

# Wisborough Green Parish Council

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Date: Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Present: Mr P Drummond (PD) (Chairman), Mr A Jackson (AJ), Mrs S Overington (SO), Mr M Newell (MN), Mr S Rollinson (SR), Mr M Watson (MW)

Apologies: Mr A Burbridge (AB), Mr H True (HT)

In Attendance: Mrs L Davies, Clerk  
Cllr Gareth Evans, District Councillor

Members of Public: 11

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the meeting was held online via Zoom that was permitted under The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020. The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.45pm and welcomed all. It was explained that the meeting would be recorded for minute preparation only, and the recording then deleted. Members of the public would be on mute and permitted to speak during public questions only.

1. Apologies for Absence: Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Burbridge and Mr True. The Chairman advised that he had received an email of resignation from Mrs Dandy due to work commitments at this time. The statutory process to recruit another councillor would be started.
2. Election of Chairman: Mr Drummond invited members to propose or nominate for the role of Chairman. Mr Drummond was proposed by Mr Jackson, seconded by Mrs Overington. Mr Drummond confirmed that he was willing to stand. As there were no further nominations, he was unanimously elected as Chairman. 'A Declaration of Acceptance of Office' to be completed. Thanks extended to Mr Drummond for continuing in this position.
3. Election of Vice-Chairman: The Chairman invited members to propose or nominate for the role of Vice-Chairman. Mr Jackson was nominated by Mr Drummond, seconded by Mr Rollinson. Mr Jackson confirmed that he was willing to stand and as there were no further nominations, was therefore elected. A 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office' to be completed.
4. Declaration of Members' Interests: Living close and on the A272, MN and SR both declared an interest in the motorbike speed and noise concerns.
5. Minutes of the Last Meeting: The Minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020 were approved as a correct record.
6. District/County Councillor Update:

### District Councillor (In attendance from 7.45 until 9.50 pm)

- Cllr Evans continued to support the Covid-19 hubs. Fortunately, it appeared that the number of volunteers outweighed those in need.
- Chichester District Council (CDC) continued to work hard to solve issues as they arose during this unprecedented time. As mentioned previously, District Councillors had access to a special hotline email so any matters of concern should be forwarded to him.
- A resident in the ward was working tirelessly to make scrubs to support carers within the District. Donations had been made to Petworth Cottage Hospital and Loxwood Surgery, and it was now the intention to support The Royal Surrey. The project was promoted on Facebook.

- The Co-op application in Loxwood was finally heard at the Virtual Planning Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May. The decision was to permit with a contribution for social affordable housing, which had now been paid.
- CDC had now resumed formal meetings such as Full Council, Cabinet and Committee, using Zoom. Members of the public who would like to speak at a planning committee meeting needed to register online at [www.chichester.gov.uk/speakerform](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/speakerform) by 5pm the day before the meeting. Participants would be asked if they would like to provide a statement to be read out or whether they would prefer to address the committee virtually. Anyone wishing to speak at any other public meeting is asked to contact [democraticservices@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@chichester.gov.uk) with their name, address and contact telephone number at least two working days before the meeting.
- Cllr Evans was pleased that meetings would now be live streamed.
- Cllr Evans' party had proposed a Recovery Plan motion at the Full Council Meeting today that aimed to be a proactive response to the Covid-19 Crisis. This motion urged for an all-party task force to work on a Recovery Plan, to maximise cooperation to pull together for the good of the community and local businesses. An update would be provided at the next Parish Council Meeting.
- The suspension of parking charges across the district had been extended to 8<sup>th</sup> June, which was a vital move to support essential services at the moment.
- CDC was very sympathetic to residents struggling to pay taxes during the crisis; residents who were struggling, due to loss of employment or earnings, should contact: [taxation@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:taxation@chichester.gov.uk)
- Dr Andrea Smith, the new CDC Climate Change Officer, has now started work. Her first task was to finalise the criteria for the Zero Chichester Fund and to develop an interim climate change action plan.
- CDC staff and members of the Senior Leadership team were supporting Stonepillow preparing food. Some Council officers and some councillors also took part in the Stonepillow Little Big Sleep Out on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May to raise funds to support the homeless during the Covid-19 crisis; within gardens rather than Chichester Cathedral grounds. Cllr Evans was pleased to have raised £643.
- CDC was one of the top 3 local authorities in the country for paying business grants to local firms. Cllr Evans had used his social media to promote this. The government allocated £37million to support businesses in the district and over 3,000 had benefited from this scheme. For various reasons, a very small number of businesses decided not to access the funding, which would be returned to central government.
- Face to face surgeries were currently not possible, but Cllr Evans reiterated that he was available to meet residents remotely through video calls upon request, either through Zoom meetings or Video Calls through Skype or Hangout. Residents could contact him by telephone 07958918056 or email [gbevans@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:gbevans@chichester.gov.uk). And social media handles. Facebook: @GarethEvansLoxwood, Twitter @GarethEvans79.

7. Public Questions: Members of the public attended the meeting to hear the discussion relating to the A272 motorbike noise and speeding concerns. In addition to these concerns, one person suggested that the 30mph speed limit should be extended on the west side of the village to reduce speed. The point would be addressed in later discussion.

8. Policy Documents and Committees: Members resolved to adopt the following policies as tabled:

- a. Standing Orders
- b. Code of Conduct
- c. Financial Regulations
- d. Investment Policy

9. Councillor interests and committee membership:

- a. Members' Areas of Interest: The following were agreed:
 

Planning Committee	AJ/AB/PD/MN/HT/SR/MW although any member could attend the meeting and might be required to do so at times, to ensure the meeting was quorate.
Finance Committee	MN/AJ/HT/PD/ MW
Green Co-ordination Group	AB (second representative to be confirmed at a future meeting)

Local Council Associations/ Outside Bodies:	PD – members formally agreed that PD would represent the Parish Council and have voting rights at the West Sussex ALC AGM and at other association meetings, as necessary.
Traffic Management Plan Group	PD/SO/SR/HT/Clerk. SR to act as link to Community Traffic Action Group.
Neighbourhood Plan Review Group	AJ/SO/SR/Clerk/Community Members
Youth Activities	AB
Major Emergency Plan	SO/SR/HT/Clerk
Winter Management Plan	HT/SO in support
New Pavilion Project	AJ/MN/MW
Pavilion Trustee Liaison	AJ/MN
Village Hall	SO
Monthly Bank Reconciliations	HT
Community Speed Watch Coordinator	HT
WG School Liaison	To be confirmed at a future meeting.
Gatwick Airport Communications	PD
Playground Inspections	PD/MN/SR
Allotment Supervisor	Ex-councillor, Mr N Beresford, had agreed to continue on the Parish Council's behalf; accepted with thanks.
Tree Warden	Ex-councillor, Mr M King, had been approached to continue in this role.

- b. Finance Committee: Membership of the Committee was agreed under item 9a. MN was nominated as Chairman, proposed by PD. All were in favour. The Terms of Reference were adopted unchanged.
- c. Planning Committee: Membership of the Committee was agreed under item 9a. AJ was nominated as Chairman, proposed by PD. All were in favour. The Terms of Reference were adopted unchanged.
- d. Green Co-ordination Group: Membership of the Committee was agreed under item 9a. The Terms of Reference were adopted unchanged.
- e. Neighbourhood Plan Review Steering Group: The Terms of Reference were adopted unchanged.

#### 10. Report on on-going matters:

- a. Coronavirus (Covid-19): A few requests for help were still being received, although the Clerk was aware that many residents were helping neighbours.
  - The Cricket Club had emailed to advise that, following guidance from the English and Wales Cricket Board, it would be opening the cricket nets this weekend. Members were delighted that this was happening and felt that the guidance was well prepared. Members were grateful to the family who had offered to move the basketball net to the summer location.
  - Advice had been received in relation to closed buildings and Legionella water control, which had been forwarded to both the Village Hall and Pavilion.
  - Although Craig Vit, Landlord at the Cricketers Arms, had not received official guidance, he was giving further thought as to how he could open again with social distancing. He was concerned that inside space was restricted and to comply with social distancing outside, asked if the Parish Council would permit tables to be put on the village green next to the public house. Members agreed that before tables were spread further at the front of the building, consideration should be given to using space in the rear garden. At the present, it was unclear when and if the public house would be busy enough to warrant these changes, so members agreed to give further consideration when the need arose. Consent from the adjacent cottages' residents to this arrangement would need to be obtained and, if permitted, it would be for a duration determined by the PC.

- b. Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Review: SO advised that the NP was currently on hold. The Green Gap Assessment had been progressed but there had been no further contact from the assisting consultants. In terms of an extension to finalise the Local Plan, no further update had been received. The NP Group had requested further guidance from CDC however, to date, no response had been received. Cllr Evans advised that the Local Plan was delayed particularly as most activities were, currently, centred around the Coronavirus response; however, he would try to obtain an update. From the information received to date, and with the issues relating to the A27 and Chichester Harbour, SO advised that it was unlikely that the housing number for the northern parishes would be known until about 2021/2022.
- c. Playground Re-surfacing: A project report detailing options, research and costs had been circulated in advance of the meeting. MW gave explanation to the proposed surfacing, an alternative similar product and reference enquiries. Having attended an installation, he was satisfied with the quality of installation and that the surface, with sub-base and annual or bi-annual pressure washing, would give longevity. In addition to the costs provided, a small cost would be incurred for the protection of the existing surface with boards, particularly at the entrance where the sub-base had failed. The Clerk gave further explanation to the quotations obtained and the options available. In view of the current playground closure due to Covid-19, members agreed that this would be an ideal time to undertake the work; MW confirmed that the contractors were now fully operational. Members agreed:
- The Parish Council had the funds to cover the surfacing and minor repairs.
  - The work should be undertaken as soon as possible as whilst the playground was closed.
  - That Tigermulch was the preferred surfacing, as shown in the report.
  - Final decision on contractors and area delegated to the Clerk and Finance Committee.
- d. Motorbike Noise/Speed on the A272: The Clerk provided a reminder that Strood Green residents had raised this concern with the Parish Council at the beginning of the year. Sussex Police had advised contacting the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership or establishing a Community Speed Watch (CSW) Group; however, CSW could not be operated in Strood Green as it was outside a 30mph zone. Sussex Safer Roads Partnership operated speed-monitoring vans, such as the one in Coldwaltham, but had not responded to three contact requests. The Clerk gave explanation to CSW, volunteer training and how it operated and linked with the Operation Crackdown website to record speeding offenders. It had been highlighted that acoustic speed cameras were being trialled in the Meon Valley (A272 and A32); this was a Department for Transport trial involving 7 sites across the UK. The Clerk had tried to obtain information from the East and West Meon Parish Councils but the Clerks had not responded. However, she had located the Meon Valley Communities Against Noise and Speed (CANS) website which provided further information. The advice on the website to other villages was to set up a community group to gather evidence, campaign and approach the various authorities and decision makers. The Clerk had also obtained access to the telematics traffic data that was collected in the centre of the village; green cabinet close to the Parish Council noticeboard. The most recent data was Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2020. It provided details of traffic flow; number, speed, and vehicle type per hour, east and westbound; however, she would need to enquire from WSCC if this information could be shared. Following last weekend, emails had now been received from 17 residents living along the A272, from Shurlands corner through to Billingshurst Road, all raising similar concerns. The Clerk had spoken to SR, who lived on the A272, as the advice from the CANS group was to get residents involved and gather evidence, and this was perhaps now required in Wisborough Green. The Parish Council's Traffic Management Group had explored various ideas with WSCC over the years and this information could be passed on.

SR advised he had set up a forum for residents to share information and consider what could be done. It was currently an information swapping exercise, but several people had now come forward to set up a formal community action group. It was SR's intention to act as a link between the group and parish council, to feedback on initiatives and ideas that might require Parish Council support. He advised that several residents had now sent letters to MPs, local councillors, the police, and other bodies to highlight their concerns. Being close to the A272, MN concurred with SR's concerns and highlighted that with house frontages, noise monitoring options could be explored, and personal CCTV footage could provide evidence, although he was unaware of the legalities. Members also felt that having CSW members outside at the weekend would be a visible deterrent, and again, demonstrated the strength of public concern. SR highlighted that this issue was

not an inconvenience, people were not taking umbrage, speeding and noise over a certain decibel was illegal and police enforcement should be available. In answer to the public question, PD advised that the Parish Council had made a concerted effort to have a 40mph 'buffer zone' on the A272, to the west of the village, similar to the one to the east, but the proposal did not meet highway regulations. The Clerk would prepare a list of the concerns raised and provide SR with details of previous WSCC discussions; options could be explored again. SR would collect names to establish the community group.

- e. New Homes Bonus: Members gave further consideration. Although the Parish Council could cover the playground re-surfacing expenditure, if the fund could be used for this project, it provided flexibility for the Songhurst Meadow project. Members agreed that the playground surface should be discussed with CDC initially and if not permitted, proposed the Songhurst Meadow project – benches, bridge, wildflower seed, dog waste bins.
- f. Land Access Restrictions: Concern had been raised that access to fields behind Sweephurst Farm, accessed from Newpound Lane and Durbans Road, had been closed to walkers. As the Clerk had a personal interest, PD had written to the landowner to highlight that this had been raised and to ascertain his intentions. PD read out both his letter and the landowner's response. There was no public right of way across the fields and the public had just been using the routes unofficially. The landowner had indicated that access could return when the livestock had been removed but gave no indication to timing. The resident who contacted the Parish Council, also on behalf of other residents, was aware that if a path had been used for a period of time without challenge, there was a formal process that could be followed to establish as a public right of way. Members agreed that the landowner's offer was in good spirit and it was noted that he kindly allowed use of one of the fields as a carpark for community events. The Chairman did not want the issue to escalate and felt that a meeting with the landowner would be useful to get a better understanding of his expectations and to discuss possible options. Members agreed; MW to also attend.  
An update is to be provided to the member of public and advise that the land was currently closed due to the livestock and issues with dog owner responsibility.
- g. Clerk's Report:
- 2020/2021 Meeting Dates: Circulated to all members.
  - VE Day Grant Variation: Approved by CDC so £250 to be claimed for a Horse Chestnut tree and commemorative plaque on the Little Green.
  - Kirdford Road Surface Water Improvements: The quotation had been accepted and work was due to start on 1<sup>st</sup> June. There had been no response from the residents in relation to the middle section and the Clerk would follow up.
  - British Telecommunications Contract: The Clerk was due to move to a new house in April but this had now been delayed. The Finance Committee had previously discussed the broadband and telephone contact and agreed that this should be reviewed after her move had taken place. The Clerk highlighted that the contract was, potentially, not the best value.
  - Vandalised Bench: A dedicated bench on the village green had been vandalised some time over the weekend; the incident had been reported to the police. Having made some initial enquires; the Clerk believed that none of the dedicatee's family members remained in the village. The seat had been removed, but the bench could not be removed entirely as it would leave the metal fixings, which would pose a trip hazard. Members agreed that this provided an opportunity for a further donated bench and as this should be promoted. The Parish Council would also consider purchasing a replacement; for discussion at a future meeting.

#### 11. New Items for Discussion:

- a. Website: The check to ensure accessibility compliance, required to meet regulations from September 2020, was currently being undertaken. The Clerk had also booked a webinar training course offered by the Society of Local Council Clerks, at a cost of £36, to ensure that documents put up also met the requirements. When completed, an Accessibility Statement would need to be approved by the Parish Council.

The current Covid-19 situation had also highlighted that village communication could be improved by capturing emails and sending out updates. The Communications Working Group would discuss further and report back.

MW and SR had new Parish Council email addresses to conform to General Data Protection Regulations. To obtain further email addresses for all parish councillors, a further £2 per month charge would be incurred; members approved this expenditure. Members were reminded that the Parish Council emails would not be publicised, and that correspondence would continue through the Clerk.

**12. Correspondence:** Details of correspondence received since 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020 was noted:

<b>List of correspondence received:</b>
SDNPA – notification of grants available to community groups for Covid-19 support.
Rural Services Network – weekly email bulletin.
West Sussex County Council and the South Downs National Park Authority have now submitted the Soft Sand Review of the Joint Minerals Local Plan to Government to be tested for soundness and legal and procedural compliance.
SDNPA – May newsletter: Find out about the 10 key priorities for the National Park over the next five years, including increasing biodiversity, volunteering and affordable housing. Community goodwill Discover how communities in the National Park are rallying round to help those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. Grants boost Water voles and young people are to benefit from charity funding. Udderly moovellous! Can you name the different cow species found on the South Downs
Petworth Road resident – reporting Ash dieback in tree, being on edge of Conservation Area, advised to contact CDC for advice.
Rural Services Network – weekly email bulletin.
Updates from NALC, WSCC and CDC re Covid-19.
GACC update – circulated.
17 emails in relation to noise, speed, alarming driving, narrowness of pavement on A272 Petworth Road
Thank you from Sussex Air Ambulance for donation.

**13. Planning:**

- a. **Planning Applications:** The following application was reviewed. Application details and plans had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were also displayed:

<b>Application Number</b>	<b>Application Details</b>
WR/20/01036/PA3Q - Case Officer: Rebecca Perris	<p>Mr Jefferson Stroodlands Cottage Newpound Lane Wisborough Green Billingshurst Prior Approval Application for Change of Use of Agricultural Building to Dwelling (C3). The Parish Council objected to the application for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The intended dwelling was too large and did not address the identified local need for smaller, more affordable housing, particularly for first time buyers and younger families. (Neighbourhood Plan consultations and Housing Need Survey 2019).</li> <li>• Was not best land use and removed an agricultural building associated with farmland; the building was demonstrated as in use.</li> <li>• It did not meet Chichester’s Local Plan policies for development in a rural area.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed dwelling was unsustainable; car use would be required to access village facilities.</li> <li>• The design was not compliant with Neighbourhood Plan and Village Design Statement policies.</li> </ul>
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b. Chichester District Council Planning Decisions: No decisions to report.

#### 14. Finance:

a. Subscription to Society of Local Council Clerks: Members approved the expenditure of £202.00 for the Clerk's annual membership.

b. Reconciliation: AJ confirmed that he had checked and agreed the Bank Reconciliations for the period ending April 2020 for the Parish Council's NatWest Business Account and Barclays Community Account.

c. Accounts for Payment: The Clerk displayed the Payment List for May that was approved:

##### Online Payments from Barclays Current Account

Payee	Amount £	Description
Sussex Land Services	665.40	Grass cutting contract for March
West Sussex County Council	1,785.65	Clerk's salary for April Payroll charge 1 Oct – 31 March 2020
Pyzer Cleaning Services	1,008.60	Public toilet cleaning and supplies for 2 months
Sussex Land Services	665.40	Grass cutting contract for April 2020
L N Davies	30.82	Zoom and website monthly fees and computer ink
Society of Local Council Clerks	202.00	Annual membership subscription
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,357.87</b>	

##### Direct Debit Payments from Barclays Community Account

Date	Amount £	Payee	Description
30.04.20	230.48	NEST	Pension contributions for period 01 to 30 April
07.05.20	105.37	Business Stream	Allotment water
11.05.20	197.76	British Telecommunications plc	Broadband and Telephone (quarterly)
19.05.20	28.20	Plusnet	Village Hall Broadband for May
<b>Total</b>	<b>561.81</b>		

##### Payments to Barclays Community Account

Date	Amount £	Payee	Description
27.04.20	18.00	Allotment tenant	Annual rent
30.04.20	62.00	Allotment tenant	Annual rent and deposit
30.04.20	18.00	Allotment tenant	Annual rent
07.05.20	32.00	Allotment tenant	Annual rent

11.05.20	3,843.00	Village Hall	Lease payment (1)
12.05.20	1.00	WG Sports	Peppercorn rent
19.05.20	32.00	WG Fete Society	Garage rent
19.05.20	32.00	Allotment tenant	Annual rent
<b>Total:</b>	<b>4,038.00</b>		

**Payments to Natwest Current Account**

Date	Amount £	Payee	Description
06.04.20	18.00	Allotment tenant	Annual rent
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.00</b>		

d. Financial Statement of Accounts: The first statement for the year was displayed. There were no items of concern to highlight to members and no further questions. The Clerk highlighted that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) had been placed in a reserve within the accounts to ring-fence this funding. It was a requirement to record this income and expenditure separately to complete the annual monitoring report.

e. Bank Accounts: Having received the CIL funding, the Clerk highlighted that the Parish Council's Barclays Accounts were over the £85,000 protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). Despite enquiries, NatWest had been unable to explain why the bank statements continued to include a statement advising that the deposit was not eligible for protection under the FSCS. In the current Covid-19 situation, contacting banks was proving more difficult. Although members felt that the NatWest Account would be covered, members resolved that another online account with Lloyds, to spread this risk, should be opened when the opportunity arose. PD, AJ and the Clerk to be signatories for this account initially.

**15. Other Reports:**

- a. Village Hall: SO advised that 4 tenders had now been received and were being checked by the building consultant for completeness prior to any further consideration. There was no grant funding update to report.
- b. The Green: Correspondence had been received from the person who had driven on the Green. The letter had been circulated; it challenged the need for any further repair. Members agreed that AB should arrange a meeting, highlighting that he had originally undertaken a repair prior to any discussion with the Parish Council.
- c. Health & Safety: There were no matters to report.

**16. Any Other Matters to Report:**

- a. AJ noted that the young Horse Chestnut, close to the cricket net area, was showing signs of distress in this hot weather. Clerk to arrange watering.

**17. Date of Next Meeting:**

Planning Committee Meeting on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June at 8.00 pm (only if required to meet CDC deadlines)  
Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020 at 7.45 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.02 pm.

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Chairman

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Date