

PARISH OF WEST DEAN

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF ELECTORS HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 MARCH 2016 AT 7PM IN THE MUSIC ROOM AT WEST DEAN COLLEGE

Present: Cllrs. I. Odin (Chairman), Mrs. U. Cochrane, S. Corbett, K. Goacher, D Kendall, B. Pearmaine, Mrs S Pearmaine, P. Rice

In attendance: G Burt, Clerk
County Cllr. J. Hunt
A. Barron, CEO, EJF
Mrs. G Moss, Headteacher, West Dean CE Primary School
P. Kirk & Miss C. Willams, Savills
2 members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. Mrs Slade.

2. West Dean C of E Primary School

Mrs G Moss, Headteacher, explained that there was one pupil per school year on the School Council and they served for 6 months. She then introduced pupils, Millie and Madeline who gave the following report:

The School Council meet every Tuesday, then reports back to other students. They have input into Governor, Teacher and Parent meetings. They had discussed the Centurion Way, new kit for the play area and supported *Project Paddington*. They had met with the School Governors, and sold Poppies. They took part in collective worship and studied R.E. They took part in a mock teacher interview.

In response to a question, they advised that Project Paddington was about donating fluffy toys to refugees.

Mrs Moss added that:

They took part in World Book Day; the school was oversubscribed; their development priorities were maths and speaking. An inspection was imminent – their previous OFSTED report had deemed them outstanding. They were now working towards an *Artsmark* accreditation and an International Schools' Award. They had a very strong team of staff, and good relations with other schools. They took *E-Safety* very seriously. They supported a safe cycling route to the school and the SDNPA would be funding a gate onto the Centurion Way. They were very successful in swimming galas! They had plans to extend the school. Outdoor learning was important. They were trying to get more parents involved in the learning process.

3. Alexander Barron ACA, Chief Executive, The Edward James Foundation

Mr Barron told the meeting about his background, his management team and the issues they faced and plans for the future. Whilst they were a very asset-rich organisation, they had been losing money for some time. They had 79 full time students, and were subject to OFSTED inspections. He circulated a hard copy of his presentation, for the minute book. He then took questions on the new Biomass facility and the costs of residential courses.

4. Minutes

On a proposal by Cllr. Corbett, seconded by Cllr. Goacher, it was unanimously RESOLVED that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Electors held on 4 March 2015 be approved. They were duly signed as a correct record.

5. Chairman's Report from Cllr. Ian Odin

Cllr Odin reported that Operation Watershed works on the B2141 had been completed and were working well, with little flooding since; the OW works on the A286 had yet to be completed. Work on the replacement Biomass heating system being installed by the EJF which supplied many village homes was underway.

Regular and helpful updates were received from Southern Water about pumping of sewage by tankers at the Village Green.

He thanked all Councillors and the Clerk for their support and work throughout the year along with the District and County Councillors.

Particular thanks to Cllr Hunt for arranging the Rolls Royce to escort for retiring Parish Councillor John Rufell to his surprise farewell reception at the College, arranged by Cllr Mrs Slade and the EJF.

The footpath along the A286 between West Dean and Singleton had now been cleared.

6. Planning Committee Chairman's Annual Report from Cllr. Steve Corbett

Cllr Corbett summarised the many applications (details attached Appendix 1) that the Parish Council had commented upon over the past year – they had not objected to 90%. The conversion of Foresters Cottage to student accommodation seemed to make sense, and the ongoing saga of the Centurion Way had occupied much time.

7. Financial Report from the Clerk, G Burt

Last year, I reported that I hoped to be able to follow in the footsteps of the previous Clerk in having no comments from the External Auditor on our accounts. Well, I am pleased to say that for the 2014-15 accounts, once again there were no comments!

Copies of the Annual Return for 2014-15, together with a more detailed breakdown of the various budget headings have been circulated.

Whilst the Council increased the precept in 2013-14, there was no increase in the current year, but there will be in the forthcoming year 2016-17.

Although savings will be had from reduced maintenance of the Recreation Field as the Council has relinquished a significant part of it back to the landowner, regrettably these are not enough to make up for further reductions in the Council Tax Reduction Scheme grant and also the legal requirement to offer the Council's sole employee (that's me!) a pension.

Although the Council's balances are healthy, Councillors were keen that income and expenditure should broadly balance so that these reserves were not depleted over time.

The good news is that although our Precept will increase by £213, the amount that a Band D Council Tax payer will pay to the Parish Council in 2016-17 will remain at £48.69, as the Council Tax Base, upon which the Council Tax is calculated has gone up also!

The Council continues to manage its finances prudently, and significant capital projects only pursued when grants secured.

I am happy to take any questions.

8. Annual Report from County Councillor Jeremy Hunt, Member for Chichester North

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

Once again I have very much enjoyed representing the residents in my Division, Chichester north, and particularly the residents of West Dean. This is a very tight knit community which is lucky enough to have a very effective and supportive parish council.

West Dean is also very lucky to have many of the essential elements that help make a thriving community - something that many communities have lost - you have a thriving shop, a pub, an active Church and a wonderful school. None of these things happen by luck, they all take a great deal of hard work and effort, so I would urge everyone to value what they have in their midst and support your local services.

I represent WSCC and although I know that we have had to reduce the extent of many of our services, I hope you feel that generally we are able still to do enough to ensure that the fabric of your parish is maintained. This situation of ever reducing grant funding from the Government is going to continue, so a strong parish community is going to become even more important. For example, resilience planning is a very important undertaking. This is something that many of your neighboring parishes have undertaken with support from both WSCC and the CDC. Do you have plans in case of a major power failure, a major flood or a prolonged and heavy snowfall - do you know where the old and vulnerable are in your parish? Who will make sure they are okay in times of trouble? Community resilience planning is vitally important because in times of emergency it could be quite a while before relief comes, especially if the 'disaster' is widespread.

Another area is community volunteers. Some parishes for instance, have groups of volunteers who meet regularly to do minor works - litter clearing, path clearing, edge trimming etc.

I am delighted to see that our Rangers team have been able to clear the footpath from Singleton to West Dean, as well as the footpath right through the village and as I understand it, the footpath/cycle way from West Dean to Binderton. I know this has been a concern of the PC for some months and I'm pleased that we were able to get the work done so speedily. But will we have the resources to do this work going forward?

Going forward, now that the footpath has had a major clearance, could a group of community volunteers help to keep this footpath clear by carrying out an annual tidy up? We can supply the necessary equipment such as brooms, shovels and of course not forgetting high-viz vests! Anyway, it's just a thought.

There is currently a consultation, which I believe you have on the agenda for discussion later, regarding the future of the rangers - or the community support team as they are now known - so who knows what the future holds.

At the January meeting I touched on the possibility that WSCC were considering increasing their share of the council tax for the first time in five years. In February the proposed WSCC Budget was approved, so our share of the council tax will increase by 3.95% from April 1st. This will mean an increase on a Band D property of £45.90 per year/£0.88p per week. I would like to point out that we have not raised our tax for five consecutive years, which means that you have enjoyed six years of no increases, a saving to a Band D tax payer of approx £525 over this period, assuming a tax increase of 2%pa. Now some of you might be aware that until this year we were not able to increase our council tax by more than 2% without triggering a referendum. So what has changed to allow us to now increase our tax by 3.95%?

Well, as part of the governments funding strategy going forward they have now allowed us to raise our tax by an additional 2%, providing that 2% is ring fenced for adult social care. So our plans are that 2% of the increase will indeed be used to support funding for adult social care and the additional 1.95% will be used to support services across the council.

Despite these spending pressures there are some really good news stories:

- Firstly, in response to pressure from many of the authorities who were severely impacted by this steep reduction in funding, the government has announced some interim funding for the next two years to help 'cushion' the blow. To WS this means an additional £6.2m in 16/17 and an additional £6.3m in 17/18. (1.1% of our budget of £535m). This interim funding was announced to late to be included in our budget proposals put forward at CC in February, so we will be putting forward firm spending proposals at the April CC Meeting. The proposals are that the money will be spent on frontline services.*
- Secondly, despite having to bridge a funding gap of £44m this year we are increasing spending - in fact a net increase of spending of nearly £10m, spread across our essential frontline services, such as adult social care and various children's services.*
- Over the last two years we have invested nearly £30m on our Better Roads Programme. This was a programme of major refurbishment, not just patching, of many unclassified roads across the county. The thinking behind this was that a one off investment in these roads would save us millions of pounds in repair work we would otherwise have to spend going forward. This is already paying off. An example of this investment was a major refurbishment of Chilgrove Park Road.*
- Next, following the great success of Operation Watershed Mk1 and Mk2, we are also putting £0.5m into Operation Watershed Mk3. As I said, Operation Watershed has been a great success across the County and we calculate that the £2m invested so far has leveraged benefit to the county worth around £7m. And just to update you, I understand that the work on repairing the drains on the A286, funded through Operation Watershed, which were delayed last year due to the upgrade of the water main, are now scheduled for May.*
- Finally, we will be continuing with both our CIF grants and our BSF awards.*

Lastly, I would of course point you towards our website which has a wealth of information and on the services WSCC provides. Apart from the details on our services there is also a

section containing all our press releases which cover the many initiatives we promote. These initiatives range from subjects as varied as 'promoting the recycling of old or worn out textiles', 'schools join the solar generation', 'stay warm stay safe say our firefighters' and finally a campaign to fight against Child Sexual Exploitation - something that happens far more often than you would believe.

Well, I think I have gone on long enough, so once again thank you all for your support I very much look forward to representing you for another year.

Cllr Hunt then dealt with questions on pavements and potholes. Hylters Lane was particularly bad, as the roadworks on the A286 had meant some lorries had taken a short cut down the lane. Cllr Hunt had reported its poor condition. Cllr Mrs Cochrane suggested some advisory signs, highlighting its narrowness etc.

9. Traffic Action Committee Report from Cllr. Steve Corbett

Cllr Corbett reported that the funds that the SDNPA had offered for a village traffic study were no longer available; no funds were available either from WSCC. It was still hoped to galvanise a team of volunteers to use the latest speed monitoring kit, known as GENESIS, which resulted in letters being sent by the Police to offenders.

10. Public Session

There were no questions

There being no other business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.52pm.

Signed:

Chairman of the Council

APPENDIX 1

WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATIONS LOG 2015-2016								
Validated	Ref		Decision	Date	Comments by:	Comments	Comments sent:	
8 January 2015	SDNP/15/00102/H OUS	erside Cottage Church Lane West Dean Chichester West Sussex PO18 0O	Approved	05/03/2015	19/02/2015	No Objection	19/02/2015	
		Proposed double garage to adjoin north side of existing house.						
3 February 2015	SDNP/15/00513/P RE	Provision of new biomass facility with associated car parking, landscaping and infrastructure. Land North of Foresters Cottage West Dean West Sussex	Pre-App Advice given	n/a	03/03/2015	n/a	n/a	
12 February 2015	SDNP/15/00677/T CA	123 The Grinch West Dean Chichester West Sussex PO18 0RX	Pending Considerati on		06/03/2015	No Objection	09/03/2015	
		Notification of intention to fell 1 no. Pine tree and 1 no. Cryptomeria tree.						
19 February 2015	SDNP/15/00627/LI S	To open up internal doorway, and construct stud wall. install new doorway into corridor to kitchen area West Dean College A286 Vicarage Lane to The Grinch West Dean Chichester West Sussex PO18 0QZ	Approved	19/05/2015	12/03/2015	No Objection	09/03/2015	
25 February 2015	SDNP/15/01042/S CREEN	New biomass facility with associated landscaping and car parking. Land to The North of West Dean College A286 Church Lane to Millers Lane West Dean West Sussex	No EIA needed	n/a	19/03/2015	n/a	n/a	
11 March 2015	SDNP/15/01272/LI S SDNP/15/01236/F UL	Internal alterations to bedrooms room nos. 50-52 and 115-119 including removal of modern partitions and installation of en suite bathrooms and associated mechanical and electrical services. West Dean College	Approved	21/05/2015	16/04/2015	No objection	13/04/2015	
Fri 10 Apr 2015	SDNP/15/01755/F UL	Provision of new biomass facility with associated car parking, landscaping and infrastructure. Land to the North of Foresters Cottage A286 Church Lane to Millers Lane West Dean West Sussex	Approved	07/08/2015	28/05/2015	No Objection	27/04/2015	
Fri 24 Apr 2015	SDNP/15/01933/F UL	Permanent retention of 2 no. freestanding hot tubs (originally permitted under temporary planning permission WD/12/00312/FULNP). The White Horse High Street Chilgrove West Sussex PO18 9HX	Approved	29/05/2015	19/05/2015	No Objection	15/05/2015	
21 May 2015	SDNP/15/02447/LI S	Internal layout adjustments to Ground, first and attic floors to form bedrooms. Preston Farm Binderton West Dean Chichester West Sussex PO18 0JT	Approved	07/09/2015	12/06/2015	No Objection	12/06/2015	
28 May 2015	SDNP/15/02360/F UL	Removal of the temporary link structure and replace with a timber framed single storey building. Farbridge Preston Farm Binderton West Dean Chichester West Sussex PO18 0JT	Approved	01/10/2015	18/06/2015	No Objection	12/06/2015	
30 June 2015	SDNP/15/02936/F UL	Provision of underground pipe network to link proposed biomass facility to associated buildings at and surrounding West Dean College. A286 The Grinch to Town Lane West Dean	Approved	07/08/2015	22/07/2015	No Objection		
26 August 2015	SDNP/15/03580/F UL	Moving of existing boiler flue to other side of the roof. The Dean Ale And Cider House A286 Millers Lane To Cemetery Lane West Dean	Approved	26/02/2016	23/09/2015	No Objection	22/09/2015	
30 November 2015	SDNP/15/05911/A DV	An interpretation panel (sited in two locations) for path users containing information mapping about the Centurion Way path and connectivity to RoW network, plus a brief history of the location and former railway line. A1 Panel mounted on wooden pedestal. Land at Centurion Way Chichester West Sussex	Approved	06/01/2016	04/01/2016	No Comment	23/12/2015	
21 January 2016	SDNP/15/06305/LI S	Installation of oil-fired heating boiler in small shed to rear of property. Binderton House Binderton Lane Binderton West Dean PO18 0IS	Withdrawn	24/02/2016	17/02/2016	No Objection	19/02/2016	
11 February 2016	SDNP/16/00650/F UL	Construction of external paved area adjacent to existing Visitor Centre. West Dean College Chichester West Sussex PO18 0QZ			17/03/2016			
22 February 2016	SDNP/16/00518/F UL SDNP/16/00519/LI S	Change of use and internal alterations to cottage into serviced student accomodation, including localised repairs, 2 no. conservation rooflights, 6 new ensuites, landscaping, parking including 1 no disabled bay, bikes and bin hardstanding. Foresters Cottage West Dean West Sussex PO18 0RD			23/03/2016			