



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on Tuesday 12th November 2024**

Present: Councillors: Michael Lunn (ML) Chair (+WDC), Peter Weston (PW) Vice Chair, Ben Floyd (BF), Stephen Lester (SL), Damon Wellman (DW) and Alan Hobbs (AH)

In attendance: Vicki Rutt (Clerk), Cllr Bob Standley (ESCC) and 3 members of public.

162. RECEIVE A 5 MINUTE PRESENTATION FROM MEMBERS OF THE A267 SAFETY ACTION GROUP

Members of the A267 Safety Action group; Sarah Jones, Susan King and Melvyn Butcher attended the meeting to explain why they have created this group. Sarah Jones explained that on the 1st October 2024, there was a fatal accident outside her house on the A267. Back in 2017 she sent a letter to the local MP at the time explaining this will happen, following the accident this year, she resent the letter, and this group has been formed. The aim of the group is to make it better for all users. It is a huge stretch of road that is used consistently but is not fit for purpose. Driver behaviour does not help with using phones, overtaking and speeding. A Facebook group has been set up and they have received a lot of interest and members. It is not going to be a quick fix, but they have the marketing and media skills to push this forward and try to introduce change. They are working on a strategy document which will be shared and when delivered will hopefully get the attention of ESCC. ML thanked the group for their time and attendance. He explained that the PC are very much aware of the issues and have been campaigning to ESCC for over 15 years. The group have the PC's support and asked that communications to the Parish Council is maintained.

163. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – None.

164. APOLOGIES– Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Munday.

165. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – BF declared a personal interest on agenda item 174a.

166. MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on the 1st October 2024 and the Finance Meeting held on the 15th October 2024 were recommended for approval and signed as a true record (previously circulated).

167. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

a. Action Log 2024 - Clerk reported from the action log which is available on the village website.

b. Clerks report - This was noted (previously circulated).

168. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

168.1 WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

WD/2024/1638/F for FOINAVON, MAIN ROAD, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4HJ (Replacement access gates)

This was noted.

168.2 APPROVED APPLICATIONS

WD/2024/1196/PO for BROADREED FARM, FIVE ASHES, MAYFIELD, TN20 6LG (revoke the section 106 obligation)

This was noted.

168.3 PLANNING APPEAL NOTIFICATIONS

APP/C1435/D/24/3354176 for HUGGETTS FARM, STONEHURST LANE, HADLOW DOWN, TN20 6LL (two storey side extension). This was noted and Council had no further comments.

168.4 PLANNING APPLICATION

WD/2024/2244/F - IVY BARN FARM, POUND GREEN, BUXTED, TN22 4AP

Conversion of agricultural building into a residential dwelling.

HDPC are not a consultee but as it is on the boundary of the Parish and a resident has asked us to discuss this tonight, ML proposed that it will be discussed and comments submitted, this was seconded by DW.

Comments: The PC are aware of the speed and dangerous of the road due to the narrowness and height levels of the road, it is historically not safe due to lack of visibility. Buxted train station is a 25-minute walk away but as there is no sufficient and safe footpath to the centre of Buxted, it is therefore an unsustainable location for development.

169. REPORTS FROM CLLR. BOB STANDLEY, ESCC & CLLR MICHAEL LUNN, WDC - written reports had been submitted and are published on the village website.

Cllr Standley reported that it is unlikely they are going to receive a SEND grant that they were expecting, so the budget will be short. There is expected to be 130 officers losing their jobs. There is only £7 million left in reserves which is worrying. Cllr Lunn reported that he sent an open letter re Housing, he did get a response but no explanation or conclusion on housing numbers. The Policy Framework will come out prior to Christmas 2024, it is likely housing numbers will go up significantly for Wealden. There is high probability that a further Regulation 18 will need to be consulted on additional sites to bring up housing numbers.

Cllr Lunn confirmed that the climate tax by licensing is still being looked at.

170. HIGHWAYS:

a. Discuss and agree whether to join ESALC in legal discussions regarding issues with Balfour Beatty/East Sussex Highways – ML explained this came up following a number of Chairs from Parish Councils asking for advice on how to hold ESH to account for the streetlighting issue and highways issue. An email has come in from eSALC asking for Council interest to join forces to request legal advice. The email is unclear whether this is just the streetlighting issue at present and no questions or term of reference was shared so at the moment, more information is needed for Council to make a decision. Clerk to liaise with eSALC. **Action 1.**

b. Agree to sign 3-year SWARCO contract – It was agreed that PW will review the contract and if happy to sign, all Councillors agreed to delegate authority to the Clerk to do this ahead of the next meeting due to deadline being the 28th November 2024. **Action 2.**

171. COMMUNITY CENTRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE – UPDATE

a. Note the minutes from the meeting held on the 24th September 2024 – The minutes were noted.

172. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

a. Letter from ESCC sent to a resident re speed concerns on the A272 and School Lane – This was noted.

b. Open letter from District Cllr Lunn re housing numbers - This was noted.

c. Receive recent update from UK Power Networks on proposed A272 works – The following update was received from UKPN on the proposed works on the A272. *'We have been denied the permit for October half term due to conflicting works in the area. This was challenged to see if we could collaborate our works with the other party but this was denied. The next opportunity would be Christmas, but a decision has been made to postpone until the February half term for start of works at the top of School Lane. I hope the residents understand the reasons for not disrupting the roads over the Christmas holidays.'* Cllr Standley did try to find out why the permits were not approved but did not get a specific answer. The Clerk will continue to liaise with UKPN regularly to ensure we are kept updated on this project

d. Request for permission to do remedial work on the Pavilion – A request has come in from the Playing Field Committee asking for written permission for the committee to apply for a grant to cover the costs of remedial works needed at the Pavilion on the flooring, heating and new grab rail. Approval was given and the Clerk will email them.

Action 3.

e. Discuss and agree Urban Grass cutting for 2025 – It was agreed, that as in previous years, HDPC will continue with option 1 which is two urban cuts over the course of the year to be carried out by ESCC, at no cost to the PC.

f. Invite to WDC Climate Change event on 3rd December 2024 – It was agreed that SL would attend.

g. Discuss consultation from NALC re enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at council meetings – It was agreed to defer this to the December meeting for discussion.

173. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS (COUNCIL MATTERS AND OUTSIDE BODIES): BF updated that the Bonfire evening on the 2nd November went very well with very positive feedback being received, they raised around £3,000. PW

explained that he has sent in his usual monthly speed report which is shared with all and put on the website. Report AH updated on recent burial ground inspections and has sent report to the Clerk. DW asked for permission to go up there once it is dry, to go up there with a barrel to do some controlled burning of the rubbish in the extension burial ground, this was approved. ML reported that he has met with the local PCSO, and the recent break ins were discussed, if you see anything please do call 999.

174. BURIAL GROUND:

a. Review and approve form for memorial stone, family Blades – The request was approved. Clerk will liaise with the family. **Action 4.**

It was raised that one of the recent burials has sunk quite low so the Clerk will urgently liaise with the funeral director. **Action 5.**

175. RISK ASSESSMENTS

a. Q2 quarterly risk assessment, to assign – It was agreed that BF will do it, Clerk will send the previous ones to him. **Action 6.**

b. Discuss tree works required – ML raised some concerns about trees in the playing field and along the main road. AH will review them and keep an eye.

176. CLERKS MATTERS:

a. Clerks hours October 2024 – The hours were noted and agreed.

b. Discuss and approve meeting dates for 2025 – The meeting dates were agreed and will be published. **Action 7.**

c. Acknowledge update from eSALC on the NALC 2024/25 pay award and backpay of a 61p per hour increase – This was noted and agreed.

177. BANK RECONCILIATION – The bank rec for October 2024 was approved and signed by ML and PW.

178. OTHER FINANCE MATTERS:

a. Acknowledge receipt of Precept part 2 from WDC for £21,330, Cheque from UKPN for £3.61, bank interest payment of £381.42, CIL payment from WDC for £4385.66 and payment from Catsfield PC for SLCC subs for £119 – These receipts were noted.

b. Payments for ratification: DD for service charge from UT Bank at £18 in Sept 2024 and £5.40 in Oct 2024 – Noted.

c. Q2 figures 2024/25 – to approve – The Q2 figures were received, noted and approved.

d. Discussion re budget and precept for 2025/26 ready for approval at December 2024 meeting – Clerk explained that the proposed budget was discussed in full at the Finance meeting in October 2024 and was nearly finalised but there are two things outstanding that need confirmation from payroll and BT for broadband changes. Budget will be finalised for approval at the December 2024 meeting.

e. Confirm sight of the interim audit report for 2024/25 – This was noted, and the Clerk was thanked for her hard work on this.

f. Agree to apply for a corporation card through Unity Trust – The Clerk raised that at the interim audit it was raised that it is not ideal to do reimbursements as you can't then claim back the VAT. There is a card available from Unity Trust but there is a small charge to it and Cllrs discussed that it defeats the rule of double signatory. Therefore, it was agreed to not be processed at the moment as purchases outside of the usual invoicing processes are unusual.

179. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT - ML and PW will authorise.

a. Vicki Rutt salary November 2024 by SO - £1216.02

b. Vicki Rutt overtime - £314.44

c. Lucy McConachie Play area inspection October 2024 - £40

d. WDALC 2024/25 subscription - £21.02

e. Barcombe Landscapes grass cutting - £83 + VAT £16.60

f. Hadlow Down Village Hall – hall hire Aug 2024 - £40

g. Hadlow Down Village Hall – hall hire Oct 2024 - £40

h. HMRC – Tax + NI for Oct 2024 - £330.79

i. East Sussex Pension Fund – Oct 2024 - £457.48

j. Mulberry & Co – Interim Internal Audit - £154.35 + VAT £30.87

k. The Computer Studio – Microsoft 365 renewal for £122.40

180. CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 Section 17 – nothing raised.

181. DEFIBRILLATOR BATTERY – this had been checked on 12th November 2024.

182. ITEMS TO GO ON NEXT AGENDA: None.

The meeting closed at 20:37.

The next meeting date is Tuesday 3rd December 2024 at 19:00.