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Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting of Woodmancote Parish Council (WPC) held at The Pavilion, Blackstone Lane, Blackstone, Henfield BN5 9TA on 09 July 2024, 7.30pm

Present: Cllr R Noel, Cllr Austin, Cllr Batchelor, Cllr Dixon, Cllr Donald & Cllr Morris.
Others Present: Cllr Croker, The Clerk and 1 member of the public.

2024 - 101 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr W Noel and Cllr Linehan.

2024 – 102 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest from councillors regarding items on the agenda.

2024 – 103 Public participation

A member of the public pointed out the poor condition of local footpaths and that no one seemed to be doing anything about them. He had personally spent five hours working to clear one bridleway which was impassable. Cllr R Noel noted that there is a lack of West Sussex County Council (WSCC) manpower to undertake the work; but there is a designated footpath warden to oversee the footpaths and agreed to call WSCC to get the work done. Cllr Morris agreed to forward the relevant email address for the member of the public present to Cllr Noel so that he could update the member of the public once the information was available.

2024 – 104 Minutes

The Minutes of the WPC Ordinary Meeting on 11 June and the WPC Extraordinary Meeting on 27 June 2024 were RESOLVED subject to the agreed amendments.

2024 – 105 Action updates from previous minutes

105.1 Blackstone Wastewater Treatment Works - Cllr Dixon reported that the MTS contractors at the Works had agreed to repair the verges, road and entrance to the works from 11 July 2024 and that this would take two to four days.

105.2 Footpath from A281 to Bylsborough House – Cllr R Noel reported that Mick Hills of Swains Farm Shop had repaired the fence alongside the entrance to the footpath. Cllr Noel agreed to follow up surface cutting of the path by WSCC.

105.3 Bus shelter replacements – Cllr R Noel confirmed that WPC would receive £4,320 S106 money towards the replacement bus shelters. Three quotations would be required; it was agreed that Cllr Austin would provide up-to-date quotations from JD Fears and Cllr R Noel would obtain two more from reputable suppliers.

Cllr R Noel also reported that additional funds for the playground might be available via Horsham District Council (HDC) 'People's Budget' grant of up to £5,000; designed specifically for residents aged under 25 years of age.

105.4 Potholes along Blackstone and Bramlands Lanes – The Clerk reported that she had spoken with Cllr Linehan regarding repair work of stretches of road between 300m and 1000m. He has since confirmed that funding would be available through Lot 7 (Infrastructure Improvements and Carriageway Structural Patching) and that this work would be carried out during the financial year 2024-5. Cllr Linehan had agreed to keep the Clerk updated with repair works and dates

105.5 Blackstone Playing Fields dog fouling and installation of a dog bin – Cllr R Noel confirmed that the new dog waste bin had now been installed at the entrance to the playing field from the car park, and that he would discuss with HDC regarding invoicing Sussex Cricket directly for weekly collection costs.

105.6 Adopting Councillor .gov email accounts – The Clerk explained the requirement to adopt individual Councillor .gov email accounts to ensure an extra level of security for WPC business. She had received one quotation from Vision ITC for £20/year for each email address. She explained that she would obtain two more quotations from Government accredited providers and attend a Parish Helper/Cabinet Office run seminar on 11 July focussing on .gov accounts and how to obtain funding to switch.

2024 – 106 Reports from outside bodies

106.1 WSCC – Cllr Linehan had given his apologies.

106.2 HDC – Cllr Croker and Cllr R Noel updated the Council:

The general election on 04 July 2024 had taken a lot of HDC time. There were two additional areas of work to note: The People's Budget – public funding for community projects; and two reviews are underway - a Planning Review and a HDC Constitution Review – and these would be reported at the end of the year.

2024 – 107 Planning

107.1 There were no new planning applications to discuss.

107.2 There were no late planning applications to discuss.

107.3 There had been no consultee comments submitted by WPC since the last meeting.

107.4 Planning update – It was noted that the enforcement order against Fenlea had been dropped by HDC on the condition that the appellant would not apply for costs.

2024 – 108 Finance and Payments

108.1 Reconciled accounts - The reconciled accounts for June 2024 were approved.

108.2 Payments – The following payments were approved:

24.06.24 Talk Talk ,£4.90, Mobile Phone – PAID

30.06.24 Unity Bank Trust service charge, £18.00, Bank Charge – PAID

04.06.24 Roger Noel, £20.00, Meeting Room Charge
14.06.24 Elizabeth Trundle, £8.11, Mileage (notices)
05.07.24 Elizabeth Trundle, £8.11, Mileage (notices)
27.06.24 Elizabeth Trundle, £6.22, Mileage (meeting)
09.07.24 Elizabeth Trundle, £6.22, Mileage (meeting)
09.07.24 Elizabeth Trundle, £6.00, Home Working
27.06.24 Mulberry Services Ltd, £370.50, 2023-24 Audit Charge
04.07.24 HDC, £119.70, Dog Bin Emptying Charge
08.07.24 WSCC, £683.13, Clerk Salary ref; 8001771919

2024 – 109 Blackstone Playing Fields

Cllr R Noel reported that the new playground would be installed on 14 September 2024. It was agreed that Cllrs Dixon, Austin, Morris and R Noel would collectively dismantle the old playground on 3 August at 10am. Cllr R Noel suggested that WPC postponed the Woodmancote and Blackstone Fete until Summer 2025 when it could be a launch pad for raising funds for a new village hall. This was agreed with the proviso that WPC consults residents beforehand to confirm that they would like a new hall. If so, then a Village Hall Fundraising Committee would be established.

Cllr R Noel circulated an edited version of the residents' communication leaflet. The copy was agreed with the inclusion of Councillors' .gov email addresses once these had been set up. It was agreed that Cllrs would approve a printing quotation for 250 x A5 leaflets via email and that the leaflets would be distributed during August.

2024 – 111 Conversion of battery-run Speed Indicator Devices (SIDS) to solar power.

The Clerk reported that she had emailed for a quote from the original supplier but had not yet had a response. Cllr Dixon pointed out that the Council would also need two extra mounting pole. The Clerk agreed to investigate this and obtain a quotation.

2024 – 112 Environmental issues

112.1 Bio-diversity Sub Committee – Cllr Morris confirmed that there was no update at present.

112.2 Climate Action Plan – Cllr R Noel confirmed that there was no update at present.

2024 – 113 Correspondence

The Clerk drew Cllrs attention to a recent email received from a resident, whose property backs on to the Blackstone Playing Fields, pointing out overhanging oak tree branches on to her property and requesting a tree management plan. Cllr Dixon suggested that this might be a responsibility of Sussex Cricket as leaseholders and agreed to check the lease. If not, then it was agreed to suggest to the resident that it would be perfectly permissible for her to cut back the tree as she wishes.

Cllr R Noel also commented on the oak trees on the road which Sussex Cricket had mentioned. He agreed to write to WSCC Highways Department to arrange to have these cut back.

2024 – 114 Items for next agenda/to note

Cllr R Noel noted that Sussex Cricket would be donating £10,000 towards the new Parish playground in the form of a grant, and that he would remind Ian Waring of this. It was agreed that Cllr R Noel would be added as a Unity Trust Bank signatory.

Cllr Batchelor raised the issue of tyres being dumped in Cutlers Brook on Blackstone Lane. It was agreed that WPC Cllrs would liaise regarding a date for members to remove the tyres so that HDC could take them away after the first August Bank Holiday.

2024 – 115 Date of next meeting

10 September 2024

The meeting closed at 9.19pm

Cllr R Noel – Chair

Woodmancote Parish Council