

Minutes of a meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT** Committee held on Thursday 4th March 2021 at 6.30pm via Zoom video conferencing

PRESENT: Councillors Andy Long, David Powell, Richard Reading, Chris Wells, Karen Cook and Roy Iremonger

Also present: Jackie Cottrell – Parish Clerk
4 members of the public

ELECTION OF A TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN

Cllr Andy Long, Chairman of the Parish Council volunteered to chair this meeting as no other councillor had put themselves forward.

00267 **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Andy Long as temporary chairman of this meeting.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - None

00268 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Roy Iremonger – personal interest 11.4 – concerning his property

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee meeting held on 3rd September 2020

00269 **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd September 2020.

Matters arising from these minutes – None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of Wild About Warbleton requested Members note her groups interest in any progress regarding the mowing of verges and the mowing of Rushlake Green Village Green. The Clerk reported East Sussex County Council were very impressed with the work completed by Wild About Warbleton and the Chairman confirmed a resolution if appropriate would be taken regarding the village green under agenda item 12.

Another member of Wild About Warbleton informed the Members that East Sussex County Council were working on the details of implementation plan of the five proposed Wild Flower Verges that the Parish had endorsed. A detailed management plan has not yet been finalised. WAW would continue to produce detailed surveys of each route to measure the success of the project. The group would be working closely with East Sussex County Council. The WAW member requested details of the role of the Parish Council regarding the five routes.

The Chairman of the Environment Committee confirmed the land does not belong to the Parish Council but the Parish Council had endorsed the five routes to East Sussex and would be keeping a close eye on developments and continue to support the group regarding this matter. Another member of the public requested a copy of the five routes. The Clerk to email this information and update the website to clearly show the five routes and information on the progress so far.

CLERK REPORT

The Clerk referred to the report she had previously circulated to all Members ahead of the meeting. The Clerk had been unable to organise an SLR meeting due to time constraints. There were no further updates and there were no further questions from Councillors.

ENVIRONMENT TERMS OF REFERENCE AND GUIDANCE

The Clerk had previously circulated the Environment Committee Terms of Reference. Cllr Williamson had made some suggested changes prior to the meeting and these amendments were discussed. It was agreed the following would be recommendations for adoption at the next Full Council meeting:

- War memorials and Items on the asset register would be added to the list of items that the Environment Committee would consider under 3.3.
- A new item to be added to address the close relationship with the CIL Committee.
- A new item to be added referring to the need for the Environment Committee to submit its budgetary requirement to the F&GP Committee on a yearly basis.
- To remove Bodle Street Green from the list of amenity land that the Parish Council owned.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

8.1. To discuss the vacancy of Chairman

Cllr Long the temporary Chairman of the Environment Committee highlighted his lack of time available for this committee due to already being Chairman of the Parish Council and running his own business. He also highlighted his lack of detailed knowledge of environmental issues and stated he would not like to become the permanent Chairman of this committee. No members came forward to express an interest. The Clerk to add this item to the next Full Council agenda and to investigate the possibility of a Non-Councillor chairing the meeting.

8.2. To elect a new Chairman

This item as minuted above could not be taken forward.

INFRASTRUTURE BUDGET

9.1. To discuss the items on the asset register which are in need of repair

9.2. To agree a list of items in priority order to be repaired with the new infrastructure budget

The Chairman referred to the new £1,500 infrastructure budget. A copy of the Asset Register had been circulated to all Members ahead of the meeting and any items that had been highlighted in red were in need of attention and some items had been highlighted as they needed further clarification on their condition. All the above items were discussed in detail and the following items were raised:

- The condition of the war memorial was considered good. The Clerk was awaiting a health check report.
- Fingerpost repairs would be considered by the CIL Committee.
- A local member of the community looks after the fencing and the mowing at the Peter Croft war memorial. The Clerk to write to this person requesting confirmation they would be happy to continue to voluntarily do this work. The condition of the memorial was good.
- The noticeboard sited at Rushlake Green Village Green required attention. The legs were unstable as well as the concrete slabs around the noticeboard. The Clerk to obtain a health check and quote for any repair work required.
- The committee to recommend to Full Council the removal of the Beestons noticeboard. It was in very poor condition and situated in a non traffic area.
- The Clerk to confirm who owns the noticeboard sited at the Warbleton Church.
- To not replace the missing noticeboard at Three Cups which has been missing for several years. It is not situated in a high traffic area. The pub and dairy have both gone.
- The metal well cover at Spring Hill was considered the top priority. The Clerk to obtain quotes urgently.
- The missing bench at Dunn Village Hall. The Chairman has the bench at his property with the plaque. Cllr Cook to investigate possible sponsors towards the cost of a new bench.
- Village sign. The sign itself is in reasonable condition but the post is wobbly as well as the concrete slabs. The Clerk to organise a health check and quote for repair work at the same time as the quote obtained for the noticeboard repairs.

00270 It was **RESOLVED** the Clerk would commence work on the above items and where necessary obtain quotes in order for these highlighted assets to be repaired with the new infrastructure budget

OSBOURNE HOUSE CLOCK

The Clerk she was in the process of arranging a site visit for the clock by a local company who had agreed to produce a quote for 3 options:

- **Option 1.** An automatic winding mechanism that will last for the next 40-50 years. They will also include a quote for a yearly maintenance check.

- **Option 2.** An automatic winding mechanism that will last less than 10 years. They will also include a quote for a yearly maintenance check.
- **Option 3.** A quote to train a new volunteer clock winder. A volunteer would need to be happy climbing a ladder and preferably someone with mechanical experience who is practically minded. They could be male or female.

The Chairman advised Members this item was for noting only at this time.

HIGHWAYS ISSUES AND FUTURE SLR MEETINGS

11.1. To discuss road safety in the parish

The Clerk to confirm with Wealden District Council CIL funds could be used to pay for a temporary speed survey which would cost approximately £492.

11.3. Winter Damage to verges

The Clerk referred to the information provided by WAW regarding the winter damage to verges on Barley Mow Lane from hedge cutting and ditching in wet weather. The Chairman commented it was a heavily used road especially when there were local road closures. As a result, the verges have suffered even more damage.

It was agreed the Clerk would write to the land owners advising them of preferred timings for hedge cutting.

It was also agreed this item would be addressed at a future SLR meeting and a recommendation would be made to Highways to provide signage stating the road was unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles.

A Councillor asked Members to note farmers have a very small window for hedge cutting which they are tied to.

WAW endorsed both of these ideas.

11.4. Blocked drains

A Councillor addressed the committee and advised them that the drains located at the triangle at Bodle Street Green – Trumpets Lane, White Horse Lane and North Road were not functioning. He advised Members they need pumping on a yearly basis as they become totally blocked. The Clerk to contact East Sussex Highways and to include Bill Bentley in any correspondence.

RUSHLAKE GREEN VILLAGE GREEN

12.1. To discuss the Wild About Warbleton report for the Rushlake Green Village Green

The Chairman referred to the meeting with WAW on the village green which himself and several other councillors had attended. He reminded councillors that the parish council has an obligation to consider bio diversity and the environment. He also highlighted there were many other factors to consider when making a decision about changes to the cutting contract.

Councillors discussed the report at length. There were all impressed with the findings of the report and pleased with the diverse range of species identified on the Green. They also acknowledged the report found little wrong with how the Green was managed currently.

Concerns were raised regarding long grass and sight lines as well as residents with opposing views who could ignore any new cutting regime.

A member of WAW spoke on behalf of the report. She asked Members to note that at the recent exhibitions that the group had held there had been lots of positive interest in the test areas. She advised any test areas agreed would be monitored and the results compared.

00271 It was **RESOLVED** NOT to just note the report. Some action would be taken.

00272 It was **RESOLVED** to liaise with Orchard Landscapes, Wild About Warbleton and Highways to explore the option of test areas. The existing contract would not be altered but the flexibility within the contract would be investigated in order to try and satisfy environmental needs as well as taking into account any cost implications and required site lines.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed

The meeting closed at 20.15pm