

**Draft minutes – subject to ratification**  
**WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 7.30PM**  
**IN THE BOUDOIR AT WEST DEAN COLLEGE**

**Present:** Cllrs I Odin (Chairman), S Corbett, K Goacher, D Kendall, J Ruffell, Mrs C Slade.

**In attendance:** County Cllr J Hunt  
District Cllr H Potter

G Burt, Clerk to the Council  
6 Members of the public

**47.14 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mrs Cochrane, Hill and Wheeler. These were accepted.

**48.14 Code of Conduct**

- (i) Declarations of Interests – The following interests were declared  
Cllr Kendall - Agenda Item 11 - Planning SDNP/14/03612/RE3  
Cllr Goacher - Agenda Item 11 - Planning SDNP/14/03612/RE3 and Minute 60.14(i) as a contractor to the Council.
- (ii) Dispensation Requests – None.

**49.14 Public Session**

Residents commented on a draft response from the Parish Council on the plans to alter the route of the existing and then extend, the Cycle Way along the route of the former Chichester to Midhurst Railway Line - SDNP/14/03612/RE3. Comments included the bias in the scheme towards cyclists over other users such as pedestrians and horse riders; the fact that initial comments on the scheme seemed to have been ignored and poor maintenance of the existing route in terms of vegetation control. Residents were not against the scheme *per se*, just against the current plans, hence the only comment to be made was objection. The draft response from the Council would be amended in the light of residents and other Cllrs comments and be attached to and form part of these minutes – Appendix A.

**50.14 Minutes**

On a proposal by Cllr Goacher, seconded by Cllr Ruffell, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting on 2 July 2014 be **ADOPTED**. They were duly signed as a correct record.

**51.14 Matters Arising not already on the Agenda**

None

**52.14 County Councillor's Report**

Cllr Hunt reported:

- i. On the reopening of the Village Shop and that a letter ought to be sent to the West Dean Estate thanking them for their assistance. Further grants may be available to assist, but not for revenue items.
- ii. Once the CCTV results of the survey of the B286 was complete, quotes could be obtained and the Parish Council could apply for a grant under *Operation Watershed*.
- iii. That WSCC were looking for nominations for the Carers Oscars – closing date 22 Sept.
- iv. The *What Matters to You?* Survey being conducted to help determine future WSCC priorities.
- v. The work being done to assist families with difficulties (*Think Family Program*) – much better to try to help them now, rather than later when it was more difficult.
- vi. The most recent CLC meeting.

**53.14 District Councillor's Report**

Cllr Potter reported on:

- i. The last Lavant Valley Partnership Meeting; one of the best attended recently.
- ii. The *All Parishes* meeting on the 27 October 2014.

- iii. Southern Water's *open day* at Lavant.
- iv. A campaign to encourage would-be Cllrs to stand in 2014.

A Parish Councillor asked Cllr Potter if he thought the new scheme of delegated decision-making on planning applications was working well; Cllr Potter thought it was. Another Parish Councillor complimented both WSCC and CDC for being better listeners than they had in the past.

#### 54.14 Highways and Flooding

- (i) Fingerposts at Hylters Lane – Members commented that work on the two new posts was still in progress, and that payment should only be sent once completed.
- (ii) Operation Watershed: Flooding on B2141 – nothing to report.
- (iii) Operation Watershed: Flooding on A286 by West Dean College – Landbuild, one of WSCC's contractors, had advised that a CCTV survey of the drain was planned for 22 September 2014.
- (iv) Theft of Salt Bin on A286 by Manor Farm Min. The replacement of this was in hand.
- (v) Local Winter Management Plan 2014/15 - Nothing to report.

#### 55.14 Parish Council Involvement with West Dean CE Primary School Council

Cllr Corbett reported that he met the School Council earlier that day, and been most impressed with their interest in the democratic process. It had previously been felt that the best meeting for the children to attend was the Annual Meeting of Electors. Cllrs Mrs Slade and Kendall kindly agreed to assist Cllr Corbett on school liaison. Cllr Hunt reported that 'Skills-based' Governors was the current byword in Governor appointments. It was agreed that Parish Council minutes and agendas would in future be also circulated to the school.

#### 56.14 Traffic Action Committee, including Community Speedwatch and SID

Cllr Hunt reported on the new GENESIS hand-held directional speed guns – Clerk to circulate to all Cllrs. It was agreed that a PCSO be asked to attend a future meeting.

#### 57.14 Planning Committee

- (i) Chairman's Report – since the last Parish Council meeting on 2 July 2014, the following had been dealt with:

##### New Planning Applications:

##### **SDNP/14/03612/RE3**

South Downs National Park Authority, Former Chichester to Midhurst Railway, Binderton to West Dean Section, West Dean.

An extension to the off-road recreational path known as the Centurion Way, from Binderton to West Dean (circa. 2,000 metres). The project includes the reconstruction of the Centurion Way on the approach to the route extension at Binderton (circa 430 metres).

Recommendation: As per Appendix A

Decision:

##### Recommendations and SDNPA Decisions on older Planning Applications:

##### **SDNP/14/01966/FUL**

Karova Farms Ltd., Brick Kiln Farm, Hylters Lane, Chilgrove, West Dean.

Proposed new grain store.

Recommendation: *No objection.*

Decision: *Approved.*

##### **SDNP/13/04308/FUL**

Mr. Lee Howard, The Dean Ale and Cider House, A286 Millers Lane to Cemetery Lane, West Dean.

Bio-mass boiler flue installation.

Recommendation: *No objection.*

Decision: *Refused.*

##### **SDNP/14/02197/FUL**

Karova Farms Ltd., Brooms Farm, High Street, Chilgrove, West Dean.

Proposed new straw and farm machinery storage building.

Recommendation: *No objection.*

Decision: *Approved.*

**58.14 West Dean Cemetery and St. Andrew's Churchyard** – It was reported that a plaque on one of the table-top tombs in the churchyard had fallen off. Cllr Goacher kindly agreed to obtain details of which ecclesiastical authority could give authority for the flattening of such tombs.

**59.14 Finance**

- (i) Payments from 3 July – 10 September 2014,  
On a proposal by Cllr Mrs Slade, seconded by Cllr Ruffell the above payments, previously circulated, were unanimously **APPROVED** and are attached to and form part of these minutes. Appendix B.
- (ii) Bank Balances and Bank Reconciliation were noted and are attached to and form part of these minutes. Appendix C).
- (iii) Annual Return 2013/14 – this had been approved without comment by the Government-appointed external auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP. The statutory Notice of Conclusion of the Audit and Right to Inspect the Annual Return notice had been displayed on the notice-boards for the due period, together with a copy of the Annual Return. A copy of both had also been posted on the website.
- (iv) Comparison of Budget against Expenditure to date with 2015/16 Pre-Budget – The Clerk apologised for this not being available.

**60.14 Chairman's Report**

None

**61.14 Councillors' Questions and Reports**

None.

**62.14 Clerk's Report and Correspondence**

The Clerk had previously tabled a summary of notable correspondence from 1<sup>st</sup> August – NOTED.

**63.14 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting would be held on: **Wednesday 12 November 2014 at 7.30pm in The Boudoir at West Dean College**. Comment was made on the poor lighting in the room and the Chairman kindly agreed to raise the matter with the College.

**64.14 Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED that due the nature of the business about to be transacted (staffing), that the press and public be instructed to withdraw.

**65.14 Appointment of Clerk**

The Chairman reported on the recent interview process. It was RESOLVED that G Burt be appointed Clerk to the Council & RFO from 1 August 2014, at SCP 25 for 6 hours per week. The use of Chichester Payroll Services to process the Clerk's Salary was also approved at a cost of £10.00 per month.

**Closure:** The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Signed:

Chairman of the Council

## COMMENTA FROM WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL ON

SDNP/14/03612/RE3

South Downs National Park Authority, Former Chichester to Midhurst Railway, Binderton to West Dean Section,  
West Dean.

West Dean Parish Council have considered this matter carefully, and on behalf of the residents and affected communities of West Dean, now summarise our findings. We support the aims of the SDNPA to stimulate the health and mental well-being of all communities within and from outside the Park, and also to boost tourism and contribute to the local economy. Many people have made favourable comments regarding the use of the old railway line to act as a green lane into the National Park, allowing the preservation and enjoyment of a distinctive part of our Victorian industrial heritage. We also support the concept of Safer Routes to School, which I am sure will be endorsed by West Dean C of E Primary School which lies along the route proposed. We note several letters of support in favour of opening the route up to cyclists, although it is notable that none of these originate from West Dean.

We are well aware of the statutory purposes of the SDNP designation:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area;
- To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the park by the public. If there is a conflict between these two purposes, conservation takes precedence.
- There is also a duty to foster the economic and social well-being of the local community in pursuit of these purposes.

By good management and communication it should be possible to work towards a successful co-existence and a balance between these duties. Unfortunately, the way this application has been presented shows flaws, errors and omissions, which we find difficult to reconcile with these multiple aims.

Chichester District Council, East Pallant House, East Pallant, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1TY Email: [dcplanning@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:dcplanning@chichester.gov.uk)

**Impact on protected species, nature conservation and biodiversity** is a Material Planning Consideration:

- Protected species (bats): As your Phase 1 Habitat Survey makes clear, further surveys are required to establish meaningful data as to bat habitats along the route. For planning purposes it is not enough that these be conducted afterwards by condition. Assessment and intended mitigation measures must be complete and accepted before determination.
- Your survey results for badger activity are inaccurate. To our certain knowledge there are several live setts immediately on or next to the railway line at the southern end of the route. Your own report recommends that further surveys are necessary before consulting with Natural England and before any determination can be given.
- The application states that the new route will be built in line with the technical guidance of Sustrans. To our alarm, this guidance recommends the regular use of herbicides, both for preparing a new route, and for future maintenance. We would like to see a detailed environmental impact assessment of these proposals before considering them.
- The route extension will enable users to travel to the face of the West Dean railway

tunnel. The zone leading to the tunnel mouth is a designated Site of Nature Conservation Importance. The entire length of the River Lavant through the Parish is also an SNCI and the proposed route bridges directly over the river (Plan No 114-C).

- If a planning proposal affects an SNCI, a biodiversity survey and report to establish any likely impacts must be part of that proposal. However this is not the case and you have answered “no” to question 13(b) in your application.
- You plan to demolish a set of derelict buildings at the old mushroom farm, (also in the SNCI) but you have not surveyed or shown evidence that this will not impact on any bat roost or habitat which may be present. Nor have you assessed the risk of contamination by pollutants or materials hazardous to health or the environment (e.g. asbestos), and you have answered “no” to question 14 in your application.
- Comments from your own ecology consultant from HCC are similar, and more comprehensive, and we endorse that report. It is unlikely that this application can be granted without further surveys being completed, at the appropriate times in the calendar year.

**Traffic generation, vehicular access, and highway safety** are a Material Planning Consideration:

- We have received concerns about the impact of encouraging more traffic and visitors into West Dean, as a destination, with no onward traffic-free routes to the north. We recommend a feasibility study to establish the impact of this plan on a very small village in a Conservation Area and AONB. We do not understand why this was not done as part of the application. This should include all potential users of the route, including equestrians who at present are excluded, and also any increase in vehicular access generated by this proposal.
- Your report mentions (twice) the potential for introducing a new bridge over the River Lavant at Church Lane. If you intend to build a bridge in this location, please provide details of the scope and size, appearance, and above all for what purpose. If not, please remove it from the application, which we cannot support while this is included.
- The proposed route will deliver users to a dead end, where a “ramped structure” will be provided for access, subject to a later planning application. This will be of considerable size and appearance, immediately next to several listed buildings and a Conservation Area. Should this for any reason be refused, or delayed, the purpose of the route extension, with no means of access, will fail.

Chichester District Council, East Pallant House, East Pallant, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1TY Email: [dcplanning@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:dcplanning@chichester.gov.uk)

- It follows that this application can only be determined responsibly with some knowledge of the proposed access which at present does not exist. We suggest that this application cannot be properly judged until the access plan is ready for scrutiny.
- You wish to encourage visitors to West Dean Stores, the Public House, West Dean Gardens, and the heart of the village, which we support. However, if you solve the problem of access from the planned route, you will then have delivered your users to the opposite side of a very busy road with known safety and speeding issues. As you say, significant intervention will have to be made to allow safe crossing.
- Assuming that the SDNPA is not able to build a safer crossing without the support of WSCC Highways, we would like to see the results of your consultation with them, and a firm and explicit commitment on their part to make this happen. The Parish Council would be ready to work with you and WSCC on a feasibility study to prove the viability of such a scheme, and timetable it to coincide with the new route. Without this, users will be worse off than they are at present, where Centurion Way already brings them safely to the east side of the A286.
- We have spoken with West Dean Primary School and they are producing their own

report and comments, once they have consulted with children, parents, staff and governors. They are concerned above all with the safety of the children and the impact on traffic outside the school, and of course the lack of a safe crossing point. It would be most appreciated if the SDNP could involve the School further before finalising the plans which directly affect the wellbeing and security of the children.

- There are other alternative routes which deliver users from Centurion Way to the east side of the A286, at considerable saving, which have not been considered, and we would be happy to work with the SDNPA on this, with the benefit of local knowledge.

**Incompatible or unacceptable uses** are a Material Planning Consideration:

- Your application describes existing use of the route as farm access, but does not mention horse riders. The horse riding community in and around West Dean is significant both in number and in its contribution to local business. Their established use of the existing railway line is well-known, and is made very clear in their comments. They feel understandably outraged at not being considered, consulted or accommodated.

- We strongly recommend that you reconsider this application to provide a multi-user path which includes equestrians. Guidelines are provided by the Trails Trust charity, and the British Horse Society charity. We consider this omission to be a glaring error in your proposal, and highly discourteous to a respected sector of the community.

- It is evident that the existing riding school and manège immediately adjacent to the railway path are incompatible with frequent use of the proposed route, and we understand that you intend to re-locate these facilities. Accordingly, this material change should form part of the same planning application, or be conditioned. The new route should not be opened to the public before the re-siting is completed.

**Inadequate landscaping and means of enclosure** are a Material Planning Consideration:

- Under this heading we include the lack of explicit consideration of the needs of the local Primary School immediately adjacent. We believe they are broadly in favour of improving safer routes to schools, on condition that security of the children should be paramount. The proposed route runs alongside and immediately next to the school playground and recreation areas. Secure fencing and permanent screening should be made a condition of approval of this scheme, and this has not been addressed.

Chichester District Council, East Pallant House, East Pallant, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1TY Email: [dcplanning@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:dcplanning@chichester.gov.uk)

- There is a potential weakness of security at the farm access track to the south of the school playing field, which at present is openly accessible to users of the railway route. Secure gating should be installed to prevent casual access of passers-by.

- This also applies to the security of the farmland on both sides throughout the route, and the need for adequate protection for the public against straying into uncontrolled agricultural space.

- You do not make clear the status of the new cycle route. In your application you state that new public rights of way will be provided. Does this refer to all or part of the route? Please clarify this. If it will be a Cycle Track it will be a highway maintainable at public expense. If it is a Permissive Path or PROW, who will be responsible for maintenance and upkeep?

- Maintenance is a serious and material consideration and has not been addressed in the application. We have received several comments doubting the responsible use of public funds to create a new route which will not be maintained. Upkeep of the existing Centurion Way from Lavant to Binderton has been badly handled in the past and this opportunity should not be missed to commit to funding and carrying out regular maintenance.

**Financial considerations** as a Material Planning Consideration:

- We would like to see a feasibility study which measures the likely socio-economic impact of this development on the local environment and the community, and a costbenefit analysis which validates the use of public funds. In excess of £500,000 is budgeted to create a short length of route (less than 2000m), and value for money for all users, not only cyclists, needs to be proved. Pedestrians, equestrians, and local residents and businesses, all contribute to public funds and should not be disadvantaged. The feasibility of practical aspects – the expense of moving the riding school, building a ramp, creating a new road crossing – needs to be clearly justified. And we note that none of these elements are included in the current application, so it is impossible to judge without the full picture before us.

The Parish Council, and no doubt the SDNP Planning Committee, are very supportive of the intentions of this application, as bringing benefits to the local community, all users and visitors of the National Park, and fulfilling national and regional policy. However, if any particular sector of the community, or the biodiversity of the wildlife and countryside, is going to be disadvantaged by this development, we feel that this must be corrected before going forward. Without this, the primary purpose of the SDNPA, to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and wildlife of the area, is not being met.

Although we do not doubt the impartiality of the Committee, we feel that they too need to make an informed decision with all the facts before them, which on the face of this they do not have. If the application were approved, it would contravene planning policy (in respect of protected species and biodiversity) and would need so many other conditions as to be almost meaningless. We recommend that this application be **withdrawn** and represented in a revised form which addresses all the foregoing concerns. If it is not withdrawn and goes forward to Committee in its current form, we regret to say that we **object** to this application.

**WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**FINANCIAL REPORT 10 SEPTEMBER 2014**

**RECEIPTS 3 JULY - 10 SEPTEMBER 2014**

DATE	£	Ref No	PAYER	DESCRIPTION
28/07/2014	1.49	BAC	Santander	Interest
04/09/2014	910.07	BAC	HMRC	VAT Refund
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>911.56</b>			

**PAYMENTS: 3 JULY - 10 SEPTEMBER 2014**

DATE	£	CHEQUE NO	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION
28/07/2014	29.17	SO	J E Martin	
29/07/2014	275.68	SO	J E Martin	
20/08/2014	£1,356.00	101163*	Sussex Land Works	Rec Ground grass cutting
10/09/2014	£120.00	101171	PKF Littlejohn	External Audit 13-14
10/09/2014	£3,360.00	101172	JK Engineering	Finger Posts
10/09/2014	£438.13	101173	Broker Network Ltd	Insurance renewal - Came & Co
10/09/2014	£18.00	101174	West Dean Ltd	Hire of room for Council meeting - 11 Sept
10/09/2014	£624.00	1001175	K E Goacher	2 of 2 : Cemetery grass cutting
10/09/2014	£232.68	1001176	G Burt	Clerk's Net Salary - Aug
10/09/2014	£58.00	1001177	HMRC	Clerk's Tax + NIC - Aug
10/09/2014	£10.00	1001178	Chichester Payroll	Payroll bureau - Aug
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,521.66</b>			

\* Payment previously approved but awaiting invoice / exact amount.



		<b>APPENDIX C</b>
<b>WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL</b>		
<b>RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT</b>		
<b>BANK RECONCILIATION</b>		
<b>AS OF 4 SEPTEMBER 2014</b>		
<b>PRESENTED TO COUNCIL ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2014</b>		
<b>RECEIPTS &amp; PAYMENTS</b>		
Balance brought forward (as at 02/07/2014)		£24,365.96
Add Total Receipts		911.56
Less Total Payments (as approved at the last meeting + SOs)		(1,290.21)
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£23,987.31</b>
<b>BANK</b>		
Barclays Community	17,956.42	
Santander (as @ 28/07)	6,000.89	
Imprest Account	30.00	
		23,987.31
<b>Less unpresented cheques</b>		<b>£0.00</b>
<b>Plus uncleared deposits</b>		<b>0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£23,987.31</b>