



Minutes of the Meeting of Billingshurst Parish Council

Wednesday 14 July 2021

7.30pm

Present

Cllrs Paul Berry (Chairman), Graeme Acraman, Barry Barnes, Edna Benger, Garry Commins, Phillip Day (from Min 78/21), Craig Gale, Dave Homer, Ken Peters, Caroline Beresford Pratt, Doug Waller and Sarah Wilson.

In attendance

G Burt, Clerk to the Council
District Cllr Nigel Jupp
County Cllr Amanda Jupp
Mark Snelgrove, Billingshurst Tennis Club (BTC)
Rob Falkner, BTC
2 Members of the Public

66/21 Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman advised

1. Of the COVID precautions in place.
2. That Cllrs wishing to speak should raise their hand and speak clearly and loudly.

67/21 Apologies for Absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Sandy Duck, James Marchant and Roy Margetts (prior engagements). On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** that the reasons given be accepted.

68/21 To Receive Declarations of Interest and consider any requests for a dispensation.

- Cllr Graeme Acraman declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute 71/21 as Chair of the Scouts & Guides.
- Cllr Barry Barnes declared a personal interest in Minute 71/21 as a former member of the Tennis Club.
- Cllr Dave Homer declared a personal interest in Minute 71/21 as his wife is heavily involved with the Scouts & Guides.

Adjournment for

69/21 Public Session (Members of the Public may speak for up to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman).

Rob Falkner spoke on behalf of the Tennis Club in support of the additional court. He added that regrettably HDC had not supported the *West of Billingshurst* housing allocation,

which could have facilitated a new site for the Tennis Club, along with other improved sporting facilities. This meant that an additional court at LSRRG was therefore still required.

Andrew Pearson spoke against the additional court, saying how important un-encumbered open spaces were for a multitude of reasons. Cities such as London had far more open space than Billingshurst; such spaces should be preserved at all costs.

70/21 Reports from:

- a. County Councillor Mrs Amanda Jupp had submitted a report prior to the meeting, adding that WSCC had been given £9.6 million extra to support healthy activities/eating in schools. There had been an increased take-up for free school meals. The number of COVID cases in the county was on the up. Due to the favourable weather, grass appeared extra-long this year on the highway. Any areas where long grass was a danger to highway safety, please report it. She agreed to see what could be done regarding footways to Adversane and Five Oaks where already narrow footways had been reduced further by rampant hedges. The Children & Family Centre in the village was still scheduled for closure.
- b. District Cllr Nigel Jupp reported that thanks to grants etc. HDC's finances etc. were in a healthy position. Reserves were good, but much was earmarked. Income streams would take some time to recover. Cabinet was being asked to approve the draft new Local Plan the following evening, which would include the East of Billingshurst allocation for 650 houses. He thought this had been selected by officers as it was the most sustainable in terms of access/closeness to existing facilities than the other two sites in or adjoining the parish. This was then due to go to Council later in the month prior to public consultation. He encouraged residents to continue to make their views known to Cllrs. The preferred site included provision for a new primary school. It was possible that rather than further expand The Weald School, its catchment area could be reduced. (i.e. outlying areas removed, so that the school could accommodate more students from the village itself.) He commented on the continuing desirability of the area to relocate.

District Cllr Kate Rowbottom, in tending her apologies, said *Please congratulate the Neighbourhood Plan group on a successful plan. I know what hard work has gone into it. The big decision on sites will be made in Council on the 28th July.*

- c. Council Representatives on Outside Bodies.
Cllr Craig Gale reported that the new team leading the BSRA were very focused on taking the club forward for the benefit of sports teams and young people in particular, and were actively seeking new funding streams.
Cllr Graeme Acraman reported that HALC had recently met with HDC and made the point that there had been a lack of information to parishes coming forward from HDC about the Local Plan in recent months. HDC said they would take the comment on board.

Resume Meeting

71/21 Disposal of land at Lower Station Road Recreation Ground.

The Council had previously granted landlord's consent to Billingshurst Tennis Club for the construction of a fifth court. However, the Council was obliged to advertise its intended disposal of public open space and consider any comments. 58 comments had been received and these had been circulated to all Councillors (in addition to being put on the website.) Members discussed the proposals in some detail, with comments including: Tennis Club membership was a small percentage of the parish population; whatever the Council decided it would disappoint someone; loss of space that was available to use at all times by anyone. Cllr Doug Waller proposed (seconded by Cllr Craig Gale) the following motion: That the Council does not dispose of additional land to Billingshurst Tennis Club. Cllr Dave Homer requested a recorded vote.

For the motion:

Cllrs Acraman, Bengier, Beresford Pratt, Commins, Gale, Homer, Peters, Waller, Wilson.

Against the motion:

Cllr Berry

Abstentions:

Cllr Barnes

The motion was **RESOLVED**.

72/21 To consider cost etc. to improve quality of sound of broadcast/streamed meetings.

Following the cessation of virtual meetings, the Council had continued to stream meetings on the internet, but the use of a good laptop was insufficient alone to provide good audio quality for listeners, many of whom had complained. Although not mandatory to stream meetings, Councillors were keen to continue to broadcast meetings, as statistics showed there had been many more viewers of council proceedings (both live and on catch-up) than had previously attended physical meetings. Although the Council did not have the resources to physically interact with residents who made comments or asked questions during meetings, residents could be encouraged to submit questions in advance. Although the Council did not have a specific readily available fund to meet the approximate £1,400 cost, several funding options could be looked at.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Sarah Wilson, **RESOLVED** that the Council continues to stream meetings whenever possible, and the Finance & General Purposes Committee be charged with allocating funds accordingly.

73/21 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 May 2021.

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2021, previously circulated were taken as read. On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and signed as a correct record accordingly.

74/21 Matters Arising – that are not separate agenda items

None

75/21 To consider recommendation from Working Practices Committee of 19th May 2021 to adopt new Code of Conduct.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** that the new Code of Conduct be adopted accordingly.

76/21 To consider the following proposal from Cllr Barry Barnes: *That the Council convene a meeting of enthusiastic individuals and representatives of groups and societies, to form a committee to consider a programme of activities, entertainment, street parties etc, for next year's four-day celebration of HM Queen's Platinum Jubilee.*

Members agreed that efforts should be made to work with others to produce a program of activities to mark this important occasion. However, the Council did not have the capacity to undertake a comprehensive program alone. On the proposal of Cllr Barry Barnes, seconded by Cllr Paul Berry, **RESOLVED** that the Council host a meeting of interested parties keen to deliver a program over the Jubilee weekend, with an emphasis that those coming forward must be willing to be actively involved. Cllr Barry Barnes would furnish the office with contacts from previous celebrations. Cllr Mrs Amanda Jupp would ascertain what those wanting to hold street parties had to do by way of road closures etc.

77/21 To receive Minutes as approved by the following Committees:

- a) On the proposal of Cllr Dave Homer seconded by Cllr Sarah Wilson, **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meetings of 1 April, 6 May, 3 June and 23 June 2021 be received.
- b) On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters seconded by Cllr Craig Gale **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the F&GP Committee meetings of 28 April and 26 May 2021 be received.
- c) On the proposal of Cllr Doug Waller seconded by Cllr Craig Gale **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Working Practices Committee Meeting of 17 March 2021 be received.

78/21 To consider any applications for cooption (1 vacancy)

The Council had widely publicised the casual vacancy. Written submissions from 1 candidate (Phillip Day) had been circulated to all Councillors. On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** that Phillip Day be co-opted to the Council accordingly.

Cllr Phillip Day then signed the *Declaration of Acceptance of Office* and joined the meeting.

79/21 To review appointments to committees etc.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED** the appointments as set out in Appendix A.

80/21 Neighbourhood Wardens - to receive Wardens' Reports for March, April, May and June.

NOTED

81/21 Any other matters for information only.

None.

82/21 To receive reports on recent meetings with local police and PCC's representative.

- Cllrs Berry, Peters and the Clerk had recently meet with the local Commander and PCSO.
- They advised that they do monitor social media, but quite often, those reporting incidents via that medium were not willing to give statements. This highlighted the importance of reporting all incidents via correct channels.
- Cllrs Acraman, Gale and the Clerk had recently held a periodic meeting with the PCC's representative.
- They advised that the new police officers recruited thanks to the increases in Council Tax should start to *appear* later this year.

Members commented that there seemed a greater police presence in the village recently.

83/21 Date of Next Meeting – 1 September 2021

Meeting finished at 9.08pm

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

2021-22

(The Council has set the max. membership for Committees to 10 members.)

COMMITTEES	
Planning & Environment	EB, GC, DH , JM, CBP, SW, DW
Property	GA , BB, PB, SD , DH, RM, CG
Finance & General Purposes	GA, BB, EB, PB, DH, RM, KP , CG
Working Practices	PB, DH, RM, DW , SW, CG
Billingshurst Centre	GA, KP , SW , SD, CG, RM
Complaints (5 members Max)	PB, SD, RM
Complaints Chairman	SD
WORKING PARTIES	
Neighbourhood Plan	GA, SD
Emergency Planning	GA, EB, SD
Internal Audit	GA, DH, RM
East St Traffic Calming	PB, GA
Youth Liaison	RM, SW, CG
Jubilee Skatepark WP	BB, PB, DH, CG
Local Plan	DH, BB, GA, DW

Bold indicates Chairman/Vice Chairman

REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES	
Allotments Society	EB
B'hurst Sports & Recn. Assn. (BSRA)	CG
Friends of Station Road Gardens x1	BB, SD
HALC (H'ham Assn Local Ccls)	GA + SD
N'hood Warden Steering Group x2	GA, SD, PB, Clerk
Public Art Steering Group	Clerk
SPD Working Group	SD + Clerk
Trustee of Adversane Hall x1	SD
Trustee of Dauxwood Pre-School x1	SD
West Sussex Association Local Councils (WSALC) AGM x2	SD, GA
Youth Council	
B'hurst Flood Action Group	GA

Updated 15/07/2021