



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD

on 20th July 2021 at 8.00pm
at Rodmell Village Hall

1. Present

Councillors John Gillies (JG: Chairman), Nikki Terry (NT), Sue Carroll (SC), Lesley Prosser (LP) and David Smart (DS). Alison Stevens (AS) and fifteen members of the public were also present.

Apologies for absence were received from District Councillor William Meyer.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced the resignation of Sarah Last. Rodmell Parish Council would like to formally thank Mrs Last for everything she has done for the Parish.

2. Public Questions

There were no questions from the public at this point in the meeting.

3. Disclosures of Interests

There were no disclosures of interest on any items on this agenda nor were there any changes to the Register of Interests.

4. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6th May 2021

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 6th May 2021, were read, confirmed as a true and accurate record, and signed by the Chairman.

5. Planning

SDNP/21/03009/FUL - Land to the west of Whitegates, The Street, Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 3HE - Installation of 5no. (five) timber and canvas safari tents along with a permeable parking/turning area, recycling/waste, cycle storage and Electric Vehicle Charging Point with associated footpaths, landscaping and an underground water treatment plant for drainage treatment.

Councillor Gillies reminded everyone the Parish Council is asked to give its opinion on planning applications and must base its comments on certain criteria. It does not have the power to reject an application so residents must also submit their own comments too.

The meeting was then suspended to allow comments from the floor.

The residents who were present said they object to this application because;

- The site is outside the development boundary and within a Conservation Area.
- It is bordered by three Grade 2 Listed Buildings and can be viewed from the main road.
- The access is inappropriate and dangerous and the photographs illustrating it are misleading and show no line of sight.

- The 'tents' are wooden structures and are in place for 52 weeks a year which makes them permanent. At 4m high they are also obtrusive and would change the appearance of the village on approach.
- Some of the issues raised in the pre-application advice given for SDNP/14/00849/PRE are still pertinent. For example, the existing access is an agricultural field access only capable of catering for single file traffic, the access still needs to be widened/improved to recommended standards. Doubts were raised that this could be done safely.
- The application does not say who is responsible for the site's ongoing oversight and maintenance.
- There are two new access points onto the footpath which the application states are for guests to use to access provisions. However there are no provisions available in Rodmell, the only facility being a pub.
- Details in the application seem to have changed since the pre-application (SDNP/21/00062/PRE). The application is now in the name of the owner's son, the site location details have changed and three cottages are missing from the application, whilst others are incorrectly named.
- The noise impact statement needs to be expanded and include the impact this development will have on the residents at Whitegates, and the three cottages which are not shown on the plans.
- The application contains many contradictions especially in respect of the trees and hedgerows. The replanted trees will block residents' views, and if intended as a barrier to noise, will not be fully effective for many years.
- The area attracts many bees and butterflies, (a count is currently in progress for both) as well as badgers, bats, foxes and pheasants, many of which will be lost if this proposal goes ahead. Countryside living is what Rodmell is all about.
- Provision has only been made for eight car parking spaces, one of which is an electric charging point and one is for disabled drivers. Any overspill will have to park on The Street which already has an issue with parking. These cars will be parked for days and could prevent residents accessing and leaving their properties. Emergency services and utility vehicles will also not be able to get through.
- Water, drainage and electricity is currently supplied through a private arrangement. If the site is allowed to go ahead a new supply will be needed for each.

Councillor Gillies reminded residents the following are both valid planning criteria and cannot be considered;

- Loss of view
- Devaluation of property
- Business competition
- Damage to property
- Consent required under other legislation (such as building regulations)
- Boundary disputes, rights of access, covenants and other private rights
- Disturbance during development
- Maintenance of property

Rodmell Parish Council voted by three votes to one, with one abstention, to object to this application. A copy of their submission is attached to these minutes.

SDNP/21/03355/HOUS - Forge House, Mill Lane, Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 3HS - Demolition of porch and conservatory and erection of new porch and orangery – Rodmell Parish Council has no objections to this application on any planning grounds but councillors noted the application does not mention there is a Right of Way to the C7 and hopes that this will not be affected.

SDNP/21/03651/HOUS - 2 Ouseside Cottages, Newhaven Road, Rodmell BN7 3HB - Internal alterations including new balcony and installing underground drainage – Rodmell Parish Council has no objections to this application on any planning grounds.

6. Maintenance Reviews

- 6.1: Defibrillator Report – Councillor Prosser continues to monitor the defibrillator and sent a photograph of it to the Clerk so she has a record. It was also suggested that some notices should be printed and displayed (eg; in the bus shelter, sports pavilion) informing people where the defibrillator is located, and this action was agreed.
- 6.2: Replacement Litter Bins – The Parish Council has replaced a litter bin at each of the two bus stops and they are now being emptied by Lewes District Council.
- 6.3: Review of the arrangements for maintaining the Parish Council's assets – It was resolved;
- i. That Councillor Gillies and the Clerk will carry out a review of the Parish Council's asset list.
 - ii. That the verge around the hard surface at the playground will be left uncut to encourage wildflowers to grow.
 - iii. To accept the work recommended in the Annual Play Parks Inspection Report. It was noted the grass has been cut since the inspection. Councillor Gillies will ask Mr Sellick if he can help with the general maintenance issues and the Clerk will get prices for an ownership sign. Councillors discussed placing several signs around the Parish to let residents know where the defibrillator is.

The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to officially thank;

- Mr Sword Daniels and Mr Ashplant for cutting the grass at the playground initially and Mr and Mrs Foster for taking over the mowing on a regular basis. Councillors invited them to submit claims for any out of pocket expenses.
- Jenny Brown for cutting the grass at The Dicklands.

7. Clerk's and Councillor's Reports

7.1: Legal Matters

- General update on the school and playground progress – The Parish Council understands the school has been sold, subject to contract. The Parish Council's right of way to the playground has now been successfully registered with the Land Registry. The documents show the rotten wooden walkway is the responsibility of the Diocese but the Parish Council will tape it off until it has been repaired.

7.2: Other updates

- Website and Email Problems: It was noted that some maintenance work may soon be needed on the website.
- Tree Warden – The Parish Council received notification of an application (SDNP/21/02478/TCA) to fell a Goat Willow which is leaning against a brick wall at The Forge in Mill Lane. Rodmell Parish Council supported the application.
- Countryside, agriculture and allotments – Councillors commented on how good the allotments are looking now.
- Repairs to The Street – ESCC Highways has confirmed it is aware there is a small area which requires further work at The Street but said it has not been done because it requires a different process. They do not currently have a timescale for this work.
- Sports Field, Mowing and Trimming – Councillors Smart said the Parish Council has been fortunate to have the grass mown by a local volunteer but the arrangement is due to come to an end. He has carried out some research to see what the best option is going forward. One option is to employ a contractor, another is to purchase some equipment and do the mowing ourselves. If the Parish Council supplies the equipment there are two further options - to purchase a self-propelled mower, or to purchase a tractor mounted gang mower. He will see how viable it is to buy a gang mower and report back to the next meeting.

It was also noted that some strimming is needed on the C7 between the Abergavenny Arms and the gate at the start of the public footpath. The Clerk will report this to Highways.

- Communication with Northease residents – Residents at Northease are experiencing problems with noisy motorbikes on the C7, especially first thing in the morning. Offenders can be reported at operationcrackdown.org. Photographs and details can also be sent to Joe Attwood at POLO who will report them on residents’ behalf.
- The footpath between Northease and Rodmell – County Councillor Osborne has written to Rupert Clubb, Director of Communities, Economy and Transport at ESCC to see if he will authorise filling the gap with a semi-paved footway along the side of the C7.
- Safer C7 Report – Councillor Carroll said POLO sent out a survey asking residents if they want a safer C7 and received a very favourable response. Funding (around £30000) is now being sought to employ a consultant to design a scheme which will force traffic to slow down along its entire route. For example the consultant will look at each junction in conjunction with the SDNPA publication ‘Roads in the South Downs National Park’ and come up with recommendations. Mr Clubb has written to POLO to support its plan to commission the C7 feasibility study and indicated that his department would be willing to provide advice and officer support at key points, to ensure that the study considers measures that would be acceptable to the Highways Authority. The implementation phase of the project will be eligible for CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy). Both Lewes Town Council and the Kingston Road and Cranedown Residents’ Association have already donated. It is hoped to raise the rest of the money from Parish Councils and Crowdfunding. Councillors agreed, in principle, to make a donation and will agree an amount at the next meeting.

8. Brief Report from the Clerk and/or Councillors – Councillor Carroll said;

- POLO is to meet the Ouse Valley CARES Team to get an overview of The Ouse Valley CARES project which includes a sustainable energy strand, and is building on the work already underway in Barcombe to reduce reliance on heating oil and embrace renewables.

More details about the project can be found at: <https://climateactionforum.org.uk/local-projects/ouse-valley-cares/>

- At the latest Lewes District Association of Local Councils Meeting, members were updated on the Lewes Local Plan.

Maria Caulfield MP sent a report, which is available to read on the Parish Council’s website at rodmell.net.

9. Finance Report

Councillors resolved;

9.1: The accounts to the 5th July 2021 were received and approved by all.

9.2: The following payments were approved;

		<u>£:</u>
Lewes DC	Dog Bin emptying	93.60
LDALC	Subscription	20.00
A Stevens	May Salary	345.05
A Stevens	June Salary	345.05
HMRC	PAYE	249.40
A Stevens	Land Registry Searches	59.85

10. Appointment of a new Parish Councillor

Prospective candidates are being asked to submit a brief cv about themselves, with a covering email saying why they would like to be a Parish Councillor, to the Clerk by 23rd August. The Council will hope to co-opt a new Councillor at that meeting.

11. The next Full Council Meeting is planned for Tuesday 21st September 2021, items for the agenda need to be with the Clerk by Friday 10th September 2021. There was no further business and this meeting closed at 10.02pm.