

Minutes of the Meeting of Warbleton Parish Council held on 18 March in the Dunn village hall at 7.00 pm

Present

Councillors

Mr B Whitton (chairman)
Mr A Long
Mr C Wells
Mr J Trunkfield
Mr D Turton
Mrs K Cook
Mrs S Ralph
Mr N Richards
Mr J Glass
Mr M Sibbering

East Sussex County Councillors

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

Members of the Public

PCSO Matt Neve and four members of the public present.

Apologies for Absence

10.71 Apologies were received from East Sussex County Councillor Mr R Simmonds and Councillor C Harding.

Declarations of interest

10.72 None.

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 February

10.73 Councillor Turton corrected the date for the auction of promises to be held in the Dunn village hall from 17 to 27 March. Councillor Sibbering also corrected the reference in minute 10.54 to himself. Subject to these amendments it was resolved that the minutes of the meeting on 18 February having been circulated be signed as a correct record.

Matters arising from minutes of meeting on 18 February

10.74 None.

Public Adjournment

10.75 Mr Austin reported that there was a problem with an overgrown hedge at Springfield Farm close to Dog Corner. The clerk said he would write to the landowner concerned. Mr Austin confirmed that the cherry tree at the bottom of Church Hill Warbleton, had been cut down and the chairman explained that he had spoken to a neighbour who had cut it down.

10.76 PCSO Matt Neve explained a number of measures that the police were taking to reduce crime. The police had a horse watch initiative to try to prevent the theft of horses and tack. This included the marking of tack so that were it to be stolen and sold on the police would be able to tell and return it to the rightful owners. The police had begun a new operation called Operation Time designed to deal with the problem of Anti-Social Behaviour. The clerk explained that Inspectorate Wakefield in charge of Operation Time had given a presentation at the clerk's conference. The clerk had since circulated a note to Councillor's explaining Operation Time. It was generally felt that Anti-Social Behaviour was not currently a problem in the Parish although the chairman mentioned that a number of youths were congregating at times behind St Mary's church. PCSO Matt Neve said he would investigate.

10.77 PCSO Matt Neve would also be running a monthly surgery in Rushlake Green and would soon be setting up a neighbourhood watch scheme. There was also a plan for local village residents to become involved in speed watch. This was an initiative to reduce speeding with local residents using speed measurement devices and reporting on motorists exceeding the speed limit.

10.78 Finally, there had been reports of a burgundy coloured car going around the parish with three occupants one of whom was possibly a woman. Unfortunately the police did not have a registration number. They were acting suspiciously. Councillor Wells said he thought the car concerned was an Astra. Further enquiries would be made.

Reports

East Sussex County Council

10.79 Nothing to report.

Wealden District Council

10.80 Councillor Long reported that he had attended a presentation at County Hall on winter transport policy. Presentations had been given by Rupert Clubb Transport and

Environment Director and other Director's. The County Council's lead members were also present. Councillor Long felt that the presentations had been too self congratulatory on how well Highways had dealt with the severe Winter weather and the consequences for roads. The Council had tended to blame the media for exaggerating conditions and criticising the County Council. Councillor Long had raised some specific instances where there had been problems, but these had been dismissed as exceptional.

10.81 Councillors discussed how, many years ago, farmers had undertaken snow plough work with ploughs provided by the County Council. These had until this year not been needed and farmers had been unwilling to insure for their use when they had not been required. Councillor Trunkfield commented that the few dairy farms left had milk collected by very large tankers that could not reach them in very severe weather. Councillor Long said he would continue to pursue the matter.

Dunn village hall

10.82 Councillor Turton reported that the roof spraying had been completed and that the hall would soon be connected to the new sewerage system. A loop system for the hard of hearing had been fitted but at the moment was not fully effectively. New low energy bulbs had been installed producing the equivalent of 150 watts of light.

Bodle Street Green village hall

10.83 Mr Gibson reported that the Channel Theatre company was putting on a performance at the hall next Tuesday and explained the receipt sharing arrangements between the company and the village hall that were more favourable to the hall than those operated by other theatre companies.

Rights of Way committee

10.84 Councillor Sibbering distributed some large scale copies of maps of the Parish. He reported that he had a team of eight volunteers ready to undertake work on footpaths and to help with the repair of styles. East Sussex County Council had provided equipment, tools and high visibility clothing to enable them to undertake the repairs and clearance work. In all there were 16 styles in need of repair.

10.85 Councillor Sibbering had developed his proposal for circular walks around the Parish. East Sussex Rights of Way Department were interested in the proposal and had offered to provide maps.

10.86 Finally, Councillor Sibbering had received an invitation from Wealden District Council for a day's training in the provision of walks. The clerk then reported that at the Parish clerk's conference earlier in the week, Wealden had given a presentation on a new initiative called Walk Wealden. He distributed a coloured brochure and a participant's questionnaire and risk assessment sheet. Councillor Sibbering read from

the questionnaire which was also an ethnicity survey. Councillors were very concerned in principle about the initiative and Councillor Long said he would be taking it up with Wealden District Council.

Wealden District Association of Local Councils

10.87 Nothing to report.

Clerk's Report

East Sussex County Council

E Mail from Highways Department

Proposals for speed reductions Punnetts Town and Three Cups

10.88 A joint meeting was to be arranged with Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council and East Sussex Highways sometime during the weeks beginning 10 or 17 May. The meeting would be held in the Punnetts Town village hall and would be arranged by the clerk of Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council. Councillor Long confirmed that he would attend.

Wealden District Council

Letter from Mr Kavanagh Establishment of Local List-Parishes/Towns covered.

10.89 The clerk read out the list of Parishes involved in the Supplementary List scheme and this confirmed that Warbleton was excluded.

Dog Waste Bin emptying charges

10.90 Wealden had notified of a small increase in dog waste bin emptying charges from 1 April.

Horticultural Society

Request to use green for flower show on 31 July and for set up before removal of marquee on 2 August.

10.91 Councillors agreed to use of the Green.

Parish Clerk's Conference at Wealden District Council: Other Matters

10.92 The clerk reported on other matters covered at the Parish clerk's conference. There had been a presentation by Mr Pashler on recycling and household waste disposal. This had been very interesting but did not deal with any matters directly

affecting residents. There had also been a presentation on the “no cold calling scheme” intended to deter door to door sales people. This scheme covered areas or streets and involved putting up signs and stickers on letter boxes telling sales people not to call. Councillors discussed the prevalence of cold callers in the Parish and felt that they were infrequent. It was also felt that there would be difficulties in setting up the scheme in rural area like Warbleton.

Finance

Financial Statement for 18 March

10.93 It was resolved that the financial statement to 18 March be approved and a copy is attached to these minutes.

Accounts for payment.

10.94 The following accounts were approved for payment:

Mr M Sibbering	Reimbursement for copying parish map	£18.00
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Rural Access to Services Scheme

10.95 The Rural Access to Services scheme had been discussed at the Planning committee meeting on 12 March. Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS) had e-mailed an explanatory note and a detailed form for completion in order to apply for a grant. The clerk had circulated this to all Councillors and asked for guidance at the meeting on how to respond. The advice had been unclear as to whether the Council simply did not wish AiRS to be present when they discussed the scheme on 18 March or whether they wanted to withdraw from it completely. The clerk had interpreted the Council’s wishes as withdrawal from the scheme and had advised AiRS accordingly. Councillor Long felt that the Planning committee should not have taken any decision on the scheme, but left it to the full Council. As a result the clerk had spoken to AiRS and resurrected the possibility of Warbleton participating.

10.96 The clerk explained that a member of AiRS would not be attending the meeting, but that he had found out some further information. It was necessary to submit an application by 31 March so that AiRS could draw down the money from SEEDA. The parish steering group formed to pilot the scheme, did not have to solely comprise of Parish Councillors, but could and should, involve other community groups. This steering group would also have a member of AiRS who would work with it over the next year.

10.97 Councillors agreed to participate in the scheme and send the questionnaire provided by AiRS to residents of the parish. From the responses it would be possible to tell the need for access to services and then continue to develop schemes to enable or improve access to them or, if it was shown that there was no demand, decide

whether to withdraw from the scheme. The administrative costs of the questionnaire would be met from the grant and were estimated at between £400 and £500 leaving an effective grant of £4,500.

10.98 The clerk pointed out that an application form needed to be completed and submitted to AiRS together with supporting documentation by 31 March. The clerk agreed to complete all of the administrative sections of the form and to provide the supplementary information requested to support the application. It was not however, the clerk's responsibility to determine how it was proposed to spend the money on accessing services. On this AiRS had advised that at this stage all that was necessary was to indicate three or four broad areas where it was felt that access could benefit from funding. If the results of the questionnaire showed that the funding should be spent on different areas then the initial suggestions could be scrapped. Councillor Long agreed that he would complete these sections of the form. He advised that Mrs Clifford of the Dunn village hall had volunteered to be involved with the project.

Electronic Consultation on Planning Applications

10.99 Councillor Glass explained that having read the clerk's e-mailed report of the presentation given by Wealden District Council at the Parish clerk's conference on 15 March, it was clear that Warbleton would have to participate in electronic consultation on planning applications. The clerk explained that there would be no opt out and Warbleton received too many applications to be exempted from the scheme. The clerk went on to explain two problems with the scheme and that these might affect other Parishes but not Warbleton. The Director of Corporate Services at Wealden had given a strong assurance over the robustness of the underlying computer system hosting electronic storage and communications for planning applications. Wealden were running a pilot trial at a number of Parishes over the summer, beginning next month, and would be lending them the equipment to participate. However, no decision had been taken about provision of equipment for the scheme in the longer term. One point on equipment that had arisen was that it would have to be insured.

10.100 The scheme was due to be implemented in December 2010. By September after the pilot scheme had been running for a few months it should be clear how the new system would operate and if there were likely to be any problems. Councillor Richards felt that nothing should or could be done on the equipment side or in determining the exact process for dealing with applications until the position became clearer in the autumn. Councillors concurred and it was agreed to defer further consideration until then.

Other Planning Matters

Sunny View

10.101 Councillor Glass, chairman of the Planning Committee, reported that Wealden District Council had refused the application for a track to the ménage at Sunny View

Bodle Street Green. Wealden District Council had still not made a decision on the second application for an extension to Sunny View.

Matters considered urgent by the chairman

Notice boards

10.102 Councillor Wells reported that he had received an estimate of £395.00 from Mr A Funnell to make the two notice boards. This included two mounting posts and installation. Councillors felt that this was very reasonable and asked the clerk to accept the estimate. There remained the decision as to the arrangements for placing a plaque over the notice boards commemorating the service of the Daw family to the village. It was decided that this should be left to chairman's discretion. The clerk reported that the Warbleton charity had just paid the Council a grant of £200.00 towards the cost of the Community notice board.

Clerk's Hours

10.103 The clerk reported that he had spoken to Mr Leggo at SALC who had agreed to undertake an assessment to see if clerk's hours were in line with what the Council wanted him to do. There would be no charge for this assessment. The clerk would have to provide details of the work he was doing. However, in view of the current uncertainty over what additional work might arise from electronic consultation on planning applications, it would be sensible to wait until the position became clearer in the autumn. Councillors agreed.

Dates of next meetings

10.104 The next meetings of the Parish Council would be on 15 April in the Dunn village hall (preceded by the Annual Parish meeting) and 20 May in the Bodle Street Green village hall. The meeting in May would also be the Annual Parish Council meeting. The dates of these meetings might be affected by the timing of the General Election.

Chairman.....

Date.....