



PLUMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Village Hall on 10th January 2023 at 19:45.

Present: Cllr N Beaumont – Chair (Cllr NB), Cllr Paul Burford, Cllr Paul Stevens, Cllr A Gardiner (Cllr AG), Cllr N Shefras (Cllr NDS), Cllr Jim Brown (Cllr JB) and District Councillor R Banks (Cllr RB).

Absent: Cllr Z Needham (Cllr ZN), Cllr Nick Satchell (Cllr NS), Cllr R Jury (Cllr RJ), and CC Cllr S Osborne.

Also present: Anita Emery (Clerk & RFO).

MOP's: 0

The AGENDA is as follows:

486. To accept apologies for absence

- Cllr's ZN, RJ and NS tendered their apologies and reasons for absence accepted. C Cllr SO tendered her apologies. It was noted that Cllr RB would join the meeting later as attending East Chiltington PC meeting.

487. Declarations of pecuniary and disclosable interests in respect of matters to be discussed.

- None

488. To Approve Minutes from Parish Council meeting held on 13th December 2022

- Unanimously approved.

489. Clerk's Report and discuss any Matters Arising from previous meeting.

- Clerk reported precept application submitted. No response from the Rachel Paget regarding the query over access to the pond and alternative way of removing the bull rushes. Clerk to chase.

490. Brief Report from the County and District Councillor on matters affecting this Parish.

- No County Report received.
- District Report (Cllr Banks joined the meeting at 20:17)
- Met L Palmer of LDC regarding Nolands and Eton sites – no planning guidance received yet and LDC are having to work under the current regime – all depends on what 'advisory' means in the new NPPF which is out for consultation. LDC will be responding to the consultation – deadline 2nd March. Cllr PS requested a copy of LDC's response. Cllr RB to make request.
- Power cuts are too frequent and followed up and meeting with UKPN.
- Potholes by Brickworks are getting bigger each day – suspect it is due to a SE Water leak.

491. Questions from Members of the Public – limited to a maximum of 15 minutes in total

- None



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492.Planning applications and consider further applications submitted after agenda publication:

SDNP/22/05768/CND

Plumpton College

Variation of condition 4 minor material amendment to plans for the Agri food hub and setting including associated updates in respect of conditions 6,7,21,23,24,26,27,28,30,32,33,34,36,37 and 40.

- PPC decision: No Comment

To note approved applications.

TW/22/0073/TPO

The Fountain Inn – T1 – Oak reduce eastern elevation by 3m

Verdict: Approved

- Duly noted.

493.Correspondence

- Duly noted.

494. Finance Committee

- To approve the Finance Committee minutes of 13th December 2022
 - To adopt expenditure as itemised on the schedules.
 - To adopt year to date accounts.
 - To adopt combined bank reconciliations
- Cllr PB reported that there were two additional expenditure items – PF £12.76 for Cllr JB expenses and PPC - £209.33 Viking Direct. These were duly noted. Under the PPC YTD overspend on PAYE/Salaries and pensions there was confusion over why the percentages were not the same – this is due to the NIC rate changes during the year. VH – Hall deposits and returns were explained as these are security deposits and are returned after the event and will not tally as some events are booked pre 2022-2023.
 - Cllr PB therefore requested that items a-d be approved/adopted. Unanimously agreed.

495.. Neighbourhood Plan Update

(i) Planning Liaison Working Group update

- See Appendix 1 for planning liaison group update
- PPC have heard from Millwood Homes, the developers of the Glebe site, that the houses will now be heated via Air Source heat pumps and not Gas. They hope to start building in the next couple of months. Millwood has accepted the suggestion of Rectory Lane for the new development but final decision rests with LDC.
- Councillor PS drew attention to the parking issues around the church which would be exacerbated by the decision to use a new entrance for the development. It was suggested that the diocese and developer were approached for one last attempt to use the shared access provided for in Oakfield Lane. The reluctant consensus was that



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the diocese would continue to claim no influence over the developer and that an approach would not yield a positive result.

496.To note and action if necessary monthly RA reports.

- Clerk advised the manhole cover on the tennis track had been inspected and was confirmed that it was safe and due to the nature of the cover it would need a specialist contractor to re-fit at a potential cost of £2-3k. PPC discussed and confirmed that considering its location it will only deteriorate and therefore needs action. RA to be changed to risk 3. Clerk to investigate easements in the area and Cllr JB to take another look at it to determine what is underneath it. **Clerk and Cllr JB to action.**

497.Update on broadband fibre optic community scheme and actions.

- Cllr PS advised that ESCC was still in procurement with BDUK and that the process was expected to last until end February, with no contract awarded until October this year at the earliest. There was concern that 'Lot 16' under discussion covered a wide range of cost, which might indicate that there was a range of scope. Cllr PS would contact Sarah Osborne to see if she could shed light on whether Plumpton was confirmed in scope or not. Still receiving a trickle of EOI's.

498.Update on first aid training sessions

- Clerk has chased again for an update.

499.Committee/Working Group Reports

i. Transport and Environment/Footpaths/Policing

- Cllr NB reported the SID will be ordered soon and has applied for a second licence north bound.
- ii. Allotments update
- Cllr RJ sent a report in in his absence – nothing to report on the allotments apart from very wet.

iii. Community Orchard Update.

Cllr NB reported that since no-one has expressed an interest in managing an Orchard it was unanimously agreed to remove it from the agenda and revisit as and when.

e. Village Hall

- i. Management of pond – vegetation and wild area between pond and footpath.
- Clerk to chase up PPC's query. **Clerk to action.**



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ii. Replacement of footbridge update

ESCC responded to the query on widening the bridge. This would mean major structural changes to the concrete supports and of course more wood for the bridge itself. After a short discussion it was agreed to go ahead as originally planned. **CIlr NS to action.**

f. Playing Field/Pavilion

- Cllr RJ reported the following;
- Quite a few football matches cancelled due to weather.
- The 4 builder's bags at the far end of the field are actually sand. There was some metal and other bits on the tops of the bags that seem to have been removed.
- Jim has agreed to disperse the sand as soon as the ground is dry enough so that he can get the digger on.
- Skatepark repairs are scheduled for the 8th February.
- Another section of the curtain rail needed replacing as it had been pulled down.
- Water supply issue resolved at the tennis pavilion. The exercise confirmed that the sports pavilion does not supply the tennis club pavilion.

i. To note playpark & skatepark inspection and action where necessary

- Clerk advised the monthly report had not been received.

ii. To discuss/consider financial support for the Activity Scheme shed.

- Activity Scheme had contacted the clerk to advise the metal shed that was erected in 2019 has ruined the contents. They were asking whether any financial contribution towards another shed and its contents. PPC discussed and considered storing elsewhere i.e. village hall/pavilion or using a small area of the big cricket and football shed. PPC also advised the scheme should apply for an S137 grant in March. Clerk advised application form had been sent to them. **Clerk to action.**

iii. Tennis Club lease

- Cllr PS reported that the questions from the tennis club had been reviewed. Tennis club want to start the lease from new (25 years) and not commute the existing lease. Queries right to renew – under the old lease there was no right to renew. Maintenance of track was commuted from old lease – tennis club appear to want the power to approve maintenance which would be unusual. After a discussion PPC agreed that sticking to the original intention to commute the existing lease is the way forward. There would be significant expense in changing the lease as this was originally done under UKPN. Clerk to locate details from Ian Davison to understand the lease renewal.

iv. To confirm responsibility for the donated defib as presented by XX on 26th November. (NB: at 4.1.2023 Defib has still to be handed over to PPC). Noted to defer.

g. Events Committee



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- Meeting on the 24th January to discuss Coronation celebrations. **Clerk to distribute agenda.**
- Cllr PS reported that whilst not under the Events Committee, the resident's handbook is in first draft within the Village Society.

500.Interaction with Plumpton Primary School

- Cllr AG reported that the school had decided on a plaque for the platinum jubilee trees

501.Communications/Website

- Nothing to report

502.Items to be reported by Parish Councillors and/or to be included in future meetings

- Cllr JB asked about a list on potential CIL spend. Cllr PB and PS had formulated one and it was being distributed this week.
- The VH platinum jubilee grant that had been forwarded to the clerk with a deadline of 20th January – PPC decided too short time to apply and it seemed to be written for village halls that need a substantial investment.
- Cllr PB requested a new agenda item of CIL Committee to be added to next months agenda.

Meeting Closed: 21:40

Dates of next meetings:

24th January 2023 – 19:30 PPC Events Committee

7th February 2023 19:00 PPCFC, 19:45 PPC

Anita Emery | Parish Clerk 11/01/2023



Appendix 1

- PPC has been contacted by a number of residents who independently wrote to Maria Caulfield concerned over the Nolands development decision. Maria's response, together with some other public statements, has raised some issues that residents wish to be informed on.
- Firstly, it is not correct that the lack of a Local Plan is the core reason that Nolands was approved by the Planning Inspector. In fact, the Inspector clearly highlighted that Nolands conflicted with both the Local Plan and our Neighbourhood Plan. These plans were designed to provide certainty until 2030, but under government changes to planning policy the Inspector no longer had to give full weight to those plans where the Local Plan is over 5 years old and the Neighbourhood Plan is over 2 years old, as is the case. In determining Nolands, the Inspector gave greater weight to the need for housing as determined by the Standard Method. For Lewes, the Standard Method gives a minimum of 782 houses per annum, whereas the Lewes Local Plan was based on 345 houses per annum. Lewes has been planning for the lower number and therefore inevitably appears to be under delivering against the larger government imposed number.
- Maria states that the Planning Inspectorate is independent of government, but it is an executive agency of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and makes decisions on behalf of Michael Gove. It is reasonable to presume that the Nolands Inspector was acting on government policy when choosing to give less weight to the Lewes Local Plan and our Neighbourhood Plan.
- Maria also states that she 'called in' Nolands, but PPC do not immediately understand how this can be the case as Nolands was refused by Lewes, so did not need to be called in. It was the developer that appealed Nolands, not Lewes. Maria will be approached to clarify this.
- Whilst Maria says she has also written to the Secretary of State to ask him to look retrospectively at the Nolands decision in the light of proposed new planning policy, it is PPC understanding that a Planning Inspector's decision on behalf of the Secretary of State can only be challenged by a judicial review, which PPC cannot afford to fund. The Inspector made the point during the Noland Inquiry that he could only make determination based on current policy, not future proposals. Certainly the latest version of planning policy has some encouraging proposals, such as making Neighbourhood Plans carry full weight for 5 years not 2, which would have resulted in Nolands being refused. PPC welcome that as it would be impractical to build a new Neighbourhood Plan every 2 years, but every 5 years is still significantly less than the 15 years PPC built the current plan for.
- Housing targets have not been scrapped in the latest proposals. Planning policy still states "To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance." There is now a proposal that says this figure is 'advisory'. Previously Maria sent us confirmation from the ministry that the Standard Method was not a target per se, but was a minimum number that Lewes were free to exceed. PPC hope that now advisory means that 'exceptional circumstances' (for instance the fact that a large part of the buildable land in Lewes district is in the National Park, and therefore protected,) means Lewes will be allowed to develop or revert to a lower housing need figure.
- Maria also says she is concerned that Eton has not been excluded from their new local plan by Lewes. Lewes does not yet have a new local plan but is working through the official process to develop that plan. Unfortunately, as explained above that plan has to start with a minimum housing need figure dictated centrally by the Standard Method, which provides the much higher local need than in the current local plan. Lewes has to look at all possible sites and can only deviate downwards from the central need figure if it can demonstrate exceptional circumstances. The Eton site has been put forward and therefore must be considered, but in the public consultation it was the least popular option.



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- PPC remain committed to helping Lewes put a new plan in place as there is no doubt that will help, but it remains the case that government changes to planning policy significantly undermined Lewes and our own Neighbourhood Plan.
- We will continue to work with Maria to ensure plans are respected, and we are glad that Maria has recently spoken against an unplanned development in Wivelsfield Green that Lewes refused and the developer is appealing. It is a shame that Maria did not feel able to do the same for Nolands.