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Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held at Blackstone Pavilion, Blackstone Playing Fields, Woodmancote on Tuesday 12 March 2024, 7.30 p.m.

Present: WPC Cllr Dixon, Cllr Austin, Cllr Batchelor, Cllr Morris, Cllr R Noel, Cllr W Noel
Others Present: Cllr Mike Croker (HDC)

Cllr. Dixon noted that the meeting was being recorded and that CCTV was present in the room which could also be taking images.

2024-031 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Austin and Cllr Donald. Cllr Paul Linehan (WSSC) was absent.

2024 - 032 Meeting minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the WPC Ordinary Meeting on 13 February 2024 were RESOLVED subject to agreed amendments and signed by Cllr Dixon.

2024 - 033 Actions & Updates

033.1 – Blackstone Wastewater Treatment Works - Cllr Dixon updated the Council: He had emailed Sue Cobb at Southern Water several times with regard to the state of and mud on the road alongside the Wastewater Treatment Works and requested that residents are kept informed of Southern Water's plans for the Works. He had received a reply from Sue Cobb on 12 March saying that she was chasing this up and hoped to have more information for the Council very soon. Cllr Dixon agreed to keep pursuing this. Cllr R Noel agreed to contact Andrew Griffith MP about this too. Cllr Batchelor noted that there was a planning application notification at the Works for the installation of a motor control centre kiosk and requested that Cllr Dixon requests clarification about this from Sue Cobb.

033.2 – Footpath from A281 to Bylsborough House – the Clerk updated the Council: she had spoken to the landowner's daughter, Nina Hills, of Swains Farm Shop, and asked that the path is cleared of overgrowth as a matter of urgency. She agreed to investigate this and thought that it probably had not been done due to the wet weather. Cllr R Noel reported that a new footpath ranger is likely to be appointed and agreed to contact Cllr Paul Linehan to confirm this. It was agreed that the Clerk would follow up Mr Hills to ensure that the path is cleared.

033.3 – Bus shelter replacement – Cllr Austin had reported before the meeting that JD Fears would provide a quote for a new shelter by the time he returned from his break in six weeks’ time. Cllrs discussed possible alternatives. Cllr R Noel informed the Council that Ansty and Stapleford PC’s had a quote for a shelter of £4,400, but that a ‘smoking shelter’, as an alternative, would cost around £465. It was agreed to await the quote from Fears.

033.4 – Anti-litter signs – Further to correspondence with HDC regarding erecting temporary yellow and black ‘anti-litter’ signs (similar to those displayed by Worthing Town Council) Cllr R Noel reported that HDC had agreed to pay for these for WPC.

033.5 – Anti-fly-tipping posters - Cllr Morris has completed an anti-fly-tipping poster which she circulated at the meeting and confirmed that she would put it up on all the WPC noticeboards.

033.6 - Following an email from HDC regarding WPC’s precept increase being greater than 5%, it was agreed that the Clerk would respond by stating that the Council requires a larger percentage increase than for 2023/24 as it has two significant projects it needs to complete during the coming year - the replacement of its bus shelters and switching its SIDS from battery to solar-powered. The Clerk confirmed that this had been actioned.

033.7 - It had been agreed to invite a member of Henfield Fire Service to give a presentation at the WPC Annual Parish Meeting on 9 April 2024. Cllr R Noel confirmed that he had arranged this. It was agreed to start the meeting at 6pm for WPC business and then to have the APM at 7pm. The Clerk would produce and post the APM poster. Cllr Morris pointed out that the members list of Councillors needed to be updated on the noticeboards for 2024 and the Clerk agreed to do this.

2024-034 Public participation

There were no members of the public present. The Clerk confirmed that she had received an enquiry from a member of the public regarding large vehicles driving along Blackstone Lane – see agenda item 13.

2024-035 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest from Cllrs with regard to items on the agenda.

2024-036 Reports from outside bodies

036.1 - West Sussex County Council: Cllr Linehan was not present at the meeting and submitted no report.

036.2 – Horsham District Council – Cllr Croker updated the Council

- Food waste collection dates had been confirmed as: Commercial, by 31 March 2025; Residential, 31 March 2026; Plastic film, 31 March 2027. HDC intends to acquire 11 new waste trucks with the help of Government funding, but an additional HDC contribution will be needed. No definitive costs available to date. HDC’s carbon footprint will increase due to the additional trucks while WSCC footprint will reduce as it has relatively more to recycle.
- Peer Review Governance report is still awaited. The outcome of the Planning peer review is still unclear: the ambition being to reduce frequency of meetings, improve training and reduce the number of costly appeals.
- Local Economic Partnerships no longer exist and WSCC has taken over this role.
- Infrastructure – funding for The Capitol Theatre refurbishment at £10.7 million has been approved. HDC is looking to sell The Drill Hall to Lifespring Church, and negotiations are ongoing.

2024-037 Planning

037.1 DC/24/0207 - The Squirrels, Henfield Road, Woodmancote. Construction of a pitched roof rear extension. The Council had *no objection* to the application but expressed concern that the planning application did not include a bat survey.

037.2 Late applications:

DC/24/0106 - Blackstone Gate, Farm House, Henfield Road, Albourne BN6 9JJ - Application to confirm the change of use of residential annexe to a separate single dwelling (Lawful Development Certificate - Existing). Brought back from previous meeting. The Council had *no objection*.

APP/Z3825/C/24/3338558

EN/22/0085 – Fenlea, Furners Lane, Woodmancote BN5 9HX - Alleged Breach: Without planning permission a. The material change of use of the Land from a mixed use of agriculture and the storage of a static caravan and a lorry body to a mixed use of agriculture and the open air storage of tyres, wheel hubs, building materials, metal containers, plant, equipment and vehicles normally associated with a civil engineers/highway maintenance contractors depot, including, but not limited to plastic piping, cable drums, manhole covers and frames, road traffic safety barriers, road cones, temporary road signs, temporary metal fencing panels and other miscellaneous paraphernalia, and waste materials. The unauthorised laying of hardstanding at the north end of the Land Site. An appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against the Council's service of an Enforcement Notice.

Cllr R Noel raised the issue of increasing rubbish and containers being stacked at the site. The Council agreed to support HDC's enforcement notice, and not submit any comment.

2024-038 Planning update

038.1 Planning decisions received as per the supporting paper were noted and received as read.

2024-039 Blackstone Playing Field: Please note that item 9 was held under the 'Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 S.1(2). Which excludes members of the public due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

038.1 To discuss any matters relating to the leases of a confidential nature and associated costs.

2024-040 Finance/Payments

040.1 Reconciled accounts – The reconciled account for January 2024 (brought back from the previous meeting) and February to 4 March 2024 were approved.

040.2 The Schedule of payments were approved as follows:

07/03/2024	Elizabeth Trundle	£8.10	Mileage to noticeboards
12/03/2024	Elizabeth Trundle	£6.22	Mileage to meeting
12/03/2024	Elizabeth Trundle	£6.00	Working from home allowance
05/03/2024	WSCC £516.68		Salary and oncosts
07/03/2024	Elizabeth Trundle	£5.99	Printer paper
07/03/2024	Elizabeth Trundle	£4.25	WD40 for noticeboard locks

2024-041 Environmental issues

Cllr Morris confirmed that there were no current updates but that she and Cllr Batchelor would continue to engage with Henfield Bio-diversity events.

2024-042 Training for the Clerk and RFO and related costs

The Clerk updated Cllrs with the current cost of £450 for the CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration) course. She stressed that as she has already completed the training sessions before joining the Council, WPC would not need to pay for these.

The Clerk requested that a decision about training be deferred until she was in a position to accurately assess how many hours the role of Clerk and RFO is currently taking. It was agreed that the Clerk would take a log of working hours over the next month and report back to the Council, and to defer making a decision about CiLCA training until September 2024.

It was also agreed that the Clerk would research Excel training costs and report back at the next meeting.

2024-043 Correspondence

The Clerk reported that she had received an email from a resident regarding large vehicles driving along Blackstone Lane and the state of the road with increasing potholes. The Clerk had replied and signposted the resident to the WSCC pothole compensation portal and Cllr Linehan as the WPC WSCC representative.

It was agreed that the Clerk would follow up with a further email requesting that the resident took pictures of the areas of concern and also noting that it was not possible to restrict the size of vehicles in a rural area where farming equipment is required.

The Clerk confirmed that she had received confirmation from Michelle Webber of Mulberry Associates that the internal audit is booked in for 13 June 2024.

2024-044 Items for next agenda/to note

Cllr R Noel reported that he will be organising a local Henfield Neighbourhood Watch Committee.

2024-045 Date of next meeting

9 March 2024