



WOODMANCOTE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held at Blackstone Playing Field Pavilion on Tuesday 13th
August 2019 at 7.30 p.m.
(Members of the Public were invited to attend)

Mrs L Bannister – Clerk to the Council
48 Titmus Drive Tilgate Crawley West Sussex RH10 5ER
Tel: 07921 822869
Email: woodmancoteparishcouncil@gmail.com

Present: WPC Cllrs. Broucke (Chair), P. Williams, D. Austin, C. Dixon, M. Batchelor and W. Noel
L. Bannister (Clerk)

Others Present: HDC Cllrs. M. Croker & R. Noel
WSCC Cllr. D. Barling
8 members of the public

Cllr. Broucke made members of the public aware that the meeting was being recorded by CCTV, which was outside of the control of Woodmancote Parish Council.

2019-140. Apologies

Apologies were given from Cllr. Prangnell. These were accepted.

2019-141. Minutes of the last meeting held on the 9th July 2019

These were approved by Council and duly signed by Cllr. Broucke.

2019-142. Action from previous Minutes

The Clerk reported that the website is now ready and will come forward for approval at the next meeting.

Cllr. Prangnell has been accepted as a signatory.

Cllr. Broucke reported that the pavements along the A281 by Woodmancote Hall have been strimmed, and the pavement from the Church to Swains have been flailed back at an amended price as agreed by email.

2019-143. Matters concerning Members

Cllr. Broucke informed Members that this Item was added for Members to bring forward any matters that they might be concerned about. Issues were raised as follows:

Cllr. Austin has been approached by residents from Woodmancote and members of neighbouring parish councils asking questions about items from the previous Minutes. They are concerned that the Chair has not declared something, but was not specific about what that could be.

Cllr. Williams was concerned that non-Members keep interrupting Council meetings. Cllr. Broucke confirmed that all questions should come via the Chair when the Meeting is in session.

Cllr. Dixon made the following points:

- The area being targeted by Mayfield was first published in January 2019 in the SHELAA housing report.
- At a meeting on 14th May Cllr. Broucke made two Declarations of Interest, namely:
 - As a tenant of land owned by Mayfield he has a pecuniary Interest in this matter. This is as a result of his landlord selling the land to Mayfield.
 - He owns land in the Parish that will be subject to planning applications going forwards.
- Cllr. Dixon was unable to attend the meeting on 14th May, so became aware of the declaration when reading the meeting Minutes. Cllr. Dixon found the declarations to be unclear and therefore sought clarification at the next WPC meeting on 11th June. At the meeting Cllr. Dixon asked Cllr. Broucke the direct question 'is your land included in Mayfield'. The response from Cllr. Broucke was 'no'.
- The Chairman then attended the Inter-Parish meeting on 26th June and a meeting at HDC on 5th July. Cllr. Dixon questioned if there was, at this time, an undeclared conflict of interest that could have prevented Cllr. Broucke from attending these meetings?
- Cllr. Broucke phoned Cllr. Dixon on 5th June to inform him of the declaration he was planning to make at the next WPC meeting on 9th June, knowing Cllr. Dixon would be arriving late to that meeting, the call was an appreciated courtesy. During the call Cllr. Dixon asked Cllr. Broucke if he has specifically asked Mayfield not to include his land. Cllr. Broucke replied that he had not asked Mayfield to exclude his land, but had not taken an option with them. Cllr. Dixon questioned that this inaction could amount to tacit approval and made this point to Cllr. Broucke during the call.
- Whilst Cllr. Dixon was unable to be at the start of the WPC meeting on 9th June he understands that Cllr. Broucke made it quite clear that he had not approved his land being included in Mayfield. Cllr. Dixon questioned if in fact Cllr. Broucke's inaction amounted to tacit approval.
- The next Inter-Parish meeting was on 1st August. On the morning of 1st August Cllr. Broucke, believing the meeting had in fact been held the night before phoned Cllr. Dixon to enquire about the content of that meeting. Cllr. Dixon informed Cllr. Broucke the meeting was not until that evening. Cllr. Broucke then phoned Cllr. Dixon on the 2nd August, but Cllr. Dixon missed his call. Cllr. Dixon said upon reflection he felt a little uncomfortable about these calls given Cllr. Broucke's situation and the subject of the Inter-Parish meeting. Cllr. Broucke countered that this phone call had been agreed and Cllr. Dixon accepted this fact.
- Cllr. Dixon felt that in the past Cllr. Broucke had done a lot of good for the Parish but it was now time for him to stand down.

Cllr. Batchelor said that there are still some concerns about how much transparency there has been. If this is not answered sufficiently it will taint other decisions down the line for any other development in the Agenda. There needs to be trust and accountability about everything from all Members.

The Clerk advised the following:

- The Sussex Association of Local Councils has advised that the Chair should be mindful of public perception and follow his instincts, and it is their personal opinion that the Chair should leave the room during Mayfield discussions and decisions.

- The planning application or Strategic Housing and Land Availability Assessment for Mayfield Market Town has not come to Woodmancote Parish Council for a decision yet. Cllr. Broucke is obliged to declare an Interest in items on the Agenda.
- The Clerk advised the Chair that for transparency he should declare his Interests at every meeting, and leave the room during each discussion regarding Mayfield Market Town.
- No members of the public have come forward to the Clerk with complaints or questions about the Chair. The Clerk reminded Members and members of the public that they can get in touch with any concerns, complaints or questions and she will try to help or put forward their issue to Council.
- Councils should be cautious about acting as lobby groups against development.

The Clerk noted that as Members have not come directly to the Clerk with these issues it has made her job difficult. The Clerk reminded Members that she is there to listen to issues and can advise on legal aspects and best practice if necessary. This extends to members of the public; they can contact the Clerk with any concerns. The Clerk confirmed that to date, no members of the public have been in contact with the Clerk regarding Cllr. Broucke.

Cllr. Broucke did not agree that by not objecting to his land being included in the Mayfield Market Town plans this was tacit approval. Cllr. Broucke encouraged Members to make a proposal about how to move forward.

Cllr. Austin read out an excerpt from the previous Minutes regarding the comment proposed on Henfield's Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr. Austin felt this was proof that Cllr. Broucke was in support of Mayfield Market Town.

Cllr. Austin was concerned that neighbouring parishes are already resisting Mayfield Market Town, and there has been no action taken by Woodmancote Parish Council. The Clerk recommended that Cllr. Austin make a proposal for action to be taken so that it can be added to the next Agenda – no action has been taken yet because nothing has been proposed by Members.

Cllr. Broucke stated that a libellous email had been sent to many Woodmancote residents by Cllr. Austin's wife, and he was concerned that his character had been defamed by this. Cllr. Austin disagreed that this was a statement. Cllr. Williams read out the email and supported Cllr. Broucke's claim.

Cllr. Dixon was concerned that Cllr. Broucke's Interests harm the public perception of the Council.

Cllr. Broucke again asked Members if they had a proposal for a way to move forward. Some Members suggested that a proposal is made after members of the public had their say. Cllr. Broucke felt this wasn't fair unless all members of the public were made aware and invited to attend.

Cllr. Dixon suggested holding a secret ballot to find out where everyone stands without the awkwardness of publicly stating where they stand.

Cllr. Broucke asked Cllr. Barling if he had any advice to offer.

Cllr. Barling advised that if Mayfield Market Town is discussed he should declare an Interest in this and leave the room during discussions.

Cllr. Barling encouraged the Clerk to read the constitution of the Council to see if it would allow a proposal at this stage. The Clerk confirmed that the Standing Orders state that decisions must be made on items on the Agenda, and proposals must be made and seconded before a vote can happen.

Cllr. Barling hopes that the issues can be resolved and the Meeting can return to being amicable.

2019-144. Declarations of Interest from Members in respect of any items in the Agenda

Cllr. Broucke declared an Interest in planning application DC/19/1489 as the applicant.

Cllrs. Batchelor and Dixon declared an Interest in matters relating to Woodmancote Hall as trustees of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

2019-145. Open Forum

Members of the public were made aware that due to the Data Protection Act, members of the public may be recorded as being present at the meeting, and that the room is monitored by CCTV (which is not under the control of WPC).

The meeting was adjourned to allow members of the public to speak

Cllr. Broucke announced that Richard Flitney from Blackstone had sadly passed away and there would be a funeral tomorrow at 11.45 at Woodhouse Farm.

Mr David Lewis put his name forward to be a Councillor. He has a background in finance and used to be in the army. Co-option will be added to the next Agenda.

Christine Warren had been asked to attend the meeting as the former Clerk to WPC and on behalf of the Chairs of Shermanbury and Henfield Parish Councils and the former Chair of WPC (Peter Bates – who apologised that he was not able to attend). They are concerned that WPC is not taking enough action and that the Chair should resign due to the conflict of interests.

Peter Jenkins called for the Council to work together and for the Chair to step down due to conflict of interests.

Lynne Russell lives next door to the proposal for Mayfield and asked that Council wait to know and understand the facts before any decisions are made.

Cllr. Williams added that a comment can't be made until there is something to comment on.

Cllr. Roger Noel made the following statements:

- The survey of Woodmancote Hall completed by Sussex Surveyors showed that the cost of renovation would be over £300,000. The Parochial Church Council has made the decision to sell Woodmancote Hall so the renovation will not go ahead. A member of the public has offered a building to use as a community centre, so Cllr. Noel calls for the CIO to remain open.
- Cllr. Noel was suffering with extreme fatigue during the last WPC meeting, and inaccurately agreed that Cllr. Broucke had declared all of his Interests as explained by HDC'S Monitoring Officer Sharon Evans. Sharon Evans has told Cllr. Noel that she will be keeping a close eye on the conduct of Members of Woodmancote Parish Council, and has made the following points in writing in an email that was sent to Cllrs. Noel, Croker and Barling:
 1. Cllr. Broucke agreed in his meeting with Sharon Evans to ask Anna (a member of the public attending the meeting) who she was working for and in what capacity as she is attending all meetings in the local ward and HDC planning meetings. Anna confirmed that she attends 9 Parish meetings as well as planning meetings at HDC, WSCC and Mid Sussex District Council.

- Cllr. Noel told Cllr. Broucke to ask Anna to confirm if she attends the meetings in a paid capacity.
2. Cllr. Broucke reported that Sharon Evans had told him that putting some coins in a pot towards LAMBS (Locals Against Mayfield Building Sprawl) would be a declaration of Interests. Cllr. Noel stated that the Clerk agreed with this statement. Cllr. Noel reported that Sharon Evans says that she did not say this.
 3. Cllr. Broucke did not fully explain to the committee his land interests. During a telephone conversation with Cllr. Noel, Cllr. Broucke declared that he owns 23 acres of land within the proposed Mayfield area. Cllr. Noel believes this is a conservative estimate, and pointed out to the Meeting that this could be worth several million pounds if the Mayfield proposal is approved.
- Cllr. Broucke reportedly stated on the telephone to Cllr. Noel that one of the Members of WPC has a home that can only be accessed over Cllr. Broucke's land. Cllr. Broucke allegedly said that he would remove drainage rights from that Member if his wife did not retract her statement regarding Cllr. Broucke.

The Clerk asked Cllr. Noel to send his speech to the Clerk if he wanted it minuted 'word for word'.

Cllr. Noel requested that Cllr. Broucke address these points. Cllr. Broucke responded as follows:

- Cllr. Broucke respects Cllr. Noel for what he has brought to the Parish, but feels that Cllr. Noel has been the instigator to a lot of bad feeling in the Council.
- Cllr. Broucke denied that he said anything about drainage rights as he does not own the access to these for any Members.
- Cllr. Broucke asked Anna if she is attending the meetings in any paid capacity. Anna confirmed that she works as a freelance researcher and has been working on behalf of Mayfield since November.
- As far as Cllr. Broucke is aware he has been acting in the best interests of the Parish.

Cllr. Broucke declared the following Interests:

- Cllr. Broucke is a tenant of Mayfield although that is coming to an end this month.
- Cllr. Broucke has mowed grass on Mayfield's land, taken crop from their land and cut their hedge.
- Cllr. Broucke owns 23.7 (approximately) acres within the land proposed for development, and he has not made an agreement with Mayfield to sell the land to them. There is no option agreement.

Cllr. Wendy Noel confirmed with Cllr. Broucke that he is a freeholder of 23.7 acres and a tenant of more. Cllr. Broucke confirmed this and added that he took a hay crop off of approximately 27 acres.

- Cllr. Broucke did not know the land that he rents had been sold to Mayfield until it was crop time.

Cllr. Wendy Noel confirmed with Cllr. Broucke that he has not told Mayfield whether or not his land could be included. Cllr. Broucke confirmed this. Cllr. Noel asked why some land was not included in the Mayfield plan. Cllr. Broucke believes it was because Mayfield were told that they could not include it. Cllr. Broucke reported that he has been on the farm since 1964 and his family has been in Woodmancote for 3 or 4 generations.

Cllr. Austin confirmed that Cllr. Broucke does not have any controlling rights over his water connection.

Cllr. Broucke advised Members to call for vote on his appointment as Chairman if that is what they want.

The meeting resumed

2 members of the public left the meeting

2019-146. Reports from other Authorities:

146.1. Horsham District Council

Cllr. Croker reported that HDC is sifting through 500 odd sites for their Local Plan Review. One of the things they are looking at is how deliverable they are, including the ownership.

The Novartis site has come up for a planning decision recently. Officers were minded to refuse this. Due to the potential financial implications, this application will be decided at Committee level.

Cllr. Broucke asked if the decision on strategic sites had been delayed until February. Cllrs. Croker and Noel were unable to confirm this.

Cllr. Williams asked how HDC would know ownership of land. This can be found out through a search of the Land Registry.

146.2. West Sussex County Council

Cllr. Barling reported as follows:

WSSCC will have a funding gap in 2021 which they will need to address. This will have an effect on their non-statutory services. The Highways budget had to be cut by £8000 for next year and this will have an effect on parishes. It helps that Highways are letting roadsides grow at the moment as that is good for carbon reduction and insect life.

WSSCC aim to make council services carbon neutral by 2030. There are lots of plans in place for this.

Cllr. Barling will be going on a tour of soft sand sites with potential. The closest to Woodmancote is Ham Farm at Steyning, although this site is controversial.

Cllr. Barling stated that he is opposed to the Mayfield Market Town proposal, and would prefer development next to existing settlements. This is his personal view and he has not attended any meetings regarding Mayfield because he had already formed that view.

Cllr. Barling regrets the discussion earlier in the meeting as he has always enjoyed attending WPC meetings.

Cllr. Broucke asked about the negative report from the Inspector for the Fire Service. Cllr. Barling said it wasn't as bad as reported in the press, and the biggest issue was the culture of bullying. More funding has been put into the service to address the issues. There was a serious fire in Steyning recently, which showed the value of retaining local stations.

Cllr. Roger Noel added that he attended a site visit at Old Dairy, West Cottage with the planning officer. This will be approved by recommendation of the planning officer. The second application will be resubmitted with a different plan.

2019-147. Planning

127.1. DC/19/1489 Woodhouse Farm, Wheatsheaf Road

Cllr. Broucke answered the following questions about this application:

- Is this an application for 3 extra houses? No, they have just been changed to new builds instead of a barn conversion. The application has changed so that the homes are no longer overlooking neighbours.

- What will happen to the barn? It will be pulled down.
- What will happen with the other part of the land? This will become gardens.

Cllr. Broucke left the room and Cllr. Dixon took over as Chair

It was RESOLVED to comment on this application as follows:-

‘Woodmancote Parish Council does not object to this application but would ask that the following conditions are added:

- That the agricultural building is demolished.
- That electric charging points are added.
- That a plan for water services is made so that water pressure for the neighbours is not affected.
- That a plan for foul sewage is made.
- That provision is made for cycle parking.’

Cllr. Roger Noel left the meeting

Cllr. Broucke returned to the meeting and resumed as Chair

147.2. Applications received since publication of the Agenda

None.

2019-148. Planning updates

The following planning decisions have been made:

DC/19/0947 Two Hoots Furners Lane – refused

DC/19/0683 Granary Cottage, Paynesfield – permitted

DC/19/1121 Glenard Farm, Henfield Road – permitted

DC/19/0898 Bos Barn – refused

2019-149. Blackstone Playing Fields

149.1. Lease

The solicitor has explained that the area that WPC would like to retain rights over can be excluded from the lease to Sussex Cricket with their agreement. Part of this land is subject to a possessory title application, and there is some risk in carrying out work on this land during the first ten years following registration as it remains vulnerable to challenge.

WPC understood the risk and **RESOLVED** that they were happy to proceed with the lease on this basis.

The solicitor recommended involving a surveyor who is very familiar with Land Registry plans to carve out the land required. The Clerk will get some quotes from surveyors for the next meeting.

Cllr. Broucke can recommend someone who would charge around £400-£1000.

149.2. New sign proposal

The sign was approved with a green stripe.

149.3. Other

David Bowden from Sussex Cricket has requested a meeting with Cllr. Broucke to discuss the entrance gateways to the ground. A date will be agreed for this.

2019-150. Ground sockets for Speed Indicator Device

The following quotes have been received:

Wilbar Associates - £3135 plus VAT

Balfour Beatty – £2238 plus VAT

MSF - £4501 inc VAT

The Clerk will query with WSCC why these quotes are so much higher than theirs.

2019-151. Application for Community Highway Scheme – Layby on A281

Highways cannot support the application to create a pavement around the back of the layby because the ditch is not maintained by them and they would prefer to retain an open ditch.

They will process the application on the basis that the layby will be closed.

Cllr. Barling advised Council to focus on road safety issues in the application.

2019-152. Footpaths/pavements

A resident has sent an email thanking Council for clearing the pavement to Henfield.

Cllr. Williams confirmed that Public Rights of Way 3190 and 2540 are unpassable.

2 members of the public left the meeting

The Clerk has been contacted by the Clerk of Fulking Parish Council, who are interested in working with WPC to improve the footpath to Henfield.

2019-153. Speed Indicator Device update

Cllr. Pragnell will download the data from the device soon.

2019-154. Response to Henfield Parish Council's questions re. Mayfield Market Town

Cllr. Broucke left room and Cllr. Dixon took over as Chairman

The following questions were received from the Chairman of Henfield Parish Council on behalf of the Inter-Parish Group:

1 – What are agreed housing numbers for each Parish for the current Plan period to 2031 (taken from your Neighbourhood Plan numbers) and what is the projected growth number in total dwellings since the last census in 2011?

2 – How many dwellings have been given planning permission (committed) for each Parish during the last 8-10 years what is the growth since the last census in 2011?

3 – What are each parishes major concerns about a proposal to build 7,000 on the proposed Mayfield site. Please list up to five main reasons.

It was RESOLVED to respond as follows:

1 – WPC did not have any agreed housing numbers for its Neighbourhood Plan. Historically, Woodmancote has had one average home built per year and this is expected to continue the same in the future.

2 – The Clerk will get the data for this.

3 - The potential loss of green spaces, the unknown impact of development on infrastructure, flooding, transport, traffic, biodiversity and the environment.

Cllr. Barling left the meeting

Cllr. Broucke returned to the meeting and resumed as Chair

2019-155. Woodmancote Hall

This was covered at item 145 above.

It was noted that the hall will be a loss to the parish.

Revd Doick has committed that the Church will refund money spent by the CIO.

2019-156. Finance/Payment

156.1. Reconciled accounts & bank statement

These were agreed by Council and signed by Cllr. Batchelor.

156.2. Interim Internal Audit

It was agreed not to go ahead with this.

156.3. Payments:-

It was **RESOLVED** to pay the following:-

- a. WSCC – Invoice for Clerk’s salary for June – £343.10
- b. The Sussex Sign Company – payment in advance for signs (agree fixed delivery first) - £541.18
- c. Information Commissioner’s Office – Annual fee - £40
- d. Clerk’s expenses - £85.32

Cheques were signed by Cllr. Williams and the Clerk.

2019-157. Correspondence/meetings

157.1. Inter-Parish Group meeting

Adur Research Group has been instructed to report on transport and flooding. This is completely independent and has no association with Locals Against Mayfield Building Sprawl.

The Group wanted information on heritage information. Cllr. Austin does not believe there are any listed buildings or heritage assets that would be affected by flooding, although it was noted that Chess Barn and Catsland Farm could be vulnerable.

Tidal effects will also be investigated.

157.2. South Downs National Park Local Plan

HDC has advised that if there are any policies in the Woodmancote Parish Neighbourhood Plan that do not conform to this, they will no longer be valid.

The SDNPA is holding a parish workshop to explain the plan. Cllrs. Dixon and Noel will attend.

157.3. Statement of Community Involvement consultation

This has been received.

157.4. Letter from Parochial Church Council

This was covered by Cllr. Roger Noel.

157.5. Inter-Parish Meeting

This will be held on Thursday 5th September 7pm. Cllr. Williams queried why Locals Against Mayfield Building Sprawl were invited to the meeting.

2019-158. Other business

Action in Rural Sussex would like to get views from parishes that have made Neighbourhood Plans. Cllr. Austin would be happy to attend one of their meetings.

Cllr. Broucke asked Councillors how many of them wanted him to resign. Cllr. Broucke would consider it if asked to resign. Members were unwilling to answer, preferring to discuss it at the next meeting instead.

2019-159. Date of next meeting

This will be on Tuesday 10th September 2019 at 7.30 pm. This will be held at Blackstone Pavilion.

The meeting closed at 10.10 pm