

Draft Minutes of the Virtual Parish Council Meeting Held Monday 4 May 2020

7.30pm, via the 'Zoom' Video Conferencing facility¹

Agenda Item	Description	Resolved
Present:	Councillors Ian Dawson (ID, Chair), Edward Pascoe (EP), Bernard Rust (BR), Ian Haffenden (IH) and Harriet Martin (HM). District Councillor Nancy Bikson, six members of the public and Liz Gander (Clerk).	
Open Forum:	<p>The Chairman welcomed everyone to this inaugural 'virtual' Parish Council meeting, occasioned by the coronavirus pandemic and invited questions or comments from members of the public present.</p> <p>One resident asked where the Parish Council is at in terms of undertaking a review of the Neighbourhood Plan, given the 'terms and language that was used to reference [it] in the Manor Nursery application' and whether they (members of the Theobalds Road Residents' Association) could help?</p> <p>The Chairman explained that there are essentially three tiers of review, each of which has a different requirement in terms of the level of re-consultation required with members of the community. The Parish Council had been due to have a meeting to discuss the review at the end of March, but this was cancelled owing to the coronavirus situation.</p> <p>The same resident noted that it would be helpful for any update of the Plan to include mention of the fact that the 100 home allocation which Lewes District Council (LDC) had imposed on the western side of Wivelsfield has now been met and that Antye Field is listed as an Asset of Community Value.</p> <p>Councillor Martin noted that one important element of any such review would be to ensure that the Plan remains in conformity with the Lewes District Plan. As yet however, updating a Neighbourhood Plan remains uncharted territory as others have not yet been updated to learn from.</p> <p>Another resident expressed unease at the granting of the Lakedene application (item 4f). There were said to be significant flaws in the consultation process, including failure of LDC to put a notice of planning outside the site, thus depriving people of the opportunity to comment, as well as well as a failure to upload objections to the website and reported errors within the application itself. Key concerns in respect of the application included the effect of additional surface water run off on the adjacent land and well-used footpath, which is already prone to flooding and the potentially detrimental affect of site traffic using the private road. Two further residents reiterated these concerns.</p>	

¹ As provided for within The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

1		<p>Apologies for Absence Councillor Jackson sent his apologies for the meeting as he currently has no internet access.</p>	
2	a	<p>Declarations of Members' Interests <u>To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda.</u> Councillor Dawson declared a personal interest in items 5i as he is a member of the Bonfire Society Committee and 8e, as he helped to formulate the original quality assessment criteria questions.</p>	Cllr Dawson noted personal interests as detailed.
	b	<p><u>To receive (and grant if appropriate) written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests</u></p>	None noted.
3	a	<p>To Approve the Minutes of: The Parish Council Meeting held 2 March 2020</p>	Minutes agreed and copy signed by Chair
4	a	<p>Planning Matters The following applications were considered at the meeting: <u>LW/20/0133 - Land To The East Of Tillershaw, North Common Road - Outline planning application in relation to access, landscaping, layout and appearance only for the demolition of 4no. poultry sheds and erection 4no. detached dwellings. for St Peter & St James Hospice.</u> Following some discussion the Council resolved to support this application, (notwithstanding the fact that it is outside the planning boundary), on the grounds that it is on previously developed (brownfield) land and is for the financial benefit of St Peter & St James Hospice. The Council however asked for the following requests to be considered and included as conditions of planning as appropriate: i. For a pavement to be built as part of the S278 Highway works, linking the new dwellings and Hospice site with the village of Wivelsfield Green, to improve accessibility for those needing to walk to the site (eg from the nearest bus stop). ii. For all dwellings to be equipped with electric vehicle charging points. iii. For the CIL exemption to be refused, unless the value of any CIL contributions due would result in a corresponding loss of revenue to the Hospice.</p>	To support with comments as detailed.
	b	<p><u>LW/20/0139 - Clearview Nursery Lane - Detached 2 bay oak framed carport.</u></p>	To support.
	c	<p><u>LW/20/0165 - Moors Cottage, Slugwash Lane - Conversion of existing dwelling and annex to 2no. 2 bedroom dwellings, incorporating a single storey rear extension and retaining existing access and off-road parking.</u> Following some discussion, the Council resolved to object to the application on the grounds that it is a large application, and the Council felt it unreasonable that a CIL exemption was being sought.</p>	To object on the grounds detailed.
	d	<p><u>LW/20/0177 - Somerset House, Green Road - Change of use from B1 to C3 - Erection of 14no. 2 storey dwellings with associated parking and landscaping.</u> Wivelsfield Parish Council resolved to object to the above application on the grounds that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incorporating 14 dwellings within the site is considered over-development; • parking provision is not consistent with the Wivelsfield Neighbourhood Plan which requires a minimum of 2 spaces per dwelling; • there are concerns about the impact of increased vehicle movements on the safety of the Eastern Road/Green Road/Slugwash Lane junctions. 	To object on the grounds detailed.
	e	<p><u>LW/20/0210 - Land to the North of Theobalds Road - Erection of 3 detached dwellings, with garages and associated landscaping-</u> the</p>	

	f	<p>Parish Council wished to object to this application on the same basis as it had for the previous application for this site (LW/19/0474). It agreed that, should additional information or key issues come to light during the formal consultation period due to begin next week, it would consider at the next meeting whether to submit supplementary comments.</p> <p>Notices of Planning Permission Received (for information only) <u>LW/20/0134 - Lakedene, Theobalds Road - Conversion of existing garage into guest accommodation and erection of pool house to rear of host dwelling.</u></p> <p>The Council was most concerned to learn that permission had been granted for this application when due process appeared not to have been followed and factual flaws in the application had been noted (as discussed in the open forum). The Council resolved to write to the Interim Head of Planning to request that the approval granted be revoked to allow for proper consultation (and assessment of the accuracy of the application) to take place.</p> <p>Certificate of Lawful Use or Development Received (for info only) <u>LW/20/0041 - Copper Beeches, North Common Road - Conversion of existing garage to garden room (by removal of existing garage door and replacement with window and pass door) and glazed enclosure of the existing rear undercroft.</u></p>	<p>To object on the grounds detailed.</p> <p>Clerk to write to LDC to object to the granting of this application owing to procedural errors.</p>
5	a b c d e f g h	<p>Financial Matters</p> <p><u>To ratify the use of online payments (previously authorised in principle) from the April payments run onwards</u>, as necessitated by the coronavirus pandemic and rules to prevent social contact.</p> <p><u>To agree procedures for online banking.</u></p> <p><u>To ratify items paid in April</u> – the Council ratified payment of sixteen items last month, totalling £9827.21, (see Appendix A for further information).</p> <p><u>To review and authorise items for payment</u> – fourteen items were approved for payment this month, totalling £9765.43, (see Appendix B for details). Councillor Rust to approve the online payments.</p> <p><u>To agree to apply for a Co-op Business Charge Card</u> – as the Council’s application for a Barclays credit card (as per the resolution passed in January) had been turned down, the Council agreed to apply for a Co-op Business Charge Card, to allow the Clerk to make payments directly from the Council’s account, where an arrangement to be invoiced for payment after a purchase is not available.</p> <p><u>To review quotes for repairing the village sign on Ditchling Road</u> – the Clerk had approached five businesses for comparative quotes for the work, but heard from only two. The Council resolved to appoint the blacksmiths of Far Ridge Ford to undertake the work (as this was the cheaper of the two quotes) and to request the hot dip galvanising finish for longevity and to match what was put on originally.</p> <p><u>To review the quotes received for tree work at the Recreation Ground, to decide which contractor to appoint and to agree a three-year contract term</u> – subject to them having the required £10m public liability cover, the Council resolved to appoint J Lee Trees to undertake the work. If the relevant level of insurance cover is not in place, Sussex Tree Surgeons will be appointed instead. The contract will be let on a three-year term for continuity (subject to the work in year one being satisfactory).</p> <p><u>Notification of receipt of CIL</u> – the Council had received a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) sum of £4,698.68 from Lewes District Council to use towards infrastructure projects.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Agreed. Payments ratified.</p> <p>Payments approved.</p> <p>Application for charge card agreed.</p> <p>The Council resolved to appoint Far Ridge Ford to undertake the repair.</p> <p>Contractor agreed for three-year term.</p>

	i	<u>Request for a grant of £500 from Wivelsfield Bonfire Society</u> – the Chair abstained from voting on this item. The Council resolved to award the grant, on the understanding that, if coronavirus prevents this year’s event going ahead, the money will be rolled forward for use next year.	£500 grant agreed.
	j	<u>Request for a £400 grant towards the setting up of a food bank as part of the Wivelsfield Coronavirus Buddies scheme</u> – between receiving the initial request and the meeting, the organiser of the food bank had been in touch to ask if the grant could please be increased beyond £400 to allow for as many families to be supported as possible. The Council agreed to donate an initial sum of £500, under S137 of the Local Government Act 1972, with the provision to supply a further £500 should it be needed between now and the next meeting (subject to receiving some basic information from the organisers as to how many households have been helped etc). This would not preclude the organisers from coming back to ask for more money at a later date if required. The Council and District Councillor Bikson acknowledged the wonderful work that is being done by the Wivelsfield Coronavirus Buddies Volunteer Group and now also by the Wivelsfield Community Cooperative (food bank). Many volunteers have been giving their time to help others, but particular thanks must be given to Rosemary Fair who set up and has been running the Coronavirus Buddies scheme, as well as (with a small group of other volunteers) being instrumental in organising the food bank.	£500 grant agreed, with provision for a further £500 without this having to come before another meeting. Clerk to purchase some flowers from the Chairman’s fund as a thank you to Rosemary Fair.
6	a	Policies <u>To review and adopt updated Pensions Discretion Policies</u> - The draft mandatory and non-mandatory Pension Discretion policies were agreed.	Agreed.
7	a	Report of Clerk <u>Update on the land at Charlwood Gardens, auctioned on 24 March</u> - The land had not sold at auction, so the Council is waiting to see if the application made by residents for Town and Village Green Status is approved.	
	b	<u>To resolve to sign the Memorandum of Agreement with East Sussex Highways regarding the urban verge grass cutting arrangements for this year</u> – agreed.	Agreed.
	c	<u>To note the outcome of the Annual Play Area Inspection reports</u> – the Council noted the outcome of the reports and the Clerk’s recommendations that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> when social distancing measures are removed, the Council forms a working party to clean the play equipment; The Council looks to put some money aside so that, as play equipment or surfacing needs replacement, or repair, funds are available for this purpose. 	Noted.
8	a	Village Hall Improvement Project <u>To note the Clerk’s report on the status of the Hall project.</u>	Noted.
	b	<u>To note the minutes of the joint (virtual) meeting held with members of the Management Committee held on 28th April.</u>	Noted.
	c	<u>To discuss the proposal from the Hall’s architect that the Parish Council and Village Hall Management Committee are named as joint employers for the contract, with a legal agreement to be drawn up detailing how the contract will be split once tenders are received.</u> A lot of time had previously been spent discussing this, with various pieces of advice being received. Financially it would make sense to have a dual employer arrangement in place, so it was agreed to go to tender on this basis, knowing that nothing is set in stone at this stage so things can be reassessed when tenders come back.	Agreed.
	d	<u>To confirm a 70:30 price/quality split for how tenders are assessed.</u>	Agreed.

	e	<p><u>To review and agree the quality assessment criteria and scoring matrix to be used for assessing tenders.</u> Subject to the criteria being checked and approved by RLF as sound, they were agreed by the Council. The Chair abstained from voting on this item as he had helped to prepare the questions.</p>	Agreed.
	f	<p><u>To acknowledge that RLF is being employed as contract administrator and that the contract will be managed by them and the wider professional team.</u></p>	Agreed.
	g	<p><u>To agree that, with the professional contract administrator in place to manage receipt of the tenders, Standing Orders 18d iv & v shall be suspended.</u></p>	Agreed.
	h	<p><u>To agree that the Clerk will issue the instruction to go to tender</u> (with the agreement of Peter Burton from the Management Committee).</p>	Agreed.
	i	<p><u>To agree that the Parish Council's Chair and Peter Burton from the Management Committee will represent the employer during the contract period.</u> The Chair abstained from voting. The Clerk asked that, when any information is passed on from the Contract Administrator or wider professional team, that this is shared promptly with her and the rest of the Council.</p>	Agreed.
	j	<p><u>To agree that the representatives named in 8i above will also attend the scoring assessment with RLF.</u> The Chair abstained from voting. The Clerk requested that, if possible, she would like to attend the scoring assessment as an observer.</p>	Agreed.
	k	<p><u>To resolve whether to lodge an expression of interest with Lewes District Council for CIL funding, to contribute to the cost of installing a Parish Council office as part of the Renshaw Room works – this suggestion had been made at the joint PC/Hall meeting last week.</u> It had been suggested that two expressions of interest be submitted, one for the store end of the Renshaw Room, the other for the Parish Council office and public toilets. The Clerk had put some queries to the Hall's fundraising team about whether it would be wiser to put in one overall bid, than two separate ones and whether we would need to be able to demonstrate match funding. As the earliest closing date for this CIL funding round is 30 June, the Council was inclined to say a provisional yes to putting in a CIL bid (though potentially one bid, split into two parts), but wanted to obtain more information first. Item to be included on the 1 June agenda.</p>	To be discussed at the June meeting once further information has been obtained.
9	a	<p>Reports from Councillors <u>Feedback from the Lewes District Association of Local Councils meeting held 9 March 2020</u> – Councillor Martin said the only real thing of note was that the director of East Sussex Highways had outlined the principles for the additional funding made available for repairing potholes.</p>	
	b	<p><u>Report from Westmeston Parish Council about trees and paths in West Wood.</u> To discuss whether the Council would wish to discuss the use of <u>permissive footpaths through West Wood with the owner.</u> West Wood is now being run as a properly managed woodland, with the relevant felling licence in place with the Forestry Commission. As a consequence, for safety, branches have been put across some of the unofficial (permissive) footpaths to discourage people from using them. The Council is aware that this has disappointed some people, who have been accustomed to walking more than just the official footpaths. It therefore agreed to write to the landowner to ask if it would be possible to retain some of these permissive paths for public use.</p>	Clerk to write to the owner of West Wood regarding possible retention of public access to the permissive paths.
	c	<p><u>Request for permission to make a repair to bridges on the drovers road</u> – Councillor Pascoe has volunteered to repair the bridges on the drovers' road for the small cost (less than £10) of some sand and cement. This is needed to prevent their collapse and a more costly repair.</p>	Agreed.

10	a	<p>Correspondence</p> <p><u>Information from Action in Rural Sussex (AirS) and request for a donation</u> – AirS have removed their subscription fee in order to make their services more accessible, but are requesting that, where possible, member organisations make a donation to help them cover costs. The Council resolved to make a donation equal to the previous membership fee of £50.</p>	To make a donation of £50, equal to the former membership fee.
	b	<p><u>Concern regarding the impact of planning application LW/17/0593/DM/17/2739 on Asylum Wood – two letters.</u> The Clerk to write to LDC regarding the information received that the buffer zone protecting Asylum Wood has been eroded with protective fences etc being moved closer than the prescribed distance to the trees.</p>	Clerk to write to LDC.
	c	<p><u>Information from Planning Officer regarding the Hurst Farm development and allocation of allotments</u> – the planning officer had advised that the allocation of allotments would be likely to be down to Haywards Heath Town Council.</p>	Noted.
	d	<p><u>Notification of adoption of the Lewes District Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies.</u></p>	Noted.
	e	<p><u>Concern about the destruction of trees in Kiln Wood, South Road</u> – Clerk to follow up with LDC.</p>	Clerk to write to LDC.
	f	<p><u>Response from East Sussex Highways to query posed about why sections of South Road are being resurfaced during April, when the general state of other roads (including Green Road/Ditchling Road by the mini roundabout) are in a much worse state.</u> It was said that the contractor had done a really good job with the repairs, however it is frustrating that the area around the mini roundabout on Ditchling Road is in such a poor state. Although the Council has brought this up a number of times with Highways, it was suggested that we write again, asking them to address this and the deteriorating areas on North Common and Green Road, on the principle that those that shout the loudest get heard.</p>	Clerk to write to East Sussex Highways to petition for comprehensive road repairs.
11	a	<p>Items for Noting or Inclusion on Next Agenda</p> <p>Verge opposite Parish Council office.</p>	
	b	Signs on the bridleway near to Golf Course Farm.	
	c	Missing bollards from around the village shop.	
12	a	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Monday 1st June 2020 – Parish Council Meeting</p>	

The meeting closed at 9.58pm.

Items Paid in April as Ratified at This Meeting

Payee	Expenditure	Value	Total	Payment Type	Voucher Ref
		£	£		
General Expenditure					
Clerk	Salary April 20		1511.18	Online	147
East Sussex Pension Fund	Pension contributions April 20		549.95	Online	148
Lewes District Council	April 2020 play area inspection Dog bin emptying 1 Apr-30 Jun 20 Litter bin emptying 1 Apr-30 Jun 20	18.00 655.20 54.29	727.49 ²	Online	149
Transparency Solutions Ltd	March 2020 Office 365 Subscription		38.64	Online	150
Sage UK Ltd	April Sage 50 Accounts subscription		96.00	DD	151
Trident Computers UK Ltd	IT contract May 20		55.80	Online	152
Ansty & Staplefield Parish Council	Share of street lighting energy costs Valebridge Road area		249.81	Online	153
Lemonade Print	Printing of Annual Parish Meeting agendas and minutes		18.96	Online	154
BT	Quarterly phone & broadband		449.60	DD	155
E Gander	Laminating pouches Heavy duty staple gun 2 nd class stamps x 48 5 x large letter stamps	14.28 14.77 31.20 5.75	66.00	Online	156
Surrey Hills Solicitors LLP	Legal advice re queries regarding Village Hall Improvement Project and Charlwood Gardens land.		1110.00	Online	157
Costain Ltd – ESCC	Installation of two raise/lower columns for CCTV at playground		3343.02	Online	158
Wivelsfield Green Cricket Club	First half of Cricket Pitch Maintenance Grant		350.00	Online	160
Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance	Donation		250.00	Online	161
Simon Goacher	Payroll Services 2019-2020		161.98	Online	162
ESALC	NALC subscription 2020-21 ESALC subscription 2020-21	151.34 697.44	848.78	Online	163
Total Expenditure			9827.21		

Online payments were set up by the Clerk and approved by the Chair.

² Whilst grouped against one voucher reference, each of these items was set up as a separate payment online to allow Lewes District Council to cross reference them to the relevant invoice numbers.

Items Approved for Payment May 2020

Payee	Expenditure	Value	Total	Payment Type	Voucher Ref
		£	£		
General Expenditure					
Clerk	Salary May 20		1511.18	Online	
East Sussex Pension Fund	Pension contributions May 20		549.95	Online	
Lewes District Council	May 2020 play area inspection		18.00	Online	
Transparency Solutions Ltd	April 2020 Office 365 Subscription		38.42	Online	
Sage UK Ltd	May Sage 50 Accounts subscription		96.00	SO	
Trident Computers UK Ltd	IT contract June 20		55.80	Online	
Shredded Neat UK LLP	Safe disposal of redundant paperwork		60.00	Online	
Surrey Hills Solicitors LLP	Advice re S297 Agreement		60.00	Online	
Zurich Insurance	Annual Insurance Premium (renewal 1 June)		1231.18	Online	
E Gander	Zoom subscription for Council meetings Webcam for Cllr Pascoe	59.95 19.23	79.18	Online	
Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd	Sealant for attaching dog waste bag dispensers		6.03	Online	
East Sussex County Council	Annual street lighting maintenance and energy contract 2019-2020		5059.69	Online	
Wivelsfield Bonfire Society	Grant for bonfire celebrations 2020		500.00	Online	
Wivelsfield Green Playgroup	Grant for Wivelsfield Coronavirus Buddies Food Bank		500.00	Online	
Total Expenditure			9765.43		

Online payments set up by the Clerk on 6/5/20 . Authorised by B Rust.