

SLAUGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

2 Coltstaple Cottages, Coltstaple Lane, Horsham, RH13 9BB

PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES

Held on Thursday 23rd May 2013 at 7.30pm in the Pavilion, High Street,
Handcross.

Sally Mclean – Clerk to the Council
Email clerk@slaughampc.org.uk
Website: <http://www.slaughampc.co.uk>

The Minutes will remain in DRAFT until approved and signed at the next suitable meeting.

Present: Cllr Sue Hance, Michael Earle, Gail Boustead, Bob St George, David Clare, Andrew McNaughton, Pat Long, Chris Hinchey

Others Present: Tom Warder AIR's, Brendan O'Neil rCOH, Debra Logan NHP Committee and 22 members of Public

1. Introduction and welcome by the Chairman

Apologies due to work from Dorothy Crossan and Simon Goyder.

Welcome all; especially welcome our two speakers, Tom Warder Action in Rural Sussex who will be talking to us about Community Trusts; and Brendan O'Neil from rCOH who will be talking about the proposals for a new community hall contained in our Neighbourhood Plan.

This meeting is for us to tell you what the Parish Council has been doing over the past year, and also for you to ask us questions, which you can do at item 7, the Open Forum.

Before we start, I would like to thank Billie and the ladies from the Pease Pottage WI for doing a splendid job with the teas and coffees

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24th May 2012 APPROVED

3. Annual Report of the Council presented by the Chairman

The Chairs of the Committees will be telling you what our various committees have been doing over the last twelve months, but I would like to give you a quick overview of the past year.

It has been an extremely busy time for the Parish Council, as the impact of preparing a neighbourhood plan, while trying to see off the resulting premature planning applications that came in, has stretched our resources to the limit. I would like to offer sincere thanks to all Councillors, and members of the public who have been involved in the process. Particular thanks are due to Chris Hinchey, who has chaired the process while running a business, family life and has somehow managed to retain good humour and a clear vision throughout. Enormous thanks also to our Clerk, Sally, who has managed the whole process for us. We have now seen it to

the stage where there is real light at the end of the tunnel. Debra will be giving you more details in a minute, but it looks as if we will be going to Independent examination in the summer, and a referendum in the Autumn. This will be your chance to vote on the future development in the parish, and will be the first time that has been possible. It will be quite a historic occasion, and we hope that you will all use your vote, and will encourage all friends and neighbours to do so as well.

Having got to this stage, we now have an opportunity to draw breath, and concentrate more on what you might call the “normal” parish council activities, whether to do with allotments, transport matters, the recreation ground, or the ever-present problems of dog poo and parking at the school. We are a parish of four villages, and this can make things more challenging, but I am impressed by the “whole parish” approach of our councillors and clerk who work with the best interests of all the villages in mind. One small example of this is the “freighter” – the mobile waste service that used to be paid for by WSCC and now has to be funded by the Parish Council. It hadn’t been to Pease Pottage for some years, and it was good to hear that its recent visit was as enthusiastically received there as it is in the other villages.

Our Parish is also in two wards, which means that we have two District Councillors, two County Councillors, and a set number of parish councillors for each ward. In September we said goodbye to Geoff Coe, a member for Slaugham and Warninglid ward, and are hoping to fill this vacancy by co-option next week. More recently, David Ross has stepped down which means that we now have a vacancy in the Handcross and Pease Pottage ward. Please would anyone who may be interested in joining us from these villages contact Sally with their details? I think we can promise a rather less frantic but equally interesting time going forward – it could be a good time to get involved. Could I also thank on behalf of the Parish Council both Geoff and David for the contributions they have made over the years.

I will now hand over to the Chairmen of committees to give their reports on the year:

Planning – Michael Earle

Recreation – Bob St George

Community Halls – Andrew McNaughton

Neighbourhood planning –Chris Hinchey.

4. Reports of Chairmen of Committees and working groups

Planning Committee & Vice Chair Cllr Michael Earle

Well what a year for planning!

I’m sure you’re all aware of and hopefully been part of the neighbourhood plan, which has been chaired and driven brilliantly by Chris Hinchey. I’m sure Chris will speak more on this in a moment.

I think the Planning Committee will agree with me when I say we have all learned a lot this past year and certainly had our knowledge tested. I won’t dwell on the subject too long, but for those of you who aren’t aware there have been 3 attempts of considerable developments in and bordering our Parish. Just last week Cllr Bridges and myself represented this council at Horsham District Council for a development proposed on the border of Pease Pottage. I’m happy to report this was unanimously refused by the committee. Unfortunately at the other side of this village an appeal

was held and resulted in permission being granted for a considerable development. This baptism of fire for us was a big learning curve and although we effectively lost the appeal, I'd like to thank not only the Cllrs who assisted in our defence, but also the community who also fought to protect their village and work on the neighbourhood plan.

Other applications include the Hyde and Clays Lake, both of which were thankfully rejected by Mid Sussex. That is not to say we aren't expecting that to be the last we hear of them!

You will be aware that the government are making changes to the planning system, not only through the introduction of 'localism', but by given what appears to be more free rein with regards to extensions and home improvements. How this filters down and affects this Planning Committee is yet to be fully understood, however in an attempt to stay up to date and give us the best opportunity to respond to applications appropriately (both small and large) training for Cllrs has been organised of which much interest has been shown.

On a closing note, as Vice-Chair of Slaugham Parish Council I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the councillors, but in particular Sue and Sally who have done and achieved so many things this year, I couldn't even begin to list them! A true asset to this Council.

Thank you.

Recreation Committee Report Cllr Bob St George

I am happy to report the Recreation committee has had a very successful year.

We have been very busy as follows:

The new structure included the setup of a new Users Committee being chaired by Cllr Gail Boustead

The financial accounts are in a healthy position and up to date. The accounts were approved by Slaugham Parish Council and submitted to Mid Sussex District Council to obtain relief from statutory Business Rates.

A review of the Allotments in Handcross and Warninglid was completed in 2012. As a result a review is in progress of which a detailed register and plan of the plots in Handcross and Warninglid will be implemented.

The recreation Committee is seeking to re-establish an Allotments Association in Handcross and letters have been sent out to this effect to allotment holders in Handcross.. Warninglid already have a fully functioning Allotments group it's not yet an association.

We are seeking to build the revenue earned by the Pavilion by targeting and seeking bookings from other people and groups inside and outside of Handcross. In order to pay for the maintenance of the structure and up keep of the building we are not a profit making organisation

I would like to thank all members of the Recreation Committee including our Parish Clerk for their support and hard work during the year. I would also like to thank all our users for supporting us and using the facilities.

New Community Hall Cllr Andrew McNaughton

The work had commenced in earnest for the new community centre in Pease Pottage, Finches Field. It is an emotive subject and taken a fair amount of work to get it off the ground but we are getting there. District Council are in negotiations with the land owner Simpsons Trust to try and acquire the land currently leased to the Council so that they may keep the current pitches, by doing this it will also mean that the new Open Green Space at Hemsley's Field could be linked to Finches Field.

The Committee are in the process of developing a questionnaire that will go to all the residents so that feedback can be obtained on what they would like to see available to them at the site and within the centre.

Neighbourhood planning – Cllr Chris Hinchey.

Neighbourhood Plan (NP) has been prepared after extensive community involvement and engagement. The Committee has discussed with the community the need for development and Community acceptance based on NP providing facilities and affordable housing.

The Plan is now in the latest stages of Regulation 14 Consultation phases and the comments are currently being reviewed by the Committee

The Plan was consulted on during 19th December 2012 to 8th February 2013. The purpose of the 'Pre-Submission' version of the plan was to consult the local community and statutory authorities on the plan's proposed policies, in accordance with Regulation 14 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Within the original 'Pre Submission' plan there were 2 options presented to test opinion and views. Following analysis of the responses, a series of public meetings have been held to review and consider the results. Amendments were made and this version is presented for an additional 21 day consultation period, allowing Statutory Authorities, Stakeholders and Residents time to make any further comments. Also attached were two Community Right to Build Orders.

The principal change is the final choice of sites; this version contains the additional choices in B as previously consulted. No additional sites are included as A was a subset of B in the previous version, other smaller changes included wording and content, including consultation detail and plan preparation, Coos Lane Park, Slaugham Manor, delivery plan/CIL, the addition of Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Community Right to Build The consultation period commenced on 3rd April 2013 and ended on the 24th April 2013.

The Committee held several public meeting to review the representation's made during the total consultation period/s

The Pre-submission Plan was produced and at this point, the Neighbourhood Plan came under the direction of MSDC who published it for a further 6 week period of consultation on 13 June 2013. Following that consultation they will appoint an Independent Examiner sometime in September that will be engaged to examine the Plan. The current timetable is that the this will be completed by end of November early December with a referendum planned shortly after.

Further exhibitions will be held in October to revisit how we arrived where we are and why there is a need for a Neighbourhood Plan and the benefits other than just development, what it will for the four villages and what the next stages heading towards referendum should the Plan pass examination.

5. Financial Report of the Council

Financial Report

The accounts for the year ended 31st March 2012 were audited by both the internal and external auditors and passed without any matters arising.

The accounts that you have on your seats are the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2013, which will remain draft until approved by the Parish Council and sent to the External auditors in June.

You will see that this year we spent slightly more than our income - £1,433 – which is accounted for almost entirely by expenditure on the neighbourhood plan. However, the good news is that we have applied for £7,000 of government funding recently made available for nhp work and hope to get this, and we have also been told by our consultants that we should be able to recoup money spent on the nhp from the CIL – community infrastructure levy – on future development in the parish.

The neighbourhood plan is now at the stage where future expense (of examination, referendum) will be met by Mid Sussex District Council. Any future spending on the Community Right to Build orders is covered by grant funding by another government agency, the HCA, which has been agreed.

You will see that we have an earmarked reserve for tree surgery. During the past year none of the budgeted £3,250 was spent on tree work, but we are now in the middle of a major review of the safety of trees on Parish land, in particular the Recreation ground here and around the Furnace pond in Slaugham, and it is clear that quite a lot of remedial work will need to be done. We have therefore earmarked that unspent money for next year's costs.

6. Community Land Trusts – Tom Warder (Action in Rural Sussex)

Community Right to Build Orders – the new community hall – Brendan O'Neil

Provided a short overview of what a Community Land Trust and the benefits that they offer for the Parish.

A presentation on what the new hall could look like from the information gathered during the 2010 survey and recent NP consultations

7. Open Forum for the Public

Question 1

Concern over the size of the new parish hall replacement facility, has a business plan been completed to deliver the annual costs for this size of building.

The diagrams of the facility are an example of what it could look like should the Parish meet all the aspirations of the village that were captured in the survey carried out in 2010 and again from the consultation process within the NP. This design is based on that

wish list a detailed scoping document and business would need to be carried out to ensure that the building does meet the right need and was sustainable.

Question 2

Please could the PC confirmed the required number required a referendum for the Plan to be adopted.

The requirement is 50% of those that vote.

Question 3

Will there be further exhibitions to engage the community further.

Yes, the NP Committee have planned for further exhibitions later in the year that will provide further information on the how the site/s may look, the Community Land Trust (CLT) attributes and what repeat information on how we arrived where we are and what the next stages will be for referendum.

Question 4

Who will work with the CLT, will there be professionals on the board as well as members of the Parish?

Yes, the CLT are looking for volunteers to join them and they will deploy certain aspects of setting up the governance and legalities to professionals that will assist them going forward and during these stages, in addition to identifying individuals within the Parish with specific experience to join the board.

Question 5

Will the NP slides be available?

Yes on the website

8. Closing remarks by the Chairman

Cllr Hance thanked all those in attendance.

Handcross Fun Day on the 7th July