

FOREST NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held on 21st August 2017 at Salvation Army Hall, 7.30 p.m.

Present:	Messrs. N. Friswell, M. Hough, G. Sitton, G. Stanley, B. Travers Mrs. D. Sumpter (Chairman),
District Councillors	2 DC Mr. G. Newman and Dr. D. Skipp
County Councillors	2 CC Mr. A. Baldwin and Mrs. M. Millson
Public	0
Press	0
Apologies	Ms. J. Dumbrell and Mr. J. Batchelor; CC Dr. N. Dennis,

01.562.17 Minutes of Meeting held on 18th July 2017

There were three amendments – during the discussion with the Cycling Forum, Ms. Dumbrell had asked that Cycling Forum members looked at ways in which to improve pedestrian safety when cyclists use paths. 03.562.17 Planning – the house number was 64 Comptons Lane and not 79 Comptons Lane. 04.558.17 Planning Matters – Mr. Hough disagrees with FNC comments as there is a real need for long term affordable accommodation, especially rental. The Minutes were proposed by Mr. Hough and seconded by Mr. Travers.

02.562.17 Matters Arising

03.533.16 Bus Shelter (Melksham Close)

DC Dr. Skipp has discussed the matter with HDC Mr. Jonathan Chowen who has stated that there will be available funds for this bus shelter. As previously discussed at Neighbourhood Council Meetings, the problem is not the funding but the ongoing maintenance and HDC reluctance to take on this contract.

There was general discussion about the fact that residents from this neighbourhood have regularly requested this bus shelter at a well-used bus stop and reference was made to the fact that Horsham residents do pay a town charge and possibly the maintenance could come out of there; however this course of action may not be desired.

DC Dr. Skipp will discuss this again with both Mr. Chowen and Mr. Crowley and will refer to the new bus shelter in Brighton Road that HDC has agreed to maintain.

05.553.16 Winterton Court

HDC had advised that this is to be known as Winterton Square.

06.533.17 Litter

HDC John McArthur has not responded to FNC request regarding how often Brighton Road is “swept”.

Horsham in Bloom – Neighbourhood Cup

It has been agreed that this year’s Horsham in Bloom Cup will be awarded to Mrs. Helen Cox who voluntarily clears part of Brighton Road and surrounding area of litter. In addition it is agreed that vouchers for the sum of £20 will also be awarded to Mrs. Cox by this Council as a gesture of thanks.

Resolved Mrs Sumpter will attend the award afternoon and present the cup and prize

05.557.17 Pigeon Droppings under Iron Bridge

Mr. Sitton (as a resident) met with a Network Rail representative, Lisa Lannidinardo, at the Iron Bridge. She advised that problems such as the pigeon droppings should first be directed to HDC who in turn will contact Network Rail. She has agreed to try to arrange the removal of the redundant poster board. She has also agreed to refer the overgrown vegetation above the bridge and the current poor drainage to the appropriate departments. Regarding the condition under the bridge she suggests that this is “spruced up” with a mural and Network Rail might be able to contribute to this venture. However this Council is opposed to this idea as it does not believe that a mural will be sympathetic to this Victorian part of the town.

Resolved to contact HDC regarding issues around Iron Bridge

06.557.17 Planning Matters

Mr. Jeremy Quin, MP, has responded to this Council’s letter regarding permitted developments which is noted.

07.563.17 Any Other business – car parking

Mr. Hough outlined multiple problems that he has experienced when trying to pay at town car parks. There appears to be an inherent problem with the meters and on occasions these will not accept payment. Other Councillors referred to the problem at Horsham Hospital car park where the meters are regularly disabled if there is heavy rainfall and this causes distress and annoyance to outpatients and hospital staff.

Resolved that this Neighbourhood Council will formally write to HDC (Gordon Lindsay and Ben Golds) about the lack of efficiency with all meters and will ask that the complaint is documented.

05.562.17 Correspondence – Plaques

This Council will agree in principle to Horsham Museum applying for a grant for plaque renewal and/or installation but will wish to be further involved if this Heritage Lottery application is successful.

Resolved to write to Horsham Museum, Jeremy Knight

03.562.17 County Councillors’ Reports

CC Mrs. Millson said that this is a quiet time of the year and therefore little to report. She has highlighted some recent drainage problems particularly in St. Leonards Road. Highways will “rod”.

CC Mr. Baldwin stated that he visited The Forest School on 20th July to discuss parking issues at the beginning and end of the school day and the dangerous ways in which some cars are parked – on zig zag lines etc. The first stage is to ensure that there are prominent signs showing areas where parking is not allowed and following this, Parking Enforcement Officers will regularly patrol the area and issue parking fines if these are not adhered to.

CC Mr. Baldwin referred to CLC Meetings and the next meeting on Monday 6th November. Prior to this meeting, residents are to be given the opportunity to discuss how the new controlled parking zone times are affecting their lifestyles. The consultation process ended on 17th August and there is a proposal for roads near to the town centre to have restrictions extended to 9.00 p.m. each evening. This is to avoid visitors to Horsham Town using off street parking but some residents are very concerned that it means they are also not able to

park their own cars until that time – it would seem that there are also some anomalies regarding the issue of car parking permits.

Resolved to advertise CLC date plus pre-discussion on this Council's website

04.562.17 District Councillors' Reports

DC Mr. Newman referred to The Old Dairy Site and the HDC proposed naming of the new development, Garner Court. It is understood that the original owner of the site is insisting that it is called Buchan Court and is prepared to go a Magistrate Hearing to ensure that this is accepted. This Council is of the opinion that this matter should not be taken any further and will reluctantly not object to Buchan Court name choice.

DC Dr. Skipp referred to a recent HDC Governance Committee Meeting where proposals were set out to change some of the ways in which planning applications are processed and by removing some conditions, Officers can make decisions without reference to Councillors.

The following is an extract from a letter sent to Mr. Crowley

i,ii,iii,iv – we do not have any objections to these clauses

v,vi – we are concerned that applications for the approval of tree works in conservation areas and TPO work could be approved by the Planning Committee, bypassing input from Neighbourhood Councils. Current planning officers associated with tree work applications have very good historical facts but this may not always be the case. Neighbourhood Councillors have a strong local knowledge and volunteer their time because they are interested in ensuring that the best decisions are made for their area. Tree works can have a major impact on visual amenities although this may not necessarily appear to be the case from an application.

vii – Neighbourhood Councils are on HDC list as consultees in the decision making process as to how Section 106 money (allocated to their area) is spent. We would therefore argue that any modifications to the way in which an application is discharged should also be referred as this follows the democratic process.

viii – whilst it may seem that the wording “non-material amendment” will be a minor, in reality it might alter the appearance of a property and therefore the overall effect of an area. Forest neighbourhood has roads and areas that retain their historical appearance and therefore local knowledge should be valued and sought.

Forward Planning – affordable housing

DC Dr. Skipp referred to a large sum of money that is currently being held by HDC for affordable housing. This has accumulated following developers stating that they cannot afford to build affordable housing on new sites and are therefore passing over money as a their way to settle the agreement.

Resolved to contact HDC Ms. Kate Rowbottom and CEO Mr. Tom Crowley to ask for their solution to provide affordable housing (much needed) in this district

05.562.17 Planning

Mr. Travers highlighted two applications: 16/1319 Horsham Kebab Shop revision to licensing hours. This Council has strongly objected and referred to an Appeal Inspector's decision to dismiss a previous application.

This Council has not objected to this application but subsequent to this submission, has received e mails from a local resident who is disappointed with this decision and has stated that last year's Fantasia had an adverse effect on his lifestyle – quoting the Ferris wheel view and noise. The e mail was discussed and it is agreed that this e mail will be forwarded to the District Councillor so that this point of view is taken into consideration. Mr. Hough also commented that the “park and ride” double decker buses were old style and emitting unhealthy fumes along St. Leonards Road from The Forest School and were also blocking the roads.

Regarding Horsham Park Ice Rink, this Council strongly objected to the proposal to commercialise parts of Horsham Park. There is, however, further information. It is understood that the Ice Rink will be placed on the grass and there is no intention to permanently hard surface the area; revenue from the Ice Rink will be passed to Evan Giles' department to be solely used for general maintenance in Horsham Park, the Ice Rink will be a standalone attraction, i.e. with no additional amenities such as drinking facilities.

It is also understood that Denne Neighbourhood Council has decided not to object to this year's application but will assess the event as it evolves. It is also understood that if the Ice Rink is successful, another area of Horsham Park may be considered for future years.

17/1542	Penn Cottage, Chesworth Close	Single storey & first floor extns	N/O
17/1647	Units 2 & 3 Blatchford Road	Replace roof including new roof lights	N/O
17/1609	Baptist Church, Brighton Road	Removal of condition to allow 24-hour usage	N/O
16/1319	25 Queen Street	Variation of condition to allow opening until midnight Mon – Wed; until 3 am Thurs - Sat; until 1 am Sunday	HFNC OBJECTS to this proposal – see below
17/1688 17/1689	Hornbrook Park Horsham Park	Christmas Fantasia 28/10 to 28/1/18	HFNC has no objection to the ice rink etc being at Hornbrook Park as it was so successful last year. However, we strongly object to any proposal to commercialise parts of Horsham Park and reiterate our objections to the original proposal DC/17/1453 – no access on plan; loss of green amenity space; noise disturbance by events.
17/1700	37 Queensway	Extensions all around the property with balcony at rear & garage made integral.	N/O

16/1319 25 Queen Street – Application for revised opening hours.

HFNC objects to this proposal as it has done before. In 2010 an application was made to extend the opening hours, and when HDC turned this down the applicant went to appeal. The appeal was dismissed with the Inspector noting “the unacceptable harm to the living conditions of nearby residents from noise and disturbance”. On that occasion, the proposal was to open until 1.00 am.

This proposal is to open until 3.00 am on three nights of the week and would therefore create disturbance for much longer and later periods of time. Additionally, since 2010 more residential units have been developed in the near vicinity. Two blocks of flats either side of the top of Queensway; the recently finished Jubilee Court almost exactly opposite the Kebab Shop; and the soon to be completed Harrington House or 4 Brighton Road (behind the City Business Centre).

06.562.17 Ayshe Court Lakes

A member of the public has advised that the fencing alongside the path is now in a dangerous condition and he is concerned about children’s safety when they walk along to access their schools.

Resolved that DC Dr. Skipp will follow up this issue

07.562.17 Treasurer’s Report

Current Account £6,141.94, Reserve Account £1,281.21. The Clerk’s honorarium and expenses have been paid.

Denne Neighbourhood Council has recently analysed its annual insurance costs and these are higher than this Council is currently paying. This Council does not have the same cover and will now ascertain whether it should arrange for the same coverage as DNC. It will also ascertain whether there is any advantage in having block insurance for all three NC’s.

07.562.17 Correspondence

HDC is enthusiastically promoting a “Year of Culture 2019” for this district and any further information will be circulated.

Section 106 monies – Mrs. Sumpter and Mr. Friswell will meet on Wednesday 30th August to look at what is needed in this neighbourhood and respond to HDC’s letter.

The date for the next Three Chairs Meeting with HDC Jonathan Chwen and Trevor Beadle has been changed and regrettably it is not possible for a FNC representative to attend. Apologies will be sent.

SUBWAY – Mr. Sitton as a member of the public) also visited North Street Subway with the Network Rail representative and he understands that the overgrown vegetation is scheduled to be removed by late September. Responsibilities are: Network Rail – Iron Bridge; Fencing – Southern Rail and Car Park – Indigo.

The appearance of The Subway is very poor at the moment. One suggestion is to ask Green Gym whether it would be prepared to tidy up the surrounding land.

Blueprint – The Cycling Forum did attend the AGM and it is suggested that this Group becomes more involved with the Plan. Unfortunately there is a lack of enthusiasm for

Blueprint and despite the fact that a Neighbourhood Plan would be extremely beneficial to the future appearance of this Neighbourhood, it is difficult to recruit members and there is very limited money available for expenses including the production of the document. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that HDC has advised that Blueprint must also produce a Business Plan. HDC state that this neighbourhood is predominantly a business area. Mr. Cook has reluctantly agreed to continue as acting Chairman for the time being

Council Numbers - there was general discussion about the lack of volunteers for organisations, including Forest Neighbourhood Council. District Councillors pointed out that it is easier for rural districts to involve residents and in the case of Blueprint; it would be easier if there was a Town Council. In general terms the comment was made that town residents are generally happy with how the town operates and tend to become involved when there is a grievance.

08.562.17 Any Other Business

NHS – Mr. Friswell recently attended a local meeting where recent patients had the opportunity to discuss their NHS experiences. He referred to his own recent experience at a specialist hospital and felt that all NHS hospitals could follow its example where the whole surgery programme – from operation through to post operation dates – is set out before any procedure commences. He believes this is good practice as well as reducing paperwork.

The Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.