

WIVELSFIELD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2016

DRAFT MINUTES

of the Meeting held on

Thursday 10 March 2016, 8pm, at Wivelsfield Village Hall

Present

Guest speakers: Inspector Rob Lovell and PCSO Ed Hall - Sussex Police, Helen Smith, Headteacher - Wivelsfield Primary School, County Councillor Jim Sheppard, Paula Wood, Churchwarden - Wivelsfield Parish Church, Derek Stephenson, Chairman - Wivelsfield Village Hall.

Parish Councillors: Ian Dawson (Chairman), Judy Stoner & John Fair.

Clerk to the Council: Mrs Liz Gander.

Members of the public: as per the attendance book.

1. Welcome to Speakers & Introduction

Councillor Ian Dawson, Chairman of Wivelsfield Parish Council, welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced the speakers and briefly outlined the agenda. It was agreed to alter the proposed running order so that Helen Smith could leave earlier in the evening. The Chairman asked everyone to ensure that they had signed in and thanked Wivelsfield Films and Wivelsfield Green Playgroup for providing refreshments.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from District Councillor Sharon Davy, Parish Councillor Michelle van Bochove (who was attending a Council-related training event) and Sheila Blair. Maria Caulfield MP's apologies were sent during the evening when an earlier engagement overran.

3. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of the last meeting, held on 12 March 2015, were circulated amongst those present. The minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

None noted.

5. Inspector Rob Lovell & Police Community Support Officer, Ed Hall - Sussex Police

Inspector Lovell summarised the changes being made to local policing in response to changing types of crime, dwindling budgets and a review of services. £35m savings need to be made over the next five years. From 4 July communities within the Lewes District will be served by three teams of four PCSOs, to be deployed on an as-required basis across the district, rather than each community having a named PCSO as has been the case in the past. The benefit of this will be having teams able to respond to concerns, rather than all knowledge about a particular issue being centred on an individual PCSO.

Inspector Lovell acknowledged that Ed Hall has been a fantastic PCSO, but that he has been successful in securing a job as a police constable in Brighton.

Ed outlined the forty-five crimes logged against Wivelsfield over the last twelve months. These have included 7 burglaries, 7 incidents of anti-social behaviour, 14 incidents of violent crime (but this can include threats on social media or harassment,

as well as physical assault), 1 incident of shop-lifting, 3 public order offences, 9 thefts and 2 cases of criminal damage and arson. The remaining two incidents were listed as 'other crime'.

Ed said that his last day as a PCSO will be 23 March and that it has been a pleasure to be involved in this community. Former Parish Council Chairman Jason Stoner noted what an excellent example of a PCSO we have had in Ed, thanked him for all his work and congratulated him on his new role.

11. Head Teacher, Wivelsfield Primary School - Helen Smith

Helen introduced herself as the new Head of Wivelsfield School. She wanted to update residents about the proposed extension to the primary school which would see the addition of two further classrooms, two group rooms and additional toilets. As a part of the planned expansion, the hall will be extended and some extra provision made for parking. The additional classrooms will allow all children in the school to be taught in single year group classes for the first time and will allow the temporary classroom currently residing on the playground to be removed.

The expansion is necessary to accommodate both existing pupils and an anticipated increase in demand generated by new housing. Having single year groups will benefit the children and make it easier to attract good teachers, however Wivelsfield will still be a small, friendly school. If all goes to plan, building could commence this spring/summer and be completed by this time next year.

6. Chairman of Wivelsfield Parish Council, Ian Dawson

The Chairman's report focussed on three key areas: changes on the Council, the Wivelsfield Neighbourhood Plan and the Council's new style of communication.

Changes on the Parish Council - Jason Stoner stepped down as Chairman in June 2015, but stayed on the Council to support the new Chairman and remain involved with the Neighbourhood Plan process. He, alongside Councillor Craig Bowden has now however decided to step down - Councillor Bowden after eight years with the Council. The Chairman thanked them both for their longstanding commitment and willingness to remain involved with the Neighbourhood Plan process.

Rosemary Fair stepped down in the early part of 2015 and Nick Dutt, Richard Jephcott and Dionne Franks took the decision not to stand for election in May 2015.

New to the Council are John Fair, Judy Stoner and Michelle van Bochove, however this leaves several councillor vacancies. Anyone with an interest in shaping our 'marvellous' community is asked to step forward.

Wivelsfield Neighbourhood Plan - the Chairman said that, in his three years on the Council, he has been aghast at the amount of speculative planning applications within the Parish. The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is an important document for Wivelsfield as it supports modest development and contains policies to help the community shape the future of the Parish. Work on the NP began nearly three years ago and is now at the Regulation 16 Consultation stage (which continues until 21 March). The next steps will be an independent inspection of the Plan and a public referendum.

The Chairman thanked all those that have been involved with and given feedback on the Plan, but particularly Gordon Harper, Dave Wright and other Steering Group members. He asked the community to get behind the Plan and help shape future development.

New Style of Communication - the Parish Council is updating its ways of communicating with residents with a new-style Wivelsfield News having recently been commissioned and a new website in the pipeline.

Community Litter Pick - there will be a community litter pick this Sunday from 10am, starting at the village hall. Residents are encouraged to come and help.

7. **Message from Lewes District Councillor, Sharon Davy**

No message had, in the end, been received.

8. **East Sussex County Councillor, Jim Sheppard**

Councillor Sheppard opened by stating that residents should recognise what a good Parish Council they have in Wivelsfield. Councillors give up their time for nothing and do it free for the community's benefit - sometimes getting abused for doing so.

The County Council is facing a difficult time, needing to make savings of between £70m and £90m by March 2019. They have increased Council Tax by the maximum 1.99% that they can do without triggering a public referendum (which itself would cost money), but the Leader of the Council has been lobbying the Government for additional money for adult social care as the south east faces an ageing population.

East Sussex County Council gets a lot of stick, but they are doing the best they can in difficult circumstances. They are a part of the three southern counties devolution bid, aimed at joining together to take advantage of combined buying power and streamlined services.

Councillor Sheppard is a member of the East Sussex Fire Authority and they too have to save money. They are closing their centre in Eastbourne and moving into the Police Headquarters in Lewes.

Whilst also a member of the South Downs National Park (SDNP) Authority, Councillor Sheppard said he has never really seen the point of having another body to do what was already being done. The South Downs are beautiful and have been for hundreds of years. 80% of the SDNP is farmland - farmers have looked after it for generations, why change it.

9. **Member of Parliament for Lewes, Maria Caulfield**

Unfortunately, Maria was detained by another engagement and was unable to attend.

10. **Church Warden, Wivelsfield Parish Church, Paula Wood**

Paula introduced herself as one of the Senior Church Wardens who, in conjunction with Steve Onions, is presently 'in charge' of the Church following Christopher Breeds' retirement. The process of appointing a successor to Christopher is quite involved, requiring the compilation of a glossy 30 page 'parish profile' which will be published worldwide to attract candidates.

The Church is delighted to be a part of the community and honoured to be involved in many groups and events including the Community Tea Club, Village Day, the Christmas

Lunch, Lunch Bunch and others. Perry Webber, the new church youth leader has plans to start a junior youth club after Easter for junior aged children.

The refurbished Church Hall now has a couple living in the flat above and is in demand for private parties, meetings etc. The Church is still raising money to pay for the work, but it is up and running and not in competition with the Village Hall.

12. Chairman of Wivelsfield Village Hall Management Committee, Derek Stephenson

Derek is comparatively new to the village, but has been involved with village halls previously. He noted that, whilst the hall is an extremely good facility, it does have some age-related problems including very dated toilet facilities, single-glazed windows and doors, no insulation and ladder-only access to the well-used east loft. There are plans in the pipeline to address these issues (as well as adding a Parish Council office and porch area to prevent heat loss), but these will be dependent upon being able to secure funding. In the meantime, the Hall has engaged a firm of mechanical and electrical engineers to undertake a full review of the electrical and heating systems, to make recommendations as to how best to go forwards.

Outside of the hall itself, the Management Committee is exploring the possibility of some public toilets to serve users of the recreation ground, updating the facilities in the pavilion and is seeking professional advice on maintenance of the football pitches.

13. Question Time

Questions were asked about accessibility of any planned toilets at the green and the distribution of Community Infrastructure Levy/ Section 106 (developer contributions) money for sites on the border of the Parish such as those at Greenhill Way.

It is envisaged that public toilets would include one male, one female and one disabled - but this will be subject to a decision once funding is in place. The toilets would probably be open only during daylight hours and would be a project run with the Parish Council.

In relation to the question of an equitable distribution of developer contributions, Jason Stoner spoke up to promote the Neighbourhood Plan. Communities with a Neighbourhood Plan in place will get an uncapped 25% of contributions from developments that take place within their NP area, whereas those without will be subject to a capped 15% rate. Since the District Council expects Wivelsfield to take some degree of development in future, it is better that it brings in a greater contribution towards infrastructure, than that we have new homes anyway, but lose out on securing valuable funds. For this to happen, the NP needs the support of the community.

14. Chairman's Summary

The Chairman provided a summary of the evening and some of the things that had been heard, said he hoped that everyone had learned something of use and thanked everyone for coming.

The meeting closed at 9.04pm.