



PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF A FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 15th February 2024 AT THE VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: Hands (Vice Chair – Chair for this meeting), Esdaile, Hare, Hunt, Lee, Marcusson, Martin, Trembling and Riddle

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr H Quenault (Clerk), Cllr Charlottle Kenyon (West Sussex County Council) & 2 members of the public.

The meeting opened at 7.30pm.

141. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received as follows:

Cllr Paul Clarke – Illness

Cllr Jon Campbell – HDC Commitment

Cllr Len Ellis-Brown – HDC Commitment

142. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO REGISTER OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest made. There were no changes to the Register of Interests.

143. MINUTES OF FULL COUNCIL

An omission was noted and a question was raised over minute number 127, it was felt this did not accurately portray the Council's position on a stepped bridge and the importance/need for a ramped bridge design.

It was agreed to defer the signing off of these minutes until the next Full Council meeting. The Clerk agreed to collaborate with Councillors outside of the meeting to rewrite minutes number 127, to better depict the discussion.

144. COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes, Reports and Recommendations of Committees (other than separate agenda items) as follows:-

PLANNING & SERVICES COMMITTEE

Members received the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th January 2024.

RECREATION & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Members received the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th January 2024.

145. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no public speakers.

The Chair moved to the next agenda item.

146. DISTRICT & COUNTY REPORTS

West Sussex County Council Report:

The County Councillor was present and provided the following report:

Regretfully, many of the items requested for an update this month have yet to be brought fully up to date, due to sick leave in the Highways team, specifically the Assistant Highway Manager, who is dealt with most regularly.

The Councillor will meet with the Assistant Highway Manager on Monday and will issue an updated monthly report following that meeting.

Staff absence has been an issue recently affecting a number of scheduled meetings, which has been raised as an issue with the relevant Highway Operations Manager.

Adequate cover for meeting attendance is needed.

Balancing the budget is a priority, striving to do better than other Councils. A healthy reserve balance is a positive.

A29

A recent meeting with the Highway Operations Manager provided an update on the A29:

A geotechnical survey and report by Coffey International was commissioned by WSCC to move forward with the legal process necessary to gain access to embankments required for work. Coffey Intl advised removing trees on the embankment due to safety concerns, pending legal permission from landowners.

Legal permission to access the land for necessary works is being pursued, with an update requested from WSCC's Head of Law and Assurance.

West Chilmington Road:

Regular updates are available on various platforms. Recent updates from WSCC Highways indicate progress is limited due to consistent rainfall, with approximately 1 week of work remaining pending lower water levels and uninterrupted time for work to commence. Options to reopen the road using metal road plates were explored but deemed unsafe or impractical. Weekly checks on roads used as cut-throughs are ongoing to address safety issues.

Other Pulborough case work:

Localised flooding on Broomers Hill Lane reported to WSCC Highways. Works are provisionally booked for March 15, with further investigations planned if needed.

Investigation into school crossing and patrol costs and processes ongoing.

Water pooling outside Tesco and flooding under Pulborough rail bridge are being addressed, with updates expected.

After the report, questions and subsequent answers followed:

Pedestrian Routes: There were concerns raised about the lack of routes for pedestrians with the A29 being shut and the lack of spending to improve infrastructure on the auxiliary paths and roadways.

Culvert Material: It was established that the replacement of the culvert on West Chiltington Road would be polymer instead of brick, with the assurance that it would be wider. The estimated time for uninterrupted work was noted to be one week, but it could extend up to three weeks if there are risks/flooding involved. The importance of addressing issues in West Chiltington was emphasised by Parish Councillors.

Flooding at Pulborough Railway Bridge: The ongoing issue of flooding at Pulborough Railway Bridge (A283) was discussed during a recent working group meeting and ongoing work is being undertaken with a meeting scheduled next week.

Blocked Drainage: During maintenance work, it was observed that the drainage ditch on the A29 at Tesco's was heavily blocked and signs of pollution, possibly oil, were noted.

Delayed Meetings: Delayed meetings caused by lack of attendance by County officers was highlighted. This had been passed to Officers and would be addressed by offering replacements encase of sickness.

A283 Concerns: Concerns were raised regarding drainage problems related to work done by Network Rail. It was noted that the hardcore is higher than ground level, leading to issues. Additionally, the transport & infrastructure working group highlighted problems with a depression in a ditch that is impeding drainage, leading to a sinkhole.

Traffic Solutions: Issues with traffic management, particularly in Link Lane, were discussed, including large potholes and a proposed change in the speed limit on the A24.

Lack of Information and Communication: Concerns were expressed about a lack of information and poor communication online regarding various issues.

Legal Matters A29: Long court dates were mentioned as a frustration, with the need to address situations promptly.

Overall Impact on Surrounding Roads: It was emphasised that issues with the A29 aren't isolated and affect neighbouring roads and footpaths as well.

Budget Debate: There was discussion about budget allocation of 106 spend and the frustrations with the general budget process. The need to consider the impact on rural communities was highlighted.

Fracking Proposal: Concerns were expressed about a proposed fracking site West Chiltington and the accuracy of information provided, with objections raised regarding planning consent for a borehole.

The County Councillor was thanked for her attendance.

Horsham District Council Report:

There were in District Councillors present and therefore no update was given.

Members **NOTED** the District & County Reports.

147. MUGA SURFACE QUOTES

The Clerk introduced the three quotes and explained his recommendation.

It was pointed out that the FA had recommended one specific quote based on it being compliant with the regulatory body that manages surfaces. The Clerk made the Council aware that there is a high likelihood of the FA releasing over £23,000.00 towards the MUGA surface. The FA require a condition report of the existing surface and sight of a warranty to be applied to the surface. The sports playable would be increased to three, being football, netball and short tennis/pickleball. It was mentioned that other stakeholders and current users of the site had been kept up to date with the proposal.

Questions arose over the wording of the quote and whether this would mean the existing surface would be repaired. This was clarified to be the case. It was noted that the other quotes did reference other sports, however, the Clerk explained that these change the bounce of the court impacting football.

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept Sports Play quotation of £31,952.00 Ex-VAT providing that funding is sought and received from a third-party organisation and that the quote would contain that the existing surface is to be repaired where needed.

148. SEEKING CIL FUND SPEND

The Clerk initiated the discussion and put forth their suggestion stemming from the preceding agenda item. It was clarified that the fund in question has a limited timeframe for utilisation, expiring in under five years and is subject to specific spending constraints.

The Council **RESOLVED** for the Clerk to utilise the current balance of CIL monies to progress the MUGA project.

149. VACANCY ON RECREATION & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

The Council nominated and **RESOLVED** to accept the appointment of Cllr Sharon Curd as a member of the Recreation & Open Spaces Committee.

It was explained that due to Cllr Curd's other recognised positions, it was her responsibility in future to excuse herself where there could be a potential conflict in interests.

150. WARDEN REPORT

The Councillors expressed their gratitude to the Wardens for their diligent efforts in addressing anti-social behaviour. This included incidents such as bins being thrown off the bridge in front of passing trains. The Wardens were commended for their role in reporting such incidents and ensuring that those responsible are brought to justice. Additionally, they were acknowledged for their collaboration with local traders and their initiation of the DISC program. Through this program, they directly communicate with business and address issues with shoplifting and other problematic behaviours.

The Council **NOTED** the Warden's Report for December.

151. QUARTERLY 106/CIL UPDATE

The Clerk introduced the appendices and explained that (with help of the District Councillors) he had asked several key questions of the 106 team at HDC.

Those question (and subsequent answers from HDC in Red) were as follows:

DC/05/0736

- Can you provide details on where the remaining funds from DC/05/0736 have been allocated and which groups have received them? **The remaining funds have not yet been allocated to a specific project but they are allocated in the database (and therefore in reports) to reflect that the legal agreement requires them to be used for a particular purpose, as opposed to a use which is general in nature.**

- Additionally, could you offer a breakdown of the original expenditure for DC/05/0736? This is attached separately. There is slight difference in the total available in our database compared with that on the attached breakdown. The next round of reports will show the amount available as £20,413.28.
- I am particularly interested in learning more about the proposed project that is in consideration for these funds. These funds are not currently allocated to a specific project, only for improvements to Pulborough and/or Storrington Town Centres as required by the legal agreement. Once identified, a specific use for the funds would be subject to a request for funding seeking to have the funds awarded to that project.

DC/15/1084 - Library Expansion

- Could you confirm if the funds allocated for the library expansion (DC/15/1084) have been fully utilised, and if so, provide details on the completion of the project and its components? It has been requested of West Sussex County Council as to their intentions for these funds.

DC/09/0488 & DC/15/1084 - Recycling Improvements

- What are the plans for utilising the funds set aside for recycling improvements in DC/09/0488 and DC/15/1084? These funds have not yet been formally allocated to a particular project however they have been liaising with colleagues to identify how these will be used.

DC/15/1084 - Nitrogen Dioxide

- ♣ Regarding the funds for nitrogen dioxide in DC/15/1084, could you provide insights into how this money will be used and its anticipated impact on the parish? The Council's Environmental Protection Officer (Air Quality) has advised that the intention is to use these funds in line with the requirements of the agreement to provide and maintain equipment of real time monitoring of nitrogen dioxide in the Parish of Pulborough for a period of five (5) years. The analyser will be located on London Road – to be approved by the Highways Authority.

Architectural/Feasibility Statement for Pigeon Gate Bridge

- I noticed that fees for the architectural/feasibility statement over Pigeon Gate Bridge (specifically for DC/15/1084) were not allocated to the smaller amounts outstanding and rather utilised for the large amount found in DC/15/1084. Could you confirm the reason for this, considering the possibility of legal agreements and the best-suited approach? The Transport Contribution in the legal agreement relating to DC/15/1084 is defined as being "towards provision of the Bus Shelters, the proposed new footbridge over the railway line to the east of the Site and or such other priority schemes listed in the Pulborough Village Transport Plan February 2010 or subsequent updated version".

Further detail is provided in Schedule 10 of the legal agreement (Obligations by the County Council) which states that in the case of the Transport Contribution, the County Council covenants that (a) £20,000 will be spent solely on the improvement of the Bus Shelters... and (b) the balance payable shall be retained and ring-fenced by the County Council for the sole use of funding the proposed new footbridge over the railway line to the east of the Site (or other transport and highways improvements in the vicinity of the development is provision of the footbridge is no longer feasible). Due to the specific use given for this contribution, and the requirement within the legal agreement to commit/spend the contribution within a particular timeframe, it is considered

appropriate that the feasibility work come from this contribution. The remaining unallocated transport funds do not carry a commitment/spending deadline and the use to which they are to be put is general in nature. These funds could therefore potentially be used in the area in the future.

DC/15/1084 - Bus Shelters

- For the money allocated for bus shelters in DC/15/1084, can you specify where these funds have been directed, especially considering that the designated locations already have shelters in place? As mentioned above, the Transport Contribution in the legal agreement relating to DC/15/1084 is defined as being “towards provision of the Bus Shelters...”, however the County Council obligations at Schedule 10 include spending these funds on the improvement of the Bus Shelters. As above, “Bus Shelters” is defined as the *improvements to the two bus shelters to serve the development as provided by the County Council at the bus stops on Stane Street to the north of Stane Street Close or in such other location/s as may be considered appropriate by the County Council*. Therefore HDC officers have asked West Sussex County Council for an update.

Financial Discrepancy

- I observed a significant difference between the liable amount (£467,698.68) and the received amount (£106,117.11). Could you kindly explain this discrepancy? I understand that for DC/21/1535, the project may not have started, but additional clarity would be appreciated. Of the funds listed, there are no outstanding invoices in respect of DC/17/2125, DC/19/1314 and DC/22/0992.

DC/19/1998 – CIL and surcharges remain outstanding and we have applied additional surcharges since the report was sent in January 2024 (please note that parish councils do not receive a proportion of surcharges applied). Should the outstanding amount not be paid, the matter will be referred to the Council’s Legal Team.

DC/21/1535 – an amended application is expected in respect of this development therefore the scheme as currently approved may not proceed.

DC/21/2407 – the CIL has been paid, however surcharges remain outstanding. This matter has been referred to the Council’s Legal Team.

CIL Payments

- Regarding CIL, can we kindly request that all outstanding payments owed to the parish councils be expedited? We are actively progressing through various projects and these funds would greatly contribute, especially in the case of the MUGA project pending Council approval. We have not collected any further CIL from developments in Pulborough since the proportion sent to the parish council in April 2023. The parish’s proportion of any further CIL payments received between now and 31 March 2024 will be sent to the parish in April 2024 as required by the regulations.

The Council **NOTED** and thanked the Clerk for his detailed explanation of the quarterly 106 and CIL update from Horsham District Council.

152. FINANCE UPDATE

The Clerk emphasised the importance of biannual updates to the full council regarding the Parish Council's finances, following the recent audit. Fortunately, we anticipate a

modest surplus of approximately £10,000 by year-end, which will bolster our reserves for future projects. This surplus is primarily attributed to favourable interest rates on our bank accounts, resulting in significant income. While certain areas, such as office expenses, salaries and election costs, have seen higher than usual spending, careful planning has ensured our financial stability. Of particular note is the provision for major development within MUGA, which promises to be a significant source of income in the future.

All financial documents are readily available to anyone, regardless of their involvement in finance committee. This includes every Councillor's right and the public's right to access this information.

The Council **NOTED** the finance update from the Clerk and thanked him for the update.

153. PULBOROUGH PANTRY UPDATE

Cllr Kevin Lee updated the Parish Council about the work of the Pulborough Pantry.

In October, a proposal was put forward for the establishment of a community food pantry, which aimed to operate in a cost-neutral by balancing expenses with revenues. The initiative sought to address both excess waste going to landfills and the rising cost of living crisis by providing non-perishable goods to those in need. The concept involved a collaborative effort, with a small group discussing the logistics while the larger community contributed ideas and support.

Each week, the pantry serves approximately 120-140 people, sourcing goods from local supermarkets like Sainsbury's and Lidl, as well as offering fresh produce. The clientele ranged from individuals helping the fight against food waste to those facing financial difficulties. Beyond merely distributing food, it is set up as a warm hub. Recently, meetings were held with Horsham Matters to help fund the pantry and offer more support such as offering financial advice and connecting patrons with additional services as needed.

Funding initially, came from various sources, including donations, purchases, and partnerships with organisations like Martin Mundy Lester, Cubitt West, Howdens, NISA, PCP, local Freemasons, and Tesco's Blue Token Scheme. The initiative proved successful, as evidenced by its high standards of food inspection (5*) and positive feedback from volunteers and beneficiaries alike.

It was accepted that this was an incredible achievement.

The Chair expressed comments of thanks to the volunteers, especially individuals such as Maria, Nicola and Charlotte for their dedication to the project. The Chair and Clerk noted with appreciation the overwhelmingly positive involvement of the majority of Councillors (as well as their partners), who generously dedicated their personal time to contribute to this project.

The Council **NOTED** the verbal update on the Pulborough Pantry and thanked Cllr Lee, Cllr's involved in the project and the volunteers.

154. PULBOROUGH PANTRY TOR'S

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the terms of reference for the Pulborough Pantry as per Appendix D.

155. PRESS & PUBLIC EXCLUSION

The Council **RESOLVED** to exclude the Press and public from the next agenda item.

156. SPORTS & SOCIAL UPDATE

The Clerk gave a concise update regarding progress with the Sports & Social.

The Council **NOTED** the sports & social update from the Clerk.

157. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Traders Group: The road closure in West Chiltington is causing disruptions for local businesses and impacting their trade. Meanwhile, the Barn House Lane project aims to introduce new designs to enhance the appeal of Pulborough. This project holds significant importance as it serves as the entrance to the Wildbrooks area. Collaborating with a design firm, the focus is on revitalising the landscape, including addressing overgrown areas and improving views, particularly around the car park. A volunteer group is poised to take on the maintenance of these areas, including managing the hill in front of the village hall to maintain its verge and promote wildflower development. Discussions have also taken place regarding Swan Corner, with hopes for its improvement. Additionally, there are expectations for the Cornstore to be retained.

Fairtrade: It was announced that this year marks the 20th anniversary of Fairtrade in Pulborough, with celebrations planned for May 22nd at the village hall. The event will feature two speakers and should be promoted prominently on our website. We aim to take ownership of this significant milestone and make the event a success.

APCAG: After receiving pressure from community organisations, the CEO of Civic Airspace Reorganization in the southeast of England is considering the impact of consolidating flight paths. It was commented that we are optimistic that our voices will be heard in this decision-making process. The Development Consent Order (DCO) for the runway is expected by the end of this month and we are actively engaged in this matter. An online meeting with MP Andrew Griffith was held and a letter of appreciation was sent, acknowledging the support of APCAG and local Councillor representation.

Pulborough Society: At a recent Pulborough Society event, Andrew Bliss, the High Sheriff, delivered a presentation on his charitable work. During his talk, he mentioned that the upcoming incoming High Sheriff is also highly engaged in charitable endeavours.

158. PAYMENTS

The meeting closed at 8.44pm.

.....Chair

.....Date