

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for North Mundham Parish held on 9th May 2017 which commenced at 7pm

PRESENT: Cllrs. Denia Turnbull, Tim Russell, Rob Callaway-Lewis, Annie Maclean, Frances Neave, Paul Chivers, Hugo Wall and Peter Stephens.

In attendance: Mrs Louise Chater (Clerk to North Mundham Parish Council), District Cllr. Chris Page, John Hall West Sussex Growers Association, 26 registered electors and three members of public.

Apologies: Cllr. Keith Phillips, Di Wade, Sally and Christian Arnold

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and introduced the members of the parish council.

A01.17 Minutes of the last meeting -17th May 2017
On a proposal by Annie Maclean, it was agreed the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting and these were duly signed.

A02.17 Matters arising
None.

A03.17 Annual report from the Parish Council

The Chairman opened her report by stating that the Parish Council welcomed resident's comments and attendance at the Parish Council meetings.

The pressure is rising on all the services due to the increase in housing numbers. In addition to building work that has taken place within the parish, there are a significant number of planning applications in an adjoining parish which will have a substantial effect on the roads with an increase in the associated pollution in our parish.

Following the A27 consultation, liaising with adjoining parishes and with the support of District Councillor Barrett, the Parish Council objected to all the options including the one which would bring a proposed new road that would feed more traffic through the parish. This cooperation between the Parishes will continue in the preparation for the next round of ideas on the development of the A27. The Parish Council looks forward to working with the recently elected District Councillor Chris Page and County Councillor Jamie Fitzjohn, on this and many other matters.

In our more immediate environment the Parish Council are continuing to work towards the provision of the Canal Mead Permissive Path. Following a spate of vandalism, the bus shelter at Church Road has been fixed at considerable expense with special glazing which should resist the vandals. Tree planting could be increased if we take up the offer from Brick Kiln

Nursery and we look forward to receiving your suggestions about where some trees might be planted. The litter picking day was well supported, with additional volunteers from MacDonal'd's, who helped the residents to collect over 10 bags of litter. Unfortunately fly tipping continues, and this should be reported to Chichester District Council on 01243 785166.

The Open Gardens event in 2016 was much enjoyed and it is hoped that this year's event on 25th June 2017 will be equally successful.

The French Exchange group is due to welcome visitors in May 2018, and the Parish Council is in the process of reviewing its relationship with this Exchange.

In the year just past, the Parish Council has continued its support for the Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch and the Playing Field Trust. The Playing Field Trust is now more financially secure as a result of the income generated by the Free School.

Due to the increasing pressure on District and County Council budgets there is likely to be a greater need for the Parish Council and volunteers to take on services currently provided by these bodies. It is thanks to the commitment of such voluntary help that this council functions. My fellow councillors have worked hard, taken advice, considered the evidence, then spoken out to express the opinions of the Parish all in the interest of democracy.

Councillor Frances Neave reported that the village hall bookings have been busier than ever and the hall had recently hosted two weddings and a further one was booked for this weekend. Drapes and chair covers are now available for hire and the Committee are in the process of making a scrap book to help with the advertising of the hall as a wedding reception venue.

In the past year a large area of the wooden flooring has been replaced and the wooden floor has been sanded and treated. The foyer and ladies' toilet have been decorated. In the coming year there are plans for replacement banquet chairs and new curtains.

The Village Hall Working party which consists of three parish councillors, two regular users and the booking secretary, meet every month. The Village Hall Management Committee meets twice a year.

Frances expressed her thanks to the booking secretary and caretaker for his fantastic work.

The whole complex is now known as the North Mundham Village Centre as we are working closely with the Playing Field Trust to promote the Centre.

Councillor Tim Russell reported that the Parish Council has formed a planning committee. This Committee meets every month, except August, and the meetings are which you are welcome to attend. The Planning Committee had considered 34 applications in the preceding year, of which a significant number had been tree applications.

Tim reminded those present that the Planning Committee is not the deciding body for applications: The Committee can only make comments to the District Council. If the Parish Council objects to an application it automatically has to go to the District Council Planning Committee rather than being decided by a District Council Planning Officer. The Parish Council does keep alert to applications that are in the surrounding parishes, however the Council does not have the same power to bring the matter before another district's planning committee.

Councillor Hugo Wall stated that although there hadn't been much rain recently it is very important to keep your drainage ditches clear; if you have a ditch on your boundary you have a duty to maintain it. In South Mundham work has taken place to clear the culverts, however, it was recently noted that water is not moving in the ditch in Honer Lane and the Parish Council will investigate this further.,

AGENDA

The Clerk stated that the accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2017 have been completed and the internal audit had taken place which revealed no areas of concern. The end of year PAYE and Pension requirements have been completed and no further action is required.

As reported last year the Parish Council has been working on grant applications to fund the Canal Mead Permissive Path. The Parish Council has been successful in obtaining a grant to cover half the cost of this project. The Open Garden Event on 25th June will be raising funds for this project and the Parish Council hopes to be in the position to complete the project this Autumn.

A03.17 Neighbourhood Plan - Update

Councillor Peter Stephens stated that since the Parish Council gave its presentation on Neighbourhood Planning at the meeting this time last year the Council has been in a bit of quandary. As reported last year the neighbourhood plan has to tie in with the Local Plan. When the Local Plan was adopted the Planning Inspector stated that a review had to take place and this has just commenced.

As you are all aware at the time that the Local Plan was adopted the parish had planning permission in place for more than the housing quota. The parish council working group engaged with the District Council Neighbourhood Plan Officer, who expressed concern that the Parish Council were embarking on a plan that was not required.

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group has met regularly to work on the scheme of works, the timetable etc., and the group continue to remain concerned that the Neighbourhood Plan will continue to be out of step with the Local Plan. Housing Allocation and Site Allocations consultations are due to take place shortly and the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan is not sufficiently developed to be taken into consideration by the District Council. As you are all aware the Neighbourhood Plan has to support the number of houses in the Local Plan.

Due to the nature of the parish, the working group has been giving consideration as to whether we could more satisfactory deal with the issues in the parish with a Parish Plan.

The advantages of a Parish Plan are that it does not require such a regimented timetable of consultation, referendum and adoption, which means that it is significantly faster to produce. However, there is no funding available to assist with the production of the plan and it won't be adopted by the District Council in the same way. However, the Parish Council can use it to support the Parish Council evidence in planning comments and grant applications, for example.

In contrast, there is grant funding available to assist with the significant costs involved in employing consultants and carrying out the research required for a Neighbourhood Plan, however, it's likely to take a minimum of two/three years to complete.

In a comment from the floor, the Chairman of Oving Parish Council stated that the Planning Inspector in approving the local plan stated that the local plan has to be updated every five years. Oving Parish Council have decided not to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan and are in the process of preparing a parish plan.

Peter Stephens responded: Yes there is a fundamental problem: we would have to review our plan every five years, going through the same consultation and adoption process, to ensure that it remained consistent with the Local Plan.

Q: If we prepare a parish plan, would that mean we have worked out where we want development and where we don't?

A: You can do that with a parish plan, however, it is not binding.

District Councillor Page stated that the Parish should have some sort of plan in place, otherwise if you wish your District Councillor to go to the planning officer with regard to a planning matter, it would make it difficult if there is no supporting evidence. However, it is all up in the air until the General Election which takes place on the 8th June.

A resident stated that it appears that a parish plan gives you much more flexibility and will enable you to keep it up to date as presumably you can review a parish plan as often as you wish.

Another resident commented that it is easier to react to where the District Council or a Developer wishes to build rather than trying to decide where you want development. He noted "I was involved in the Neighbourhood Plan for Sidlesham and it appears to have just got filed and forgotten by other parties".

A04.17 Presentation by John Hall, Sussex Growers Association, on the lighting within the greenhouses and light pollution (and why it happens sometimes).

West Sussex Growers Association is the professional body that represent the growers in the area.

In addition to food production nearly all the nurseries in this parish are engaged in water management, and in most cases, the growers can harvest enough water to grow the crop for the entire year. Many of the Growers are also involved in electricity production.

The food production is all driven by customer demand and all the growth is to order, 85% of all fresh produce is sold through supermarkets. All the growers use beneficial insects, including for pollination, and use minimal chemicals.

Food and plant security will become more important, Sainsbury's intend to increase their "home-produced" food by 50% by 2020.

There are a significant number of glass houses in the area since it has the highest winter light levels in the UK. There is approximately 240 hectares of glass within the Chichester and Arun District, this amounts to £1billion sales annually and equates to 8000 employees. Planning is a big issue for the members of the Association and it takes a lot of time and money.

Light and Light Pollution comes down to three points: Operational issues, Glass houses built prior to 2003 and Education

Up until the early 2000's there were no planning conditions associated with light pollution from glass house developments. Since 2003 planning conditions were imposed so that no light emits into the night sky.

The Association's Code of Conduct states that glass houses built prior to 2003 should comply with the rules on light pollution that apply to the new glass houses.

If it is a new glass house and they are not complying the Association are very quick to alert growers to the situation and require them to address it. If it is an older greenhouse then the Association works with the grower to improve the situation.

Currently the majority of the lighting systems are high pressure sodium lights, however these are gradually being updated with LED lights; research is being carried out into colours and wave lengths. When the light is escaping, it is usually reflective light and not direct light.

John Hall stated that once they were made aware of the problem over Christmas the Association had meetings with the relevant growers. The issue was caused by the humidity because it was so mild. The Association advised the growers that the screens should only be opened by 5% and this would reduce the humidity but would prevent the light pollution, however, it was noted that the new black out screens are breathable

Q: when you upgrade the lighting system do you need planning permission?

A: You would not need to apply for planning permission, but just e to comply with existing planning conditions.

Q What is the problem with using black out screens regularly?

A: Sometimes it is an operational problem and they are broken, however, mainly it is down to human error. Please contact the Association if you have any concerns with regard to light pollution and they will investigate it. The Clerk stated that if the light pollution is due to an operational problem then if the association advises the Parish Council they will put the information on the Parish Council website.

Q: What is the difference between black out and reflective blinds?

A: Modern greenhouses can have screens that let light through, however, some glass houses have two screens one to stop the light pollution and the second to let the light through which saves energy, the second option reduces the light but isn't efficient as the blackout screen. It is being recommended that all glass houses put in two screens when they are replacing their screens.

Q: The main culprits appear to be Vita Cress and Hills; do you know when these were built?

A: Both these sites were built prior to 2003.

A resident asked if we should lobby the supermarkets to ensure that this issue is addressed. John responded that although you can lobby supermarkets he would prefer it if residents continue to contact the Association so that they can address the issue.

Noise Pollution - a concern was expressed about the low humming noise which was particularly prevalent at Easter. John stated that he wasn't

aware of this issue but if it occurred again then please contact the Association at the time so that they can investigate it.

John reiterated that if you have any concern please contact the association immediately on John.hall@wsga.co.uk or 07788 107915

The Chairman thanked John for his presentation and requested a visit to the glasshouses, John confirmed that he would look into this.

A05.17 Questions from the Public

Jeanie Down - made a request for volunteers to prepare and cook food for the North Mundham Christmas Lunch, please speak to me after the meeting. The Chairman thanked Jeanie and the volunteers for the service they provide for this event.

Mark Neave reminded everyone that the Gala was due to take place on 15th July 2017, and he wanted to encourage residents to take part in the competitions.

Louise Russell once again raised her concern with regard to the community kitchen and considered it a waste of public funds and felt that this was going to be repeated when a second storey would be built which nobody knew about.

A resident responded that the fact that the hall is now being let out for weddings, surely that shows that the kitchen is a benefit.

Another resident stated that he had used the kitchen for a party and it had been very successful.

Yet another resident stated that she uses the new kitchen every month and it is a considerable improvement on the previous kitchen.

The Chairman thanked Louise for expressing her views and stated that the plans for the village hall were included in the village hall business plan which is available on the parish council website

There being no further questions the Chairman thanked everyone for coming and invited them to join the Parish Council for refreshments.

The meeting closed at 21.03pm

Signed: _____ Chairman North Mundham Parish Council

Dated: _____