



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Held Monday 5th February 2024

7pm, Renshaw Room, Wivelsfield Village Hall

Agenda Item	Description	Resolved
Present:	Parish Councillors H Martin (Chair), C Broad, D Cumberland, I Haffenden, R Morris, S Morris & N Turner. L Gander (Clerk) and eleven members of the public.	
1	Apologies for Absence None noted.	None noted.
2	Declarations of Members' Interests To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda To receive (and grant if appropriate) written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests	None noted.
3	<p>Public Forum The meeting was suspended whilst the open forum took place.</p> <p>Many of those present had attended to make the Parish Council aware of their objection to site 39WV, Land at Rogers Farm, included within Lewes District Council's Land Availability Assessment, owing to the negative impact it would have on the small settlement at Lunces Common. Objections were wide-ranging and included: the impact of developing the proposed area of land on the agricultural setting of the two Grade 2 listed buildings; the impact on the registered common and wildlife thereon, and issues with development owing to the presence of a mains water pipe supplying Haywards Heath which runs through the field and has already caused issues for developers building the neighbouring Springbank development. There were also concerns about access, the fact that the area is already renowned for flooding and concerns about safety for vehicles turning onto the B2112 which has a 60mph speed limit at that point.</p> <p>The Council noted that, at this stage, nothing has been decided about the various sites put forward and included within Lewes District Council's Land Availability Assessment, but that is why now is the time to ensure that the information contained within LDC's assessment of each site is complete and accurate and to respond with comments to the current Local Plan consultation.</p> <p>Other residents had attended to object to planning application LW/22/0421 for Land Adjacent to Kiln Cottage. Objections related not only to the proposals themselves, but also the poor way in which this has been</p>	

		<p>administered by Lewes District Council. Neighbours had not received letters, no site notice had been posted and, despite the plans being for an entirely different proposition to the last one for this site, they were being passed off simply as an amendment to an application lodged in 2022, rather than being treated as a new, separate application.</p> <p>Objections about the application itself included the impossibility of widening the access to the 4.5m deemed necessary to make the proposal acceptable and the danger to existing homes and residents that would arise from an increased number of vehicles using the narrow single-track access (particularly construction vehicles, given that even small delivery trucks have damaged existing properties owing to the restricted width of the track). Access itself would be an issue as the developer does not have access rights to the site. The proposed house is also entirely out of keeping with the surrounding, single storey dwellings, which it would tower over. No design and access statement has been submitted to explain the reasons behind and detail of the changes in these plans and none of the supporting documents have been updated to reflect the new proposals or time interval since the originals were compiled.</p> <p>The Council thanked people for coming and making their views known and encouraged their continued participation and feedback. One councillor advised that there are still vacancies on the Council and that, even if people do not want to commit to joining the Council, there are other ways to get involved and have your voices heard – either through coming along to meetings, or by helping out with particular projects.</p> <p>Finally, the Community Speed Watch Co-ordinator had brought along the spare batteries from the temporary speed indicator device, for councillors to feel how heavy and cumbersome they are to carry and move around (and particularly to lift into place into the unit). The batteries are only lasting around 9-10 days and each charge takes several hours. As such, he is wondering whether it would be possible to have a second charger, but is mindful of the cost. On a positive note, he advised that the device demonstrably slows traffic and definitely works.</p> <p>Owing to the number of people who had attended the meeting and the nature of the issues raised, the Chair allowed the open forum to run beyond the usual 15 minute cap, before resuming the meeting.</p>	
4	a	<p>To Approve the Minutes of: The Parish Council meeting held 15th January 2024</p>	Approval deferred to the next meeting.
5	a	<p>Planning Matters New application considered at the meeting <u>LW/22/0421 - Land Adjacent To Kiln Cottage, Hundred Acre Lane</u> - Erection of 1 no. detached dwelling with car parking and associated works (AMENDED DESCRIPTION) The Council resolved to object very strongly, both to the application itself and to the apparent lack of due process followed for the consultation. The Council believed that, owing to the entirely different nature of this 'amended' application rather than that originally submitted (for one 5 bedroom house, rather than two), it should have been listed under a new planning reference, both for clarity from a transparency perspective (rather than passing it off as an amendment,</p>	To object to the application itself as well as the manner in which it has been administered.

		<p>which is normally a relatively minor change to an existing application) but also so that the planning history for the site is clear. Concerns would also be raised about the apparent lack of a site notice, or neighbour letters, advising of the consultation.</p> <p>Objections to the application itself included: the proposed dwelling remains too large and too tall, entirely out of keeping with and unsympathetic to surrounding dwellings, contrary to local and national policy. There was no explanation of the changes that had been made from the last version of the application and supporting paperwork had not been updated to reflect the revised proposals. The location of the proposed dwelling would have a negative impact on wildlife, with the proposed buffer zone to the badger sett still appears not to be compliant with guidance. There are concerns about surface water run off and parking and access, with the single width access track being too narrow to be practical or safe for an increased number of vehicle movements, let alone construction traffic. Safety of both pedestrians and existing buildings is a primary concern, given a history of relatively small delivery vehicles hitting homes along the track and the lack of space for any division between pedestrians and vehicles.</p> <p>Notices of Planning Approval Received (To note for information only)</p> <p>b <u>LW/23/0493 - Clearwaters Farm, Clearwater Lane</u> - Change of use from agricultural land into a dog walking compound, including erection of 6ft deer fencing enclosing site, creation of 2no. car parking spaces and pathway with associated landscaping.</p> <p>c <u>LW/23/0641 - Park Farm, Hundred Acre Lane</u> - erection of an open fronted steel framed agricultural barn to be used as a feed and bedding store for the beef enterprise on the farm.</p> <p>Notice of Prior Approval Not Required (for information only)</p> <p>d <u>LW/23/0680 - Cads, Valebridge Road</u> - Change of use and conversion from workshop to dwelling house with integral garage.</p> <p>Tree Works Applications Approved (for information only)</p> <p>e TW/23/0078/TPO – 20 Strood Gate</p> <p>f TW/23/0082/TPO - 29 Downscroft</p> <p>g TW/23/0094/TPO – Former Nuggets, Valebridge Road</p> <p>Other Planning Matters</p> <p>h <u>Consultation on Lewes Local Plan - 'Towards a Lewes Local Plan: Spatial Strategy and Policy Directions'</u>: to discuss and refine the Council's response as appropriate. It was agreed to send the response drafted by the Clerk following the informal meeting held on 2nd January (and discussed further at the Parish Council meeting of 15th January) in full, via email to LDC (rather than trying to shoehorn bits of the Council's response into LDC's questionnaire to address specific questions). Additionally, the Clerk will compile comments raised about the Development Capacity Study and Land Availability Assessment to send in as well.</p> <p>NB The consultation period has been extended to 12pm on 19th February and residents are encouraged to respond.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>The Council to email LDC with general comments about the local plan consultation, as well as specific feedback on the Development Capacity Study & Land Availability Assessment.</p>
6	a	<p>Financial Matters</p> <p><u>To approve this month's payments</u> – the Council ratified payment of one item for the Hall Improvement Project Part 2, paid since the last meeting, and a</p>	

		further nine items of general Council expenditure totalling £4166.98 (see Appendix A for details).	
7	a	Clerk's Report <u>Bridleway from Eastern Road to St George's</u> – someone from the Rights of Way Team had confirmed that they would be visiting the bridleway to conduct an inspection of its surface last month. They also agreed about the need for a safe, all-weather route linking Wivelsfield Green to Burgess Hill and said they would keep this route firmly on their radar when considering priority works for Ditchling Common Country Park for the next five years.	Noted.
	b	<u>To discuss and agree on rural grass cutting options given by East Sussex Highways</u> – the Council agreed to go with the second of two options given for the cutting of rural verges, which was: 'Excluding single track lanes, the first cut at start of season to be only visibility cuts for safety at junctions and on the inside of bends where sight lines between road users may be obscured by vegetation. The second cut later in the season will be visibility plus a 1 metre wide swathe along the verge.'	The Council resolved to request the reduced rural/ environmental enhancement service of grass cuts for our rural verges.
	c	<u>Request to consider applying to licence a third site on Green Road for the temporary speed indicator device, this one to be facing traffic travelling east bound</u> – having seen the effectiveness of the speed indicator device at slowing traffic travelling westbound along Green Road, a resident who had originally expressed concern about having a SID outside their property for eastbound traffic owing to fears of it impairing visibility, has now said that they would be willing to have one situated there. The Council was happy to proceed with obtaining the relevant licences to allow this to happen. This location will require a temporary post, so, once confirmation of both the licences for this site and a location for the one on South Road have been received, a contractor can be sourced to install sockets for both.	The Council resolved to apply for the necessary Highways Licences to have an eastbound site along Green Road for the temporary Speed Indicator Device.
	d	<u>Street lighting issues</u> – the Clerk made the Council aware of complaints received about a light in Farncombe Close which has been out for a number of weeks. Residents have been frustrated by the length of time it is taking to get the light repaired, and the fact that they have received conflicting information from East Sussex Highways and the Parish Council. Unfortunately, changes to systems owing to Balfour Beatty having taken over as the East Sussex Highways contractor last year has slowed progress with lighting repairs and there has been a backlog of work for the lighting team. Unhelpfully, the Highways Contact Centre and operatives on the ground have also been giving out incorrect information, initially saying that the light was nothing to do with them because the Parish Council owns it and therefore not accepting a fault report, and then telling residents that Highways had the part and it was that the Council needed to approve the work (when no quotation had been received to enable the Council to do so). The Clerk has been in regular communication with East Sussex Highways, seeking to speed the process up, but is still awaiting a quote.	Council awaiting quote for the work needed to the light in Farncombe Close.
8	a	Reports from Parish Councillors <u>To agree the proposals for community engagement from the informal meeting held on 29th January:</u>	
	i	<u>To consider further community benefit activities</u> – the Council had agreed to look for some things that it could do for community benefit that would be relatively quick and inexpensive to arrange, pending a full public consultation to develop a longer term strategic plan. Suggestions had included: a leaflet to go out to the community making residents aware of	Potential actions to be explored.

		<p>the role of the Parish Council; to design and install village sign boards outlining history and features of the village; to undertake a 'community reach out' meeting with current and previous community leaders to understand how best to support community initiatives; as well as looking at other possible options.</p> <p>One possible suggestion was to sign up for the Weald to Waves project, which aspires to create a wildlife corridor to improve habitat connectivity from the High Weald to the coast, so the Council will look into this further. It was suggested that perhaps the edges of the village green could be left unmown as a part of this, so the Parish Council representatives on the Village Hall Committee will take this to one of their meetings as a suggestion.</p> <p>ii <u>To agree a date for holding a 'community reach out' meeting</u> - it was suggested to look at the second half of March for this.</p>	Meeting to be arranged towards end of March.
9		<p>Reports from District & County Councillors, MP & PCSO The Council noted a report received from Maria Caulfield MP.</p>	
10		<p>Items to be taken to the Next Lewes District Association of Local Councils Meeting None noted.</p>	
11	a b c d e f	<p>Correspondence <u>Mid Sussex Planning Policy Consultations - Submission Draft Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039: Regulation 19.</u> The consultation closes on 23 Feb 2024 at 23:59. The relevant documents may be found at: https://midsussex.inconsult.uk/districtplanreg19/</p> <p><u>East Sussex draft Local Transport Plan 4 Consultation</u> - Consultation runs until 25th February and may be found at http://eastsussex.gov.uk/DraftLTP4 The Council agreed to respond about the need for safe cycling provision linking Wivelsfield Green to neighbouring towns.</p> <p><u>Hedgehog Highway Project</u> - to discuss whether the Council would wish to support this initiative. The Council suggested that we invite representatives of this project to the Annual Parish Meeting (if appropriate depending on distance) and agreed to buy a pack of the hedgehog highway surrounds and leaflets to make available to residents.</p> <p>Additional Correspondence Received Since Publication of the Agenda <u>Contact from an organisation offering information and links to companies that provide electric vehicle charging points.</u> The Council agreed to make an initial enquiry to find out more.</p> <p><u>Invitation to submit a joint Parish response to the Lewes Local Plan consultation.</u> The Council was open to submitting comments with a collective voice, but talked about the best mechanism for this going forwards. It was suggested that the Lewes District Association of Local Councils might be one good forum for this.</p> <p><u>Letter from East Sussex Children's Safeguarding Partnership</u></p>	<p>Cllr Turner to draft some comments for circulation and approval. Clerk to submit comments.</p> <p>To support the hedgehog highway project.</p> <p>To find out more.</p> <p>To explore the best means of having a collective voice going forwards.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
12	a b c	<p>Items for Noting or Inclusion on Next Agenda To consider options for making allowances available to co-opted members Slugwash Lane planning application Feedback from meeting with Cala Homes</p>	
13	a	<p>Date of Next Meeting Monday 4th March 2024</p>	

Accounts for Payment for the Meeting of 5th February 2024

Items Paid Since the Last Meeting for Ratification

Payee	Expenditure	Value	Total	Payment Type	Voucher Ref
		£	£		
Village Hall Improvement Project Part 2					
MAC Trees	Cutting of trees to the rear of the Hall		1800.00	Online	901
Total HIP Spending			1800.00		

New Items for Payment Approval

Payee	Expenditure	Value	Total	Payment Type	Voucher Ref
		£	£		
General Expenditure					
Salaries	February 24		2484.44	Online	902
East Sussex Pension Fund	Pension contributions February 24		890.80	Online	903
Lewes District Council	2023 election expenses		235.97	Online	904
Lewes District Council	Car park & pavilion bin emptying January 24		48.00	Online	905
Lewes District Council	Charters Gate Way dog bin emptying February 24		93.60	Online	906
Lewes District Council	Outdoor Gym & Play Area Inspection February 24		36.00	Online	907
Sage UK Ltd	February 24 Sage 50 Accounts subscription		92.40	DD	908
Tetrabyte	IT support & Office 365 Licences		146.27	DD	909
DM Payroll	Payroll Services Oct 23-March 24		139.50	Online	910
Total General Expenditure			4166.98		