 8 (iii)

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

None

419. Draft Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting 16 January 2023 to be agreed

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

There were no questions.

Proposed: Cllr C Hanson

Seconded: Cllr N Beaney

Unanimous Agreement

Resolved: that the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 16 January 2023 be agreed

420. 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 had sent a report in previously that had been circulated to Councillor earlier this week. He said one of the main challenges recently were the new Regulations that had come into force regarding Council housing. These covered fire, insulation and damp conditions. Also, how Councils listened to concerns and complaints from residents was highlighted in the new Regulations.

He then gave a brief report on Wealden's ongoing response to the Ukrainian situation.

There was no ESCC Councillors present at the meeting.

421. Planning Application WD/2022/3369/MAJ

The Chair introduced this item and asked Councillors to suspend Standing Orders so that members of the public could put forward their views.

Standing Orders to be suspended

Proposed: Cllr C Hanson

Seconded: Cllr P Baldwin

Unanimous Agreement

Resolved: That Standing Orders be suspended

After a lengthy discussion it was decided to reinstate Standing Orders

Proposed: Cllr C Hanson

Seconded: Cllr P Baldwin

Unanimous Agreement

Resolved: Standing Orders reinstated

Recommendation: Councillors agreed to object to the above application for the following reasons:

- This is a complete overdevelopment of the site. The density of the proposed housing does not match that of the adjacent development, it is out of keeping with other housing in the area
- How can this extra development be considered when other development in the area are not completed
- Overdevelopment is happening in our community and is particularly in this Dittons area at present
Developers say the land is derelict but the field could be used for grazing. The developers surface drainage plan seems to involve diverting surface water into the attenuation basin for the existing site
- The proposed access route to the site will involve cutting down mature trees that currently act as a noise screen for the A27
- The reduction of trees/shrubbery of the north boundary to make room for the entrance road, will have an impact on the neighbouring properties as these currently provide a noise barrier from the A27
- The access is privately owned.
- Poor access to the site. The access itself is small and is the only entrance into the site. During construction and completion of the site there will be a large increase in traffic, heavy goods vehicles, parking, dirt, chaos and disruption. This will also cause movement of ground levels, potentially causing damage to the property next to the access road at the side and back. As well as the neighbouring properties
- Once developed, there will be only one access to the site, this will have an effect on the noise levels as more cars (estimated 63) will be passing through, therefore cause more noise and disruption to current residents.
- Extra traffic would intensify current severe congestion problems
- There is no underpass or safe crossing for the footpath crossing the A27 to the north.
Extension of the existing site road access to the field would involve extensive vegetation clearance and extensive works to consolidate the steep bank

- Further development on the site will increase the likelihood of flooding on the A27 trunk road through water run-off during heavy rainfall as the land falls away towards the A27.
- The flood risk assessment and drainage strategy. – 3.11 Foul water drainage: A connection via the Phase 1 foul sewer is proposed: There is a potential risks that the new development will cause future consequences with sewerage overflowing to the current development. This has already been demonstrated in other parts of Westham Parish over the Christmas period. The drainage system is not suitable for additional developments
- The Public Pathway – **The 1066 Way** runs through the site
- The current footpath is not suitable for heavy daily use. It is unlit and muddy for much of the year
- Newts and Bats have been sighted in the field. An independent ecological report is required

Proposed: Cllr N Beany

Seconded: Cllr R Mayfield

Unanimous Agreement

Resolved: That objections as recommended to the above planning application WD/ 2022/3369/MAJ be made to Wealden DC Planning Department

422. An update on new developments in the Parish area

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

Councillors were surprised that the Parish Council had not been consulted about the siting of these bus stops / shelters by ESCC Highways and Wealden DC Planning department. The had 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. Cllr Shing was not present at the meeting and had sent apologies. Also, there had been no contact with the

Council from ESCC Highways regarding a meeting to discuss the concerns of Councillors.

The Clerk had been contacted by the developers of Sycamore Grove the new retirement home at the junction of Dittons Road and Golden Jubilee Way regarding an open day they were holding at the end of March. They said that Councillors would be sent invitations to visit the development to see the facilities available for residents.

At the previous meeting, the Clerk had informed Councillors that a site on Rattle Road, Westham a wooden bus shelter would 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.

Councillors were asked if they had found a new site for the bus shelter that was to be removed from Rattle Road. If a new site could not be found then the bus shelter would be removed and disposed of by the developers.

The removal of this bus shelter that cost in the region of £4,000 had been agreed with ESCC Highways who had not discussed this with the Parish Council.

Councillors had found a site on Dittons Road and asked the Clerk to contact the developers to install the bus shelter at the chosen site opposite the Bluebell Nursery entrance.

423. Financial items to be agreed

(i) Income and Expenditure Reconciliation reports for January 2023

The financial statements were circulated at the meeting for Councillors consideration and approval

Proposed: Cllr D Upton

Seconded: Cllr R Mayfield

Unanimous Agreement

Resolved: that the above Financial Income and Expenditure Reconciliation Reports for January 2023 be approved and signed

(ii) Bank Statements for January 2023

These finance documents were circulated at the meeting to Councillors.

Proposed: Cllr D Upton

Seconded: Cllr R Mayfield

Unanimous agreement

Resolved: that the above Bank Statement for January 2023 be approved

(iii) Stone Cross School invoice

Councillors discussed an invoice that had been received from Stone Cross School. Including a number of costs for various works that had been carried out.

It was decided that a letter be sent to the school asking for a meeting to discuss further clarity on insurance, quotations etc.,

Proposed: Cllr D Upton

Seconded: Cllr R Mayfield

Unanimous Agreement

Resolved: That a letter be sent to Stone Cross school requesting a meeting for further clarification of costs

424. To sign the Fields in Trust Deed of Dedication for Adur Park

The Deed of dedication for Adur Park was signed by the Chair of the Council, Cllr Daniel Upton and the Chair of Finance, Cllr Bob Mayfield

425. Grass Cutting Maintenance Contract for 2023/24

Councillors were supplied with copies of tenders that had been received from a number of contractors.

After a short debate it was decided to accept Quotation B that was a competitive price.

The contract would start in March 2023 and run for one year in the short term.

Proposed: Cllr R Mayfield

Seconded: Cllr N Beaney

Unanimous Agreement

Resolved: That Quotation B was accepted and the contract for the Grounds

Maintenance work would run for one year

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 20.45 hours