

-----  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
MAYFIELD AND FIVE ASHES PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD AT MAYFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL  
ON MONDAY 10 MARCH 2008 AT 1930 HOURS**  
-----

**Chairman Of Mayfield And Five Ashes Parish Council  
Councillor Martin Pitcher  
Meeting Chairman Councillor Robert Fitzsimmons**

**SUMMARY OF MEETING**

- Council awarded Quality Status
- Newick Lane traffic calming discussed.
- Recent incursion by travellers and lessons learnt discussed.
- Argos Hill Windmill Trust progress report.
- Youth Committee drop-in centre progress report.
- Review of rural speed limits debated.

**ATTENDANCE**

Martin Pitcher	(MP)	Apologies for Absence (B)
Paul Amans	(PA)	Present and Voting
Peter Deller	(PD)	Present and Voting
Jane Driscoll	(JD)	Present and Voting
Elaine Wheeler	(EW)	Present and Voting
Patricia Balfour	(PB)	Present and Voting
Jayne Bramwell	(JB)	Present and Voting
Graham Playfoot	(GP)	Present and Voting
Hubert Hills	(HH)	Present and Voting
Deveda Redman	(DR)	Present and Voting
Catherine Swingland	(CS)	Apologies for Absence (B)
Robert Fitzsimmons	(RF)	Present and Voting
Chris Lilly	(CL)	Present and Voting
Jerry Watkiss	(JW)	Present and Voting
Tony Lay	(TL)	Present and Voting

Present and voting 13      Present and not voting 0  
Apologies for Absence 2      Not present 0      Other Council Business 0

**Also Present**

ESCC Councillors Robert Tidy (RT), C Dowling (CD), Wealden District Councillors B Redman (BR), R Standley (RS)  
David Thompson Parish Clerk (DT)

**Apologies for Absence**

(WDC) G Wells

There was one member of the public present.

## **MINUTES**

### **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS ON AGENDA ITEMS BELOW**

- 1.1. GP declared a personal interest as Chairman of the Five Ashes Village Hall.
- 1.2. TL declared a personal interest on agenda item 19, as a local resident.
- 1.3. JB declared a personal interest on agenda item 19, as a local resident.
- 1.4. PB declared a personal interest on agenda item 19, as a local resident.
- 1.5. There were no other declarations of interest.

### **2. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 2.1. The Chairman announced that Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council had been awarded Quality Council Status on 29 February 2008.
- 2.2. The Council thanked the Clerk for the work he had undertaken to prepare the Council's submission. The Clerk thanked members for their support, in particular Mr M Pitcher who had given him a great deal of help.
- 2.3. The Clerk noted that the presentation of Quality Status to the Council would be made by the Earl of Lytton.
- 2.4. The Chairman stated that the Clerk would issue a memorandum outlining the key issues on Quality Status.
- 2.5. There were no other announcements.

### **3. PUBLIC QUESTION**

- 3.1. There were no questions from members of the public.

### **4. GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS**

- 4.1. This item was held over to the April meeting (8C01).

### **5. MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 11 FEBRUARY 2008 (7C10)**

- 5.1. The Clerk announced that he had made an error in the interpretation of the Minute Item 4 and these would be corrected (Minutes 4.10, 4.11 and 4.12).
- 5.2. Seven other minor changes were accepted.
- 5.3. The minutes were UNANIMOUSLY approved subject to the amendments above.

### **6. MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL SCHOOLS MEETING HELD ON 11 FEBRUARY 2008 (7C10A)**

- 6.1 One amendment was accepted after which the minutes were approved by UNANIMOUS vote.
- 6.2 With regard to minute 7C10A/4.5 GP asked to know what other sites could be used to plant flowers within Five Ashes.

It was agreed that the Five Ashes Primary School Council be asked to develop suitable projects.

**ACTION DT**

## **7. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2008 (7F10)**

- 7.1. One amendment was accepted to the minutes which were then approved by UNANIMOUS vote.
- 7.2. CL drew attention to the key issues arising from the minutes:
  - Minute 7F10/5.4 that the Parish Council would stand by its current policy of street lighting standards and that it would not agree to one off upgrades requested by residents.
  - Minute 7F10/7.1 that the Committee recommend to Full Council that HH be considered as the Parish Council representative on the Mayfield Community Centre project.
  - Minute 7F10/11.3 that the Assistant Clerk had resigned, having found a more suitable post nearer to home. Until a replacement was available she had agreed to carry out work under the direction of the Clerk on one evening per week.
  - Minute 7F10/11.6 noting that the Clerk had been accepted as an Associate member of the Institute of Local Council Management (AILCM).
- 7.3. HH enquired as to the position with regard to the Best Village Competition (Minute 7F10/9.1 and 9.2). The Clerk replied that D Kirkness had agreed to lead the project provided that there was increased Parish Council participation. In addition JB had agreed to participate providing that the presentation timings were tightened up.
- 7.4. The written application had to be submitted by 10 April 2008 and the judges visit would be held in May 2008.
- 7.5. With regard to minute 7F10/10.2, in reply to a question from GP it was noted that KS would re-inspect the trees at the end of March and recommend any treatment work necessary to the Jubilee trees at Five Ashes Village Hall.

## **8. FINANCE REPORT – JANUARY 2008**

- 8.1. CL reported that the January finances were in line with expected trends, and that the year end result would be under forecast.
- 8.2. The Finance results were UNANIMOUSLY approved.

## **9. REPORT FROM ESCC COUNCILLORS R TIDY AND CHRIS DOWLING**

- 9.1. RT congratulated the Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council on the achievement of Quality Status.
- 9.2. With regards the incidents on Newick Lane, RT reported that he had received a number of contradictory emails on the subject, he was therefore setting up a small working party consisting of interested parties to arrive at a consistent ESCC view of what was required. However it did not necessarily mean that ESCC would agree with the Newick Lane proposals.
- 9.3. JB asked about the situation with regard to the roundabout – this was still in hand within the county to place under sponsorship (see Minute 6C08/6.7).
- 9.4. With regard to the recent incursion of travellers on the stub end of the old A267 RT reported that the County Council were examining the issues raised by the incident.
  - Both ESCC and WDC were holding an inquest.

- There was a need for clear communication. The principal councils were preparing a leaflet on the subject.
  - Method of transmitting the eviction order needed to be physical.
  - Procedures over evictions needed to be made clear.
  - Health and safety issues.
  - This had been the first case where such an eviction had gone right through the High Court.
- 9.5. With regard to the protection of the stub end of the old A267 there would be a meeting in the near future with residents. However there were problems:
- Fibre optic cables under the road.
  - Water mains under the road.
  - Cabling under the road.
  - Resident access to owned wood.
  - Access by bridleway and footpath users.
  - Access for residents.
- G Furness the area engineer was reluctant to act at present.
- 9.6. GP asked that should not action have been taken because the travellers were on a public highway? RT replied that this had been done, but had not been taken into account by the High Court.
- 9.7. TL asked the current location of the travellers. RT replied that they were in the Rotherfield, Crowborough area, the children were in residential accommodation.
- 9.8. CD advised that if there were any Five Ashes issues he would be happy to assist.
- 9.9. PD commented on the roundabout and the lack of progress on planting. The Parish Council had progressed a scheme and had chosen a successful tenderer, and asked why the parish should be penalised. RT noted that this was the position reached a year ago (Minute 6C08/6.7) and would make efforts to try to move the problem forward. JB asked for action to be taken quickly.

## **10. REPORT FROM WDC COUNCILLORS ROBERT STANDLEY AND BRIAN REDMAN**

- 10.1. RS reported on the final budget and the forthcoming council tax. WDC had contained their increase to 3.3% however it had moved to an increase of 4.2% in order to absorb Central Government demands. Even so funding had been set aside to accommodate climate change, affordable housing etc.
- 10.2. There would be consultation on trading controls in the near future.
- 10.3. BR reported that there had been a meeting of those interested in the preservation of the Argos Hill Windmill:
- A trust document was being drafted.
  - There was a need for a forum for fund raising because WDC cannot give money to Council organisations.
  - £7000 had been granted for initial repairs.
  - £39000 was also available.

It was noted that WDC cannot afford £400,000. It was also necessary to identify essential work. When these initial problems are solved the trust can move forward.

- 10.4. In a general statement, PD criticised the Public Services Charter leaflet publicly available for bad presentation and bad English. He considered that council tax was very high and many people could not afford to pay. RS noted that the people who suffer most were those just above the benefit threshold. He also noted that there was a considerable amount of inflation creeping in to council services.

#### **11. MINUTES OF THE PARISH PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 FEBRUARY 2008 (7P18)**

- 11.1. PD introduced the minutes to the Council. There were no questions.
- 11.2. After acceptance of one amendment, the minutes were UNANIMOUSLY approved by the Council.

#### **12. MINUTES OF THE YOUTH COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 FEBRUARY 2008 (7Y06)**

- 12.1. DR reported that EW and DK had interviewed J Stead on 5 February and JS was considered acceptable. JS has a daughter who also had youth experience, and she will be interviewed at the next Youth Committee Meeting, scheduled for 12 March.
- 12.2. With regard to minutes 7Y6/3.1 and 7Y6/3.2, DR reported that there were problems with a venue and that it had not been possible to get use of the Memorial Hall.
- 12.3. The minutes were approved by UNANIMOUS vote.

#### **13. MINUTES OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY MEETING HELD ON 20 FEBRUARY 2008 (7R06)**

- 13.1. A minor change to the minutes was accepted after which the minutes were approved UNANIMOUSLY.
- 13.2. JB reported that following further court action Mr Sharman was co-operating with the footpath diversion project.
- 13.3. RT undertook to help trying to improve communications with Ms Lawrence.

#### **14. MINUTES OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 FEBRUARY 2008 (7D09)**

- 14.1. DR reported that both she and the Clerk had been absent from the meeting.
- 14.2. A minor change to the minutes was approved after which they were UNANIMOUSLY approved.
- 14.3. With regards minute 5.1 DR noted that the individual action plans were co-related to the plans outlined in the published document. Further work and review would take place.
- 14.4. With regard to minute 7D08/4.1 it was noted that the plan and the associated action plans would be reviewed on a regular basis. Each action plan would have an owner.
- 14.5. PD asked that with this plan, the reviews be carried out routinely and regularly monitored, this was agreed.

#### **15. MAYFIELD COMMUNITY CENTRE REPRESENTATIVE**

- 15.1. The Council having noted the F&GP minute 7F9/7.1 debated the appointment of a replacement representative for the above body.

- 15.2. L McClean of the Mayfield Community Centre was of the view that this had been accepted by JB and agreed. The Clerk replied that this was not the case. The Full Council must appoint the representatives. In the case of the Community Centre the F&GP were recommending HH on the grounds of experience and as an ex-Chairman of the F&GP familiar with the Parish Council's financial processes.
- 15.3. A vote on the appointment of HH as the Mayfield Community Centre representative was held.

For 9                      Against 0                      Abstentions 2

The appointment would last until the Annual Meeting in May.

## **16. ARGOS HILL WINDMILL – REPORT FROM J DRISCOLL PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE**

- 16.1. JD reported as follows:

Meeting attended by six potential trustees (one more couldn't attend the meeting). Apart from the Wealden and Parish candidates. Chaired by Nigel Hannam (WDC) who presented Wealden's case at Parish Council meeting in January. (Brian Redman WDC's potential trustee.)

One of the potential trustees is Geoffrey Daughtrey who is a solicitor with Cooper Burnett which is useful.

Initially some of the 'trustees' were pressing for more money, the arguments being:

- a. To dismantle, store, and re-erect would cost much more than £39,000.
- b. If WDC were to be prosecuted would cost far more.

However in view of the bill landing at the doors of the residents of Mayfield and Five Ashes in council tax and other levies, a compromise was needed.

Funding - £39,000 essential repairs (safety, stability and weather proofing). £60-70,000 thought to be more realistic so site meeting to be held to evaluate costs and if extra funding needed. Nigel Hannam would approach his Finance Committee for extra funding. In addition £7,000 p.a. for next three years (allocated).

Insurance – WDC will explore and underwrite the whole project.

Access – at present eight days a year across land owned by Derek Greenwood (potential trustee) at Mill House. It was thought English Heritage required 28 days access for funding. Possibility of access through other property (below mill) to be explored. Both parties to seek legal advice about access. Wealden Solicitor felt Wealden had total right of access at any time.

Lease – 30 years proposed. Right to renew. Lease could revert to WDC if Trust failed.

Mayfield Parish Council to nominate active trustee.

- 16.2. After the report BR commented:

- Work will be done by friends.
- Funds must go to the trust.
- Council role is one of monitoring.
- Trustee documentation will not include financial liability.

- 16.3. GP commented that he was surprised that the friends would be doing all the work, to which BR advised that by this he meant that they would be using their expertise to decide priorities.
- 16.4. In answer to a question from PD, RS noted that trust documentation was being prepared in good time for the next meeting of the group.
- 16.5. HH noted that the Parish Council minutes will show no financial liability.
- 16.6. After discussing the workload of the Windmill (Parish Council Representatives) JD agreed to continue in the role.

## **17 CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPRESENTATIVE**

- 17.1 PA reported that as yet he had no information on meetings – Clerk will follow up.

### **ACTION DT**

- 17.2 With regard to the East Sussex Economic Partnership the Clerk would be sending PA meeting details.

## **18 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES NOT MEETING DURING THE PERIOD**

- 18.1 PD reported that the Traffic Committee would be meeting on 23 April and reviewed the agenda – inputs from members were required.
- 18.2 PD reported on the review of rural speed limits:
  - There would be lower speeds in most of our Parish, which was in the first part of the ESCC programme.
  - A267 roundabout – Five Ashes 50 mph – 2008/9
  - Rural inner core 20 mph limits, would apply to Rotherfield Lane/Station Road – Fletching Street and Tunbridge Wells Road to junction with by-pass.
  - Newick Lane, not included but needed reviewing.
  - TL asked what the definition at the historic area within the 20 mph limit was? PD replied he was not sure but it was probably the conservation area.
- 18.3 With regard to Court Meadow Management it was noted that the minutes of the meeting of 4 March would be available at the next meeting of the Full Council.
- 18.4 Security Committee – RF reported that they would be meeting on 11 March 2008.

## **19 NEWICK LANE**

- 19.1 TL reported that there had been a number of traffic accidents over the past months, including two in a short space of time. Residents Mr & Mrs Whittle were affected and had asked TL to take action.
- 19.2 Two meetings had been held with M Oates and C Clarke from ESCC where ESCC were advised that the situation on Newick Lane could not go on much longer because there would eventually be a fatal accident.
  - A crash barrier was requested by the Parish Council representatives but ESCC were unable to meet this request.
  - With regard to reducing permitted speeds from 60mph – 40 mph there was a need to follow a stipulated process which would take time.
  - Short term measures had been suggested to Sussex Police who were supportive but stated it would be difficult to get prosecutions.

- Temporary slow down signs were not available and RT was asked to take some action.
- 19.3 JB reported that the area was designated as an NCN21, and that there were many footpaths and bridleways connecting to the road. She suggested 'reclaim the lanes for a day'. This would need WDC approval.
- 19.4 Further traffic calming measures were:
- Rights of Way arrows.
  - Cobbled strips.
  - Trees on the verges.
  - Need to stop large lorries using the road.
  - Gateways and fences.
- The gateway would carry speed and no lorry signs. Other ideas were welcome.
- 19.5 RT had deep sympathy over the issue but reiterated a late email he had received on the subject which needed resolution (see Minute 7C11/9.2). He noted that ESCC cannot put up signs without authority and police agreement and have to have a process for enforcement. Charles Hendry was going to raise the problem at Central Government level. No immediate action will be taken.
- 19.6 JB suggested that community "pace" vehicles with stickers showing identity could be used. RT thought this would create a traffic hazard but agreed to take the suggestion forward.
- 19.7 PD stated that ESCC was consistent in its handling of speed problems. They used a points system based on statistical evidence which included fatal and serious accidents. If there were no serious accidents then there was no point. ESCC did things differently and there we marked differences with other counties.
- 19.8 JB said that the Newick Lane problem had been going on since 1999, over eight years.
- 19.9 Other issues raised were:
- ESCC budget for traffic calming had been substantially reduced over recent years.
  - In some cases speed reductions increase accidents.
  - CD noted that such problems occurred all over the county and ESCC did not have resources to respond.
- 19.10 It was agreed that the matter should be kept as a future agenda item and that the Clerk would also ask Heathfield for assistance.

#### **ACTION DT**

### **20 CLERK'S REPORT (7X11) MARCH 2008**

- 20.1 There were no questions on the Clerk's report.
- 20.2 PD noted the resignation of the Assistant Clerk. Clerk replied that a replacement was being sought, in the meantime CP was doing an element of work in the evenings under the direction of the Clerk.

## **21 ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND NEXT AGENDA ITEMS**

- 21.1 EW reported a public concern with regard to parking at Queensmount in Five Ashes. Clerk progressing.
- 21.2 JD noted increasing amount of litter on the bypass and TL noted a similar situation in Newick Lane.
- 21.3 PD noted that the members needed to see the ESCC speed reduction plan. The Clerk had copies.
- 21.4 PD enquired about progress with the Wadhurst – Mayfield – Crowborough bus service. RS replied that it was going well.
- 21.5 PD enquired about night policing. RS noted that night policing was being carried out at Wadhurst.

**THE MEETING CLOSED AT 21.58 HOURS.**

**THE NEXT MEETING OF THE MAYFIELD AND FIVE ASHES PARISH COUNCIL WILL BE:**

**VENUE:       MAYFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**DATE:         14 APRIL 2008**

**TIME:         1930 HOURS**