# **AMBERLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes from the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 12th September 2019, 7.30pm at St Michael’s Church Hall.**

**PRESENT**: Parish Councillors; Chairman – Geoff Uren (GU), Jason Charman (JC), Peter Cozens (PJC), Hazel Allinson (HA), Abigail Rice (AR) and Tim Simpson (TS)

Also present: Vicky Spiers (VS) the Clerk, District Cllr Brian Donnelly, District Cllr Paul Clarke, Dr Charles Shaw (runs Houghton Parish meeting) and 1 member of the public.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence received and accepted from Geoff Conlon, Laura Rawnsley, County Cllr Paul Marshall and District Cllr Diana van der Klugt.

**2. PUBLIC ADJOURNMENT TO TAKE COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR**

Bob Middleton advised that he had set up a meeting with the Low Carbon Hub Company along with Geoff Uren and Steve Kennet to discuss an idea to use a hydro generation unit at the River Arun tidal bore to generate electricity. Unfortunately, the flow rates of the river are too slow for this to work. However, Bob advised that a relationship had now been established with the Low Carbon Hub Company and other environmentally friendly ideas might come out of it.

GU advised that Steve Kennet has confirmed that there are excess funds in the oil syndicate which could be invested in green energy initiatives.

GU informed the meeting that as Amberley has many old buildings a lot of the green energy ideas will not always work; insulation of the buildings will be an important first step.

*Item 11 was moved up the agenda*

**11. TRAFFIC SURVEY ON THE CAUSEWAY AND COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH IN AMBERLEY AND HOUGHTON**

Dr Charles Shaw advised that he had been working with Laura Rawnsley and they have produced a report regarding the issues on the Amberley/Houghton section of the B2139 (the Clerk had forwarded the report to Councillors prior to the meeting). Charles advised that the B2139 was a designated rural road but behaves like a trunk road, currently there are approx. 490 vehicles on the road per hour (with 600 vehicles being the saturation limit). The number of HGV’s that use the B2139 is the same as the number using the A27. Speed limits are exceeded regularly. There is a fixed speeding strip near the South Downs Way crossing, but no speed review has been done in Houghton for 10 years. WSCC Highways have no proposals to do anything about the B2139 although it is acknowledged as a rat run. According to Highways England when the A27 Arundel bypass is completed this will result in a reduction of traffic on the B2139 of up to 40% (increasing up to 70% in the evenings).

Charles advised that he is looking to set up a Community Speedwatch for Houghton and Amberley, the police have already been out and assessed three sites (1) B2139 just passed entrance to School Road (2) B2139 by entrance to the station (3) B2139 by the Causeway – Charles advised that the Causeway site however is not feasible as there is nowhere to park and it would mean volunteers having to walk down the road which is too dangerous, so there is an on-going discussion with PSCO Jason Lemm as to where the third site may be. The other two sites have been submitted to WSCC for their approval. Charles is hoping that APC will work with him and assist in recruiting some volunteers.

Charles stated that there has been a submission under the Community Highways Scheme for a footpath from the George & Dragon to Bury Lane, early indications are that there is not enough land for the pavement.

GU advised that he had spoken to County Cllr Paul Marshall regarding setting up a meeting with WSCC and the SDNPA to discuss the issue as the road does not lend itself to encouraging walkers and cyclists which is one if the main aims of the SDNPA Local Plan.

Charles advised that when the A27 Arundel bypass gets built that there will be a weight limit placed on the B2139 to stop HGVs using the road.

GU thanked Charles for his presentation and for attending the meeting.

*Charles left the meeting at 8.10pm*

**3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

None

**4. AGREEMENT OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11TH JULY 2019**

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

**5. REPORT FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Paul Clarke advised that HDC are currently looking at housing numbers for the next 15 years, eight major sites are being considered which will have more than 1500 houses and then various minor sites.

Cllr Brian Donnelly advised that at the Parham PC meeting the chairman had advised that WSCC were looking to cancel their lease for Kithurst car park with effect from October 2020, the owner (Tim Hayward) has said that he would not be able to keep the car park open due to the legal liability issues, he is currently exploring other options with the SDNPA, however early indications were not looking favourable.

**6. DISCUSSION ON COMMUNITY SUPPORT – AMBERLEY PC AND AMBERLEY PCC**

Unfortunately, neither Rev Gerry Burgess or Melanie Edge were able to attend the meeting, so item is carried over to November PC meeting. Melanie asked for the following to be noted;

1. She has info on homeless services available in Worthing, she is planning to re-publicise these and the Streetlink details (which puts services in touch with rough sleepers) through the autumn
2. The PCC Development and Outreach Group (PEG) has set up a new social group for anyone in the parish who feels isolated. There has been publicity on Listserve. It’s called CAMEO (Come and Meet Each Other) and will meet monthly on the second Tuesday of the month. The first meeting was on 10th September from 1400-1530. The time may change, depending on feedback from people who attend. Tea, cake and chat, with some optional activities and occasional speakers. We are offering transport where needed (co-ordinated by Hazel Allinson).
3. The PCC of Amberley has found that people living in Newland Gardens can feel quite cut off and often don’t know what is going on in the village. Melanie wondered if it would be an idea to install a noticeboard.

JC thought that this had been discussed before, it was agreed to speak to Geoff Conlon to see if he could remember the outcome.

**7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**(a)** **Ham Piece** – The Clerk advised that she has a meeting with an archivist at Chichester County Records on 26th September to obtain copies of the title deeds.

**(b)** **Traffic Road Order on B2139** – the Clerk advised that she had received 45 support emails/letters for the reduction of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph from Quarry House to the far side of the football field, together with 3 objections, she is in the process of collating all the emails/letters and will shortly be taking photographs of the site to enable her to complete the Traffic Order online request form, the more evidence we have the better. Laura Rawnsley has also advised that there are some permanent speed strips just by the South Downs Way crossing, the Clerk is going to try and obtain data to assist with the application.

**(c)** **Rabbits in neighbouring fields to the recreation ground** – the Clerk has heard back from Nyetimber they have used a pest controller who has advised that a lot of the rabbits are coming from the field to the North of the recreation ground, they will continue to monitor and check their fencing is rabbit proof. The Clerk has also heard back from UKPN, who are currently trying to establish if they own the land around the sub-station or just the equipment, the Clerk has advised them that they do as we are also waiting for them to cut their hedge which border onto B2139.

**(d) Speeding along Rackham Road** – JC has met with Wendy & Sandie Guthrie to discuss further. Wendy & Sandie have canvassed residents who have provided emails of support for traffic calming or a reduction in the speed limit. For either of these, evidence of speeding would be required, the Clerk has spoken to PCSO Erica Baxter and she is shortly going to do a site survey along Rackham Road to establish areas where Community Speedwatch can be used.

**8. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**(a) Planning –**

The list of current planning applications is as follows;



PJC stated that the developers for Strawberry Villas are in communication with SDNPA, they have modified their proposal to reduce the number of dwellings from 15 to 14 which will allow for more greenery and planting. The Pickwick application is still being considered by SDNPA, they have stated that they will look at no more than 7 dwellings on the site which will need to include affordable housing, Highways are not keen and the landscape officer refused to comment as there is no mention of landscaping. There is also no mention of the Amberley Neighbourhood Plan.

PJC advised that APC have also strongly objected regarding the change of use of the barn on the High Titten campsite to a holiday let. The use of the site for camping by walkers and cyclists on the South Downs Way will now be impossible, as the owner intends the use of the campsite to be restricted to those who rent the accommodation. The original purpose of the campsite for ad-hoc use will therefore no longer be possible. Peter Cozens has written to Tim Slaney at SDNPA as he thinks the SDNPA should also review the nature of an application rather than just the size. This site is halfway along the South Downs Way so he feels they should take more notice.

**(b) Roads and Paths** – JC advised he had a meeting with Mike Norris (WSCC Highways Steward) who has written to UKPN asking them to cut their hedge along the B2139 or WSCC will cut and then charge them. The hedge by the Corner Cottage on the B2139 will be cut on September 24th. The drains that flooded in School Road are going to be jetted out. JC also advised that Nyetimber have replaced the bramble and hawthorn hedge along the footpath behind the castle with new fencing as sheep kept escaping, the footpath is now wider.

**c) Assets and Amenities** – HA advised that we are down 50 rabbits in the cricket field, the pest controller will be able to use ferrets shortly.

Unfortunately, Watersfield FC have decided not to use the football field this season which means APC have a shortfall in the rent we pay to Parham Estates for the lease of the field, we also pay for grass cutting which includes diesel and extra insurance costs. HA is going to email local football clubs to see if any would like to use the field.

**(d) Village Bus** – GC had submitted a report prior to the meeting advising that the trial bus journey to Storrington and Pulborough is going to be continued over the winter.

**(e) Amberley Neighbourhood Plan delivery** – TS advised that the main area of focus is the village car park, planning permission has now been granted. We are waiting on HDC for the lease which needs to be signed. Approximately £150,000 needs to be raised to fund the car park, of which £75,000 will hopefully come from SDNPA CIL funding – TS is trying to get an answer as to when the SDNPA planning committee will be considering applications. WSCC Crowd funding is also going to be used.

It was agreed that a ANP Delivery committee meeting was needed to discuss this more detail.

*Cllrs Brian Donnelly and Paul Clarke left the meeting at 9.25pm*

**9. FINANCIAL REPORT**

All the necessary documents were approved and signed. The financial statement for the period up to 12th September 2019 was produced and agreed.

The financial statement is as follows;



A review of spending was undertaken following a report sent to Councillors prior to the meeting, there has been some overspending in Hurst Cottages playground due to additional repairs but overall all is within budget.

The Clerk advised that she would be sending invites out for the Finance Committee meeting to discuss 2020/21 budget shortly.

**10. UPDATED FINANCIAL REGULATIONS – TO BE AGREED BY COUNCILLORS**

The Clerk advised that there were minimal changes. Council adopted the new financial regulations from September 2019.

*Item 11 moved up the agenda*

**12. DISCUSSION ON LOCAL BUSINESS NETWORKING EVENT** AR had sent some notes to Councillors prior to the meeting, with the main idea being to run a local business event to look at any issues local businesses have and to get them to collaborate to resolve them, she will canvas local businesses to see if they would be interested.

**13. INFORMATION ITEMS**

GU asked Councillors to review the A27 Arundel bypass routes and consultation. The Magenta route is a modified 5a route which APC supported last time, GU asked for Councillors to email him their decisions by the end of next week. PJC had attended one of the consultation meetings and was asked that the PC respond by completing the consultation document rather than sending a letter.

The Clerk advised that she attended a SALC run budget and precept planning course which was very useful.

The Clerk advised that there are new regulations coming into effect from 23rd September regarding accessibility of websites, APC’s website has been tested and will shortly have an accessibility statement added.

**14. CORRESPONDENCE AND REQUESTS FOR DONANTIONS**

There has been one request for a £100 donation from Age UK Horsham District to assist them in continuing to fund a Community Team Officer (three residents of Amberley have benefited from this support). RESOLVED - Councillors agreed donation of £100.

The current list of parishioner queries is as follows;



**15. EXTERNAL MEETINGS ATTENDED BY COUNCILLORS**

GU attended a Chairman’s Networking Day event run by SALC, he advised there was a presentation regarding Council’s responsibilities as an employer, consequently going forward GU or a Councillor will have more formal 6 monthly meetings with the Clerk.

**16. TO AGREE DATES OF 2020 MEETINGS**

It was agreed to meet on the second Thursday of every other month with the dates being; 9th January, 12th March, 14th May, 9th July, 10th September and 12th November.

**17. TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

14th November 2019 at 7.30pm.

GU closed the meeting at 9.50pm

Vicky Spiers – Clerk to Amberley Parish Council

17th September 2019