



## **AMBERLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes from the ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024, 7.30pm at St Michael's Church Hall.**

**PRESENT:** Parish Councillors; – Jason Charman (Chairman), Tim Simpson, Leigh Cresswell, Elisabeth Tooms, Paul Mustow, Ian Corcoran and Hazel Allinson

**Also present:** Vicky Spiers (the clerk) and six members of the public.

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies noted and accepted from Fraser Wheeler and Laura Rawnsley. Apologies also noted from West Sussex County councillor Paul Marshall and Horsham District councillors Jon Campbell, Paul Clarke and Len Ellis-Brown.

#### **2. To receive declarations of interest from items on the agenda**

None.

#### **3. To approve and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

The minutes were agreed by councillors and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

#### **4. Updates from County and District councillors**

None.

#### **5. Current Matters - updates: (a) Joint Community Highways Scheme with Houghton, including the Speed indicator device for Houghton**

**Bridge** – the clerk advised a meeting was being arranged in early February with WS Highways, an update to be provided at the March PC meeting. The council also noted the sad passing of Dr Charles Shaw who was integral to the joint CHS being accepted and who had worked tirelessly and diligently with APC on the joint community speedwatch.

#### **(b) TRO for reduction in the speed limit to 20mph through Amberley village and for the reduction in the speed limit to 40mph along the**

**football field** – the clerk advised that WSCC had opened a public consultation on this TRO which runs from 18<sup>th</sup> January to 8<sup>th</sup> February (full details on APC's and WSCC websites, Gaggle and The County Times) and residents are encouraged to support. A resident asked why WS Highways had not included Arun Close in the TRO, Jason advised he thought it was a private/unadopted road, clerk to confirm.

#### **6. Committee Reports –**

**(a) Planning** - as detailed below:

Signed..... Dated 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024

SDNP/23/03188/HOUS	7 Crossgates - Erection of porch to front elevation. Erection of a single storey rear extension and dormer extension to first floor rear elevation.	APC has no objection, <b>DECISION PENDING WITH HDC</b>
SDNP/23/03726/FUL	Amberley Chalk Pits Museum - Alterations to Museum entrance way including glazed wall end and glass entrance doors. Internal alterations to improve visitor access. Historical restoration works carried out.	APC has no objection, <b>APPLICATION IN PROGRESS WITH HDC</b>
SDNP/23/03936/HOUS	Castle Cottage, Church St - Installation of 6 No. PV solar panels on south facing roof.	APC has no objection, <b>DECISION PENDING WITH HDC</b>
SDNP/23/05176/FUL	Land to The South of Castle Garage Drewitts Field Station Road - Construction of a new agricultural field access to replace existing.	APC has no objections
SDNP/23/05412/CND	Kennards, Hog Lane - Removal of Conditions 3, 4 and 6 of previously approved application SDNP/22/01019/LIS (	APC to review - deadline 9th Feb
SDNP/23/04725/HOUS	Densford, Church Street - Replacement of windows to front elevation.	APC to review - deadline 9th Feb
<b>Compliance</b>		
	Land North of Riverside Tearooms	This has been reported to HDC (not by APC) as an untidy site
	Swan Meadows	No maintenance plan in place Conifer tree stumps remain and new trees have not been planted Draining issues
<b>Other Planning matters</b>		
	Barton Cottage/The Old Postings	Large crack appeared in party wall - Leigh is currently investigating with owner

It was noted that the application for Pickwick had been called in by SDNPA and made 'not valid'.

Regarding the planning/compliance issues at Swan Meadows, the parish council are in communication with Antler Homes, the clerk was asked to chase them for an update. It was noted that some residents cleared a boundary ditch in December 2023 as it had flooded and was threatening to flood their homes.

**(b) Roads & Paths** – Jason Charman advised that the hedges along Ruffs Path have been cut. It was noted that the length of footpath closest to School Road had been waterlogged, Jason advised that it needed to be resurfaced as per the rest of the path, this will be undertaken later in the year. The pedestrian gate has been moved further up Ruffs path with positive feedback being received from residents.

Jason also advised that the Millennium Green ditch had been cleared out by Swan Meadows residents as it had flooded.

Upcoming jobs – Jason will be cutting School Road hedge and Croft Path hedge. With regards to a request for hedgehog signs near Fourviews on Turnpike Road, it was resolved by council to install one near the Newland Gardens entrance, Paul Mustow suggested that once installed the new 20mph sign could be utilised to add hedgehog warning signs.

**(c) Assets & Amenities** – Hazel advised that she would like the council to consider the installation of a bus shelter in Crossgates, confirmed that this has

Signed..... Dated 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024

been added to the possible items that the CIL funds could be spent on. Hazel further suggested a noticeboard in the car park this has also been added to the suggested CIL proposals.

A resident asked if the memorial plaque from the old bench at High Titten had been found, Jason advised it had but that it was in very poor condition, and he was looking to get it replaced by a brass plaque.

The council discussed a new litter bin for the football field as the previous one was stolen, it was resolved to install one on a pole which would hopefully make it more secure, clerk to arrange.

It was also resolved that an Asset & Amenities site meeting need to be held in Hurst Cottages playground to discuss the wooden activity trail – clerk to arrange a date.

**(d) Neighbourhood Plan delivery** – Tim advised that the repaired lights were now all installed in the car park. It was agreed that Tim will change the timer, so the lights go off at 10.30pm in the winter.

It was noted that some litter picking was required in the car park, Tim and Jason will undertake this. A discussion followed regarding the litter bin and if this was in the right place, Jason will review.

**(e) Village Bus** – Elisabeth advised that the new timetable was in place, usage is not very high at the moment.

Another bus driver and resident advised that the bus committee believe that 50% of the bus is owned by APC. Funding for the bus was received from the Department of Transport and it is insured by the bus committee, with running costs being paid for by grants. The bus has not been recorded as a part asset of the parish council and it was resolved that this required further investigation.

**(f) Climate Action and Nature Recovery Working Group** – Paul Mustow advised that the Group are working with the Millennium Green Trustees in hedge laying, trees are also being planted in the Millennium Green and cricket field in February with hedges being planted along the northern boundary of the cricket field in March.

## **7. Finance - to receive and agree Bank Reconciliations for November and December 2023; to review and authorise payments on the Financial Statement from 1<sup>st</sup> November to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

The November and December bank reconciliations and bank statements were reviewed, agreed and signed.

The Financial Statement detailed below was reviewed and agreed to by the council and signed by Jason.

Current account closing balance as at 31st October 2023				<b>£ 66,397.09</b>
<b>Plus Receipts since 1st November 2023:</b>				
12/12/2023	HMRC - VAT refund 1110/23 to 31/11/23			£ 1,680.76
				<b>£ 1,680.76</b>
<b>Less cheques presented or BACS/DD payments since 1st November 2023</b>				
DD	10/11/2023	Octopus Energy - electricity for car park 1/10/23 to 31/10/23		£ 17.26
BACS	13/11/2023	Mr A Philby - cutting of Hurst Cottages playground x2 in October		£ 56.00
DD	13/11/2023	The Tech Doctors - monthly payment for 4G data account for CCTV		£ 30.00
BACS	15/11/2023	Amberley PCC- 'Seasons Greetings' for the Wildbrooks magazine		£ 10.00
BACS	15/11/2023	PCC of Amberley - Hire of Church Hall from Aug-Oct		£ 48.00
BACS	28/11/2023	TDP Limited - new bench and anchors		£ 471.41
CHG	30/11/2023	Bank chargers for Nov		£ 3.15
BACS	30/11/2023	V Spiers - Clerks Nov 2023 salary and expenses + backdate pay sector award		£ 1,952.05
BACS	30/11/2023	NEST - Employee & Employer pension contributions for Nov 23		£ 167.23
BACS	30/11/2023	HMRC - PAYE and Employee NI contributions for Nov 23		£ 409.92
BACS	30/11/2023	RIDI Lighting - additional parts for repair of car park lights		£ 749.10
BACS	01/12/2023	RIDI Lighting - further repairs on the car park lights		£ 951.26
BACS	01/12/2023	HDC - quarterly charge for emptying of litter bins 1/01/24 to 31/03/24		£ 136.50
DD	12/12/2023	Octopus Energy - electricity for car park 1/10/23 to 31/10/23		£ 16.15
DD	13/12/2023	The Tech Doctors - monthly payment for 4G data account for CCTV		£ 30.00
BACS	15/12/2023	Mr A Philby - cutting of Hurst Cottages playground x3 in November		£ 84.00
BACS	21/12/2023	V Spiers - Clerks Dec 2023 salary and expenses		£ 1,440.06
BACS	21/12/2023	NEST - Employee & Employer pension contributions for Dec 23		£ 112.14
BACS	21/12/2023	HMRC - PAYE and Employee NI contributions for Dec 23		£ 164.48
CHG	29/12/2023	Natwest - banking charges		£ 3.85
SUB-TOTAL				<b>£ 6,852.56</b>
<b>Current account balance available after 31st December 2023</b>				<b>£ 61,225.29</b>
<b>This includes £33,471.07 earmarked reserves:</b>				
£945.60 - grant for Operation Watershed works				
£200 - grant for new noticeboard				
£1,400 - for Ruffs path works				
£ 30,925.47- SDNPA CIL monies				

## **8. Finance – to review and agree the council’s final budget for 2024/25**

This had been sent to council prior to the meeting for review, after discussion, with Paul Mustow noting that the funds for Assets & Amenities and Roads & Paths were reduced from last year the budget was agreed, (with it being further noted that some budget items are being met from earmarked reserves and the 2023/24 amounts included one-off expenditure). The overall increase is 4.67% which is a monetary amount of an extra £4.82 on a Band D property.

## **9. To consider ideas/projects to be funded by the parish council’s Community Infrastructure Funds**

The clerk had sent a list of the proposals, and these were noted by council without discussion as it was felt that a prioritisation process for assessing the proposals needs to be established first, resolved that this would be done at a Finance Committee meeting, with the proposal then being discussed by full council.

## **10. Adjournment to take questions or comments from the public**

A resident had enquired why the public adjournment had been moved down the agenda, Jason advised that it was felt by council that many of the issues raised are discussed by council under committee reports.

Issues raised by residents;

- A resident asked the council for a full breakdown of the expenditure on the car park. Resolved that the clerk will provide this
- It was asked if the parish council wanted to thank the vicar for her service to the Parish as she has now retired. It was agreed and formally noted

Signed..... Dated 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024

that the parish council thank Gerry Burgess for her tireless service to the Parish and neighbouring Parishes. Jason advised that he had already asked the clerk to send a formal note of thanks to Gerry

- A resident asked for a noticeboard in Newland Gardens, it was confirmed that this has already been added to the CIL proposals
- A resident asked if the parish council knew if WS Highways would cut the verge along Church Street along by the church wall, Jason advised that Highways would not do this. Paul advised that he would ask the Climate Action and Nature Recovery Working Group of their thoughts
- A resident asked if the litter bin in Hurst Cottages could be changed to one with a lid as it attracted wasps in the summer. Jason advised that it was anchored by concrete into the ground so this would not be possible. Paul advised that the A & A committee had discussed and as it was an isolated incident they would monitor for future incidents.

**11. To review the Climate Strategy prepared by the Climate Action & Nature Recovery Working Group with a proposal for this being adopted by APC**

This Strategy had been circulated to council prior to the meeting, after discussion it was resolved that APC support the broad strategy but would like further details and reassurances around whether by endorsing the strategy the PC does not risk increasing its liabilities and potential future costs to meet the ambitions.

Further, the PC asked for details regarding the 2050 net zero carbon ambition – it was noted that this is a national ambition, but what would it mean in practical terms for the PC.

The PC also asked to see the amended Strategy before it is sent out for public consultation.

**12. To review the Parishioner’s correspondence list and agree on any necessary action**

All actions noted on the attached:

Dec-22	Flint wall as entrance to station damaged by car impact	As APC have been unable to get a firm commitment from NR to repair the wall, this has been raised with WS Highways who have statutory powers, they are going to write to NR to ask them to repair the wall asap
Sep-22	Requested SID for Houghton Bridge	Site meeting held with WSCC Highways, awaiting confirmation from WSCC with regards to locations
Nov-23	Ham Piece	New walkway remains outstanding. Clerk spoke to tenant farmers on 14th Nov, they are still willing to instal this FOC but need to wait until eather has improved.
Dec-23	Footpath behind Castle - closed due to castle wall repairs	PC in contact with Christian Owen, Brownswords Group Head of Health & Safety, alternative route will be allowed through field to north, awaiting date that this will open
Jan-24	Ham Piece	Part of fence needs repairing - tenants responsibility, Clerk to contact farmer

**13. To receive any updates on external meetings attended by councillors**

Signed..... Dated 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Leigh advised that he, Jason, Tim, Ian and the clerk had a Teams meeting with Believ who are an EV charge point operator, who deliver fully funded EV chargers. Leigh advised that the PC need to check with HDC that they would be happy for Believ to install their chargers in the car park and then the project can hopefully move forward.

**14. Clerk's update and Information items**

The clerk advised that all correspondence received had been passed to council.

**15. To note the date of the next meeting as 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7.30pm**

Noted by council.

**Due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed the press and public were excluded from the following items:**

**16 a) Review of five donation/funding requests**

It was noted that only three requests had been received, after discussion it was agreed that:

- i) Amberley Cricket Club – request for CIL funds for a new gang mower - the PC would look into the purchase of a new tractor, which would be owned by the PC with the clerk reporting back at the March PC meeting (Paul Mustow declared an interest as a member of the cricket club)
- ii) Millennium Green – request for annual donation to cover their insurance, council agreed a general donation of £300 which would be reviewed annually, and this is to be provided for their general funds
- iii) Millennium Green – request for CIL funds to cover legal fees, the PC noted that this was not an approved use of CIL funds and therefore need to decline this request

**b) To discuss matters surrounding the proposals for the new village hall**

A Group separate from the PC are taking this proposal forward with HDC and SDNPA, there are some current discussions over where the placement of the village hall would be, and it was agreed that APC would review and respond to HDC's suggestion in line with Village Hall Group's proposal.

Jason Charman closed the meeting at 10.10pm.

Vicky Spiers - Clerk to Amberley Parish Council

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023

Signed..... Dated 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024