

**HORSHAM FOREST NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL**  
**Clerk: Mrs M Vinall, 40 Rookwood Park, Horsham, RH12 1UB**  
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**MINUTES OF MEETING 21<sup>st</sup> FEBRUARY 2022 7.30 p.m.**  
**(VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING HOSTED BY CLERK)**

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

**District Councillors:** Ms. R. Fletcher and Mr. C. Mitchell

**County Councillors:** CC Dr. N. Dennis and Mr. J. Mercer

**Public:** 0

**Apologies** Mr. J. Olson, DC Mr. S. Raby, DC Dr. D. Skipp and Mr. Adam Bazley (WSCC Highways) was due to attend but sent his apologies before the Meeting commenced

**01.02.22 Minutes of Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

Under DC Mr. Mitchell's report, it was confirmed that the Band D increase of £4,57 is per annum and only represents the HDC part of Council Tax. HDC is setting aside £1m to meet carbon neutral requirements before 2030. The Minutes were proposed by Mr. Sitton and seconded by Mr. Milne.

**02.02.22 Matters Arising**

**04.03.21 Blueprint**

HDC, Mrs. Barbara Childs has confirmed that no date has been fixed for the Neighbourhood Plan referendum. Water neutralisation continues to be the only reason for this delay.

**04.11.21 Newsletter**

Mrs. Sumpter thanked Mr. Sitton for delivering the remaining newsletters.

**09.12.21 A281 repair work**

The defect is more prominent, and it had been hoped to raise this (and the original standard of the repair) with Highways Mr. A. Bazley. It is agreed that a list of Highways matters will be prepared in order that, when possible, these can be raised directly with Mr. Bazley. In the meantime, Mr. Puckle agreed to establish a link with Mr. Bazley, specifically to discuss the A281. CC Mr. Mercer will also become involved.

**Resolved to continue to assess how the standard of Highways repairs is monitored. Mr. Puckle and CC Mr. Mercer will become directly involved with the specific problem on A281.**

**03.01.22 Jubilee Street Parties**

HDC Mr Adam Chalmers and DC Mr. Roger Noel (Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture) are taking the lead relating to how Horsham celebrates The Platinum Jubilee, and this is likely to be staged in and around Carfax. Details of how to arrange street closures are now available on HDC website.

**04.01.22 Planning "We Buy Any Car"**

This application was withdrawn on 7<sup>th</sup> February as the applicant had not applied correctly due to present location of the kiosk and needing "change of use". (as FNC observed). The withdrawal of this application is negating any involvement by HDC Enforcement although the Company continues to operate from this site. Mr. Sitton referred to photographs that he had taken showing a low loader in the vicinity (something that "We Buy Any Car" has said would not happen).

**Noted – no further action can be taken until "We Buy Any Car" submits a new planning application.**

**06.01.22 Meetings**

As Neighbourhood Councils are not statutory bodies, there is no reason why virtual meetings cannot continue. However, the consensus is that Neighbourhood Councillors would like to return to Salvation Army Hall Meetings. The option to introduce "hybrid" meetings will be investigated although Mr. Friswell commented on his experience with other meetings where

there are hearing problems. CC Mr. Mercer said that the Pandemic has resulted in significant changes to how WSCC meetings operate and; by choice, there are committee meetings that will continue to be by Zoom for the foreseeable future.

**Resolved the Clerk will now liaise with Salvation Army Officer, Ian Stewart with the intention to return on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April. The March Meeting will be by Zoom.**

#### **07.01.22 Code of Conduct**

Relating to Neighbourhood Councils only, a revised draft incorporating requested amendments, is being prepared by HDC Sharon Evans and it is agreed that the three NC's will eventually adopt a Code of Conduct together. Mrs. Sumpter commented that the Denne Chair believes the Constitution is the most important document.

#### **08.01.22 Neighbourhood Wardens**

The purchase of E bikes for the two Neighbourhood Wardens has been agreed and funding is available through unspent 2021/22 Special Charge. Mr. Sitton said that accessories will now have to be purchased, e.g. head protection.

Relating to the fact that the Neighbourhood Wardens are patrolling in the vicinity of Bohunt School, and this is situated in the North Horsham Parish, Mrs Sumpter said that once again, the Parish Council has been asked to consider contributing to the cost.

Mrs Sumpter also said this had been raised at the quarterly meeting as in addition North Horsham Parish Council is not contributing to the "For the Youth" project, even though this is benefitting the young people in the area.

#### **08.01.22 Inconsistent Regulatory Highways Weight Restriction Signage relating to Wimblehurst Road, North Heath Lane, Foundry Lane and Parsonage Road**

CC Mr. Dennis confirmed that this will be rectified and will become a special project with funding from 2022/23 for design and then to be implemented in 2023/2024.

The first phase will include an audit/consultation on the lorry route (from Hilliers, Clarence Road/Oakhill Road/Station Road). NCs commented that, in their opinion, this is currently inadequate.

**Resolved Mr. Puckle will report on missing and/or ways to improve signage along this route.**

#### **CPZ Review (controlled parking zone)**

This Review is to take place and CC Mr. Dennis commented on the current restrictions (specifically 8-10 a.m.) that are unpopular.

CC Mr. Milne will collate "early bird" ideas and asked for these to be sent to him by 14<sup>th</sup> March. He confirmed that he has listed Fletchers Close and parking on road corners. The comment was made that, along the lorry route, legal on road parking in Station Road means that when the road is blocked, car drivers are mounting the pavement, and this is a real safety hazard. However, as a counterargument, if parking is restricted, Station Road might become a "rat run".

#### **08.01.22 Horsham Green Spaces**

Mrs. Sumpter advised that Friends of Chesworth Farm have now completed a "SWOT" (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). Friends of Bennetts Field are hoping to do the same. Within Forest Neighbourhood, there are few green spaces but Mrs. Sumpter referred to New Street Gardens where there is no longer a Friends Group.

**Resolved NC Mr. Milne will look at New Street Gardens**

Reference was made to the area that adjoins Leechpool Woods and is in vicinity of Grebe Crescent. It is not known if this is a relevant area for the project.

As background to this initiative, Mrs. Sumpter advised that Horsham Green Spaces may become a Company.

**Muggeridge Field** – NC Mr. Travers advised that an Oak Tree was blown over during Storm Eunice and has opened another vista in Arun Way.

### **09.01.22 Section 106 Agreement Documentation**

There have been e mails relating to the way in which the HDC documentation is presented. Mrs. Sumpter commented that, to an extent, this is in any event becoming obsolete as all funding will be soon be referred to and allocated through CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy). Mrs. Sumpter commented on the Highways allocations and suggested that NCs should be allowed to suggest ways in which this is spent rather than how it is currently allocated. It is understood that Parish Councils have input into this expenditure heading.

### **03.02.21 District and County Councillors' Reports**

CC Mr. John Milne advised that the CC Budget has now been set and will see an overall increase of 2.99% that means a Band D householder will pay an additional £45.18 p.a. on the County Council aspect of the bill (please note the HDC figure is £4.57 p.a.). There will be a £150 emergency tax relief scheme in place for poorer householders.

**Highway Repairs** – WSCC is to trial renting out lanes by the day on larger roads for repair work. The suggestion is that this will encourage contractors to work to a tighter schedule and not leave “jobs” to work on another site which is often described as “infuriating” by members of the public. However, some Neighbourhood Councillors put forward the counter-outcome that the quality of work will be adversely affected as a result of this charge.

CC Mr. Milne reiterated that this is a trial project; WSCC is one of the few Councils to introduce the scheme although in other parts of the country where it has been in place, the comments are positive.

CC Mr. Jay Mercer said there has been no further progress on the proposal to install an all-weather pitch at The Forest School. The WSCC Task Group relating to Special Educational Needs/disabilities is now on hold since there is to be a national review culminating in a White Paper on Schools. Mr. Mercer is concerned that special educational needs will now be an annex to this White Paper.

Confidential meetings have taken place relating to Children and Young People’s Mental Health Support Services. Mr. Mercer is requesting that a version of the meeting notes is made available to share.

CC Dr. Dennis has highlighted potholes that have appeared in St Leonard’s Road and Comptons Lane and these should be repaired within the next 3 weeks. New Street residents are concerned that the paint used to mark trenches for roadworks is not “washing away” despite being advised that it is “delible”.

A problem with Bus 65 when it has not stopped within an area that has road works, has been reported and should not happen again.

CC Dr. Dennis is now on a task force committee looking, in general terms, at the A24 between Horsham and Dorking. Safety issues along this road are well documented but the main issue is that this road falls under the umbrella of two County Councils, Sussex and Surrey and, in the past, Surrey has not wanted any re-routing.

**Mobility Issues** – Mr. Friswell referred to problems he is encountering since he began to use a mobility scooter – pavements that have risen due to tree roots and the need for dropped kerbs. CC Dr. Dennis asked for documentation and DC Mrs. Fletcher referred to Equality Act 2010 that should be referred to.

DC Mr. Mitchell confirmed that the HDC budget was set on 9<sup>th</sup> February. The Police Precept has been approved. He also attended the Quarterly Meeting with Barbara Childs and the 3 Neighbourhood Chairmen at which Barbara Childs confirmed that HDC is taking legal advice concerning the Local Plan and water neutrality issue. It is hoped that the Local Plan will be passed before the end of 2022 although no details are known about the housing number that will be accepted (it is highly unlikely that this will be in the region of the Local Plan number that was originally being discussed).

DC Ms Fletcher is now in contact with a significant number of residents who are concerned about the state of the pavement alongside the row of shops in Queens Parade and Queensway and the way in which cars park on the pavement – specifically to access the take-away restaurants. There have been a number of suggestions including extending the double yellow lines, installing bollards or planters as a physical obstruction or a hand rail. Another suggestion is to reduce the width of the pavement so that a formal lay-by can be installed.

This area is included in the Public Realm Document and one possibility is to look at ways in which comments in this document can be incorporated into any proposal.

DC Ms. Fletcher will now assess whether the Queens Parade shops have dedicated parking to the rear so that deliveries can be made and to ask for comments on all suggestions.

#### **04.02.22 Planning**

The Planning Committee Comments as follows:

|         |                      |   |                     |
|---------|----------------------|---|---------------------|
| 21/2555 | Beggars Roost        | Amendment – no indication of what the amendment comprises, therefore our original objection stands. | OBJECT<br>See below |
| 21/2768 | 22 Hernbrook Drive   | 2 storey side & rear extn   | No objection        |
| 22/0063 | 119 Bennetts Road    | Single storey side & rear extn  | No objection        |
| 22/0069 | Amies Mill Farm      | Erect agricultural building to East of site   | No objection        |
| 22/0091 | 5 Bens Acre          | Erection of front porch   | No objection        |
| 22/0118 | 31 Depot Road        | Single storey side extension  | OBJECT<br>See below |
| 21/2242 | 29A Depot Road       | Erect detached outbuilding  | No objection        |
| 22/0291 | 11 Chesworth Gardens | Erect single storey rear extn   | No objection        |
| 22/0208 | 135A Comptons Lane   | Demolish existing dwelling & erect 2 storey dwelling and car port                                   | OBJECT<br>See below |

OBJECTION DC/21/2555 Beggars Roost, Brighton Road Erect detached 2 bay garage to front FNC is concerned that this proposal is in front of the building line which has been refused on previous applications. FNC is also concerned that WSCC Highways have said that the proposal is not big enough for two cars anyway.

OBJECTION DC/22/0118 31 Depot Road – This proposal is an over-development of the site as it seeks to add a 2-bed annexe to the main building which already has 4 bedrooms. However, due to access problems, this is detrimental to the host property. There is also a problem with parking any additional vehicles as there are double yellow lines outside the property which currently causes problems. Should this application be approved, we would ask for a condition that the new annexe not be converted into a separate property.

OBJECTION DC/22/0208 135A Comptons Lane – This application seeks to build a 2-storey property on a very small site, which was an infill to start with and had a small bungalow fitted in. To not make the proposal look too large, they have opted for a flat roof. This gives a very boxy, block appearance which means it is totally out of character with the adjacent properties and the rest of the road, and FNC OBJECT on these grounds.

### **05.02.21 Treasurer's Report**

Current Account £6,571.96, Reserve Account £1,286.30 Clerk's honorarium and expenses have been paid for February. It is agreed that Forest Neighbourhood Council will continue to fund the Riverside Walk to the value of £180.

### **06.02.22 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodes**

Mr. Sitton asked whether the speed indicator device currently in St. Leonard's Road can be rotated around other Horsham areas. No decision was made.

Mrs. Sumpter again referred to the HDC Quarterly Meeting with Neighbourhood Chairman. Reference was again made to the Town Charge and how the figures are balanced. Everyone is asking for more transparency. She will circulate the notes when these are available.

### **07.02.22 A24 Worthing to Horsham Corridor study**

NC/CC Mr. John Milne attended this meeting on behalf of Forest Neighbourhood Council. The Presentation has now been circulated. The areas that are closest to Horsham are at Hop Oast and Buck Barn.

Hop Oast proposal is for a dedicated bus priority for B2237 Worthing Road movement, crossing provision of A24 (south arm) and potential to link Byway 1668 Coltstaple Lane with Worthing Road, Southwater and Bridleway 1662.

The Buck Barn proposal is to install a "Through-About" roundabout to improve capacity and to prioritise A24 North South movements.

Neighbourhood Councillors were not in favour of "Through-About" roundabout.

This is a Study and currently there is no funding for any changes.

### **08.02.22 Correspondence**

Ms. Jane Eaton has been appointed as new HDC CEO. Currently she is Director of Corporate Resources.

Sussex Green Living – Sussex Green Hub will be at United Reformed Church on 26<sup>th</sup> February. Horsham Repair Café meets on last Saturday of each month.

HDC Economic Development Report

Bohunt School – invitation to tour premises (the Chair, Clerk and Mr Stanley had attended a tour)

Defibrillator Grants

HDC Notification of proposed car parking charges.

Horsham County Local Forum Meeting 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Neighbourhood Warden Report January 2022

Denne and Trafalgar Minutes

Dates for future Horsham District Old People's Forum

EV Charge Points (Horsham Railway Station land is not included as this is not "public land. FNC has put forward some suggestions).

The Meeting closed at 9.35 p.m.: