

CHALVINGTON WITH RIPE PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF

3rd September 2018

held at The Hayton Baker Hall, Ripe.

48. Present: Cllr Dunbar Dempsey (Acting Chairman), Cllr Dashfield, Cllr Lawrence, Cllr Ward and Cllr White.
49. Attending: County Councillor Bennett, A Stevens (Clerk) and eight members of the public were also in attendance.
50. Public Session:

Residents asked;

- Why trenches are being dug on a plot of land in Channers Lane which is in a Conservation Area and for which there appears to be no planning application. The Clerk will refer the matter to Enforcement.
- The Parish Council to consider commissioning a study of Darp Lane in accordance with the ESCC Policy on the control of heavy vehicles. This was discussed later on in the meeting.
- The Parish Council to oppose the Wealden Local Plan in the strongest possible terms because it supports an off line solution to the A27. This was also covered later on in the meeting.
- What is happening about a large hedge which is growing over into the road because it is causing an obstruction. Councillor Dunbar Dempsey has written an article in the village magazine to ask residents, who have hedges next to public highways and paths, to keep them cut back. She will also talk to the landowner.
- What is happening about a horsebox which is said to be causing a regular obstruction to the highway in Ripe. The matter has been referred to Sussex Police twice now.

Mr Simpson, the applicant for planning application WD/2018/1527/FA described plans he has for his land. He would like to build two conservation ponds on land adjoining Curls Courtyard to help encourage wildlife there.

In answer to residents and councillors questions he confirmed;

- Top soil will be laid around the edge of the field and any overflow from any splash will run down the hedge line to make sure there is no flooding.
- Reeds will be removed to make sure his land floods more effectively.
- The trees will be mainly willows and alders.
- There will be no loss of light to neighbouring properties.
- Any heavy traffic will access his land through Deanland.

County Councillor N Bennett;

- Said BT Open Reach is currently installing fibre broadband in the village.
- Asked councillors to think about the effect the Wealden Local Plan will have on the existing infrastructure. He said it is important to make sure developers do what they say they will do.
- A business case for an off line A27 has yet to be submitted, but when it has it will need to be evaluated against other schemes nationwide. He is personally against the proposal but the County Council has yet to express an official view.

The meeting was then opened.

51. Apologies for absence:

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

Apologies for absence were also received from District Councillor Ede.

52. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting which was held on 2nd July 2018 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record by the Acting Chairman

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

The Clerk noted the Ripe Christmas Tree will be an item on the agenda for the Full Council Meeting in October because the Parish Council will need to apply for a licence from ESCC in time.

54. Disclosures of Interest:

There were no disclosures of interests nor were there any changes to the Register of Interests.

55. Reports from Outside Meetings:

Councillor White attended the Wealden Planning Panel Meeting in July and read from his report which was as follows;

- 1 The latest draft Local Plan provides that Wealden will build between April 2013 and 2028 14228 homes of which 7700 have been completed or committed, 4012 allocations have been made and there is a balance of 2516 windfall allowance. (Windfall is defined as a requirement for homes for which land has not been allocated.) Any planning permission granted from April 2013 will count towards the planned total BUT windfall allocations will only be backdated to September 2017.
- 2 Chalvington with Ripe has a settlement capacity (determined by Wealden) of 15 all of which have been defined as windfall. For villages such as ours, a Core Area has been drawn which is basically the built up centre of the village and it is this area AND adjacent land to which the settlement capacity relates. The Old Coach House site is outside the Core Area but it is adjacent and the 6 homes count towards our 15 because planning was granted from September 2017.
- 3 Stacey Robins explained this in more detail to me; Roseneath is outside the Core Area but is adjacent and could get planning permission. The land next to Pepperham is adjacent to the Core Area but planning permission would probably not be granted because of the proximity of listed buildings and the view (but see 5 year land supply below).
- 4 Ashdown Forest; the Forest defence has largely been watered down. Any developer applying for planning permission will now have to mitigate the impact on the Forest but this mitigation is limited to actions such as: installing high speed broadband to allow working from home, installing electric car charging points in the home and make a financial contribution towards Wealden's efforts to reduce the pollution impact on the Forest and other important natural sites. Now that the Ashdown Forest defence has been severely weakened Wealden warn that there will be a flood of applications and processing of applications which were awaiting determination.
- 5 The draft plan will be submitted to Full Council on the 18 July and will be sent out to Parish Councils etc on 13 August for representations which must be submitted by 8 October. Representations are not comments, the process is a clearly defined and relates only to tests of soundness, justification and 'can it be delivered' etc. We will be sent a format on which we can respond. We will be given the chance to articulate any objections in a public forum. All of this is under the good offices of the Planning Inspectorate and is out of Wealden's hands.

- 6 Wealden currently has 2.6 years land supply but it is required by Government to maintain a 5 year land supply. Wealden are confident of quickly closing that gap if the Draft Plan is approved. Whilst there is a shortfall, however, applicants who have been refused can take their case to appeal and this would probably be upheld if they meet the basic planning rules. Pepperham, therefore, could be under threat until the 5 year shortfall is eliminated.
- 7 Wealden have said that they intend to defend the plan and any proposed development outside of the Core Areas (or the Development Areas) would be refused and this would include brown field sites applying for change of use to residential. This, however, is a good example where an application might succeed on appeal.
- 8 Specifically to Chalvington with Ripe:
 - a. Trees on land off Channer's Lane; Stacey Robins suggests that this may be the prelude to a planning application but is not linked at present,
 - b. If the Old Coach House application were submitted today it would be regarded as too dense a development. The rules have been changed. I did point out that this was the basis of our objection to the scheme at the time and is most frustrating.
 - c. Stacey will let us know how much CIL we can expect from the Old Coach House and when.
 - d. Stacey is the new Team Leader for the Southern area which includes us.

56. Planning Applications:

WD/2018/1527/FA - Land Adjoining Curls Courtyard, Ripe Lane, Ripe, BN8 6AP - Minor material amendment to WD/2015/1969/F (creation of two conservation ponds) – Chalvington with Ripe Parish Council has no objections on any planning grounds to this application.

WD/2018/1277/F - Unit 4 Deanland Business Park, Deanland Road, Golden Cross, Chiddingly, BN27 3RP - Change of use to a Ski Training Centre – Additional traffic/parking information and planning addendum – Chalvington with Ripe Parish Council has no objections on any planning grounds to this application but Councillors asked that signage is erected to direct customers to access the Park via Golden Cross on the A22 and not via the A27.

WD/2018/1525/FR - Field adjacent to Electricity Sub Station, Mill Lane, Ripe, East Sussex - Retrospective application for an Equestrian Manege 20X40M – Councillors had no objections to this application as long as there is on-site parking and the manege is not for commercial use.

57. Wealden Local Plan:

Councillors agreed to send an official response to the Plan and agreed the first draft which is as follows;

Legality of the plan – yes

Soundness of the plan – no

We do not consider the plan sound in terms of sustainable development nor is it the most appropriate strategy for rural areas:

1. **The delivery of sustainable development in relation to the parish of Chalvington with Ripe.**

This is a small rural parish with 3 distinct settlements (Ripe, Chalvington and Deanland Wood Park); there is no local employment, a twice weekly bus from Ripe (with one off peak bus service on those days), no cycle paths, no primary or secondary school, no pub, very poor C roads, no train station, mains sewage at capacity and no pavements. More houses mean more car movements (as this is the only way people can travel to work) and increased pollution. This is an unsustainable geographical area with nothing in the plan to tackle the

infrastructure issues. And yet an additional 15 houses have been allocated to Chalvington/Ripe. This is completely unsound.

2. The most appropriate strategy

In determining the allocation to the parish of Chalvington with Ripe, it appears no account has been taken of the number of new dwellings that have been approved or built in the last 10 years. In 2008 there were 397 houses in Deanland Wood Park; in the last 10 years an additional 26 have been approved, equating to an uplift of 6.5%. In 2008 there were 160 dwellings in Ripe & Chalvington; in the last 10 years an additional 28 new dwellings have been built or approved, equating to an uplift of 17.5%. This means we have contributed a massive 54 new dwellings to the housing stock in the district, punching well above our weight in terms of % increase.

In the penultimate draft of the Plan we were allocated 10 homes backdated to April 2013. Now we have been allocated 15 back dated to September 2017. This is a substantial change and yet, despite questioning the logic, no plausible explanation has been given. The planning department seems to develop policy on a whim (*should we be so damning?*) The granting of six homes on The Old Coach House site in Ripe is a clear example. The parish fundamentally objected to this application on the grounds of density. At the Parish Planning Panel meeting held on the 12th July 2018 the final draft of the Local Plan was presented and the point was made that under the new proposals the density of building would be reduced and The Old Coach House site was given as an example. Developing planning policy in such a way will lead to unfortunate (*maybe a stronger negative word here ??*) development and the unnecessary destruction of our beautiful villages and countryside. Moreover, we have never at any point been consulted about the housing allocation, nor have we received an explanation as to why our housing allocation went up so substantially. Another factor that has changed is that when the new allocation of 15 came out we were told clearly that the 6 houses on the Old Coach House Site and the 3 houses at the Lamb Inn Site would count towards our allocation of 15; however more recent conversations have indicated that these 9 would not count towards our allocated 15. How can this be right? (*again, can this be phrased better?*)

3. Objectively assessed development

We are not aware that there is a list of eligible applicants awaiting housing in the Ripe/Chalvington area. We undertook an assessment of need some years ago and identified only one applicant eligible for housing in Ripe. So we are at a loss to understand why 15 additional houses are required over and above the 28 that have already been approved or built. We do however recognise that Ripe and Chalvington are desirable places to live but we need to be clear why they are desirable – peacefulness, lack of ambient light at night meaning we can see the stars, a rural harmonious community, open green spaces which uplift the spirit. Building on our open spaces will destroy the very things that residents have moved here for, and there is a danger of building more and more in what is already an unsustainable community.

4. Remedies/Solutions

We have been asked to put forward remedies/ solutions to Wealden's housing need and requirement for a 5 year land supply. We feel one solution lies in thinking creatively about housing and building more blocks of flats in urban areas and on brownfield sites. This is what towns and cities in Europe do – they build upwards in urban areas and create open spaces beneath for play and leisure. We feel it is a fundamentally flawed policy to keep building on greenfield sites and we need to counter the expectation that everyone in Wealden will have a garden and a front drive. Another solution is that no new homes in Ripe and Chalvington are approved for the next 5 years; this would then allow some PDRs to come through the system thus adding to the housing supply that Wealden seeks. If this is not done, the moment an allocation is agreed developers will bag the land and apply for

planning permission on the grounds of the Plan's allocation so more green spaces will be covered with houses (*I think this last sentence could be better phrased*).

5. Transport

We note with dismay (*despair?*) that the Plan supports an off line new dualled A27 but that there is nothing concrete about improving bus and train services, nor about reducing the need for car journeys. An offline A27 would merely create log jams in Polegate and Eastbourne and it would create significantly more pollution in the district. Whilst the "growth" argument will always hold sway at district level it is now being challenged; e.g. the useful recent evidence-based report commissioned by Campaign to Protect Rural England that (it is claimed) '*reveals that road-building is failing to provide the congestion relief and economic boost promised, while devastating the environment*'.

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/transport/roads/item/4543-the-end-of-the-road-challenging-the-road-building-consensus>

Additionally, the villages have important cultural, leisure and economic value for the wider community, as seen in the music festivals, rambling and, increasingly, cycling including stops at the cafe in the village shop. The A27 cutting a swathe through our environment will spoil it not just for the villagers but for the wider population.

The matter was then referred to the October Meeting to allow residents time to read the draft and suggest any further changes. It was also noted that the housing allocation will be unaffected by whatever happens to the A27.

Councillor Lawrence is to attend a meeting at SSALC on the 7th September where it is hoped MPs will clarify what changes they think should be made to the A27.

Maria Caulfield MP has also been invited to a future Parish Council Meeting to update residents on any plans for the A27.

58. Emergency Plan

Councillors approved the Final Draft of the Emergency Plan. An electronic copy will be circulated to all councillors so they can hand a copy to the Emergency Services if there is an incident in the Parish.

59. Co-Option of New Councillor

Chalvington with Ripe Parish Council now has official permission to co-opt a replacement for Stephen English. Applicants are invited to write to the Clerk in the first instance with a brief curriculum vitae.

60. To consider commissioning a study of the lanes in accordance with the County Council's Policy on the control of heavy goods vehicles

Councillors discussed whether or not to commission a study but agreed most of the heavy goods vehicles are either delivering to the village or are agricultural traffic. They felt the number of cars is a bigger issue and agreed to consider commissioning a traffic survey instead. The Clerk will bring an example of the information a survey provides to the next meeting.

61. Construction Management Plan for the Lamb

Councillor Dunbar Dempsey has written to the Planning Officer to ask Sigma for a more detailed Construction Management Plan for The Lamb. She would like the plan to include details of where their lorries can park, when they can park and how they can park so that residents are protected, especially first thing in the morning, on bin collection days and evenings and weeken

62. Cheques for Payment:

The following cheques were approved for payment;

Mass Media – Website - £84.00	Cheque number 101039
A Stevens – Salary	Cheque number 101040
A Stevens – Salary	Cheque number 101041
ESCC – Pension	Cheque number 101042
HMRC – PAYE	Cheque number 101043

63. Questions from Parish Councillors:

Councillor White asked what the process is for reporting dog walking firms who let their dogs foul the paths in the Parish. Offenders, ideally with evidence, can be reported to the Street Scene Officer at Wealden.

Councillor Dunbar Dempsey asked;

- for the defibrillator to be an item on the agenda for the next meeting.
- What is happening about the cars being advertised for sale at the side of the A22. The Parish Council has contacted all the relevant bodies none of whom want to take any action because the cars do not cause a safety hazard.

Councillor Dashfield said she has heard the age group limit for Deanland had been reduced so Councillor Ward agreed to see if he can find out more.

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