

HORSHAM FOREST NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL
Clerk: Mrs M Vinall, 40 Rookwood Park, Horsham, RH12 1UB
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MINUTES OF MEETING 17th JANUARY 2022 7.30 p.m.
(VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING HOSTED BY CLERK)

Present: Messrs J. Milne, J. Olson, C. Puckle, G. Sitton, G. Stanley and B. Travers. Mrs. D. Sumpter (Chairman)
District Councillors: Ms. R. Fletcher, Messrs C. Mitchell and S. Raby
County Councillors: CC Dr. N. Dennis and Mr. J. Mercer
Public: 0
Apologies Mr. N. Friswell

01.01.22 Minutes of Meeting held on 13th December 2021

These were proposed by Mr. Olson and seconded by Mr. Travers.

02.01.22 Matters Arising

04.03.21 Blueprint – Neighbourhood Plan Referendum

Disappointingly, HDC has not set the referendum date. It is believed that the delay is due to checking the position of water neutralisation even though the NP does not have any site recommendations.

Resolved DC Mr. Mitchell will raise the issue with the appropriate HDC personnel.

04.10.21 Station Road Planters

Mr. Puckle commented that new public liability regulations are being introduced. FNC is not involved with this initiative.

Noted

04.11.21 The Forest School Planning Application WSCC/047/21

CC Mr Mercer confirmed that the first application has been withdrawn because of the number of negative comments. A revised plan is being prepared and will follow the same consultation procedure. The decision will be taken at committee level (called in) rather than by WSCC Planning Department.

Resolved FNC will continue to be actively involved with this application.

06.11.21 Neighbourhood Wardens

Mr. Charles Nell (Charlie) will commence duties on 14th February. (Please see Mr. Sitton's report under Agenda Item 11.

04.11.21 Newsletter

Several roads in the vicinity of Pollards Drive have still not received the Newsletter.

Resolved Mrs. Sumpter will contact the delivery company. Mr. Sitton agreed to deliver newsletters to homes within his vicinity.

Mr. Olson referred to the January Communication Report that shows a substantial jump in FNC Facebook followers/likes and he attributes this to interest in the newsletter. This is welcomed and it is agreed that this platform is becoming an important way in which to communicate with residents. There are currently 262 users and Mr. Olson was thanked for ensuring that FNC presence is topical and interesting.
Resolved to aim to prepare a further newsletter in late Spring, using the opportunity to publicise the Blueprint Referendum if a date is known.

03.12.21 District and County Councillor Reports

Electric Charging Points - Mr. Olson (in his District Councillor role) continues to liaise with HDC Helen Peacock and HDC Marc Rankin. Mr. Sitton is suggesting that charging points are placed outside Horsham Railway Station and Brighton Road Baptist Church where community cars are parked.

09.12.21 A281 repair work

Mr. Puckle will now contact Highways Manager WSCC, Mr. Adam Bazley regarding the poor standard of surfacing work and the fact that as of 18th January 2022, no repairs have been carried out.

Noted

03.01.22 County and District Councillors' Reports

DC Mr. Christian Mitchell advised that District Councillors meet on 27th January to consider the 2022/2023 Budget and this will be presented for adoption on 9th February. For general guidance only, it is likely that Band D residents will see an increase of £4.57p.a.(HDC part) Spending indications for a £10m budget programme will probably include:

- £1 climate – to meet carbon neutral requirements before 2030
- £200,000 business economic recovery
- £140,000 Ash die back programme
- £200,000 to continue to build on positivity from 2019 Year of Culture

WSCC and Police Panel budgets will also be announced around that date.

In answer to a question about the Ash die back, it is understood that when Ash Trees are removed, these will not be replaced. Horsham Parks Department will be organising the programme.

Relating to Platinum Jubilee Celebrations, HDC is setting up a committee and this will include being part of the Jubilee tree planting initiative.

Separately there were discussions about road closures for Jubilee Street Parties and it is confirmed that applications for street closures must be made to HDC within 6 weeks of the date. It is also understood that streets who are affiliated to the Neighbourhood Watch programme, are insured through that organisation.

Resolved relating to Jubilee arrangements, NC Mr. Olson will post updates on FNC Facebook page.

DC Mr. Jon Olson advised that he had attended a PDAG (Policy Development Advisory Group) on climate targets and will be attending a PDAG on housing.

CC Mr. Jay Mercer referred to the WSCC Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee of which he is a member. This Committee expressed its dissatisfaction at the lack of progress to improvements within the mental health service. Steps are being taken to implement changes in a swifter way. The SEN (special education needs) Task Force has still to report on how to manage serious budget problems associated with this statutory provision.

CC Mr. Mercer also referred to pupil achievement and attainment in West Sussex. It is noted that the pandemic has impacted on children's education; however, pupils in West Sussex are in the top quartile of the 151 local authorities relating to general living standards, but are in the bottom 1/3 quartile for results. Currently an SEN and Educational Attainment Strategy for the next 5 years is being prepared.

CC Dr. Dennis attended a WSCC Meeting on 17th December at which the Liberal Democratic motion relating to 20 mph driving restrictions was discussed with the WSCC Cabinet Member, Joy Dennis. CC Dr. Dennis believes that Ms. Dennis (no relation) is more sympathetic to 20 mph applications than her predecessor and with this in mind, Dr. Dennis is collating paperwork with the aim to have New Street added to the current Agenda.

Resolved FNC will forward all appropriate paperwork connected to the previous Community Highways Scheme application that was refused in 2019.

Report of blocked gullies in Oakhill Road resulting in pooling have been referred to Highways Steward, Liam Nally. The “gully pots” were rinsed through in late 2021 but it is now thought that there is a pipe break. This is currently being investigated.

DC Dr. Skipp advised that there is still no action on The Local Plan.

DC Mr. Milne commented that after a long waiting period the Fire Station will be moving to Highwood and it is anticipated that the service will be stationed there within 18 months.

Referring to Muggerridge Field, he described recent events at Muggerridge Field as “early manoeuvres” by WSCC Property Department but added these will be held up by the water neutrality issue

CPZ Review – WSCC is looking to change the whole system and how it is organised. However, the current Horsham CPZ review was already at planning stage and WSCC has confirmed it will go ahead. DC Mr. Milne said that the current controlled parking zone was put in place more than 25 years ago and he believes that it is now time to expand the zone by possibly two roads outwards. Current ideas also include changing the 2-hour slot parking, i.e. eliminate 9-5 parking although he believes there is already opposition to this proposal. For any changes to the controlled parking zone to take place, there will need to be a 50% resident majority and as background to how this figure is worked out, if a proposal is to expand by two roads, the immediate road alongside the planned CPZ will also be included in the ballot. DC Mr. Milne commented that only the area within the current CPZ will be in the review.

Mrs. Sumpter introduced newly elected DC Mr. Sam Raby to the meeting. He is representing Roffey South (a small area falls within Forest Neighbourhood which includes Parsonage Road).

DC Ms. Fletcher said that this is a quiet period and that all the current issues have been covered by previous reports.

04.01.22 Planning

Currently there are few applications within Forest Neighbourhood.

Planning Application, DC/21/2766 - Retrospective application for the erection of a “We Buy Any Car Ltd.” sales kiosk with associated operation to existing car park”.

This was validated on 16th December but circulated for comments w/c 10th January. The Company has been trading from the car park for some time, but Mr. Travers commented that the position in the application differs from the current siting. “We Buy Any Car” say that cars that are purchased will be taken from the site by car business licence drivers but this Council is concerned that if a transporter is used, it will adversely affect the drivers using the HGV route. Other comments are that Highways may not approve and the application may need change of use of the car park. Mr. Travers will again make a site visit.

FNC will alert Forest Neighbourhood residents about this application and assess their reaction. FNC may ask for this application to go to Committee.

05.01.22 Treasurer's Report

Current Account £6,881.96 Reserve Account £1,286.29. The Clerk's honorarium and expenses have been paid.

06.01.22 Meetings

After discussion, it is agreed that FNC will aim to resume meetings at Salvation Army Hall from 16th May. Before that time Mr. Puckle agreed to visit the Hall to ascertain whether it will be feasible to introduce hybrid meetings, i.e. the option to join meetings by Zoom.

Because of Easter, the April Meeting is being rearranged and will take place on **MONDAY 11TH APRIL**.

07.01.22 Code of Conduct

The HDC revised Code of Conduct and Constitution have been circulated. It was agreed that Mrs. Sumpter will liaise with the Denne and Trafalgar Chairmen with the aim to formally adopt the Codes. However, Forest Neighbourhood Councillors ask that the need for disclosure (declaring interests) is removed from NC documents.

Resolved to await the outcome of discussions.

08.01.22 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

Mr. Sitton has attended meetings with Sussex Police relating to Speedwatch. He gave statistics that included the facts that there are 293 groups and 2,500 sites within Sussex. A positive statistic is that following a Speedwatch notification, 93.3% of drivers do not re-offend.

For information, the use of body cams is being deferred and due to inactivity during the last 18 months, the site in St. Leonard's Road is being taken down.

Neighbourhood Wardens – Mr. Sitton previously circulated a report concerning temporary working hours for Neighbourhood Warden Maria Colenso. This will be in place until the second Neighbourhood Warden, Charlie Nell, is settled into the role.

Mr. Sitton said that Maria is including Bohunt School within her patrol even though, strictly speaking, this is out of area. However, she is keen to continue the positive relationship with pupils many of whom live in the neighbourhood. She has highlighted specific cases where she has been able to signpost safeguarding matters.

DC Mr. Milne attended the recent meeting with WSCC Highways, Steve Douglas to look at:

"Inconsistent Regulatory Highways Weight Restriction Signage relating to Wimblehurst Road, North Heath Lane, Foundry Lane and Parsonage Road; the installation of Highway Code approved signage to direct drivers of HGVs of the correct route to follow to access the Horsham Enterprise Park site; and for WSCC Highways to update manufacturers of Satnavs on any new legal orders and restrictions on the roads in the locality".

The outcome is that WSCC Highways Steve Douglas does agree that there are anomalies/errors that need to be rectified in this vicinity and he is optimistic that these works will come under a new service entitled "Special Project" within Community Highways Scheme.

Mrs. Sumpter has circulated Minutes from a recent HTCP Meeting. She highlighted work to be carried out in Denne Road Cemetery.

Muggeridge Field and the “triangle”

Mrs. Sumpter referred to the recent lopping of an Oak Tree along the bridleway adjacent to the triangle. There is some confusion about whether all Oak Trees have tree preservation orders although Mr. Olson discussed this tree with Mr. Ryan Allyson (HDC Countryside Warden) who does not think that this is the case. Regarding Muggeridge Field it is believed that the Keep Muggeridge Green Group (keepmfgreen) are preparing for a campaign

Horsham Green Spaces

Mrs. Sumpter also reported that Horsham Green Spaces are contacting all local green spaces groups to complete a “SWOT” (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) of their local green space in order to promote and protect accessible and sustainable green spaces for all Horsham residents.

09.01.22 Correspondence

Gatwick Newsletter from DD Community

HDC Cabinet Member List

Youth Tender

WSCC – survey about continuing the current re-cycling arrangements involving booking slots.

WSCC Newsletters – including updates about current Covid figures and vaccination centres.

Neighbourhood Alert E mails

Denne and Trafalgar Minutes

A-BOARDS – a copy of the draft Policy prepared by HDC Clive Burley, has been received. This draft sets out guidelines and enforcement procedures and in this context, the draft is welcomed. One Councillor commented that he would prefer A-Boards to be illegal and replaced by overhanging boards.

Section 106 Agreement Documentation – this will be circulated and Councillors are asked to submit ideas for outstanding balances. One comment was made that the play equipment in Bennetts Field needs to be updated.

10.01.22 Any Other Business

Mr. Stanley advised that he has now become the Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator for Fletchers Close area (please see earlier reference to insurance cover for Jubilee Street Parties).

The Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.