

HORSTED KEYNES PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the

Meeting of **HORSTED KEYNES PARISH COUNCIL** held on **Tuesday 17 January 2017** at **8:00 pm** in the Village Hall, Horsted Keynes

PRESENT: Cllrs	David Colville (Chairman)	John Luckhurst
	Sarah Webster	Chris Hersey
	Chris Wheatley	
	Billy Dye	
	Mike Kirk	
	Jez Humphreys-Davies	

Also in attendance: Michaela Frost- Parish Clerk
Cllr C Field, WSCC
25 + Members of public

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Peter Willis, a member of the public stated that he had written to the Parish Council setting out reasons for rejecting the planning application for Birchgrove Road. The Chairman informed those present that the Clerk had responded to everyone who had contacted the Parish Council and had reminded residents to forward any comments directly to Mid Sussex District Council. Peter Willis urged the Parish Council to reject the planning application for Birchgrove Road

Mrs Sainter, a member of the public sought clarification about an application to the Planning Inspectorate from Mid Sussex District Council concerning sustainability appraisal and SHLAH sites. Cllr C Hersey reassured those present that the document was an historical document and it emphasised the actual constraints the district faced with any housing numbers over 800.

APOLOGIES – Rufus Clarke and Keith O’Regan.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are invited to make any declaration of personal or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda and are reminded to make any declarations at any stage during the meeting if it then becomes apparent that this may be required when a particular item or issue is to be considered.

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Cllr Hersey's Declaration of Interest:

I wish to advise that with regard to any comment (s) I may make on any planning application on tonight's agenda, I reserve the right to alter my views on any application and submission should it come before Planning Committee A or the District Planning Committee, following reading the Planning Officer's report, considering any verbal update the Planning Officer may provide and taking into account the views expressed by other Members or members of the public at the meeting.

MINUTES

To resolve that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday 22 November 2016 and Tuesday 13 December 2016 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

REPORTS

To receive a report from County Councillor: Councillor Field informed the Parish Council that the local primary school was receiving an Ofsted inspection the following day. There was a considerable amount of inspections happening in the County for no other reason than they were due.

West Sussex County Council were asking residents to complete a Community Safety Survey which was running from December 2016 – March 2017. Residents could complete this survey online or hard copies would be available in libraries.

West Sussex County Council would be considering their final budget in February.

Winter pressures in the NHS were a national issue, but West Sussex performance in delayed discharge was good. Performance around A&E remained an issue and West Sussex County Council was working closely with NHS colleagues to alleviate the difficulties.

Councillor Field also reported that it was hoped that the water course down Waterbury Hill would be examined by West Sussex Highways in the near future as this area could become treacherous in the winter months.

To receive a report from District Councillor: Councillor Hersey updated the Parish Council about the District Plan and also informed those present that work was underway to finalise the budget. The aim for Mid Sussex District Council remained as maintaining upfront services whilst continuing with a reasonable council tax.

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PLANNING APPLICATION –BIRCHGROVE ROAD HK/DM/16/5596

The Parish Council considered the Planning application for Birchgrove Road which was available on the Mid Sussex District Council’s website and could be accessed via the Parish Council website.

The Chairman circulated comments he had made on the planning application prior to the meeting and they would be made available as an appendix to these Minutes. Councillor Hersey also read out a statement objecting to the planning application.

Councillor Hersey made the following statement:

The proposed outline development site would be outside the village built up Area Boundary and within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Beauty and would change the character of a well established rural lane and landscape. More over the site is not allocated in the proposed Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan. The Development would be environmentally unsustainable and have an adverse impact on the High Weald resulting in significant and demonstrable harm which would outweigh the benefits.

It was AGREED that the Parish Council would request that together with the Clerk, the Chairman and the Chairman of the Planning Committee would finalise the wording to be submitted to Mid Sussex District Council. The final wording would be held on file.

01121 RESOLVED – to object to the planning application for Birchgrove Road – DM/16/5596 (The reasons for the objection would be attached to these minutes as an Appendix)

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Parish Council noted that Chris Bowden, the Parish Council’s Neighbourhood Plan Consultant had informed them that he was no longer trading as a partnership under the heading of Troy Navigus. Chris Bowden’s consultancy was now called Navigus Planning. This was a technical matter and the contract with Horsted Keynes Parish Council would continue as previously agreed.

01122 RESOLVED - that the Parish Council would continue their contract with Navigus Planning (formerly known as Troy Navigus).

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The Parish Council also noted that the Clerk had received correspondence from Strutt and Parker regarding the land at police house field in the village. The Parish Council noted a draft plan which had been circulated before the meeting outlining the possible development at police house field. It was noted that this was just for information purposes at this stage.

The Parish Council considered how they would deal with planning applications in the future which were of a certain size. It was AGREED that the Parish Council as a whole would consider any applications with multiple dwellings. This was in order to maintain a consistent approach to these larger planning applications.

00123 **RESOLVED** – that planning applications submitted to MSDC within the Parish for multiple dwellings would be considered by the Parish Council as a whole.

The Chairman updated the Parish Council about the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan. It was hoped that following a conversation with Chris Bowden, it was hoped the majority of the work would be completed by the end of January 2017. All the representations/submissions would be examined by Chris Bowden and a criteria based policy would be included. The Parish Council needed to provide notes on the consultation process. The Chairman would pull this together and would submit to Navigus Planning.

The Chairman also informed the Parish Council that Claire Tester from the High Weald AONB unit was prepared to look at the Neighbourhood Plan in draft form and give her view. Claire Tester had agreed to liaise with MSDC and then would feedback to the Parish Council via the Clerk, for final drafting.

The Clerk would circulate the final Neighbourhood Document to the Parish Council for agreement which would be undertaken at an Extraordinary meeting in the near future, whereby submission of the Plan would be agreed.

FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

01124 **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments and note the receipts and year to date expenditure. The document was signed by the Chairman and a Councillor.

01125 **RESOLVED** to approve the contracts for 2017/18 for maintenance of the Green, Recreation Ground, Toilets and Bus Shelter;

The Chairman advised the Parish Council that the Finance and Governance Committee had originally prepared two budgets for consideration. One budget

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included the repayment of a public loans board loan for the refurbishment of the playground and the other did not include this figure. After further consideration it was clear that any loan the Parish Council obtained could only be for ten years. In addition the Public Loans Board required that Parish Councils needed to undertake surveys with residents before applying for a loan. The Parish Council would also need to apply for grants and fundraise. The Clerk, together with the Playground Refurbishment Working Group would continue to progress the tender process. The budget before the Parish Council therefore did not include any loan repayments.

00126 **RESOLVED** – To approve the budget for 2017/18 as recommended by the Finance and Governance Committee (playground loan not included)

00127 **RESOLVED** – to approve the precept for 2017/18 as follows:

- £33,411.61 – proposed precept
- 688.70 – 2017/18 tax base as advised by MSDC 6.12.16
- 48.51 – Band D rate

- 15.05% increase in 2016/17 figure
- £6.35 – actual rise in Band D rate

The precept calculation would be submitted to Mid Sussex District Council by the Clerk.

00128 **RESOLVED** – to consider the Special Reserves to be held by the Council at their next meeting in February 2017.

00129 **RESOLVED** – to defer consideration of the employee’s pension scheme until the next meeting.

TOILETS, GREEN AND RECREATION GROUND AND HIGHWAYS

The Parish Council received a verbal report from the Toilets, Green and Recreation Ground and Highways Committee (TGR) Committee Members and noted the unconfirmed TGR Minutes of 29 November 2016.

The Chairman of the TGR & H Committee took this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the village Christmas tree this year. There had been no issues and the tree had looked beautiful. The Chairman of the TGR & H Committee also reported that there was a new FIDO bin in place in the Village. He also reported that there had been some deliveries recently which had driven up on the Green. No damage had been caused, but the TGR Committee at their next meeting would consider whether any further action was needed. The TGR & H Committee urged any residents to come forward as volunteers under the Winter Management Plan. During periods of

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snow and cold spells it was up to volunteers within the community to keep pavements salted and clear. Any volunteers should contact the Clerk.

The Parish Council also considered the potential coffee shop in the Memorial Pavilion. Some legal notes about a possible lease agreement had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman advised that as the Memorial Pavilion was on the Recreation Ground which was governed by a Charitable Trust, it was the trustees of the Trust who should be making any final decisions. The Trustees were in fact Parish Councillors, but the Clerk would arrange a meeting of the Trustees with the applicants for the coffee shop in the near future in order to discuss the next steps. In the meantime the Clerk would also arrange for an electrical survey and a building survey to be undertaken at the Memorial building.

00133 **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would arrange a meeting of the Charity Trustees to consider and agree the next steps with regard to a coffee shop in the Memorial Pavilion.

The Parish Council also received an update on the playground refurbishment. Councillor Sarah Webster reported that the tender document was now with a specialist procurement officer at Horsham District Council who would be able to advise the Council if it met all the requirements. It was hoped that the Procurement Officer would also advise the Parish Council via the Clerk how to score any tenders that were submitted. A Moderation Panel would need to be established to evaluate and score any tenders. The Clerk, in the meantime would begin to look at any possible grants for the playground refurbishment. The Playground Refurbishment Working Group would meet and commence resident consultation on the plans to refurbish the play area. The Parish Council must show the Secretary of State within any application for a loan that the residents had been fully consulted.

The Parish Council congratulated the Playground Refurbishment Working Group for drafting the Tender and looked forward to receiving comments from the procurement officer at Horsham. The refurbishment of the play area would mean that the Finance and Governance Committee must budget for future maintenance of the play area.

00134 **RESOLVED** - to note the update. The Playground Refurbishment Working Group would update the Parish Council at their next meeting of any progress made.

PLANNING

00135 **RESOLVED** – to note the update from the Planning Committee Chairman that three applications had been considered – with no objections. The Planning Committee supported the application for Warren Farmhouse especially as it was a local business the village.

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GENERAL

The Chairman asked whether any other members of the Parish Council had received any volunteers to help with the visioning exercise. Some volunteers had come forward, but it was agreed that the Chairman would put an article in the P&P to encourage more volunteers and explain the visioning exercise further.

00136 **RESOLVED** - that the Annual Parish Council Meeting would consider visioning.

The Parish Council also discussed whether to send a representative to the Mid Sussex Emergency Planning Liaison Group. It was AGREED that there wasn't the resource to attend every meeting, but each Agenda and set of Minutes would be read by the Winter Management Co-ordinator and any key information would be fed back to the Parish Council.

Reports from Parish Councillors: Councillor Kirk reported that the HACKERS had been busy around the village and needed further advice as to whether some wood chip could be placed around the foot path near the tennis courts. The Chairman of the TGR & H Committee would look into this further and would report back to the Parish Council.

Councillor Dye requested that paint should be bought for the HACKERS group so that they could maintain the fingerposts. The Clerk would place this on the Agenda for the next meeting of the TGR &H Committee.

Councillor Humphreys-Davies reminded the Parish Council of the visit from the Flying Scotsman to the Bluebell railway in April. There would be increased traffic and public in the village. The Clerk would liaise with the Bluebell Railway over a possible litter pick after the event.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Helena Griffiths requested that the draft Neighbourhood Plan should be circulated to landowners before its submission. The Chairman clarified that the Neighbourhood Plan would be made available on the website, but would not be circulated to all landowners.

Peter Willis sought clarification about the monies in the Community Garden Fund as it was proposed that some of these monies would be used to manage the neighbourhood plan. The Clerk would look into further how the Community Garden reserve was established and report back to a future meeting.

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Peter Willis also suggested that when the planning application for Police House Field is submitted consideration should be given to bus stops. An additional formal bus stop was required going towards East Grinstead.

The meeting ended at 10:00 pm

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Objection to Birch Grove Planning Application DM/16/5596

At its meeting on 17 January 2017, Horsted Keynes Parish Council voted unanimously to object to the planning application for Birch Grove – DM/16/5595. The reasons are set out below:-

The proposed outline development site would be outside the village built up Area Boundary and within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Beauty and would change the character of a well-established rural lane and landscape. More over the site is not allocated in the proposed Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan. The Development would be environmentally unsustainable and have an adverse impact on the High Weald resulting in significant and demonstrable harm which would outweigh the benefits.

1. Pedestrian Access

The existing footpath from the Danehill junction does not stretch all the way into the village, and requires a degree of mobility to use it.

The notes (03/10/2015) provided by WSCC Highways after a site visit stated:

- Careful consideration will be required regarding pedestrian access and its linkage to the existing path network.

The pedestrian access to the proposed footpath requires further consideration as elderly residents from Westall House may be crossing Birch Grove Road.

2. Vehicular Access

The notes (03/10/2015) provided by WSCC Highways after a site visit stated:

- From the plans supplied it would appear the developer is proposing to create a private service road and footpath within the field boundary, resulting in two accesses onto the Birch Grove Road.
- Both will need full visibility splays.

The notes (dated 27/10/2016) provided by the Troy Navigus Partnership consultant of a teleconference with WSCC Highways stated:

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- No Highways objections.

While the access points are within a 40mph speed restriction, the road is derestricted a short distance from one of the access points.

The sketch layout does not show the access to Little Mead, which is directly opposite one of the access points.

The statement in the Transport Report that estimates 16 traffic movements (table 4.1) in the AM and PM periods resulting from this development which seems rather less than would be expected for 30 dwellings.

3. Defensible Boundaries

The site is outside (i.e. not adjacent to) the defined built-up area boundary of the village, and has not been allocated in our Neighbourhood Plan. Further, it was not submitted in the two Calls for Land – the first in November and December 2014 and the second in August and September 2015.

The development of this site constitutes ‘ribbon development’ with no defensible boundary, which is highly detrimental to the Conservation area. It would provide a precedent for similar sites within the area to be considered for development.

The Mid Sussex District Local Plan 2004 (Chapter 29) states that a built-up area boundary is defined for Horsted Keynes which seeks to conserve the rural setting of the village and to protect the surrounding countryside from unnecessary development – policies to support this statement remain in place, namely ‘C1: protection of the countryside outside built up areas’ and ‘C4: protection of AONBs’.

Policy C1 states that proposals for development in the countryside, particularly that which would extend the built-up area boundaries beyond those shown will be firmly resisted and restricted to 7 exceptions – none of which are relevant. Further, the site has not been allocated within the Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan.

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Policy C4 states that development will not be permitted in the Sussex Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, unless 1 or more of the 3 exceptions are met – none are.

Until the District Plan is adopted, the Horsted Keynes built-up area boundary is shown in the Adopted Proposals Map (dated August 2016) and its Insets (dated August 2016), and show that two of the saved policies apply to the area outside the built-up area boundary, namely 'C1: protection of the countryside outside built up areas' and 'C4: protection of AONBs'.

The emerging District Plan for Horsted Keynes built-up area boundary is shown in the Proposals Map (dated August 2016), its Insets (dated August 2016), and show that three policies apply to the area outside the built-up area boundary, namely 'DP10: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside', 'DP14: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' and 'DP15: Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)'.

Policy DP10 states that development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

- it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture;
- it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

Further, the site has not been allocated within the Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan.

4. High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

In order to provide 'full visibility splays' the proposal states that it would be necessary to remove existing hedgerows in both directions, and replace them with new native hedgerow. However, there does appear to be a significant gap in the length of the new native hedgerow near the Danehill junction.

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The proposal indicates that a hedge is to be removed across the entire width of the site, which is contrary to one of the 'saved policies' relating to the MSDC Local Plan 2004, namely 'C6: protection of trees, hedgerows and woodlands', which states that 'Development resulting in the loss of woodlands, hedgerows and trees which are important in the landscape, or as natural habitats, or historically, will be resisted'.

The information we received regarding this site from the AONB Unit on 19th October 2016 was:

- **Geology, landform, water systems and climate:** the site is on sandstone / siltstone bed.
- **Settlement:** the site is detached from the main settlement of Horsted Keynes.
- **Routeways:** Birch Grove Road and Danehill Lane are historic route ways which were in existence pre 1800.
- **Woodlands:** There is no ancient woodland on the site.
- **Field and Heath:** the fields are classified as medieval (AD 1066- 1499) cohesive assart, part of a wider medieval field system around Ovenden Wood. There are historic field boundaries around the site and dissecting it. The proposed site boundary does not follow these historic boundaries.

In terms of how this information is used in site assessments, the AONB Unit advice is that fields that are medieval or earlier (i.e. pre-1500AD) should be avoided when considering sites for development because these are the fields that best reflect the national significance of the AONB landscape.

5. Conformance with the National Planning Policy Framework

- *As this site is located within the High Weald AONB the applications must be considered in the context of paragraphs 114, 115 and 116 of the NPPF which sets out the criteria for the exceptional circumstances under which development in AONB may be accepted. As the NPPF indicates that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply in these cases due to their location in the AONB.*

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- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that AONBs, together with National Parks and the Broads, “have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty” (paragraph 115). Landscape embraces all aspects of landform, geology, flora and fauna, landscape features and the settlement pattern, developed over centuries.
- National Planning Policy Framework gives great weight to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in AONB’s as outlined in paragraphs 115-116. Development proposals within an AONB need to pay particular attention to its character and conserve and enhance its natural beauty. Planning permission should be refused for a major development except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated the development is in the public interest and its benefits outweigh the adverse impacts resulting from the development.

This application is a major development, and has the potential for further development. There is no expression of public interest in favour of this development, and it is not allocated within the Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan.

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