

# WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



Clerk to the Council.  
Ms Zoe Savill.  
Tel: 0777 6771921  
Email: [clerk@washingtonparish.org.uk](mailto:clerk@washingtonparish.org.uk)  
Website: [www.washingtonparish.org.uk](http://www.washingtonparish.org.uk)

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## WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

**MINUTES** of proceedings for the monthly meeting of Washington Parish Council held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7:30pm

**PRESENT:** Cllr C Beglan (CB), Cllr Steve Buddell (SB), Cllr B. Hanvey (BH), Cllr P Heeley (Chairman), Cllr A Lisher (AL), Cllr G Lockerbie (GL) and Cllr J Thomas (JT)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Cllr Paul Marshall (WSCC) and Cllr James Wright (HDC).

**ALSO:** Clerk to the Council, Z Savill

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** 2

**ABSENT:** 0

The Chairman opened the meeting at 19:30 hours.

### **27.64. Consider accepting Apologies for Absence and Chairman's Announcements**

There were no apologies. The Chairman reported that the WSALC (West Sussex Association of Local Councils) is advising councils to continue holding meetings in person after the Government has rejected calls to hold them online despite the spread of the Omicron variant. He announced a communication from the National Trust that they anticipate a final cost and timetable of the planned forestry track for the southern end of Georges Lane by the end of January.

### **27.65. To record Declarations of Interest from members in any item to be discussed and Agree Dispensations**

None.

### **27.66. To Approve and Sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

**RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes for the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 as an accurate record to be signed by the Chairman.

### **27.67. Public Speaking**

Mrs Julie Luckin gave a brief presentation which she claimed represented the 10 homes, including her own, surrounding St Mary's Gate, The Street, Washington. She raised their serious concerns about a current application for the property planning reference number: SDNP/21/06195/CND to change some of the conditions of a previously approved planning application. She requested that the Parish Council recognise and support these concerns when submitting its consultation response.

Mrs Luckin presented several arguments against the application including the allegation that the replacement UPVC used in the property are a breach of the 2018 planning consent; that the character and appearance of the dwelling have not been preserved by the use of the material, or enhanced, in contravention of Section 72 of 1990 Planning Act; that the UPVC is also environmentally damaging, in contravention of SDNPA environmental objectives including objective 2 of Policy 2 of its Local Plan. She pointed out that residents fear that planning consent would set a dangerous precedent for similar development and perpetuate the future use of damaging materials on property within Washington's unique Conservation area, particularly the application site which is at its heart, and the South Downs National Park

*The Chairman thanked Mrs Luckin and that her views would be taken into consideration when the Council formulates an appropriate response by delegation to its Planning & Transport Committee. However, he felt that HDC should be determining the enforcement case in progress first regarding the change to UPVC windows on the property. Cllr Wright explained that it was his view the planning application would resolve this and also save on HDC's resources rather than risk an almost inevitable appeal by the applicant. PM, BH and SB also commented. Cllr Wright agreed that if evidence from residents and the Parish Council supports the view, he would be willing to request an extension to the deadline to allow officers to determine the enforcement or to call in the application to be determined by committee.*

*The Chairman thanked Cllr Wright and that the Parish Council would look at the concerns from residents sympathetically. But he pointed out that the whole matter around the alleged planning breach consent needed clarifying by HDC for the future.*

*Two members of the public left the meeting.*

## **27.68. County Councillor Report**

Cllr Paul Marshall reported on a number of matters including the following:

- **Residents' proposal for a pedestrian crossing outside Millford Grange**

Following a site meeting with residents' representatives on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021, the West Sussex Highways Authority do not see sufficient justification for a crossing. A number of alternative proposals have been put forward by the authority, such as re-engineering the long straight east to west section of the A283 Storrington/Washington Road to narrow the pinch point and slow traffic. He invited views on the most suitable option, stressing that the cheaper options have more chance of being achieved. However, he would continue to push for developer funds, if the East Clayton kennels' scheme is approved, as a contribution towards costs for a crossing estimated at £130,000.

- **The Natural England position statement on Water Neutrality:** There are serious implications across the county from the lack of certainty around the development requirements for water neutrality. This includes a stop to school extensions, and some of the bigger businesses considering re-location if they cannot expand. He is engaging with local authority leaders across the county to push for a clear direction from government on a policy going forward, and to find a resolution.

- **West Sussex County Council Budget 2022/23**

The authority is working on a balanced 2022/23 budget without any additional cost saving, subject to approval in February. It includes an allocation of more monies for Highways, climate-change activities, as well as strengthening the county's normal services. WSCC

proposes to increase the Council Tax by 1.99% and adding the 1% Adult Social Care Government allowance.

**Questions (paraphrased):**

A Member enquired about progress on the application for a care home at Clayton Kennels and if it will be going to committee. He was concerned not to give the applicants any reason to be enthusiastic about contributing to a mitigation scheme for a safe pedestrian crossing nearby.

PM explained his position that he was opposed to the development because it does not form part of a policy in the local neighbourhood plan, but in the event that it succeeds then these mitigation areas should be considered. He was not able to confirm if and when it will go to committee for consideration but that it is not likely to be determined at the moment due to the water neutrality issues.

A Member pointed out a recent announcement by Inert Recycling of tipping rights for imported soils at the Sandgate quarry, Storrington until 3032. He asked what will be happening to the site in the intervening 4 years when the original extension for extraction and restoration ends in 2028. PM responded that he had also received the letter of the announcement and would be making further enquiries with WSCC officers.

**District Reports**

Cllr James Wright reported on a number of matters including the following:

- **Water Neutrality:** Due to the lack of clarity by Natural England on the water neutrality requirement, HDC has been unable to determine any planning applications that have an additional strain on a water resource. He reported that there are experts who can help with anyone in the parish who is struggling as a result of the issues and he urged them to get in touch with him, particularly local businesses, via the Parish Council.
- **Budget 2022/23:** HDC is working on its budget, with plans to spend £1 million reserves on the environment which includes several bio-diversity projects, and also specifically reducing the council's carbon footprint, and focusing on cost-saving opportunities e.g., replace the lighting of Storrington Library car park with lighting that pays for itself, and drastically reduces emissions.
- **District Council Tax 2022/23 rise:** HDC is proposing a £4.54p rise, subject to approval by Cabinet later this month.
- **Fly tipping in the parish:** Two lorry-loads of asbestos were dumped in neighbouring Wiston parish near Wiston House, and cost about £5,500 to clear up. Industrial fly tipping is a major criminal enterprise in the area. HDC is working closely with Sussex Police to find a strategy to address the fast-growing problem. Last year HDC invested in more cameras in known hot spots. JT reported that fly-tipping on land near the London Road bus stop had started again before Christmas. Cllr Wright confirmed it is one of the areas being looked at with Sussex Police.
- **Application for a care home development at Clayton Kennels:** This will go to committee but due to the water neutrality issues for developments, is unlikely to be heard for "a very long time."

*The Chairman thanked Cllr Marshall and Cllr Wright for their reports. Both then left the meeting.*

**27.69. To Report matters arising from the last meeting**

It was NOTED that there were no matters arising from the last meeting.

**27.70. To Ratify decisions made by delegated powers since 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 for ratification**

The following decisions by the Clerk under her emergency spending powers and the Council's scheme of delegation:

**27.70.1.** Mr G Fielder to rake over mole hills on the Recreation Ground on 30<sup>th</sup> December 2021 for the sum of £30. **RESOLVED to RATIFY** the decision.

**27.70.2.** Amendment of some of the Council meeting dates for the current and following year and agreed by email to all members on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Bookings confirmed by the Village Hall. **RESOLVED to RATIFY** the decision.

**27.71. Planning Decisions, Appeals, Planning Compliance and other Planning Issues.**

It was NOTED that consultation response to the following two applications will be considered by delegation to the Planning & Transport Committee before noon on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022:

**SDNP/21/06195/CND- St Mary's Gate The Street Washington RH20 4AS**

**DC/21/2765 – Merrylands Rock Road Washington West Sussex**

*Removal of existing static caravans and erection of an annexe building (Retrospective).*

**27.71.1. HDC Planning Decision:**

None reported.

**27.71.2. SDNPA Planning Decisions:**

None reported.

**27.71.3. Planning Compliance**

No reports.

**27.72. To Review, Consider, Recommend and Report on Parish Council issues, including Maintenance**

**27.72.1. To Report any maintenance issues affecting Parish Council property outside the Recreation Ground and Allotment and Agree any required action.**

None reported.

**27.72.2. To Agree and Adopt the Council's revised Code of Conduct policy as recommended by the Finance Committee**

The Chairman reported on the Finance Committee's recommendation at their December meeting to approve Horsham District Council's Code of Conduct policy as the Parish Council's policy without amendment. A copy of the HDC policy and the Parish Council's current policy was previously circulated with the draft minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting.

**RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee.

**27.72.3. To Review the Council's 2022/23 Budget**



The Chairman reported on the following proposed amendments to the agreed 2022/23 Budget circulated before the meeting:

- To include the anticipated expenditure of the £12,000 grant agreed for the National Trust's proposed forestry track from reserves before April 2022. If not spent, the surplus to be carried forward to 2022/23.
- To include the anticipated 2022/23 income of £31,488.11 CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) monies, representing the final tranches from the Vineyards development. This increases CIL funds allocated for "Special Projects" in Capital Reserves to £62,127.23.
- To adjust the anticipated 2022/23 General Reserves to £13,768, which is within the recommended 3-6 months operating costs.

The Chairman reported that the amendments would not affect the precept figure of £42,347.76 agreed at the last meeting and with no increase in the parish tax. **RESOLVED** unanimously to **APPROVE** the amended 2022/23 Budget.

### **27.72.3. To Agree tenancy application for Allotment Plot 11B**

GL reported on the current vacancy for Plot 11B and that Mrs S Tullett has made an application following a site visit with one of the Allotment Stewards on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022. **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** her tenancy application subject to the signed document, rent and deposit for 2022.

### **27.72.4. To Agree and Nominate members of a CIL Working Party to discuss and recommend community projects and funding opportunities**

The Chairman reported that the Parish Council is expecting a total of over £60K CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funds for the Vineyards housing development by October this year. Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that BH, AL, CB and JT would form a Working Party. to discuss future spending initiatives which benefit the community. The Working Party's recommendations would be made to Full Council. It was further **AGREED** that in the meantime, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman would liaise with the Village Hall Trustees to have a separate discussion on other projects and to feed back to the Working Party. Chairman to write to the Chairman of the Village Hall Trustees. The Working Party to arrange its first meeting.

### **27.72.5. To Discuss fly-tipping in the parish and Agree any further action**

It was noted that JT raised the issue of fly-tipping in the parish earlier in the meeting, and that Cllr James Wright reported that Horsham District Council is taking appropriate action. **RESOLVED** to note the information and to welcome HDC's response.

### **27.73. Washington Recreation Ground Charity**

#### **27.73.1. To Report any maintenance issues on the Recreation Ground and Agree any required action**

The Clerk reported the following:

- **Mole hills:** Mr G Fielder has raked over a number of mole hills on the grounds at the Clerk's request, at the beginning of this month. Clerk to monitor any further mole activity.
- **Gates to Play Area:** Both gate mechanisms have been oiled by Mr G Fielder and are self-closing correctly.
- **Improvements to the safety signage by the Play Area:** Further information for the Council's insurer is being provided at their request, following an injury accident last October, and advice sought on changing the wording on the signage.

- **MUGA Vandalism/anti-social behaviour:** A second incident of vandalism was reported by a resident who alleged she had witnessed two youths smashing glass on the court on Saturday morning, 31<sup>st</sup> December. She reported that both assisted her in clearing up the glass and were warned that the next time they would be reported to the Police. A very similar incident on the court in November was reported to Police by the Council. Members were concerned that police intervention is necessary and that this would be more effective if there is a witness statement. **RESOLVED** to report the latest incident to Police and to seek the resident's consent to share her details with them.

**27.74. To Agree the WRGC 2021 Annual Return**

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the 2021 Annual Return for the Washington Recreation Ground Charity, which was circulated before the meeting. Clerk to submit it to the Charity Commission before end of January.

**27.75. To receive reports and recommendations from Committees and Working Parties**

There were no Committee Meetings in December or other meetings to report. .

**27.76. To Approve Payments, Receipts and Quotes**

**27.76.1. To Approve Bank Reconciliation, Payments and Report Income.**

The reconciled bank statement showing transactions between 30/11/2021 and 30/12/2021, payments schedule and invoices circulated before the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the following payments totalling **£1,940.43** be **APPROVED**:

Voucher	Cheque	Code	Name	Description	JA
135	Direct Debit	75 - Clerk's Pension	NEST	Pension	
136	Online	2 - HMRC Employer	HMRC	PAYE	
137	Online	1 - Clerk's salary net	Zoe Savill	Clerks salary (net)	1,
138	Online	1 - Clerk's salary net	Zoe Savill	Clerk's overtime	
139	Online	5 - Office expenses	Zoe Savill	Postage	
140	Online	5 - Office expenses	Hanwells	Stationery	
141	Online	5 - Office expenses	TheWorks.co.uk	Stationery	
142	Online	5 - Office expenses	Scribbling shop	Stationery	
143	Online	3 - Clerk's expenses	Zoe Savill	Mileage	
144	Online	3 - Clerk's expenses	Zoe Savill	Electricity	
145	Online	5 - Office expenses	Zoe Savill	Phone	
146	Direct Debit	64 - Parish recreation ground	Horsham District Council	Litter Bin emptying	
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>1,</b>

Councillors **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the financial reports as follows:  
 Outstanding purchase orders: **£115.20** Dec 2021 Litter Collection  
 Outstanding sales invoices: 0  
 Income: 0  
 Reconciled Bank Balance: **£120,377.30**

**27.76.2. VAT**

**£574.14** Q3 VAT claim due January 2021

**27.76.3. PAYE and National Insurance contributions**

**£632.85** Q3 due January 2021

**27.77. To Report correspondence received and consider any responses.**

Correspondence regarding objections to planning application reference **SDNP/21/06195/CND**



was previously circulated and NOTED.

**27.78. Clerk's Report**

The Clerk reported on the following:

**27.87.1. Governance:**

The Council's Information Commission Office Certificate Dec 21/22 has been received and previously circulated.

**27.87.2. Training:** The Mulberry & Co Training Programme for Councillors and Clerks was previously circulated. The Clerk invited Councillors to let her know of any courses they would like to attend.

**27.88. To Receive items for the next agenda.**

SB proposed discussion on a Spring newsletter. Any further proposals to be submitted before noon on the Monday before the meeting.

CB proposed to discuss ways of attracting more Councillors to fill the 4 vacancies.

**27.89. Dates and time of next meetings at Washington Village Memorial Hall (Dore Room).**

Full Council Meeting: Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022, 7:30pm

Open Spaces Committee: Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 7:00pm

Planning & Transport Committee: Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 7:45pm

Personnel Committee: 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 7:00pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at **20:54 hours**.

Signed.....  .....

Dated..... 7. 2. 22.....