

CHALVINGTON WITH RIPE PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF

2nd September 2019

held at The Hayton Baker Hall, Ripe.

58. Present: Cllr Lady Conway (Chairman), Cllr Dunbar Dempsey, Cllr Dashfield, Cllr Turner, Cllr Ward and Cllr White.
59. Attending: County Councillor Bennett, A Stevens (Clerk) and nine members of the public were also in attendance.
60. Public Session:

County Councillor Bennett had nothing new to report on this occasion.

District Councillor Watts sent a written report in which he said that Wealden District Council is still waiting for the Planning Inspector's Report on the Wealden Local Plan. The Report was originally due by the end of August and is now expected by the end of September.

Mr Garner said he has received his Council Tax Bill and the Parish Council's precept seems to have increased year on year by between 9.5% and 21%. He;

- sought reassurance that the Council is in control of its finances
- asked how the increases can be justified.
- also asked if there was a budget procedure and if so for it to be added to the website.

The Clerk said;

- the Parish Council precept remained unchanged for a while. The Council opted to use its reserves to keep the precept down instead.
- In November each year Councillors agree the Precept for the next financial year. A budget procedure is used and it can be added to the website in future. This amount is then apportioned using the tax base and it is the Council Tax base which has presumably changed.
- At the end of July 2019, the balance in the accounts is £45682.40. £39435.80 of this is the Community Infrastructure Levy. Councillors asked that CIL is identified separately in the accounts.
- She anticipates there will be a year-end balance, as it stands, of approximately £6000. The recommended reserve is six months of the precept.
- The precept has been increased to £13000 this year to help bring it in line with expenditure but another increase might be necessary. Councillors will also consider reducing expenditure and sourcing other sources of income.
- Last years' expenditure was high and included some one- off payments. £1000 was paid out in legal fees for the Village Hall lease and £1495 was paid out in grants.

Councillor White said one reason for the rise in costs is the significant increase in the costs of employment principally because of the introduction of a pension scheme which was required by law. In the year ended 31 March 2019 there was a full charge for the pension, in the previous year a part charge and prior to that no charge. The scheme operated by the Parish Council is a final salary scheme which is typical of those offered to civil servants and government employees. Councillor White said that in his view these were unaffordable. Mr Garner asked if a final salary scheme was mandatory. Councillor White replied, no.

Professor Hill asked what the Parish Council is doing to challenge the proposed new A27 off line dual carriage way. He was particularly concerned to hear from the Chief Executive that Wealden District Council is supporting it. Councillor Dunbar Dempsey said the Parish Council robustly objected to the proposal in the Local Plan consultation.

Representatives of the Parish Council have also attended;

- SSALC Meetings with the other Parishes involved.
- meetings with an Independent Highways Consultant organised by Selmeston Parish Meeting.

Councillors agreed to send a letter to the Chief Executive of Wealden and copy in the Leader of Wealden, District Councillor Roy Galley, Stephen Lloyd MP and Highways England. Chalvington with Ripe Parish Council vehemently objects to the plans because it wants to protect its villages. The plans seem to us to contradict Wealden District Council because it recently declared a climate emergency and wants to be carbon neutral by 2050. Councillor Dunbar Dempsey agreed to draft the letter which will be distributed to all the councillors for approval.

Mr and Mrs Janes said they have no objections to the work being carried out to the trees at 1 Carriage Mews under TM/2019/0202/TPO as long as the work is carried out as described in the application.

The meeting was then opened.

61. Apologies for absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rogers and they were accepted by those present.

Apologies were also received from District Councillor Watts.

62. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 1st July 2019:

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 1st July 2019 were approved by all and signed as a true and accurate record by the Chairman.

63. Clerk's Report on any Matters' Arising:

The Parish Council has received a report from the Footpath Officer who listed problems on footpaths in the parish. The list has been referred to Rights of Way for action.

64. Disclosures of Interest:

No declarations of interests were declared, nor were there any changes to the Register of Interests.

65. Reports from Outside Meetings:

There was nothing new to report on this occasion.

66. Planning Applications:

There were no planning applications for consideration at this meeting, but the Parish Council commented on the following;

Tree Work: - TM/2019/0202/TPO - 1 Carriage Mews, Church Lane, Ripe, BN8 6AS - Works in accordance with submitted schedule and plans to 2 x horse chestnut trees within Tree Preservation

Order (Chalvington/Ripe) TPO/2016/0014 – Councillors agreed that it was reasonable to cut back the trees where they affect the telephone and electricity cables.

Appeal of an Enforcement Notice APP/C1435/C/18/3215511 – The erection of a brick wall on land at the Solar Park at Kitty Hawk Farm – Chalvington with Ripe Parish Council supports Wealden’s Enforcement Notice and agrees the wall must be removed.

Certificate of Lawful Development WD/2019/1729/LDE - Kitty Hawk Farm, Darp Lane, Ripe, BN8 6BB – Storage of more than three aircraft in the hangar and flights on more than 28 days per year in breach of Conditions 1 and 2 attached to appeal notice WD/1998/9003/ENF – Chalvington with Ripe Parish Council supports the Enforcement Conditions imposed by Wealden District Council.

67. Financial Update:

Councillor White said the end of year accounts show that the Parish Council has a budget deficit of about £4600. He said that there were three ways to address this; increase the precept, cut overheads or a combination of the two.

Councillor Conway asked that the CIL monies should be shown and reported separately.

Councillor Dunbar Dempsey suggested the Parish Council had a separate meeting to discuss financial issues prior to the public meeting in November. Councillor Turner supported this. She suggested that as per the Standing Orders a Finance Committee or sub-committee be established to deal with this. The Parish Clerk advised that we should not do this. This was because the Parish Council have to have such a meeting in public if all Parish Councillors are present.

As a result of this advice the Parish Council agreed to have finance on the agenda of the October public meeting. Within the review would be employment costs and it was agreed that when this item was discussed the public should be asked to leave the meeting.

It was requested that the annual accounts should be displayed on the village notice boards.

They also asked for the accounts to be produced at each meeting. The Clerk will produce accounts monthly.

68. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

Suggestions submitted so far are;

1. ANPR Cameras
2. Improvements to the traffic island outside the village shop.
3. A petanque pitch.
4. A new kitchen for the Village Hall.
5. Child warning signs outside the Village Hall.

Parishioners were reminded they have until the end of September to submit any further suggestions. All the suggestions will then be considered by the Working Party to make sure, at the least, that they comply with Government guidelines, Wealden guidelines and the Parish Council’s criteria.

69. Design Statement:

Councillors approved the updated Design Statement circulated by Councillor Ward before the meeting. A copy of the Design Statement is also on the Parish Council’s website.

70. Parish Council Communication:

Councillors discussed ways to improve its communication with residents. Suggestions included;

- Making more of/updating the website.
- Submitting regular articles in the village magazine.
- A village email distribution list.
- Social Media.

Councillor Turner will draft a Communication Plan to base a discussion on at the next meeting.

71. Proposed telecommunications installation at Mullany Business Park, Deanland Road:

Councillors carefully considered the proposal and have no objections as long as those living in the neighbouring properties have also been consulted.

72. Defibrillator:

This item was deferred until the next meeting to allow Councillor Ward time to get up to speed with the work carried out by the ex-Chairman. The Clerk will let the British Heart Foundation know we would still like the grant in the meantime. Councillors agreed they would like to conclude this item next month.

73. Fingerpost Signs:

Chalvington with Ripe Parish Council agreed to establish a rolling programme to repair/maintain the fingerpost signs in the Parish. Councillor Dunbar Dempsey will report back on the condition of each fingerpost at the next meeting.

It was noted that East Sussex County Council will currently pay half the costs of repairing up to two fingerpost signs each year.

74. Neighbourhood Plan:

Councillors agreed that Councillor White will carry out some research on 'Local Green Spaces' and report back to the next meeting.

75. Update on traffic calming:

Councillors deferred this item until the next meeting to allow for Councillor Rogers' input. Two items in his report have been passed to the CIL Working Party for consideration.

76. Cheques for Payment:

The following cheques were approved for payment;

101093	PKF Littlejohn - Auditors	£ 240.00
101094	A Stevens – Salary – July	
101095	A Stevens – Salary - August	
101096	ESCC – Pension	

77. Questions from Parish Councillors:

Councillor Ward asked whether doctors should be included in the Emergency Plan. Councillors decided that it should direct residents to their local Medical Centre or 111 instead.

Councillor White;

- Suggested Councillor Rogers might like to attend the Transport for South East Meeting being held on 23rd October in Brighton and asked the Clerk to ask him.
- Asked that an additional CIL criterion should be added namely that any project is capable of completion.
- Asked what the status of the traffic island outside the shop is. Councillors agreed it was not worth considering at this point as drivers instinctively slow down to work out what it is.
- Noted that he had received several concerns from residents complaining about the number of cycles parked on the island and noisy races through the village at unsocial hours.

It was also agreed that the Christmas Tree licence will be an item on the next agenda.

There were no further questions and the meeting closed at 9.00pm.