

**HORSHAM FOREST NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL**  
**Clerk: Mrs M Vinall, 40 Rookwood Park, Horsham, RH12 1UB**  
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**MINUTES OF MEETING 19<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2021 7.30 p.m.**  
**(VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING HOSTED BY CLERK)**

**Present:** Messrs. N. Friswell, J. Milne, J. Olson, G. Sitton, G. Stanley and B. Travers. Mrs. D. Sumpter (Chairman)  
**District Councillors:** Mrs. F Haigh and Ms. R. Fletcher  
**County Councillors:** Mr. A. Baldwin and Dr. N. Dennis  
**Public:** 1  
**Apologies** CC Dr. D. Skipp

Mrs. Sumpter opened the Meeting by commenting that this will be the last occasion when Mr. Baldwin and Mrs. Millson are County Councillors for the Forest Neighbourhood. Mr. Baldwin is standing for election in Holbrook and after many years, Mrs. Millson is retiring. Their commitment, enthusiasm and support has been greatly appreciated. It was **RESOLVED** that a letter of thanks be sent to both of them.

**01.04.21 Minutes of Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

The Minutes were approved by Mr. Friswell, seconded by Mr. Travers. .

**02.04.21 Matters Arising**

**04.03.20 The Local Plan – Rookwood**

Owing to HDC Jonathan Chowen's sudden resignation, the second Meeting was cancelled although "Keep Rookwood Green" did hold a smaller scale virtual Meeting and WSCT continues its coverage. However, HDC is rejecting the Petition signed by 1000 residents whereas the strong campaign being led by Buck Barn residents is described as having "clout" and psychologically having an impact. Using refined social media tools, "Buck Barn" can directly forward its objections to individual Councillors' emails.

**Resolved to encourage residents to forward individual comments. Mrs. Sumpter will discuss the way forward with "Keep Rookwood Green" Committee and an update will be posted on FNC website. Further FNC comments will be sent to Strategic Planning and HDC CEO Glen Chipp.**

**04.12.20 Reports from District Councillors – Town Representation**

There is no update.

**04.12.20 The Shelley Memorial**

Following on from their last Committee Meeting, members suggest that there is not a "HDC champion" for this project. The Committee still prefer to position this Memorial at Horsham Railway Station entrance and are currently in talks with Network Rail. Ways to fundraise are also now being discussed and this includes a 24-hour Shelley Poetry Recital to take place in Carfax.

**Resolved that, whilst not being actively involved, in principle, FNC supports this initiative.**

**03.01.21 Potholes**

This continues to be an emotive issue. Mr. Sitton is suggesting that FNC should become "quality controllers" although it is acknowledged that low central budgets are affecting standards, including how the work specification is written.. There are continuing complaints about the potholes in St. Leonard's Road. (*Later in the meeting, the member of public referred to the failing road surface in Orchard Road, Oakhill Road and Bethune Road vicinity*). NC Mr. Travers again referred to protruding drain covers in Queen Street vicinity; this is in Denne NC area and photos should be sent to their Chairman. Separately DC Mrs. Haigh said she would follow up this

matter as she understood it had been addressed during a recent Town Centre Walkabout.

**Resolved CC Mr. Baldwin agreed to visit St. Leonard's Road and also will look at the road surface.**

**Resolved that when the new County Councillors are in place, the current standard of highways maintenance will be brought to their urgent attention, including how FNC can become more involved in quality control.**

#### **04.03.21      Blueprint**

Mrs. Sumpter emailed the revised copy of the neighbourhood plan and in particular the updated greenspaces policy relating to Rookwood Golf Course and Mugeridge Field. HDC have the referendum version of the plan and the decision statement is awaited before a date for the referendum can be agreed.

#### **05.03.21      Neighbourhood Wardens**

A new neighbourhood warden has now been appointed and she will start on 26<sup>th</sup> April. Mr. Sitton referred to the need to provide more personal protection equipment, e.g. body cams. There will be a week of action at Kingslea School in May to help understand the ongoing parking problems in the vicinity of the school.

#### **5.03.21      Cycle Forum**

DC Ms. Fletcher commented that two-way-cycling in Carfax is now at the next discussion level. In general terms, she does not think there is major opposition to this proposal.

**Resolved to contact Mr. Francis Vernon (HDC) to ask for a copy of the latest plan**

There is funding available for further cycle racks. Please contact DC Ms. Fletcher with suggestions.

#### **5.03.21      Public Realm**

Cycling is covered in the recently published Public Realm document which has been adopted as a "Living Document" with the aim to introduce ideas as and when funding becomes available. Mr. Olson expressed his disappointment that the published document continues to show that the Subway is to be removed in Albion Way. It is understood the argument is there will be better pedestrian flow as well as "naturally" reducing the traffic speed.

#### **05.03.21      HTCP**

It is understood the Riverside Walk is to take place on 11<sup>th</sup> September. HTCP had written to the 3 NC's and North Horsham PC asking for sponsorship.

**Resolved FNC will sponsor this event for the sum of £180.**

#### **05.03.21      Friends of Chesworth Farm**

The AGM is taking place on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April and the Friends are inviting volunteers to join the Committee.

Neighbourhood Councillors have received a report that there had been a site meeting at the area at lower end of Arun Way - often referred to as the triangle that is owned by The Francis Trust. The attendees are unknown but it is understood that one of the suggestions is that the undergrowth will be cut back to the original bridlepath line although the current route may have automatically become a public right of way?

**Resolved to raise this issue as a matter of urgency after County Council elections (6<sup>th</sup> May).**

**MUGGERIDGE FIELD** – there has been renewed concern about the future of Muggeridge Field. HDC has responded by stating that there has been no recent or new promotional material submitted to them and it was not a site that HDC identified as having potential for development at Regulation 18 stage of the local plan.

#### **WILDER HORSHAM**

It is still disappointing that Neighbourhood Councils have not had any input or communication.

**Resolved Mrs. Sumpter will represent FNC when a joint NC Meeting is arranged.**

#### **03.04.21 WSCC Early Help Scheme**

Mr. Olson has circulated his draft response.

Mr. Baldwin explained that he is presently on the Children's Select Committee. When the Scheme was first proposed, he was genuinely concerned but, following a detailed explanation, is now more receptive to the proposals. Following a failed OFSTED Inspection, WSCC appointed a Children's Commissioner who is also CEO at Hampshire County Council and this CC has received an outstanding Children's Services OFSTED Report. Mr. Baldwin is adamant that it is not about cost cutting as the budget is to be increased from £1m to £1.3m.

At this stage Neighbourhood Councillors commented on the Consultation document "quote" that the Family Centres have been mostly closed during the pandemic and so staff have found new ways of reaching out to families who need help. Councillors strongly believe this is not relevant to the consultation.

The Needles Family Centre is the most likely to be retained but it is thought that Forest residents are unlikely to use this venue. This neighbourhood will therefore lose the fundamental concept of Family Centres which is to provide a "sure start" with joined-up services. Youth are less likely to join "Find It Out" if this service is removed from central Hurst Road to The Needles.

Whilst Forest Neighbourhood Councillors support WSCC's aim to address the needs of the most vulnerable, it does not agree with the proposed Scheme that will end early help group work or universal access events. The member of public also commented that the family centres have the important role of offering social support.

**Resolved NC Mr. Olson will prepare a final response that will be submitted before the end of consultation date, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021.**

#### **04.04.21 County Council and District Council Reports**

Mr. Baldwin agreed to take up FNC concern that it has not been consulted on WSCC/00921 planning application for works at Millais School. FNC had a similar issue when it was not consulted about proposed works at QE11 School.

Dr. Dennis referred to the hoardings at corner of New Street that have still not been removed. The Developers say the delay is now due to BT connection work. This continues to be a safety issue and needs to be monitored.

There are revised plans for road markings in Victoria Street with single yellow lines Monday-Saturday 9.00-5.00 p.m. on one side and opposite, there will be some resident parking bays.

Ms. Fletcher advised that “travellers” are moving around West Sussex but money has been allocated to improve defences, including at The Needles and around Bennetts Field. The work, however, is not likely to be completed before end of May.

Ms Fletcher referred to a recent virtual meeting with District Commander, Chief Inspector Sarah Leadbetter who gave an overview of policing in this area. She referred to major concerns about the unprecedented number of violent incidents during the pandemic, including stabbing and violence against women. There has been a notable increase in anti-social behaviour in Southwater and Storrington.

County Lines – more local young people are becoming dealers because of travel restrictions and so there is less violence caused by feuding. There have been 3 fatal house fires and there needs to be better public engagement. Dedicated night-time officers are being introduced.

Joint patrols with police officers and neighbourhood wardens are being introduced and a Memorandum of Understanding is being prepared.

HORSHAM WASTE RECYCLING PLANT UPDATE – relating to house clearance, it is suggested that skips are used but there can be exceptions (please ring WSCC). The comment was made that permits are issued for “one car” rather than one household.

COMMUNITY ASSETS REVIEW – DC Ms. Fletcher advised that HDC Cabinet has received a grant and has approved the re-furbishing of St. Peter’s Hall, The Needles. She does not believe this has any connection to discussions about the future of the Drill Hall.

#### **05.04.21 Planning**

An appeal has been lodged against the refusal to develop the garden at 15 Station Road.

#### **Resolved to forward FNC comments to The Planning Inspectorate**

#### **Planning Applications**

*DC/20/2194 Station Road Previous comments - HFNC strongly Objects to this proposal, which is a repeat of 19/1494 and 18/0627, on the grounds of overdevelopment and over intensification of a very small site. The substantive property – number 15 – has already been split into two properties, with separate front doors. These properties must be very small as the original properties are only small terraced cottages to begin with. This proposal would remove any outdoor space entirely and create a very cramped arrangement. By virtue of access arrangements, limited room sizes and inadequate natural light and outlook, this proposal would create accommodation below the standard which the Council would reasonably expect, to the detriment of amenity for future occupants.*

21/0560	Gardeners Cottage, Hammerpond Road Please note that this property is in the Parish of Nuthurst and Lower Beeding and NOT Forest	Revisions, existing driveway & creation of new access on to road. Erection of new carport	No Objection but unable to open most modules.
21/0630	Unit B2, Foundry Lane	Erection, a side extension to existing warehouse	N/O
21/0572	Dairy Cottage, St Leonards Park	Creation of new entrance gates and wall	N/O but can't see how trees, bushes not affected.
21/0521	10 Plovers Road	Removal of existing current porch and erection of a two-storey front extension.	N/O
21/0635	Horsham Rugby Club	Erection of a new building to provide indoor workout area.	N/O
21/0178	6 Highlands Avenue	Erection of a front porch.	N/O

#### **06.04.21 Treasurer's Report**

Current Account £4,382.56, Reserve Account £1,286.20. The Clerk's honorarium and expenses have been paid for April. Zurich Insurance, £270, has been paid.

#### **07.04.21 Correspondence**

WSCC published list of decisions for works to be carried out - for information as there are no works in our district.

WSCC Spring Schedule 23<sup>rd</sup> March – grass cutting

WSCC A24 Worthing to Horsham Corridor Summary Report

WSCC SPORTS CLUBS - Support Funds are available for any club to access

COVID – various press releases updating on current numbers, details about how to apply for home testing kits and volunteer requests.

WSCC Council Tax Support – WSCC has £3m to support anyone who is finding it difficult to pay council tax.

WSCC Transport Plan Review – survey results

Gatwick in Touch Newsletter

Denne and Trafalgar Minutes

Neighbourhood Warden Report

New Street Gardens- PCSO Chris McCavish and Neighbourhood Wardens have been asked to monitor these gardens for illegal drug activity.

FIXMYSTREET WEBSITE – This has been used to comment on hedge overgrowing in Comptons Lane.

West of Ifield Update – for information

WSCC NEW PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE - WSCC has announced its partnership with Morgan Sindall Group Plc to look at developing surplus land.

HDC Bulletins – relevant weekly alerts are being circulated.

HDC Nature Recovery Award – applications are invited before 23<sup>rd</sup> May. Also referred to in HDC Climate Change News Release

HDC Local Start Up Funds – details of how to access this money. HDC has money available for local project grants.

Section 106 Quarterly Report

#### **08.04.21 Future NC Meetings**

Whilst Central Government has announced that the Emergency Bill for Virtual Meetings will not be renewed after May 2021, HDC has confirmed this is not relevant to Neighbourhood Council Meetings.

Salvation Army has not finalised its plans to resume hall hire; this will involve a risk assessment and issuing a Protocol. Not all Neighbourhood Councillors have full vaccine immunisation.

Neighbourhood Councillors are inclined towards continuing virtual meetings for the next two months at which time the matter will be reviewed. Virtual Meetings are not precluding members of the public from attending as a link can be set up.

**Resolved to update the Salvation Army**

#### **09.04.21 Any Other Business**

A member of the public who has moved into the Ayshe Court vicinity, has expressed a strong interest in becoming actively involved in maintenance of lakes.

**Resolved to ask whether his email address can be shared with other interested parties.**

**British Spring Clean** – this is being scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> May – 13<sup>th</sup> June. HDC's contact is Sarah Hobgen. It is not known whether there are any additional protocols in place because of the pandemic.

**Social Media Report** – Mr. Olson's Report is showing a steady increase in social media hits and this is welcomed.

**Street Naming** – HDC has advised that the new development at Page Court is to be known as Tuppitt Court. In the past FNC have been asked for their suggestions but this protocol appears to have been changed. FNC would prefer the building to be named after an historic Horsham District person rather than a living person and suggest Samuel Carpenter who eventually became the Deputy Governor of Pennsylvania (died 1741).

**Resolved Mrs. Sumpter will raise this matter at the forthcoming quarterly meeting with HDC Adam Chalmers**

**Forest Neighbourhood Council AGM** – this will take place immediately before the May meeting on 17<sup>TH</sup> MAY.

**The Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.**