

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BALCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 16<sup>th</sup> JULY 2012 AT 8.00 PM IN THE W I ROOM, BALCOMBE VICTORY HALL.**

Present: Messrs. Peter Huxley, Simon Greenwood, Alan Dearden, Rodney Saunders, Mike Talman. Mesdames Alison Stevenson, Carol Jarvest & Catherine Dennison

In attendance: Richard Greig – Clerk to the Council.

**2925. Public Participation**

**Mrs Gemma Root** spoke on behalf of Balcombe Babies & presented additional information to Councillors. The Health Clinic has been reprieved & is planned to continue monthly. Additional savings have been achieved as a result of hire re-grading by the VHMC.

**Mrs Suzy Horne** mentioned a fracking application to be made to WSCC on 20<sup>th</sup> July & asked whether Councillors were aware of this. It was confirmed that the WSCC Chairman had received a copy of the Balcombe Parish Council's fracking report on publication. Additionally Mrs Horne mentioned a). agenda item 13 that appeared on tonight's agenda, b).outstanding questions raised at the May meeting, c).Air pollution readings, d). number of HGV's passing through Balcombe & e). what influence the Parish Council could have on future activity on the Lower Stumble site..

**Mrs Kathryn McWhirter (a k a Kathryn Metcalfe)** asked about the timing of the poll to be discussed under agenda item 13.

**Mr Charles Metcalfe** asked about details relating to the questionnaire analysis.

**Mr Paddy Horne** offered a lift to Chichester to attend the meeting mentioned above on 20<sup>th</sup> July.

The following documents, previously circulated to Councillors, were then released to the meeting at the conclusion of public participation

**1). Proposed Programme for Completion of Village Consultation on Proposed Exploration for Oil at Lower Stumble**

**2). Summary of Responses to Fracking Report**

& are appended to the minutes of the meeting.

**2926. Declaration of personal or prejudicial interest**

Cllr. Simon Greenwood declared a prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 13 – Fracking.

**2927. Apologies for absence**

Councillors Robin Lindsay-Stewart (unwell), Robin Williamson (in Switzerland) & Linda Short (Council duties).

**2928. To approve Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> June**

The circulated Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> June were approved nem con & signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**2929. Matters arising**

**2917(2907) – School Parking** This Council had held a meeting recently with Balcombe Estate & a further meeting with the Head Teacher had been requested.

**2917(2911) - MSDC 2012 Community Service Award** – Had now taken place. Carolyn Robertson, together with her husband, were delighted at the success of the event, & their nomination

**2922 – Redundant Church premises** - Cllr. Jarvest mentioned a meeting planned with the URC *representatives* on 25<sup>th</sup> July.

**2922 (Other 6) - Letter from Fred Stevens re Neighbourhood Plan** – the letter from Fred Stevens had been actioned as requested.

**2922 (Other 2) – Ertl – Lower Ricks complaint.** The matter had escalated & a separate letter of complaint was sent by the complainant to MSDC. Their reply stated *“the Assessment Panel were unanimous in the view that there had been **no breach** of the Code of Conduct based on the papers in front of them”*. Members noted the outcome.

**2921- (BA)/12/01666/FUL – Stumble Ridge, Oldlands Avenue** – the application to demolish & replace with a new structure had been approved by planners.

**Balcombe Fete** now rescheduled to 15<sup>th</sup> September.

**Flooding** – agreed we should publicise that we now hold a small emergency supply of gel bags (modern version of a sandbag) which come flat packed.

**2930. Urgent Matters – items not on the agenda that the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.**

No matter raised.

**2931. Financial**

a). To approve Cash Book Receipts & Payments for June 2012 – noted as presented.

b). To discuss grant application from Balcombe Babies. Cllr. Jarvest acquainted Members of the policy of the VHMA as regards the constitution of hire charges. This information has now been communicated to the Group's Treasurer, Helen Savage.

Proposed by the Chairman & seconded by Cllr. Saunders all Members were in agreement that **£300** be paid as a start up contribution on the strict understanding that although we would review the matter in 6 months should a further approach be made, we do not have resources for providing ongoing funding assistance. It should be noted that we consider continuation of the Baby Clinic a major factor.

**2932. To note resignation of the Clerk effective 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013**

The resignation was regretted. Advertising of the position was planned for September with a successor to be in place effective January to allow a 3 month hand over period. The present Clerk would however deal with year's end 2012/13 & deal with finalisation of the audits etc. as required.

**2933. Working Groups – reports from Group Leaders on**

a). **Housing & Environment** – proceeding in connection with Neighbourhood Planning – see **2934** below.

b). **Safety & Security** – Cllr. Dearden reported. Matters raised included theft of digger from London Road building site, house to house totter (Mr Boyle) & vandalism at allotments. He updated Members on recent email exchange with BT regarding possible site parking alongside the Stockcroft Road exchange. Agreed that BPC would continue to support Neighbourhood Watch & contribute towards the forthcoming “get together” for street co-ordinators.

c). **Young People** – Cllr. Jarvest mentioned that the start date of the new Youth Club Leader, Julia Beckett, would now be September 3<sup>rd</sup> when meetings would commence. The Ranger would arrange a cleaning schedule to fit around the meeting dates. The planned ¼ pipe hire for trials had not succeeded, but she was still trying to source one. Rupert Browning (MSDC) would be reminded that we are happy for them to proceed with a concrete table tennis table to be positioned near playground, fruit trees for shade & fruit in/around playground, possible small play equipment installation in place of the current hop scotch facility & an extra bin. She would suggest that if there is any additional money to be spent this could go perhaps towards additional fruit trees as lack of shading is a main concern in the playground during hot weather

d). **Traffic Matters** – Cllr. Saunders mentioned the long ongoing saga with Pieter Montyn (WSCC Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport) regarding the overdue parking survey. As an alternative we are now advised that officers in the Parking Strategy Team are currently looking at ways in which a new works programme, including Balcombe, might be put together, but not before the autumn.

Regarding the Newlands parking matter mentioned in the letter to Fred Stevens – see **2929** above – Members agreed that it would now be useful to seek the views of Newlands residents by means of a agreed questionnaire in respect of seeking views on introduction of either a CPZ &/or double yellow line restrictions. Mike Talman agreed to assist in this as required. Agreed the draft questionnaire would be made available for discussion at the August meeting. The WSCC agreed speed limit introduction north of the village on the B2036 was out with consultants but understood to remain in principal unchanged from that already agreed.

e). Local Societies – Cllr. Lindsay-Stewart was unwell but had mentioned to the Clerk that he was still actively logging details of new residents & submitting welcome packs. He sent good wishes to all.

f). Facilities & Amenities including snow plan 2012/13. Cllr. Talman mentioned repair & maintenance of village benches had been delayed due to the inclement weather. A meeting with the snow plough contractors had been requested. This might well include extra locations. All we need from WSCC is 4 bags of salt for village reserves. The Chairman asked Members to note recommendations contained (**Other 4**) in the correspondence list - Notes on Hedges, Trees & Vegetation Regulations – as there were still some offenders - & follow the recommended procedures. Following the recent letter (**Other 10**) from the Oldlands Ave. Assn. re footpath it was agreed that we should enquire on ownership.

**2934. Neighbourhood Planning – progress report**

MSDC had now confirmed that Balcombe has now approved the designation of a Neighbourhood Plan Area to include Balcombe. Two Members had recently attended a workshop, well attended & presented. Further consultation would continue until September. A local volunteer meeting would take place on 31<sup>st</sup> July. To conform to requirements for producing the plan a timetable has been prepared detailing progress. Strategic Assessment is also being addressed.

**2935. To adopt revised Code of Conduct following MSDC guidelines**

The Clerk advised Members of recommendations received. The revised Code of Conduct was accepted & signed by the Chairman.

**2936. To adopt revised Standing Orders**

Likewise the Clerk advised Members of recommendations received, this time from SALC. The revised Standing Orders were then accepted & signed by the Chairman.

**2937. Fracking - Consideration of draft programme for completion of consultation on fracking, and draft poll document, both previously circulated**

All Councillors agreed with, & confirmed acceptance of, the Working Group findings, as per the report circulated to all residents. The returned questionnaires had been analysed – refer **2925** (Summary of Responses to Fracking Report) above. The Proposed Programme for Completion of Village Consultation - see also **2925** above – was also discussed.

Preparation will now commence for distribution to residents of a poll document inviting expression of opinion on the attitude this Council should take should exploration for oil be carried out at Lower Stumble almost certainly including the use of the fracking technique.

Various queries were raised by Councillors on the precise make up of the draft (4) poll paper, including age of eligible residents & precise

wording of questions that are to appear. It was therefore agreed that authority be delegated to Councillors Saunders, Jarvest & Chairman Alison Stevenson to agree the final wording. It is planned that the report result of this poll will be ready for the BPC meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

**2938. Planning. – to consider the following applications**

**a). For representation by 6<sup>th</sup> July 2012 (extended by agreement)**

**(BA)/12/01854/FUL** – The Olives, London Road – two storey side extension – no objection.

**For representation by 13<sup>th</sup> July 2012**

**(BA)/12/02032/FUL** – 4 Bramble Mead – two storey side extension – leaves little space between neighbouring houses, but probably the best that could be achieved. No objection.

**For representation by 20<sup>th</sup> July 2012**

**(BA)/12/02182/TCA** – Bellcroft, London Road – fell conifer & thin crown of Silver Birch by 20%, reduce lateral to 2m of building. No objection.

**(BA)/12/02194/TREE** – 13 Oldlands Avenue – 1 Lime tree on the frontage – re-pollard & cut back to trunk. No objection.

**(BA)/12/02197/TREE** – Stumble Cottage, Oldlands Avenue – 2 Lime trees – re-pollard & cut back to trunk. No objection

**For representation by 27<sup>th</sup> July 2012**

**(BA)/12/ 02260/LDC** - Wakefield House, Haywards Heath Road - Construction of new chimney to south flank elevation of existing house. This is an application to establish whether the development is lawful: this will be a legal decision where the planning merits of the proposed use cannot be taken into account. Agreed that this is a legal matter the outcome should be left to MSDC to decide.

b). to consider any additional applications received by the date of the meeting.

**For representation by 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2012**

**(BA)/12/ 01865/FUL** – 6 Tunnel Cottages, High Street – proposed rear ground floor extension. Agreed that if extension not possible for us to consider at the August meeting this application will be delegated to the Planning Group. Subsequently agreed that as it is actually an extension to one of the bungalows to the south side of the High Street, only affecting the nearest neighbour the following representation should be made to MSDC:

*"The extension brings the building closer to the neighbouring property to the northwest at single storey. Should these neighbours have objections those should be born in mind but BPC have no other objections."*

**2939. Correspondence**

**W1.** Reduction of Bus subsidies – as this relates to the 272 service residents will be forewarned of the likely changes to take place in September.

**W2.** WSCC Response to the June 2012 Floods – Cllr. Jarvest requested a copy of this letter to study & will provide recommendations for a suitable reply from the Council.

She additionally requested clarification of who is responsible for clearing gullies on *unadopted* roads. The Clerk will liaise with Cllr. Talman, the Ranger, on this & report back.

**2940. Exchange of Information**

Cllrs. Saunders & Dearden updated Members on forthcoming village activities of both the Victory Players & the Balcombe French Society. The Chairman & a group of ladies, including Councillors, had recently supported the British Heart Foundation on the London/Brighton bicycle ride raising almost £3k.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 22.18 hours.

***Signed*.....**

**Date: 20<sup>th</sup> August 2012**

**THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WILL BE  
HELD ON MONDAY 20<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2012 IN THE WI ROOM**











