



AMBERLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes from the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 9th May 2024, 7.30pm at St Michael's Church Hall.

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

Also present: Cllr Paul Marshall (WSCC councillor and Leader), Cllr Jon Campbell (HDC councillor), Vicky Spiers (the clerk) and six members of the public and one dog.

1. To Elect a Chairman for the ensuing year and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

It was resolved that Jason Charman was elected as chairman and signed his DOA.

2. To Elect a Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

It was resolved that Fraser Wheeler was elected as vice chairman, Fraser to sign his DOA at the July PC meeting.

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies noted and accepted from Fraser Wheeler. Apologies also noted from Horsham District councillor Len Ellis-Brown.

4. To receive declarations of interest from items on the agenda

Paul Mustow on Item 17 as he is a member of Amberley Cricket Club.

The clerk read out a statement from the council reminding attendees that parish council meetings are a meeting of the parish council held in public and not a public meeting and respectfully asked members of the public not to interrupt throughout the meeting.

5. To approve and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 14th March 2024

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

6. To confirm any appointment/changes to committees, including a chair for the Finance Committee

No changes to committees. It was resolved that Laura Rawnsley becomes the chair of the Finance and HR committee.

Signed..... Dated 11th July 2024

7. To nominate and approve a council representative for WSALC and for HALC

Resolved Tim to remain as WSALC representative and Elisabeth to remain as HALC representative

8. Updates from County and District councillors

Cllr Paul Marshall advised that;

- He had a meeting with APC and the Area Highways Manager regarding parking on Hog Lane junction, the clerk confirmed that Highways recommendations had been passed onto the residents that raised this issue
- He acknowledges the frustration that residents have with potholes, he has monthly meetings with Highways to put specific measures in place to help reduce the current backlog of repairs. He advised that in 2023 the target response time of 28 days was met 96% of the time but this was usually a 'safety defect repair', in 2024 the response time is currently being met 75% of the time but these are permanent repairs. He said that there had been criticism of the contractor regarding them not taking a holistic approach and fixing additional potholes near to the one on their job sheet, Paul advised that the contractor is going to be trial of doing this in September (under the banner of 'added value threshold') but logistics such as time and amount of materials need to be factored in and also that the contractors are in huge demand across neighbouring counties
- Highways are also working on communications regarding riparian ownership, they have increased their drainage clearance from annually to every six months

Cllr Jon Cambell advised that;

- The representations from the Local Plan are still being reviewed, they are hoping the Plan will be adopted in May 2025
- Weekly food waste collections will start in February 2025
- He is keen for HDC to hold events in other parishes in the district rather than just in Horsham.

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

– Laura advised that WS Highways were in the detailed design phase and a meeting has been arrange on 13th May to meet in Houghton to walk through the design. The parish council will then formally review the design before WS Highways send it out for public consultation.

(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

– this has all been approved, awaiting an update from WS Highways regarding implementation.

(c) Entrance to Ham Piece

– the clerk had contacted the tenant to see if they were still able to install a sturdier entrance but had not received a response. After discussion it was resolved that Jason and Paul would undertake a site visit, it was discussed that it might be an option to move the planks (and make a

sturdier structure) as the current one was through an area that was always swampy.

10. Committee Reports –

(a) Planning - as detailed below:

SDNP/23/03936/HOUS	Castle Cottage, Church St - Installation of 6 No. PV solar panels on south facing roof.	APC has no objection, DECISION PENDING WITH HDC
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 APPROVED BY HDC
SDNP/23/04109/HOUS	Amberley Place -Installation of an Air Source Heat Pump	APC to review - APPROVED BY HDC
SDNP/24/01420/HOUS and SDNP/24/01421/LIS	Willow Cottage , Church Street, - Removal of existing oil tank. Erection of a single storey rear extension and installation of 1no window to the rear first floor gable (Householder)	
SDNP/24/01451/HOUS	Quarry Cottage , High Titten - Removal of existing chimney	APC has no objections DECISION PENDING WITH HDC
SDNP/24/01441/NMA	Drewitts - Non Material Amendment to previously approved application SDNP/17/03280/FUL (Amendments to previously approved application SDNP/14/01150/FUL. Proposed alterations to roof line of plots 8 and 9, and alterations to building length and width of plot 9.) Re updated drawings to reflect 'as built' on site.	HDC did not formally consult on this application, APC have put in an objection as the houses which have been built differ from plan. DECISION PENDING WITH HDC
Compliance		
	Swan Meadows	No maintenance plan in place Conifer tree stumps remain and new trees have not been planted Draining issues - Jason & clerk had mtg with SDNPA Compliance on 20th March to walk the site, SDNPA will be taking the outstanding issues forward with the developer

Leigh confirmed that APC's response to the further Drewitts application had also included the fact that APC thought this should be a full application as it is not a minor amendment.

(b) Roads & Paths – Jason Charman advised that the potholes reported in School Road had been marked for repair.

He is working along Croft path to remove soil to widen the path

All the appropriate (and allowable) strimming will be done by 9th June in time for the Gardens Open.

The council discussed the two gates along Croft path which are in a state of dis-repair and no longer serve any useful purpose, after discussion it was resolved to remove the gates and that the clerk is to get quotes for a new gate, Paul suggested installing a sign which stated, 'gates removed due to a safety issue'.

(c) Assets & Amenities – it is hoped to replace the agility trail with some exercise equipment and a swing, Jason asked the clerk to contact the clerk at Tangmere who have had similar equipment installed.

It was noted that the tidy up of the western boundary at Hurst Cottages playground was still outstanding and resolved that this would be done within the next few weeks by council.

(d) Neighbourhood Plan delivery – Tim said it was good to see the car park was full at the weekend, it was noted that the football teams always now use the

Signed..... Dated 11th July 2024

car park. A couple of the fence posts had been damaged by cars reversing into them and these have been replaced/fixed by Tim and Jason.

Tim and Jason were due to meet with Nicky Kirby from the school to discuss the school's use of the car park, but this had been postponed.

Tim had obtained a quote for a 'free parking' sign from Wilbar Associates (circa £400), councils resolved to go forward with this, Tim will send details round to councillors so the final wording can be agreed.

(e) Village Bus – Elisabeth advised that they were short of drivers, hopeful that they may have another volunteer.

(f) Climate Action and Nature Recovery Working Group – Fraser had provided an update prior to the meeting. There was a discussion regarding the status of the working group and the clerk advised that as there were non-councillors included in the group then this should remain a working group, whereby any decisions were brought to full council to be discussed and ratified.

11. Finance - to receive and agree Bank Reconciliations for March and April 2024; to review and authorise payments on the Financial Statement from 1st March to 30th April 2024

The March and April 2024 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 29th February 2024				£ 54,710.67
Plus Receipts since 1st March 2024:				
	19/03/2024	HMRC - VAT refund 1/12/23 to 29/2/24	£	351.27
	25/04/2024	SDNPA - CIL	£	4,379.09
	29/04/2024	HDC - First Precept instalment	£	<u>18,269.50</u>
			£	22,999.86
Less BACS/DD payments since 1st March 2024				
DD	01/03/2024	PWLB - March loan repayment	£	1,818.78
BACS	04/03/2024	Amenity Choice - eco guards and bamboo sticks for new hedge (reimbursed to V Spiers)	£	362.95
BACS	04/03/2024	HDC - litter bin emptying 1/4/24 to 30/6/24	£	32.90
BACS	04/03/2024	Vision ICT - 2 email accounts missed off invoice on 1/2/24	£	43.20
BACS	04/03/2024	HDC - Garden waste bin used by APC (reimbursed to J Charman) - £50 paid from Op Watershed Reserve	£	54.00
DD	12/03/2024	Octopus Energy - electricity for car park 1/2/24 to 29/2/24	£	21.56
DD	13/03/2024	The Tech Doctors - monthly payment for 4G data account for CCTV	£	30.00
BACS	13/03/2024	E-Decks - anti slip strips for Multi Play	£	99.71
BACS	18/03/2024	J Charman - ditch clearance (reimbursed to V Spiers) - paid from Op Watershed Reserve	£	300.00
BACS	18/03/2024	J Charman - hedge cutting (reimbursed to V Spiers)	£	150.00
BACS	25/03/2024	PCC of Amberley - Hall hire Jan-March 24	£	48.00
BACS	27/03/2024	V Spiers - Clerks March 2024 salary, office expenses and mileage	£	1,516.29
BACS	27/03/2024	NEST - Employee & Employer pension contributions for March 24	£	116.62
BACS	27/03/2024	HMRC - PAYE and Employee NI contributions for March 24	£	172.01
CHG	28/03/2024	Bank chargers for March	£	2.80
BACS	03/04/2024	AJ Gallagher - annual insurance premium	£	1,281.14
BACS	08/04/2024	Mr A Philby - cutting HC playground x2 March 24	£	56.00
BACS	08/04/2024	Acorn Workshop - new noticeboard - £200 paid from Noticeboard earmarked reserve	£	1,134.00
BACS	09/04/2024	WSALC - Annual subscription for NALC and WSALC	£	214.44
BACS	09/04/2024	McVeigh Parker - timber fence post for car park reimbursed to T Simpson)	£	27.34
DD	10/04/2024	Octopus Energy - electricity for car park 1/03/24 to 31/3/24	£	23.14
DD	13/04/2024	The Tech Doctors - monthly payment for 4G data account for CCTV	£	30.00
BACS	18/04/2024	Timberley Projects - removal of Agility Trail from HC playground	£	1,344.00
BACS	19/04/2024	Amberley Shop - refreshments for Parish meeting (reimbursed to V Spiers)	£	51.52
BACS	24/04/2024	JAF Graphics - 2 x hedgehog warning signs (reimbursed to V Spiers)	£	208.00
BACS	29/04/2024	Beechdown - tree survey on tree in HC playground	£	384.00
BACS	30/04/2024	V Spiers - Clerks April 2024 salary, office expenses and mileage	£	1,564.79
BACS	30/04/2024	NEST - Employee & Employer pension contributions for Apr 24	£	121.11
BACS	30/04/2024	HMRC - PAYE and Employee NI contributions for April 24	£	176.97
CHG	30/04/2024	Natwest - banking charges	£	3.50
			SUB-TOTAL	£ 11,388.77
Current account balance available after 30th April 2024				£ 66,321.76
This includes £36,555.16 earmarked/ringfenced reserves:				
£595.60 - grant for Operation Watershed works				
£1,400 - for Ruffs path works				
£ 34,559.56- SDNPA CIL monies				

The amount of CIL funds as of 30th April 2024 was noted by council.

12. To review and approve the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2023/24

Noted by council. The council thanked the clerk for all her work on this, which allowed the council to receive a very positive audit.

13. To review and approve the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 on the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for 2023/24

Reviewed and approved by council, signed by Jason.

14. To review and approve the Accounting Statements 2023/24 on the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for 2023/24

Reviewed and approved by council, signed by Jason. The clerk advised that she now sends this document off to the external auditor.

15. Car Parking in the Parish – including a discussion on (i) double yellow lines at the entrance to Amberley Station

– the clerk advised that GTR outsource the parking at the station to APCOA who have installed the double yellow lines due to a Department of Transport failed audit for outside of bay parking. Following discussion, the council resolved to write again to GTR to ask them to reconsider, clerk to draft a response with input from Paul and Laura. It was also suggested that the Amberley Museum may support, resolved clerk to contact the Museum.

Signed..... Dated 11th July 2024

(ii) parking at the Hog Lane and High Street/East Street junction – Jason and the clerk attended a meeting with Paul Marshall and James Strachan (Area Highways Manager) to discuss the parking on the junction of Hog Lane and East Street, Highways advised that to install double yellow lines at the junction then support from a majority of residents would need to be evidenced. James Strachan advised one potential option open to the owners of the properties that sit either side of this junction is for them to apply to WSCC for an 'Access Protection Line.' He also suggested that a polite sign is put on the walls of the two properties stating 'no parking on junction, Jason suggested that a directional arrow could also be included to point to the village car park.

16. Adjournment – to take questions or comments from members of the public

A resident read an extract from an email from APC sent to him in July 2023 which stated that if he felt strongly about the installation of double yellow lines in the parish '*by all means feel free to drum up support for the idea*', he queried why then following the release of a parking survey he had instigated that APC had sent an email out on Gaggle stating this was not a PC initiative and that it was without the formal agreement or direction of the Parish Council. After a discussion the PC advised that their view remained that they had not invited the resident to undertake a parking survey as they were not involved in the questions or how the results would be reviewed.

The resident stated that this was not his understanding of the matter.

A resident advised that the school had agreed to move their defibrillator to a wall on the outside of the school building, but that it requires a weatherproof box, resolved that Tim would obtain a quote for presentation to the council.

The resident also asked if the PC could help financially with the cost of the Amberley CPR Group's mobile phone, currently £10 a month. She advised that there is a fixed 24 month contract for £7, the clerk advised that APC could not enter into the contract as it is not the council's phone, but council agreed in principle that they could make a financial contribution, Tim and the clerk to review outside of the meeting.

17. To review expenditure of CIL funds for (a) 2 defibrillators (b) New tractor

Tim has obtained 3 quotes for two new defibrillators (to be sited in Newland Gardens and The Cricket Field), with the best option being £2680, APC have written to the Amberley Welfare Trust to see if they would donate towards the cost, an update will be provided at the July PC meeting.

Paul will liaise with Jenny Robinson regarding CPR training for the cricket club. The council also discussed installing a defibrillator in North Stoke, this was agreed in principle, but a suitable location needs to be sourced first.

The council discussed the cricket club's request for a donation to purchase a new tractor and resolved the best way forward would be for APC to purchase the tractor and donate this to the cricket club, as well as being used on the cricket field and football field the council would like the tractor to be made available for other groups (such as the Millennium Green) and for other parish events, Paul

advised that the council would need to ensure that the correct mowing parts are purchased if it going to used on areas other than sports field.

The council resolved for a maximum of £14,000 to be spent and for the clerk to obtain three quotes and to take the purchase forward. The clerk asked Paul and Jason for assistance with the type of tractor required.

18. Clerk’s update and Information items

The clerk advised that NALC have just released a new set of Financial Regulations, she would review and present at the July PC meeting for adoption.

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

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

All actions noted as below:

RESIDENT CORRESPONDENCE	ACTION TAKEN/REQUIRED
Ham Piece	Some improvements have been made, council agreed for clerk to contact farmer late spring, when the ground is drier. Clerk contacted tenant on 17th April - no response - Decided on 09/05/24 - Paul and Jason to make a site visit to discuss entrance
Concerns that the temporary footpath will close behind the Castle in Spring as sheep are normally kept in the field	Clerk to contact Brownsword Hotels. Confirmation received that temporary footpath will remain in place until the works are finished
Flint wall at Railway station needs repairing	Clerk has had previous communications with NR since Dec 2022 who agreed they would monitor the wall and make small repairs as necessary. Clerk notified WS Highways who advised the wall was not structurally unsafe but wrote to NR asking them to repair. Clerk has since made contact with a surveyor in the NR’s structure team who advised he would ask a maintenance team to visit the wall. HB resident has advised it is not just a safety issue but wall should be repaired as a historic structure, resident has informed MP and Historic England. Update 9/5/24 - NR have confirmd they will make repairs to the wall
Repairs required to Houghton Bridge near the shop	Clerk reported to the Structures team at WSCC on 22/3, who advised that a surveyor would undertake a visit. Resident has raised with Historic England and MP - Update 9/5/24 - It was noted that the Highways Steward is now taking this forward
HGV hitting or getting such under the railway bridge	Resident advised at the village breakfast in October 2023, Paul Marshall said he would get WS Highways to review all the signage - resident has advised she has not heard any more. Update 9/5/24 - Council resolved that they have done all they can and will not be taking any further action

20. To discuss the continuation of Saturday Surgeries

Resolved that council will run two a year in February and October.

21. To receive any updates on external meetings attended by councillors

Elisabeth advised she had attended the annual HALC meeting, where the main topic of discussion was HDC’s Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans.

22. To note the date of the next meeting as 11th July 2024 at 7.30pm

Noted by council.

Signed..... Dated 11th July 2024

Jason Charman closed the meeting at 9.36pm.

Vicky Spiers - Clerk to Amberley Parish Council

13th May 2024

Signed..... Dated 11th July 2024