

WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



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WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of Washington Parish Council held on Monday 1st August, 2016.

PRESENT: Cllr Britt, Cllr T Cook, Cllr P Heeley, Cllr A Lisher, Cllr Milner-Gulland, Cllr Newman, Cllr R Thomas and Cllr D Whyberd

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr Paul Marshall (Horsham District) and Cllr Philip Circus (West Sussex)

ALSO: Clerk to Washington Parish Council, Ms Z Savill

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: No members of the public were present.

ABSENT: Cllr Beglan (holiday)

Cllr Heeley opened the meeting at 19:36 hours

19.17 Apologies for Absence and Chairman's Announcements

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Beglan (holiday). Cllr Heeley informed the meeting that the funeral service of the late Cllr Norah Dore, at St Mary's Church, Washington, was very well attended. An order of service was made available for members to view.

19.18 Declarations of Interest from members in any item to be discussed and agree

Dispensations

None received.

19.19 To approve the Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting held on 1st August, 2016

The Draft minutes of the meeting had been circulated to Councillors and published on the Parish Website. Councillors **RESOLVED to AGREE (167)** that the Chairman could sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting which took place on 1st August, 2016 and the minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

19.20 Public Questions

None raised.

19.21. To Report on Matters Arising from the previous minutes

No matters arising.

19.22 County and District Issues

Cllr Circus told Councillors he was unhappy with the recent WSCC decision to close Rydon Community College, as part of the county's schools re-organisation. He had voiced a number of critical concerns at the Education Select Committee which had made the decision. This included his doubts about projections of pupil numbers, housing projections, and that the education argument was built around the notion that a small comprehensive could not succeed educationally. Although he acknowledged there might be issues with getting the breadth and depth of teaching options, there were manifestly examples of successful small schools in the county, and he was sympathetic to the idea that Rydon should be retained and developed as an 11-16 school. Cllr Newman asked Cllr Circus how he voted on the decision. Cllr Circus replied that he didn't vote because he is not a member of the Select Committee. But if he could vote now, he would vote against the decision. But he said there was no way he could counter the decision. He spoke at the committee as a witness and a local member and was never involved in the decision-making process. He said that as far as the County Council were concerned, the decision had been made and the school would become an annexe of Steyning Grammar School in 2017. Time may have expired for a judicial review. He commented that the pro-right lobby did not do itself any favours with its campaign, which in part, had involved some quite abusive emails to a range of decision makers, including one to Nick Herbert MP.

Cllr Circus also expressed his concerns for the proposed 5-day-week of many of the West Sussex rubbish tips, including Horsham, and warned it would lead to increased fly tipping. He told councillors that he had voiced his objection to the WSCC cost-cutting proposals of the aggregate waste service, and had asked David Baring, WSCC's cabinet member for residential services, to consider, instead of a rolling review, a specific review in a year or so's time, to see precisely what effect these changes will have in the round, including on recycling. Cllr Marshall commented that the introduction of charging would have to be managed and this would generate more administration.

Cllr Britt said she was disappointed that the Parish Council was not consulted about the removal of the community bottle bank at the Frankland Arms carpark and that some of the neighbouring authorities were keeping theirs. She commented that since all glass was being recycled, there did not seem any point in removing the facility. Cllr Marshall said he was aware of the removal of bottle banks at Steyning but not at Washington, and would make enquiries. Cllr Circus said that there is the attitude that since everyone has a facility to dispose of glass in a recycling bin, that the cost of keeping bottle banks could no longer be justified. However, he was in favour of positioning trade bottle banks near restaurants and pubs as these would collect a large volume of glass for recycling. This, in his opinion, would be in the public's best interest.

Cllr Marshall updated members on Horsham matters, including a district council review of all the rural car parks. He said Horsham currently spend £109,000 per year on maintaining them, mostly out of business rates. He warned there could be charges, and potentially business charges, and the result that parking would be pushed onto the roads, as was happening in and around Storrington. He said there was also a review of

domestic collections of non-recyclable waste to become fortnightly next year, making a potential saving of £1 million.

Cllr Marshall informed councillors that Horsham District Council was pursuing Barratts for the alleged breach of a condition to provide a trip-trap path at Millford Grange which links to Sandgate Park. He said that Barratts are also the same developers for the Paula Rosa site in Storrington, and that he had spoken to Christ Lyons, director of planning, asking him to keep reminding Barratts of their obligations at Millford Grange. Cllr Marshall said he would keep members informed of the situation. Cllr Britt and Cllr Heeley said that Barratts were also the subject of enforcement for other alleged breaches, namely the development of the country park and the screening of hedging along Hampers Lane. He agreed to look into these and report back on their progress.

19.23 To consider Planning Applications and discuss Transport issues

19.23.1 Applications

DC/16/1610 - Birchwood 2 Chancton Copse Rock Road Storrington RH20 3BF

Fell 1 x oak tree, surgery 5 x oak trees

After consultation, councillors **AGREED** they had **NO OBJECTION** to the application.

DC/16/1601 - Finches Hollow Melrose Place Storrington Pulborough

Loft extension and conservatory (Lawful Development Certificate Existing)

Councillors **AGREED** they had **NO COMMENT** to the application.

DC/16/1296 - Hillyfield Cottage London Road Washington Pulborough

Proposed demolition of existing outbuildings and construction of annexe accommodation.

After consultation, councillors **AGREED** they had **NO OBJECTION** to this application in principle but to defer to Horsham District Council with regard to the change of use being adverse to their Countryside Policy.

However, councillors also agreed to respectfully request that should the Planning Officer be mindful to permit the application, that it is a condition that the accommodation is tied to the home owner and is not a separate unit of accommodation.

19.23.2 Enforcement

None received

19.23.3 Appeals

No appeals lodged at the time of publication of the Agenda

19.23.4 Decision notices

Application Number: DC/16/0982

Site: 4 Gorse Bank Close Storrington Pulborough West Sussex RH20

3AQ Description: Erection of a detached house with integral garage

Decision: Application Permitted

Date of Decision: 20/07/2016

WPC Response: Councillors **AGREED NOT** to support this application for reasons consistent with the Parish Council's original objection to the previous application at this site ref:

DC/14/2612.

19.24 Transport issues:

Nothing to report

19.25 For information only:

SHELAA July 2016 - Pre-publication update - Washington sites

Assessments of the 5 sites in Washington included in the final SHELAA 2016 publication due at the end of July, were circulated to Councillors before the meeting.

The sites are: Land off the Old London Road (Luckings Yard), Old Clayton Kennels & Cattery & West Clayton, Rock Common East of The Hollow, Rock Common South of The Hollow, and 'Cadrona', Hampers Lane.

Cllr Heeley commented that the assessment followed what the Parish Council would expect at this stage, paving the way for development of the two sites which are in the Neighbourhood Plan, namely Luckings Yard and Vineyards, but objecting to any housing at Old Clayton, Cadrona, and Rock Common.

Road Closures

Closures are published on the Parish website should councillors receive queries from the public.

19.27. To Receive Year to Date Reconciled Payments, Receipts, and Approve Purchases

The reconciled bank statement showing transactions between 27.05.16 and 30.06.16 accounting year to date statement, invoice and purchase order summary were circulated to Councillors.

Cllr Heeley queried the £112 cheque for payment of 8 hours of work by the former clerk, for July. The clerk explained that the PC had agreed at Full Council earlier in the year, to pay one hour per week, and up to 2 hours if the clerk considered it necessary. The work on the Annual Report and First Quarter Finance Report was additional work to the preparation of accounts for the Full Council meeting.

Cllr Heeley accepted the reason, but asked that any payments which were unusual, should be presented to the council with an explanation so that it is fully transparent. The clerk noted this and agreed to present the additional information on future Agendas.

Payment for repair of the MUGA gate by Mr L. Harris, of Washington: The clerk presented a £144 cheque including VAT, to councillors, for the welding of the vandalised latch of the MUGA gate. Cllr Whyberd thought this expensive. The clerk said that it had been agreed at the Open Spaces meeting in May 2016 that the work would be carried out and that the cost would be in the region of £100. This had been acceptable to the committee, and was the least expensive option compared with the cost of replacement of the latch. The clerk had reported to the June Open Spaces Committee meeting that the work had been completed satisfactorily. The latch urgently needed repairing in the interests of safety of the public.

Costs were covered by the general maintenance budget and the clerk had the power to approve payments under £500 for work which in her judgement was necessary to carry out. In this instance, safety was critical. The MUGA gate was considered dangerous unless repaired, because it didn't close shut and MUGA users were at risk of injury if they collided

with it. The work was carried out prior to the inspection of the Recreation Ground.

A cheque for £1,062 (£630 and £432) was presented to councillors in payment to Mr D Flynn for his grass cutting and hedge trimming in July. The quotes are part of the annual recreation ground contract of £3,300 plus VAT which was approved at the Full Council Meeting on 7th March 2016 (minute ref: 16.31.1)

***National Association of Local Councils Financial Regulations 2016**

Ref: BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND

4.5 In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the Clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the Clerk’s judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £500. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

Councillors **RESOLVED TO AGREE (168)** the financial reports as

follows: Outstanding purchase orders - £0.00

Outstanding invoices - £532.77 (internal audit fee) and £102 (The Play Inspection Company) Reconciled Bank Balance - £ 77, 515.87

19.27.1 VAT

19.27.2 PAYE and NICs: 1st quarter payment to HMRC: £437.96.

19.27.3 Clerks Salary & expenses (cheque number) 2311

July Payment (gross)		1084.67
Holiday entitlement		
TOTAL		1084.67
LESS		
Tax		13.40
NI		49.52
Net Payment		1021.75
Expenses		
Mileage (0.45 ppm) miles		16.20
Electricity		10
Phone		10
Stationery		6.00
Printer cartridges		16.00
Total Expenses		58.20
Total Payment (July 2016)		1,079.95

19.27.4 Expenses

Councillors **RESOLVED TO AGREE (169)** to the Clerks salary and expenses.

19.27.5 Holiday

Pay None.

19.27.6 Other

To consider payment of the invoice of the Internal Audit for End of Year 2015.16.

The internal audit by Mr Frost has been charged at £368.75 for 6.25 hours (spread over a two- day visit) at £59 per hour, plus £88.50 (£59 unit price) for 5 emails (including an email from the 2014.15 audit in July 2015), and £75.52 for travelling (59p per mile for 2 x 64 miles). This is a total cost of **£532.77**. There is no VAT.

Cllr Heeley informed councillors that the clerk noted that the invoice was far in excess of his original estimation of costs to be around 3 hours work at the same rates. Last year he invoiced the PC **£208.08** for the 2014.15 internal audit and did not charge for emails.

However, Mr Frost maintains that he required two visits to complete the 2015.16 audit as there was insufficient information presented to him in order for it to be undertaken in one visit.

The clerk, in consultation with the former clerk who completed the Annual Return, is of the opinion that the PC should pay Mr Frost's invoice. However, it should be noted that one of the emails on 27th July, 2015, related to the previous audit.

Cllr Heeley proposed that the Council pays the invoice, but deduct the email charges as they were not quoted or agreed by the PC. The motion was carried by a majority and councillors **RESOLVED to AGREE (170)** to pay £444.27 internal audit fee.

Cllr Heeley said that if Mr Frost provided evidence that the Parish Council had made an error with respect to the invoice figure, the clerk should present the information to them for further consideration.

To Receive the Financial Report of WPC for the first quarter of 2016.17

A copy of the report for the period of 01/04/2016-30/06/2016 was circulated to Councillors before the meeting, prepared by Ms Gina Condie. It was reported that the Council continues to operate within their financial budget, currently £3,561. Cllr Heeley commented that this was a good result. There were some variances for Q1: Clerk's salary – this figure includes actual payment for March (4 months). In Q4 there will be 2 months payment to the clerk. Over the year the figure should balance. The general graveyard maintenance has not been paid. Cllr Heeley queried the reason for the same £1250.01 variance figure of a budget unspent, appearing twice - both for item 31 Tree Works and again for item 71 General balance

3. He said the total of £2,500 was significant for a budget not spent. It was thought that the figures for 31 was a contingency for a tree safety report, and that item 71 was a contingency for graveyard maintenance. The clerk was instructed to make enquiries and report her findings.

19.28 To Review, Consider, Recommend and report on Parish Council issues, including maintenance

Storrington & Sullington and Washington NP – Request for more information

Cllr Heely informed councillors that Horsham had requested more information for North Farm from the NP despite an initial agreement that they would visit the site. They subsequently made the appointment following contact from Cllr Heeley. Mr Rick Goring, of Wiston Estate, had agreed to show them, and a representative from the SDNP Authority, around the site and provide the necessary information. North Farm had been put forward as a potential growing employment area on the NP. Mr Goring would also provide further information if required.

Cllr Heeley said Horsham had suggested that The State of the Parishes report in the submission plan needed bolstering in some areas for Washington and that he would provide this.

Cllr Britt reported that the application for the Paula Rosa development had been accepted by Horsham to go forward and that this was good news.

Storrington & Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Period - update

Cllr Heeley reported that no specific representations from Washington parishioners had been received by the clerk to date, although there were a number of interested visitors to the Washington Parish Council's stand for the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation at the Village Day on Saturday 9th July.

The public consultation period ends Wednesday 17th August 2016.

Children's Play Area - to consider annual inspection report

The clerk circulated the Rospa play inspection report by Playsafety Ltd to councillors before the meeting. This matter was deferred from the Open Spaces Committee at their meeting on July 18th. There were no findings which required immediate remedial action, and Councillors were reminded that it is envisaged that the play area will be upgraded later this year, pending the planning application to HDC.

Cllr Heeley reported that a second playground inspection was undertaken without the clerk's knowledge, by The Playground Inspection Company Ltd. This had been automatically renewed by the previous clerk last year, which had not filtered through to the current clerk. The current clerk informed councillors before the meeting that she had cancelled the automatic renewal process in order to avoid a repeat inspection. The company emailed the clerk that they did not give prior notification of their inspections for administrative reasons.

Councillors **RESOLVED to AGREE (171)** to the payment of £102 inc VAT to The Playground Inspection Company Ltd. A cheque for £105 to Play Safety Ltd had already been agreed and submitted.

Casual Vacancies - two councillors required for the Washington Ward

Cllr Heeley reported that one applications had been received by the clerk for parish councillor of the Washington ward. Cllr Britt said she believed that there was another possible applicant. There were currently two vacancies for councillors in the ward, which would bring the number of councillors back up to the maximum of 11. There has been no

call for a by-election within the statutory 10 days' notice, so the vacancy may be filled by co-option. Applications were invited from those who believe they have the drive to help take the work of the Parish Council forward at an exciting time.

Mobile Phone Reception – to consider making representations for improved service in the area

Cllr Heeley reported that Storrington & Sullington Parish Councils have written to Mr Nick Herbert MP, Ofcom and Mobile UK (newly merged organisation formed of the 4 mobile network providers), to raise awareness about the poor and sometimes non-existent coverage in the area and urge them to find a solution. To back up their case, they are appealing to residents and business in Storrington, Sullington and Washington to let them

know what their signal is like where they live and work, by completing a short reporting form via Survey Monkey to build a map of inadequate reception, at the following:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/mobilesignal>

He said the initiative was prompted from research into mobile signal in the area by Storrington Parish Councillor Mr Richard Hurley, and a working party was formed to create the survey form. Paper copies would also be available for completion and the responses

would be used to create a map for each mobile phone network detailing which areas are

poorer than others. The survey began in July and will run for three months. The working party will review the findings and consider next steps.

A copy of Storrington & Sullington PC's letters of representation were circulated to councillors before the meeting, with the email from Cllr Hurley to the Washington clerk. Councillors were informed that campaigners hope to involve local businesses as distribution points for paper versions of the feedback form and placing posters around the Village.

Notices are also planned for distribution to the parents of school children. Cllr Hurley has offered the paper forms and publicity information to enable Washington PC to become involved if it wishes, and has invited the PC to make similar representations. Councillors acknowledged that the signal in Washington was patchy and often non-existent. Cllr Rick Thomas said he was concerned about the impact of a phone mast near properties in the area, and that it was important to strike a balance, between its appearance, radiation effects and the need to improve signal.

Councillors AGREED that the clerk write a letter of support to the MP and three agencies. Cllr Heeley invited councillors to complete the survey monkey.

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service - public consultation on its draft Community Risk Management Plan

Invitation to the Parish Council to give feedback before the consultation period closes on August 5th. The draft document was circulated to councillors before the meeting. Cllr Whyberd said he had read the Plan, it had been well drafted and he could not find a reason to raise any objections.

Councillors AGREED that it was not necessary to respond to the draft consultation.

To consider a donation to a charity of choice in memory of the late Cllr Norah Dore

The family of the late Cllr Dore had requested that any donations be made to the charities which she was closely associated with, namely St Barnabas Hospice and St John's Ambulance, instead of flowers.

Councillors **RESOLVED to AGREE (172) to** make a £100 donation to St Johns Ambulance, a charity which Cllr Dore had been closely involved.

19.29 To receive reports and recommendations from Committees and Working Parties

19.29.1 Open Spaces, Recreation and Allotments & Footpaths Committee

Recreation Ground charges - to consider new charges and revoke a previous decision.

To consider a recommendation from the Open Spaces Committee on July 18th, to approve a hire schedule for the Recreation Ground prepared by Committee Chairman Cllr Whyberd, and to revoke a previous decision by the Full Council on 9th May, 2016, to charge £10 per hour hire of the Recreation Ground for private functions.

The hire schedule was circulated to Councillors before the meeting. The clerk pointed out that a previous decision had been made on hire charges put forward by Mr Gerig of the Village Hall, and was not based on a schedule of charges (ref Min: 18:64 Full Council Meeting 9th May). Therefore, it was not necessary to revoke the decision.

Cllr Whyberd told councillors that the Recreation Ground was essentially free to be used for general recreation purposes. The proposed schedule was necessary in the current times of austerity to help towards its maintenance costs. This was in addition to the amount paid in the precept by residents. He pointed out that the new schedule was also necessary to redress the problem of previous decisions to impose a £10 hourly charge as this had reportedly resulted in some loss of business for the village hall.

Cllr Heeley read out the hire charges proposed by the committee, and pointed out that it would be better to fix a fee for hire of an area outside the village hall as this would avoid the hirer having to wait for a committee decision.

He commented that previous decisions on hire fees had been made difficult by the lack of information on details of some of the hires and also whether there would be any impact on the village hall and their bookings as a result of the amount imposed.

Councillors considered the following proposed hire charges:

Councillors **RESOLVED to AGREE (173) to** the charge of £10 per football match/and practice for youngsters, £20 for mature teams, with 50% discount if they are prepared to look after the nets etc.; £20 per cricket match as a much larger area than the square was required, and this reduced the use of the Recreation Ground by others.

Councillors **RESOLVED to AGREE (174) to** the flat rate charge of £20 per booking irrespective of the number of hours, plus £10 per extra retail unit or hog roast, for the use of area outside halls for weddings etc., and other functions which require a marquee or gazebo.

Councillors **RESOLVED to AGREE (175) to** the proposal of no charge for Village Day etc., and £350 for commercial operations such as fun fairs.

Councillors **RESOLVED** to **AGREE (176)** to charging from £20 for operations organised by groups not based locally, depending on the amount of space used and nature of activity. The rate would be determined by the Open Spaces Committee.

19.29.2 Planning and Transport Committee

Meeting No reports or recommendations

19.30 Washington Recreation Ground - Hire Request by Upper Beeding FC

Upper Beeding FC secretary Mr Dave Rowland contacted the clerk requesting the use of the grounds by the FC on an occasional basis on a Saturday or Sunday mornings for some weeks during the winter. They would be willing to take on the responsibility for the goals, nets, pitch markings etc., if there was a small storage area. Mr Rowland also requested the use of changing and showering facilities and was advised by the clerk to make enquiries at the Village Hall.

The clerk informed councillors that in the past the Ashington Cougars had hired the Recreation Ground but it was too wet to use during the last season. Other clubs have been seen using the grounds this summer for match practice without prior arrangement. Cricket fixtures usually take place on Sundays in the season and on the Square. She advised that priority should be given to the Cougars. This was because they had funded the inspection of the grounds by the Sussex FA in a grant application to improve facilities at Ashington and Washington.

The clerk was instructed to give first refusal to the Cougars before offering any bookings to the Upper Beeding club and to charge the hire fees agreed earlier in the meeting.

19.31 To receive reports on meetings attended, and notice of any forthcoming meetings.

Cllr Heeley reported that there was nothing to report on meetings. The PC had a stand at the Village Day which attracted a reasonable number of visitors. The

Neighbourhood Plan details were on display, and four Washington Story books were sold for £21 and would be paid into parish funds.

19.32 Correspondence Received

PCSO Changes

Cllr Heeley reported that there were significant changes to the PCSO structure on 4th July. The key issues to note are:

- There is no longer a named PCSO for a parish area.
- Horsham NPT have amalgamated with Adur & Worthing NPT to create a hub based approach.
- There will be PCs and PCSOs based at either Worthing or Horsham police station.

He said that decisions on the direction of resources will be based on the information and intelligence received, and the threat, harm and risk. Therefore, it will be deemed that if there is a need in a parish area, the NPT will consider using resources from both Worthing and Horsham to deal with those issues.

Cllr Heeley expressed his concern that there was now no local policing. He reminded

councillors that a local police representative had not been able to attend the Annual Parish Meeting. Instead, he had been directed to a website which had not been updated in two months in terms of current cases. He said it was far away from neighbourhood policing and the situation was dire.

Councillors **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** unanimously to a proposal by Cllr Heeley that a letter is written by the clerk to Claire Knight of the Neighbourhood Policy Team expressing its dissatisfaction that there is so little involvement by the police in the local community.

19.33 Clerk's report

Nothing to report

19.34 Freedom of Information/Data Protection Requests Received

None received.

19.35 Compliments and Complaints

None received.

Email received from Mrs Stephenson complaining about the absence of dog bags at the entrance of the Recreation Ground, and for the council to continue to make provision for them as they have done in the past.

The clerk would order the dog gloves designed for the dispenser. In the meantime, there was provision of bags by the Recreation Ground.

19.36 Governance and Accountability

Peter Frost's internal audit will be considered by the Finance Committee when the External Auditor's Report has been received.

Mr Frost's report was submitted to the External Auditor before July 13th submission deadline.

19.37 Holidays

The clerk's request for a holiday from Wednesday 3rd to 10th August was approved by the Chairman.

19.38 Training

19.39 To receive items for the next agenda

Update on the VAS order and the blind summit warning signs

19.40. Date and Time of next Meetings

Committees - Planning & Transport 15th August - to consider only planning applications
No Open Spaces Committee Meeting until 19th September.

Full Council - September 5th 2016

The Meeting Closed at 21:26 hours

Signed.....

Dated.....