

HORSHAM FOREST NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL
Clerk: Mrs M Vinall, 40 Rookwood Park, Horsham, RH12 1UB
Tel: 01403 269265 E-Mail: fncchorsham@sky.com
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 17th February 2020
SALVATION ARMY HALL, 7:30PM

Present: Messrs. N. Friswell, J. Milne, G. Sitton, and B. Travers
Mrs. D. Sumpter (Chairman)

District Councillors: 4 DC Mr. G. Newman, DC Dr. D. Skipp, DC Mrs. R. Fletcher and
DC Mrs. Haigh

County Councillors 1 CC Dr. N. Dennis (arrived 8.30 p.m.)

Public: 0

Press: 0

Apologies Messrs. J. Olson, G. Stanley, CC Mr. A. Baldwin and
CC Mrs. M. Millson

01.02.20 Minutes of Meeting held on 20th January 2020

03.01.20 Amendment was made to Jonathan Chowen status. The Minutes were proposed by Mr. Sitton, seconded by Mr. Travers and signed by the Chairman, Mrs. Sumpter.

02.02.20 Matters Arising

Rookwood Park Golf Course

Councillors who have had a preliminary viewing of the plans for Rookwood Park Golf Course, expressed surprise that they were so well advanced. It is important to forward any comments at the Local Plan Consultation stage. The initial response at this meeting is that this is a green corridor on the edge of the town that should be retained, especially as it is so close to Warnham Nature Reserve.

Trafalgar Neighbourhood Council has asked whether the three NC's should respond as one voice and Forest Neighbourhood Council is in agreement with this suggestion.

11.11.19 Chesworth Farm Volunteer Centre

HDC has now forwarded the appropriate paperwork so that an application can be made to register this Centre as a community asset. There is uncertainty as to whether this Neighbourhood Council can be an applicant. This also applies to Friends of Chesworth Farm as this is not a registered charity.

Neighbourhood Council status – Mrs. Sumpter commented that there are HDC Officers who do not understand the role of Neighbourhood Councils, especially the fact that they are not statutory bodies, are voluntary organisations and do not raise precepts. This is to be discussed at the next Unparished Meeting.

Resolved to contact HDC Melanie Stowell about form completion

03.01.20 Seed Funding

The answer to accessing Seed Funding from the joint HDC and Sussex Wildlife initiative is still unclear. DC Dr. Skipp suggests that this will evolve and will probably be demand led. Any interested group should now forward its submission to HDC.

Resolved to again ask HDC Jonathan Chowen for clarification

04.01.20 Speedwatch

Mrs. Sumpter thanked Mr. Sitton for agreeing to be the Speedwatch Liaison Officer. Mr. Sitton commented that he is still waiting to hear about a further site in Comptons Lane area.

08.01.20 The Drill Hall

Following on from the recent Meeting at which, on behalf of FNC, Mrs. Sumpter objected to the proposal, it is confirmed that HDC has agreed to defer a decision for 2 years. There were 2 petitions circulating in Horsham Town against this closure both of which received a substantial number of names. Mr. Martin Boffey organised the petition on behalf of Horsham Blueprint.

DC's Mrs. Fletcher and Mrs. Haigh said that it is now important to collate accurate information because much of the given data has been disputed. Questions should be asked as to how The Drill Hall should be promoted, how to make better use of the facility and how potential users can quickly find out costs and availability. DC Mrs. Fletcher commented that The British Legion is interested in using the facility and she supports this idea.

Within the discussion, reference was made to **BID (Business Initiative Development)**. DC Mrs. Haigh said that in order to get the scheme "off the ground", HDC has awarded a £71,000 grant. Basically, businesses will have to contribute a set figure over, and above their business rates and the sum raised which will be between £250,000-300,00, is for initiatives/promotions that are not within HDC remit. DC Mrs. Haigh cautioned that this money should not be used for initiatives that would have previously been paid for by HDC (transferring costs). One of the dangers with BID is that larger businesses that are already under pressure, will be further "hit" by this additional tax as the level of contribution is related to the size of the company. It might be the case that some companies will not be aware of BID and its implications until the additional cost is invoiced.

03.02.20 Reports from District and County Councillors

DC Dr. Skipp commented that it is important to establish a "Friends of The Drill Hall" and it is this group who must lead the campaign. DC Mrs. Haigh confirmed that there is a group of interested people.

With reference to The Local Plan, DC Dr. Skipp stressed the importance of individual responses and for residents not to assume that the current well-supported petition will have the same impact. He highlighted two areas that are of concern to him and these are Rookwood Park Golf Course and Buck Barn, south of Horsham. The development at Rookwood Park would lead to the loss of a green corridor plus could have a detrimental impact on Warnham Nature Reserve. The size of the Buck Barn development proposal is alarming.

One Neighbourhood Councillor made the comment that Horsham District has been directed to incorporate additional housing numbers into its plan and, in the case of Rookwood Park, this has led to the possibility of losing another public green space. His argument is that there are districts who say they are unable to fulfil their required quota, but they do have public green spaces that could be put forward in the same way as Rookwood Park Golf Course. *(please see HALC Report regarding its resolution to ask for the numbers to go back to Central Government).*

DC Dr. Skipp referred to the fact that HDC Budget was passed.

DC Mrs. Ruth Fletcher recently attended a meeting at which she met Inspector Ben Starns who is the newly appointed Prevention Inspector for Horsham. DC Mrs. Fletcher explained that Inspector Starns is a long-standing Horsham resident and he is extremely enthusiastic about his new role which is part of the police expansion PCSO programme. Please refer to website, <https://www.police.uk/sussex/> to see how PCSO's should be more visible and active within the community. Inspector Starns is asking Horsham residents to contact him with any policing matter concerns or information.

DC Mrs. Frances Haigh referred to Urban Realm Consultants who are employed to work on the way forward for Horsham Town. It is unclear where updates can be accessed.

4.02.20 Planning *Planning Applications - Jan 2020*

20/0009	12 Comptons Lane	Erection of a firstfloor extension over existing garage	No objection
20/0010	99 Clarence Road	Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a single storey rear extension	No objection
20/0058	40 Gorings Mead	Erection of a single storey side extension and first floor rear extension.	No objection
20/0098	Victoria House Victoria Street	Variation of condition 3 to increase Saturday working hours from 0600 to 1800	No objection
20/0092	23 Heron Way	Conversion of loft into habitable living space and erection of a single storey rear extension	No objection
20/0130	Gardeners Cottage, Hammerpond Road	Demolition of existing conservatory. Erection of single storey rear extension for an orangery, two storey side extension - annexe	No objection
20/0129	20 Stirling Way	Erection of a two-storey side extension.	No objection
20/0153	36 Smithbarn	Erection of a single storey side extension and two storey rear extension	No objection
20/0032	24 Plovers Road	Single storey side & rear extns	No objection
19/2484	1 Sandeman Way	Amendment excluding detached garage	No objection

Mr. Travers referred to 19/2484 and explained that this amendment excluded the detached garage which was the reason why FNC initially objected to the application.

Mr. Travers continues to be concerned about 19/2094 Abbey House, Foundry Lane where the taxi office is to be converted into residential accommodation. The applicant has applied for prior approval change of use. Forest Neighbourhood Council is raising the issue of cramped living space in an area that, in its opinion, is unsuitable for residential accommodation. Highways carried out a traffic survey leading to the outcome - no objection to allowing a residential block within an industrial area. It is noted that no noise survey was carried out even though the accommodation is alongside the railway line.

Mill Farm – Nuthurst Parish Council forwarded its objection to an application to build a Winery at this Farm with associated outbuildings plus a further wedding venue. Whilst Mill Farm is not in FNC area, the exit is on to Hammerpond Road. FNC has objected to the application because of road issues.

LIDL – at this stage of the meeting, the impact of this business on traffic in Foundry Lane was discussed (please see later reference under County Councillor report).

New housing proposal in Crawley Road – reference was made to this application. This had previously been submitted but was refused. Whilst not in Forest Neighbourhood, Councillors are disappointed that, under the new housing number requirement, this could be allowed.

05.02.20 Treasurer's Report

Current Account £3,610.42, Reserve Account £1,285.26. Clerk's honorarium and expenses have been paid. Hire of Salvation Army Hall for the current year and Newsletter costs for printing and distribution have been settled.

06.02.20 Reports from Councillors on Outside Bodies

Unparished Area Meeting – Mrs. Sumpter will attend the next meeting on 18th February when it is hoped that CEO Glen Chipp will join HDC Adam Chalmers and Peter Burgess. Mrs. Sumpter intends to raise the question about HDC's perception of Neighbourhood Councils.

Blueprint – the plan is now out for consultation and hard copies are available at HDC and Horsham Library. There will be an Exhibition at Unit 12 Swan Walk (old Sony store) on 7th, 14th and 15th March at which residents will be asked for their views. Volunteers are needed to help on these days. www.horshamblueprint.org/draft-plan/

HTCP – the Minutes will be circulated. Mrs. Sumpter was in attendance.

4TheYouth Mr. Friswell attended his first meeting with 4TheYouth and his report has been circulated. Currently the work includes The Snack Wagon, outreach work with youngsters who have problems and routine youth clubs.

Neighbourhood Councils no longer have an oversight role but the meeting decided that, as 4The Youth is funded from the Special Charge, there should be quarterly meetings with NC representatives.

Local Plan Briefing Meeting – Mr. Friswell attended this Meeting that was led by Clive Burley and Brian Elliott. He has circulated his initial findings.

At this stage, Mrs. Sumpter asked how to proceed regarding the submission of FNC comments about the Local Plan. It is agreed there will be a separate meeting prior to which FNC Councillors should have accessed the paperwork either in hard copy form or on HDC website.

Although not directly relating to the Forest neighbourhood, Mr. Friswell did refer to scouting issues in the district and the need to ensure that appropriate scouting provision is incorporated into any new development. He also referred to an issue in The Needles Estate where HDC has given notice it is selling the Scout Hut for a house development and the fact that HDC assumed the Scouts would be happy to move to the new Highwood Community Centre. For reasons of access and safety, this is not acceptable, and the Scouts are looking for alternative accommodation.

HALC – Horsham Association of Local Councils – FNC Mr. Olson attended this meeting and his notes have been circulated. (Mr Olson commented that HALC resolved to write to District Councillors asking them to go back to Government to discuss reducing the housing requirements for the District).

Horsham District Cycle Forum 4th February 2020 – Mr. Sitton attended this meeting and the report has now been circulated. HDCF is waiting sight of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and this should be followed by a meeting of the stakeholders.

The report also details the way in which the replacement traffic lights on Albion Way give cyclists an early green signal allowing them to start ahead of the vehicles.

Town Contra Flow route is progressing with WSCC and The Passenger Benefit Fund is now closed. Network Rail is considering all bids.

07.02.20 County Councillor's Report

CC Dr. Dennis confirmed that the Budget has been approved with the maximum increase of 1.99% and 2% adult social care. Although Dr. Dennis' Liberal Party put forward an amendment, this was not carried.

LIDL – whilst there is uncertainty about which County Councillor is responsible for this area, Dr. Dennis was asked whether it would be possible to have yellow lines along part of Foundry Lane opposite the new Lidl store. Currently this part of the road is being used by commuters and/or shoppers. A yellow line would enable a smoother flow of traffic whilst enabling customers to queue to gain access into Lidl car park without blocking the road.

CC Dr. Dennis said that he would discuss this proposal with CC Mr. Baldwin and he continues to hope that some current Station Road area parking restrictions that are only between the hours of 8.00-10.00 a.m., will be listed in the Road Space Audit. This is now scheduled to commence mid-Summer.

NEW STREET – CC Dr. Dennis is as disappointed as this Neighbourhood Council because the 20 mph speed limit in New Street has been rejected in this year's round of Community Grants. Full details as to why the application failed had been shown on Forest Neighbourhood Council website.

Quoting from WSCC Highways response, a precis for the reasons is shown below:

- *“Transport and public space – this include assessment of impact on journey times, mobility and access, costs to transport infrastructure, safety and the public realm.*
- *Economic Growth – includes generating employment, business development, housing or regeneration opportunities.*

- *Environmental Impacts – includes reduction of pollution, encouraging sustainable transport and other environmental impacts such as noise pollution or visual intrusion.*
- *Feasibility and deliverability – include needs analysis, is land available, levels of stakeholder support, funding availability / cost analysis and how deliverable a scheme is?*
- *Policy and support – how does the proposal meet WSCC core policies and plans and any local policies and plans (such as neighbourhood plans)?*

Each category is assessed against predetermined levels and a score between 1 and 5 issued for a range of sentences depending whether the project provides no or negative impact up to a substantial impact. The moderation process ensures the scores are fairly applied across all schemes and no one scheme is biased.

The scheme scored well in the feasibility and deliverability and policy and support categories but unfortunately it did not do so well in the other three categories. The panel believed the scheme is unlikely to encourage modal shift or have any positive impact on the environment, so scored the minimum in this category. If it can be proven that the scheme would encourage more walking or cycling or reduce pollution the score here could be increased.

The panel also determined the scheme would have no impact on economic growth.

Finally, the panel assessed that as traffic speeds are already in a range commensurate with a 20-mph speed limit there would be no improvement to the public realm or to safety. The latter is supported by analysis of the current road traffic collision records, which do not show any speed related collisions in the affected roads. Although perception of safety is a concern for the community, it cannot be corroborated by data and therefore the scheme could only be attributed a limited benefit. This is not to say we are waiting for an accident to happen.”

CC Mr. Dennis referred to Highways WSCC Mr. Chris Stark’s suggestion that other previously discussed traffic options are re-considered. However, in CC Mr. Dennis’s opinion, most of these are “no win ideas” (referring to one-way systems).

Following on from this information, DC Mrs. Fletcher referred to an initiative described as “low traffic areas” and its success in some towns, notably Waltham Forest. The idea is that cars can only use the main roads and are stopped from using cut-through roads, i.e. taking out choices. This was briefly discussed, and the point was made that it would be difficult to make New Street a “low traffic area” as the main roads need to make “a box” and this is probably not possible.

08.02.20 Correspondence

Horsham Older People’s Forum dates Wednesday 4th March, 10.00 a.m. Shipley Hall

Gulley Clearing – the following has taken place:

- Hammerpond Road
- Comptons Lane near Post Box
- Barrington Road
- Danehurst Crescent Depot Road
- Brighton Road by The Hornbrook Inn

Potholes have re-appeared in Redkiln Way and Highways has been notified.

County Local Committee – the next date is 16th March, 7.00 p.m. Roffey Hall

20 is Plenty – correspondence relating to the possibility of a traffic calming scheme in Oakhill Road area, (being initiated by residents).

Hampshire Court – we have been contacted by a Care Worker who had unsuccessfully contacted several Departments about lighting that is not working near to this block. This has now been fixed.

Highways and Transport Planning News

WSCC Highways and Transport News

Friends of Horsham Park Newsletter

Neighbourhood Wardens – the three Neighbourhood Councils have agreed to continue this project for the next 3 years, the sum of £79,700 is shown in the Special Charge for the financial year commencing April 2020.

Age UK – Notification that Age UK Horsham is teaming up with West Sussex and Brighton and Hove. There will be drop-in sessions in Swan Walk throughout March and April.

Session on Hate and Crime – taking place on Monday 20th April at Parkside.

09.02.20 Any Other Business

The Newsletter should be delivered to all Forest Neighbourhood residents during the coming week. One side is devoted to Blueprint. The page relating to Forest Neighbourhood Council lists the new Facebook page.

Mrs. Sumpter was thanked for organising the contents and publication of this Newsletter in a short space of time.

Noticeboards – the Noticeboard in the vicinity of North Street Subway is owned by Saxon Weald. However, this organisation has no interest and is not responding to emails relating to its poor condition.

Resolved to write to CEO Mr. Stephen Dennis

Noticeboards – the Noticeboard in New Street is broken on one side and will need to be repaired. The matter is in the hands of the Chairman.

Noticeboards – Mrs. Sumpter is awaiting paperwork in order to progress the purchase and installation of a noticeboard in New Street pocket park.

The Meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.