

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 20th FEBRUARY 2023 7.30 p.m.
Salvation Army Hall, Albion Way, Horsham

Present: Mrs. D. Sumpter (Chair), Mr. N. Friswell, K. Johnson, J. Milne, J. Olson, C. Puckle, G. Sitton, and B. Travers
District Councillors: DC Ms. R. Fletcher and Dr. D. Skipp
County Councillors: CC Dr. N. Dennis (arr. 8.15 p.m.)
Public: 1
Apologies NC Mr. G. Stanley, DC Mr. C. Minto

There were no conflicts of interest at this meeting.

Mrs. Sumpter welcomed the member of public who introduced herself as a British Horse Society Access and Bridleways Officer, Colgate Parish. She is keen to re-explore Hammerpond Road speed limits. This follows the WSCC announcement that it might be amenable to revisiting speed limits and restrictions on country roads with a view to protecting vulnerable road users.

The member of public explained that, conservatively, there are 100 horses stabled within the 5-mile radius of Hammerpond Road, who in a normal one-hour hack, could access this route. Current driving speeds along the road are to national limits even though there are varying road widths and degrees of bends throughout its length. The road is also well used by all age groups who are members of Horsham Rugby Club and Golf Club. There have been several disturbing incidents due to speeding cars. The Officer said that before considering this speed reduction application, she had been mindful of small businesses along Hammerpond Road but considered they would not be unduly affected or would object to an application.

Neighbourhood Councillors commented that it will be important for the British Horse Society to involve all three parishes who have an interest in Hammerpond Road and County Councillor Mr. Jay Mercer. DC Ms. Fletcher commented that the Cycling Group has expressed its support for the speed reduction and should also be approached...

Subject to support, the next stage will be to put forward a formal application to WSCC and before this happens, Mrs. Sumpter anticipates CC Mr. Mercer contacting FNC for its views. At this time, FNC has not formally discussed this current proposal from the Bridleway Officer.

The member of public said that she would contact all parties with an interest in Hammerpond Road and thanked FNC for its advice. She then left the Meeting.

01.02.23 Minutes of Meeting held on 16th January 2023

These were proposed by Mr. Friswell and seconded by Mr. Milne.

02.02.23 Matters Arising

02.01.23 Public Forum – YMCA application DC/22/2257

CC Mr. Milne had previously circulated WSCC Highways Report on the application that does not believe it is contrary to National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 111) and is therefore not objecting. The Report does, however, refer to YMCA Transport Statement that states an Operations Manager will be employed and a Traffic Plan will be put into place on event days.

Mrs. Sumpter referred to the YMCA Presentation at FNC December Meeting when the representatives explained that a member would be on duty to direct and monitor traffic

at the entrance to Gorings Mead. DC Mr. Milne has been in discussion with HDC Ms. Emma Parke. DC Ms. Fletcher said that she is still waiting for responses to her questions. One suggestion is that on match days, there are residents only parking avoiding homeowners being unable to access or leave their properties by car.

In view of the fact that there are a significant number of objection letters, the application may be discussed at HDC Planning Committee level.

Resolved to submit a further letter asking that if the application is approved, this will have a condition that a YMCA member is always on duty on match days to manage the traffic flow.

04.03.22 Blueprint

Mrs. Sumpter had previously circulated Minutes of the last meeting and advised there is to be a meeting with HDC Barbara Childs and HDC Emma Parkes to discuss the Blueprint protocol for planning applications. During NC discussion, comments were made that following adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan there is a legal obligation for Blueprint involvement in planning (even though Blueprint Committee is unelected) and the way forward is to find the easiest way for this to be managed.

04.09.22 Overgrown Vegetation

FNC sent the agreed first letter to a Brighton Road property where vegetation has severely encroached the pavement and Mrs. Sumpter advised that this has been successful, and the hedge has been cut back. It is agreed that a similar letter will be sent to the household where bamboo is encroaching on the pavement to the extent that it is breaking the slabs.

Resolved the Clerk will arrange this contact.

03.12.22 Queensway

It is understood there has been a positive and good response to HDC Clive Burley's options for this area and there is optimism that changes will be implemented. Most responses ask for an increase in the number of bollards along WSCC pavement although CC Mr. Milne cautioned that this is wholly against WSCC stance (even though without bollards, traffic will cross over the pavement and continuously damage the slabs).

It would seem there is support for the delivery scooters to have on street parking arrangements.

City Fibre (*please see further discussions) is scheduled to carry out work in Queensway area and it is assumed that any changes are deferred until this has been carried out.

09.12.22 Wilder Horsham

Mr. Olson attended this event and was impressed with the presentations, particularly the initiatives being carried out in Warnham Parish. He referred to the "metre square" competition where local Warnham residents have been given free wildflower seed packs. Mr. Olson referred to a "WhatsApp Group" promoting Wilder Horsham.

Resolved that notes from this day will be circulated and that FNC adopts a similar "metre square" wildflower initiative, sponsoring the seed purchase, and will encourage involvement by publicising a competition.

07.01.23 CIL – Community Infrastructure Levy

Mrs. Sumpter had circulated HDC responses to the three NC's initial questions. HDC had confirmed that it would arrange a zoom meeting and this is something that Forest

Neighbourhood Councillors have been requesting over a period of time. This is the only way that the levy can be fully understood.

Resolved Mrs. Sumpter will ask HDC to arrange a Zoom Meeting to which all FNC Councillors are invited.

03.02.23 District and County Councillors Reports

NC and DC Mr. J. Olson referred to the City Fibre dig (DC Mr. Minto is leading this issue). Apart from disappointment at the way in which some verges have been “made good”, residents within Forest area are now extremely disappointed that Virgin is now digging up the same trenches to install their network across Horsham (starting in Forest area).

Whilst other networks will be using CityFibre or Openreach, Virgin has opted to have its own Installations and WSCC has given permission because this is something that is unregulated – what Virgin is doing is lawful. DC Mr. Minto has established a good rapport with Virgin and this includes Virgin’s intention to give 7 days’ notice of its work programme.

Neighbourhood Councillors commented that they do not believe any provision or consideration is being given to wheelchair or mobility car users.

Resolved to question why this continuing trench digging is unregulated.

DC Mr. Olson referred to the enclosures that have been introduced in Owlbeech/Leechpool Woods that, historically, have been walking routes. He referred to the wildlife initiative and explained that HDC will be monitoring the number of birds that have nested as a result of the enclosures. (Not all of this area falls within Forest Neighbourhood).

DC Ms. Fletcher advised that HDC is “taking on board” NC Mr. Friswell’s report on problems for mobility scooter users within Horsham Town and is appointing consultants. Mr. Friswell is keen to see the consultant’s report but is disappointed that this will be from a non-mobility user’s perspective.

The comment was made that any proposals emanating from the report could proceed using joint CIL Monies (including percentage retained by HDC).

Connective Kerb Seminar – it is unfortunate that Connective Kerb is stating that 6 EV charging points need to be installed in an area at one specific time meaning that 6 parking spaces will be lost. It is noted that the Cabinet Member for Forest Neighbourhood has vetoed the proposed charging points in St. Leonard’s Road and within Horsham, only one road scheme is currently going ahead – Merryfield Drive. CC Dr. Dennis had understood that the Rushams Road was in the scheme but this has not been confirmed. DC Mr. Olson said there are between 45-50 charging points in Horsham car parks.

CC Dr. Dennis again referred to New Street problems and noted that the pothole problem is escalating. Work is scheduled within the criteria of the WSCC work programme. The tactile pavement at the bottom of New Street (Brighton Road) is being reconstructed and faded marking is being reinstated.

HARWOOD ROAD SPEED LIMIT – CC Dr. Dennis has previously referred to a local request to reduce the speed limit to 30 mph from roundabout up to Stirling Way. The application would be to the Community Highways Scheme and for this to be successful, it would have to have strong support. CC Dr. Dennis explained that the actual Community Highways Scheme can be applied for by one resident, e.g. not necessarily a group such as Forest Neighbourhood Council. Neighbourhood Councillors discussed the recent award to Slinfold Parish that is allowing the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit and how this was achieved. Harwood Road application would stand more chance if it included more detailed and professional information that requires monetary input.

Resolved CC Dr. Dennis will ascertain whether WSCC has funding that would cover a survey before the Highways Scheme was submitted. DC Mr. Olson agreed to approach Chesworth School Governors for their input into this proposal.

Following on from the Slinfold Parish receipt of Community Highways grant, it is proposed that FNC re-looks at the 20 mph proposal in New Street and surrounding roads.

DC Dr. Skipp referred to the HDC budget that is going ahead without controversy. He also referred to a problem that he is currently pursuing on behalf of Forest residents. Along the public way (Hampers Lane entrance) there is barbed wire that is falling on the verge and at times is encroaching on to the footpath. It is a danger to pedestrians and especially dogs. DC Dr. Skipp has approached WSCC who state that it is not its responsibility. Mr. Sitton confirmed that the fence is not owned by Horsham Angling Society. The current situation is that DC Dr. Skipp is in discussion with HDC Legal Department and he believes that he does have a strong case for WSCC to act.

DC Dr. Skipp referred to the appalling state of the Harwood Road roundabout that now needs major intervention.

CC Mr. Milne understands that following his TRO application, there will be a change to the Chesworth Garden parking lines.

WSCC budget will be increased by the maximum 5% and he referred to 2% increase in the social care budget. This year, the budget is balanced because a central loan has not been recalled – this may have implications for 2024 budget.

04.02.23 Treasurer's Report

Current Account £8883.85, Reserve Account £1289.99. The Clerk's honorarium and expenses have been paid for February. The hall hire invoice is still outstanding and a further newsletter is scheduled. The comment was made that Denne NC is asking for an increased share of HDC grant. It is also noted that Denne's expenses are higher for its clerking but lower for insurance. The Clerk will follow up the insurance quote.. NC Mr. Travers is in discussion regarding payrolls.

Councillors are asked to submit any expenses before year end.

05.02.23 Horsham Climate Action Day

Mr. Puckle said there are no further updates. This will be an Agenda item as and when further details are known.

06.02.23 Arun Way Dog Bin

Regrettably there has been no action.

Resolved DC Ms. Fletcher agreed to follow up this request.

07.02.23 Neighbourhood Wardens

Mr. Sitton represents FNC at meetings. He will seek clarification regarding what represents the wardens administration hours during the month. It is understood that the matter relating to Neighbourhood Warden involvement on Polling Day has been resolved.

There was discussion about how the patrol hours are allocated.

Resolved Mr. Sitton will ask for a breakdown of the administration hours.

In general terms, FNC agrees that the Neighbourhood Wardens should be visible where there are the most problems but with the understanding that local neighbourhood issues can be handled quickly.

Car parking issues in Heron Way, specifically at school opening and closing times, is becoming more problematical. DC Dr. Skipp said that, at this time, this is being exacerbated by builders' lorries that are parked in the area.

Resolved to ask Neighbourhood Wardens to patrol this area on a regular basis for a period. Forest Neighbourhood Council will also write to Mr. Crump, Headteacher about the issue.

08.02.23 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

Mr. Sitton attended the Horsham District Old People's Forum and learned that people with visual impairment can apply for free memory sticks. He referred to changes at Horsham Hospital to try to help with bed blocking. Due to lack of staff, Age UK has withdrawn its Wednesday meals.

Speedwatch – there are more covert operations, and the number of repeat offenders has reduced. Motorists breaking speed limits are being offered an “educational experience”. Operation Crackdown and the new Speed Management Programme is looking at addressing speed management in a more structured way and will give a better oversight into what is happening.

Forest Neighbourhood Council agreed to loan SID (speed indicator device) to Trafalgar NC for a period of 3 months.

Mrs. Sumpter will be attending Blueprint and Green Spaces Meetings. She approached Green Spaces Committee regarding an oak tree survey but was directed to the Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Inventory.

Any questions for the quarterly meeting of the 3 NC's with HDC should be sent to Mrs. Sumpter.

Chesworth Farm – there is to be a May Official Opening of a new garden area and board walk stretch. Details to follow.

09.02.23 Correspondence

Sussex Alerts

WSSC Newsletters - the proposed budget is with Scrutiny Committee; local apprenticeships; 4.7m has been received for Highways Decarbonisation Fund; West Sussex Mind (Children's Mental Health Week); Charging Point Webinar

Traffic Calming Measures in Slinfold – introducing 20 mph using Community Highway Fund

HDC Newsletters - recycling coffee pods.

Economic Development End of Year Letter

Southern Water Newsletter and updates

Footpath Golden Folly Pond – fencing work update

Polling Areas HHJA/HRJB (Pollards and Millais areas) will now vote at St. Leonard's Church Hall instead of Roffey Millennium Hall. **ELECTION IS 4TH MAY 2023. Neighbourhood Election date is Thursday 16th June 2023.**

AYSHE COURT LAKES – the broken fencing has been repaired under health and safety banner.

POTHoles IN ST. LEONARD'S ROAD – WSSC formal response to CC Mr. Jay Mercer (separately, WSSC say 25,500 potholes have been filled in last 9 months).

HDC CHAIRMAN – CLAIRE VICKERS

At an Extraordinary Council meeting of Horsham District Council on 2 February 2023 Cllr Claire Vickers was appointed the new Leader of the Council.

Commenting on her appointment Cllr Vickers said:

“It is a great honour to be elected as Leader of Horsham District Council.

“I am looking forward to maintaining our excellent track record in running a successful council.”

Cllr Vickers has subsequently made a series of Cabinet Member appointments as follows:

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Recycling and Waste - Cllr Philip Circus

Cabinet Member for Finance & Assets – Cllr Paul Clarke

Cabinet Member for Planning & Development – Cllr Liz Kitchen

Cabinet Member for Leisure & Culture – Cllr Roger Noel

Cabinet Member for Economic Development - Cllr Richard Landeryou

Cabinet Member for Horsham Town Centre – Cllr Tony Hogben

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities – Cllr Tricia Youtan

Cabinet Member for Environment & Rural Affairs - Cllr Josh Potts

For media queries please email: press@horsham.gov.uk .

BENNETTS FIELD – correspondence from DC Colin Minto regarding the newly installed Bund and follow-up work that he is recommending to make this area safer.

COUNCIL ELECTIONS – 4TH May 2023, Neighbourhood Council Election 16th June.

POLLING ID CARDS – all voters will need ID cards.

WALKING IN SUSSEX – details of the local Group.

KINDER LIVING HOME SHOW 4TH/5TH March at Parkside

NOVARTIS – Slides from December Meeting. Outline application has now been submitted to HDC Planning.

Denne and Trafalgar Minutes

10.02.23 Any Other Business

Mrs. Sumpter confirmed that the Neighbourhood Council election will be on 16th June and HDC will distribute nomination forms before that date. If the number of nominations exceeds 13 people and there is an election, the June meeting date may have to be altered.

It is agreed that Mr. Friswell will continue to represent Forest Neighbourhood Council on Committee “4 the Youth”.

The Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.