

HORSHAM FOREST NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL
Clerk: Mrs M Vinall, 40 Rookwood Park, Horsham, RH12 1UB
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MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 20th January 2020
SALVATION ARMY HALL, 7:30PM

Present: Messrs. N. Friswell, J. Olson, G. Sitton, G. Stanley and B. Travers
District Councillors: 3 DC Mr. G. Newman, Mrs. R. Fletcher (arrived 9.00 p.m.) and DC Mr. P. Burgess (left at 8.15 p.m.)
County Councillors 2 CC Mr. A. Baldwin and CC Dr. N. Dennis (arrived 8.30 p.m.)
Public: 1
Press: 0
Apologies Mrs. D. Sumpter, Mr. J. Milne

Mr. Friswell chaired this Meeting. DC Mr. Peter Burgess attended in his role as Cabinet Member for Horsham Town and he was invited to speak about current issues. DC Mr. Burgess explained that he has a huge remit although he does not have any direct power.

Drill Hall – the proposal is to demolish The Drill Hall and replace it with 20 affordable homes. The plan is for these homes to be rented to essential employees and building works will be carried out by a separate HDC company to ensure that it remains as its stock.

DC Mr. Burgess explained that the Drill Hall is costing up to £50,000 p.a. to maintain and this equates to £1.5 million in the 10 year plan. HDC does not have a finite budget. The Drill Hall is underused and he referred to heating problems as the building is too hot in the Summer but too cold in the Winter..

HDC is proposing to invest the savings from this sale into the new Highwood Community Centre enabling it to be built to a higher specification.

Please refer to NC discussion later in the Minutes and also DC Mrs. Fletcher's input.

Rookwood Park Golf Course – Golf as a sport is declining and as a consequence, this Golf Course is underused. The proposal is to release this land for approx. 1,000 new homes, This will not be imminent but already the idea to build a “green” Estate incorporating Warnham Nature Reserve and Riverside Walk is being discussed..

DC Mr. Burgess explained one point about the Central Government dictate to annually build a set number of homes in this District. Developers purchase land but are under no obligation to set out a timescale for building houses on the site. As an example – last year developers chose to build houses on their land and by so doing, the annual building number was exceeded. However central Government will not take this into account nor reduce the following year number requirement.

Highways Issues

There are cobblestones in the Carfax that need urgent attention. Whilst, exceptionally, HDC initially paid for and arranged the work, WSCC is now responsible for making good the broken stones.

Whilst there are initiatives within the town for walking and cycling routes, DC Burgess said that it is important not to overlook car drivers as this is an essential group for maintaining the town economy.

The latest Town Vision includes Queen Street. DC Mr. Burgess commented on the issues with The Iron Bridge. HDC has made some form of contact with Network Rail. It would seem

that Network Rail has no objection to HDC arranging and paying for the removal of the dangerous hooks along the bridge wall under the "Health and Safety" umbrella. DC Mr. Burgess understands that HDC is likely to go ahead with this work.

The Forum paving stones are dangerous, especially after a rainfall and urgent work needs to be carried out. DC Mr. Burgess explained that Sainsbury's own the steps leading down to the car park and so they are responsible for their condition.

DC Mr. Burgess left the Meeting.

01.01.20 Minutes of Meeting held on 16th December 2020

The following amendments were made: Mr. A. Baldwin is on the Children and Young People's Select Committee. The Public House in Brighton Road is called Hornbrook Inn. The Minutes were proposed by Mr. Stanley, seconded by Mr. Travers and signed by the Acting Chairman, Mr. Friswell.

02.01.20 Matters Arising

03.11.19 Tesco ATM

This application was recommended for approval by Planning Department but was dismissed at HDC Committee level. FNC objected to the application and is pleased with this outcome. However, it is highly likely that Tesco will appeal.

11.11.19 Chesworth Farm Volunteer Centre

HDC Mrs. Barbara Childs will now be approached regarding the community asset scheme.

Resolved

04.12.20 The Forest School

The meeting has once again been re-scheduled and will now take place at the beginning of March.

Noted

03.01.20 Public Forum

The member of public introduced himself as a person involved with the Climate Café. This Café is open on the first Saturday of each month in the Quaker's Hall and immediately follows the Repair Café. The Climate Café is interested in all matters relating to the environment and the member of public had noted that DC Dr. Skipp referred to a partnership with the Sussex Wildlife Trust and available seed funding. This Council's understanding is that any group can apply for a grant from the seed funding.

Resolved FNC will find out how the seed funding is to be distributed. Contact will be made with DC Mr. Jonathan Chowen

04.01.20 District and County Councillors' Reports

DC Mr. Newman said that this is a quiet period. He referred to 2020/21 Budget and Council Tax is likely to be increased by 2%. The Town Charge is a separate entity. He understands that this percentage is fixed until 2023/24.

CC Mr. Baldwin referred to the increase in Council Tax and this will be 3.99% broken down as 1.99% for core Council services and 2.00% for social care.

The acting Chief Executive is now in post. CC Mr. Baldwin commented that it is difficult to recruit a permanent Officer and even if there is a positive outcome from the current recruitment process, there will be a considerable delay before the appointment is approved.

In answer to the question about how the Acting Chief Executive can successfully run both West and East Sussex Councils, CC Mr. Baldwin explained that Brighton and Hove have been separated from East Sussex CC and overall, that population is lower.

CC Mr. Baldwin has been in contact with Highways about the flooding issues in North Street by Horsham Gates. This area always floods when there is any rainfall and Highways has agreed to look at this problem before beginning pothole repairs.

CC Dr. Dennis referred to the very disappointing outcome to the Community Highway Scheme application for a 20 mph restriction in New Street
“Community scheme has been reviewed and it did not meet criteria threshold for progression under this process. Limited benefit due to average speeds already below 20 mp”.

Before its presentation, CC Dr. Dennis believed that of all the local applications, this one “ticked the most boxes”.

With regard to New Street, the survey responses gave very mixed reactions to other ideas, including a one way system.

Resolved Neighbourhood Councillor, Jon Olson will contact CC Dr. Dennis to see whether any of the other proposals could be re-considered.

This Council will write to Highways expressing its disappointment with this outcome. New Street residents will be informed of this refusal in the next Newsletter.

CC Dr. Dennis referred to correspondence with residents who would like some form of traffic calming in Oakhill Road/Clarence Road area. Dr. Dennis said there is no reason why a group of residents cannot submit an application under the Community Highway Scheme.

Mr. Sitton is happy to talk to any residents who are interested in “Speedwatch”. His first thoughts were that providing there is a clear line of sight and sufficient volunteers to man the speed gun, there is no reason for this area not to be included in the initiative.

Resolved NC Mr. Olson asked to discuss this with Dr. Dennis including “resurrecting” the idea to have a pedestrian crossing in Oakhill Road. FNC Mr. Sitton agreed to be the Speedwatch liaison officer.

05.01.20 Planning

The following comments have been submitted.

19/2484	1 Sandeman Way	Single & 2 storey rear extn/ 1 st floor side extn/ convert garage to living/ erect detached garage to front	See notes below
19/2512	4 Heron Way	Erection of single storey rear and side extn, flue to log stove, replacement block paving to existing drive.	N/O, except rumours of wood burning stoves being banned
19/2449	Hilliars Garden Centre Camping World	Construction of 3 marquees for tent display purposes	No Objection
19/2539	20 The Hornets	Single storey rear extension	N/O
19/2548	104 Comptons Lane	Amendment to 19/0496	N/O

Ref 19/ 2484 1 Sandeman Way –

HFNC has grave concerns about the size of the proposed garage.

- a. At five metres in each direction it is huge and will dominate the street scene.
- b. It is proposed to build the garage ahead of the building line.
- c. Despite these reservations, no residents of Sandeman Way have objected.

06.01.20 Treasurer's Report

Current Account, £4,988.94, Reserve Account £1,285.04. The Clerk's honorarium and expenses have been paid for January 2020. Salvation Army is to be asked for the 2019/2020 Invoice for hall hire.

07.01.20 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

FNC Mr. Friswell attended a Meeting of 4The Youth on Tuesday 14th January. Dean Sweet is the Founder and Paula Lintott is the Youth Worker. 4The Youth has taken over the work from Horsham Matters. It receives the grant from the Special Charge that pays for the Youth Worker who works in Horsham Town and minor miscellaneous expenses. All other overheads are met by fundraising as is some youth work outside Horsham Town.

FNC Mr. Friswell's report has been circulated. He commented that 4The Youth is once again using the Snack Wagon. He also added that Horsham Youth really need an easily accessible meeting place in the centre of the town.

08.01.20 The Drill Hall

DC Mrs. Ruth Fletcher joined this Meeting after attending an HDC Meeting to discuss the Drill Hall proposals. She explained that the motion to delay any decision was narrowly lost and so the future of The Drill Hall will be decided at a Cabinet Meeting on 3rd February.

One positive point from the Meeting is that, regardless of the Drill Hall discussions, the size of the Highwood Community Centre is to be increased as it then becomes more economically viable. However, in her opinion, the Highwood Community Centre and the Drill Hall discussions should be entirely separate (de-coupled).

This Neighbourhood Council discussed the retention of the Drill Hall solely from the perspective of the Forest Neighbourhood residents. With this in mind, a letter will be sent pointing out that there needs to be a Community Hall in the centre of the town, especially taking into consideration future housing numbers. Easy access to the Highwood Community Centre should also be questioned.

The Drill Hall is a building of interest and adds character to the area.

Resolved to write to HDC Jonathan Chowen

09.01.20 Correspondence

Gritting – letter from WSCC Peter Catchpole explaining that WSCC has reconsidered its Gritting Policy and will reinstate previously withdrawn routes.

CLC – Horsham Community Fridge - £500 has been awarded to this venture and the fridge is to be placed in Horsham Library.

Highways – repair of covers 3013177 it is not known whether these covers have been fixed. This has not been confirmed.

HDNC Minutes

Christmas Lighting – Jonathan Chowen has thanked FNC for its letter of congratulations. He explained that the additional lighting was introduced to coincide with the Year of Culture.

Piazza Italia – this event is being cancelled. It is understood the Organisers have requested this break.

Friends of Horsham Park – there is an event on Saturday 26th January, 10-12.00 Midday, Park Barn, identifying birds in Horsham Park.

Neighbourhood Warden December Report

Homes of England, West Ifield – open meetings are taking place between 10-18th January 2020.

HDC Crime and Disorder Survey – Councillors are asked to complete an online questionnaire.

Legal and General Land North of Horsham – Notification that L & G will be arranging further Presentations this year.

Parish Council AGM – Peter Allan, Prevention Police Sergeant has asked if we would like a PCSO to attend a meeting. PCSO's are being re-introduced into our community.

WSCC changes to the permit system

Horsham Local Plan Workshop, Thursday 6th February 3-5.00 p.m. in Goodwood Room, Horsham.

HALC Meeting (Horsham Association of Local Councils) Monday 27th January 7.30 p.m.-9.30 p.m. Coolham Village Hall RH13 8GN

HDC – has recently launched and new website: [Discover Horsham District](#).

10.01.20 Any Other Business

Horsham Green Gym is happy to consider any small works that FNC suggest. Green Gym will be asked whether it is able to cut back overgrown branches at the beginning of the Riverside Walk Path from Brighton Road entrance.

Mr. Travers commented on the first Blueprint draft. He noted that this includes apartments described as St. Mark's Spire. It is confirmed that these will be as a result of the conversion of the remaining Sun Alliance offices.

The Meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.