

Cuckfield Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting held at 8.00 pm on 11th March 2010

Present: Mr Salisbury (Chairman), Mr Gregory, Mrs King, Mrs Burgess, Mr Blanch, Mrs Macintyre, Mr Mercer

In Attendance: Mrs Jones (Clerk),

261 Public Question Time: No matters were raised by the public

262 Apologies for Absence were received from Mr Gallagher, Mr Gilboy, Mrs Revell, Mr Bradbury

263 Declarations of Interest: Mrs Burgess and Mr Salisbury declared a personal interest, as residents of Courtmead Road, in Item 10 of the agenda regarding the sale of land in Courtmead Road.

264 Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting: The minutes of the meeting held on 14th January (previously circulated) were approved by the Council

265 Clerk's Report on Matters Arising from the Agenda

The clerk reported that following a meeting with WSCC and Ansty & Staplefield Parish Council, a joint letter from the Parish Councils had been sent by Mr Bradbury to WSCC strongly objecting to the proposals for the inclusion on the long list of the site off of the Cuckfield Bypass for a 'Built Waste Facility'. The Chairman stated that Nicholas Soames MP had lent his weight to these objections.

266 Report from County Councillor

In the absence of Mr Bradbury, the Chairman read a report from the County Councillor regarding various matters of interest including information on road conditions (an additional £2.8 million has been allocated to deal with potholes), levels of Council Tax, support given to the Haiti earthquake, speed limits, etc.

The Parish Council noted with sadness the recent death of Cllr Brenda Binge. Condolences would be sent to the family.

267 Report from the Chairman

267.1 Meeting with Cuckfield Dramatic Society: A meeting had been held with Richard Wiseman as CDS was now launching its fundraising for the new community theatre at Warden Park School. Although the Parish Council supported the project, it would not be possible to make a large financial commitment. It would be necessary to look at other sources, including S.106 contributions. This matter would be placed on the agenda for the next Council meeting.

267.2 Meeting with Gary Wall, Leader MSDC: At this meeting the Chairman had stated his concerns regarding the poor communications with the District Council and the need for a better understanding from all. There were concerns regarding the Charter between the District and Local Councils and that this was not taken sufficiently seriously by Members or Officers. A training programme needed to be instigated to show how the Charter relates to their work and it should be part of the performance review process. MSDC would review this matter. The issue of highspeed broadband was also discussed and was now being taken up by both MSDC and WSCC.

267.3 Cyclepath at Warden Path School: A meeting had been attended by WSCC Officers, Mr Bradbury and Warden Park School. WSCC had given serious consideration to a cyclepath along Broad Street but there was insufficient width for this. They had also looked at a path for school use only from Haywards Heath but this was unacceptable to the Parish Council as it would be of little benefit to residents, however a public right of way was unacceptable to the School. The possibility of fencing off a path was not considered suitable as it could be a target for anti-social behaviour and vandalism. It now looked unlikely that there would be funding to take this matter forward.

267.4 Design Plan for Cuckfield: A meeting had been held earlier in the day with the Architecture Centre to discuss the development of a management plan for Cuckfield. Various ideas were discussed including the importance of quality of life issues that needed to be considered when looking at transport solutions. This work could complement the Village Design Statement that was currently underway. The Parish Council would provide information regarding work that has been done to date to enable the Architecture Centre to come up with a definitive plan. If it was decided to move forward with this project, quite substantial funding would be required and it would be necessary to consider the use of grants from the CLC as well as S106 monies.

268 Committee Reports

268.1 Planning Committee: The minutes dated 4th & 25th February were noted by Council.

268.2 Environment Committee: The minutes dated 25th February were noted by Council. The clerk reported that the insurance company had asked that a weekly inspection regime be set up for the skatepark. This matter would require consideration by the Committee.

268.3 Roads & Traffic Committee: The minutes dated 11th February were noted by Council.

268.4 Queen's Hall Committee: The minutes dated 4th February were noted by Council. It was noted that the work on the basement was still outstanding.

268.5 Finance Committee: Mrs Macintyre reported that the accounts had been inspected and the level of reserves was higher than originally anticipated. This was due to reduced expenditure being incurred on the street lighting and additional income from weddings at the Queen's Hall.

268.6 Schedule of Payments

The schedule of paid cheques, as previously circulated, was approved by the Council.

269 Land in Courtmead Road

The Chairman reported that the sale of this plot of land was being actively pursued by Mid Sussex District Council. The Parish Council had two options: Firstly, to accept that the land was suitable for development. Restrictive covenants would be put in place by MSDC to restrict the development to one large dwelling. Or, secondly, for the Parish Council to object to the sale of the land as this would be a loss of general amenity and of a safe area for recreational use by young children. The plot also offered lovely views across the countryside. After discussion, it was **resolved** that the Parish Council would write to the District Council formally objecting to the sale of the land for development. The Parish Council wished to see the land retained for the general amenity of the community. It was agreed to arrange a meeting with MSDC to look into this matter in detail.

270 Community Bus

The clerk had circulated passenger figures for the community bus running between Warninglid and Burgess Hill via Cuckfield. Only two passengers were using the service on a regular basis and it was therefore agreed that the Parish Council would not give any further financial support to this service.

271 Any Other Business

Lead poisoning: Mr Blanch had received information from a resident highlighting the risks to residents from old lead pipework. It was agreed to write to the Environmental Officer as the District Council asking whether there was a policy in place to pursue this matter with South East Water.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.