

# STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE MAIN HALL, THE PARISH HALL, THAKEHAM ROAD, STORRINGTON, ON WEDNESDAY, 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2016, commencing at 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Mrs A Worthington-Leese in the Chair  
County Councillor Philip Circus  
District Councillor Ray Dawe  
Dr Keir Newsome – Glebe Surgery  
30 Members of the Public.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** There were no apologies.
2. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.** These were duly **AGREED** to be a correct record of the proceedings thereat and were signed by the Chairman.
3. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.** Mrs Worthington-Leese presented the following report.

This year we have recruited four new councillors: Marie-Hélène Jakob, Bob Dent, Cheryl Brown and James Ross so welcome to all of them. We now have a full house! The first time for some while.

The year has been dominated by the Neighbourhood Plan and I would like to say that rumours of its demise are greatly exaggerated. Following a very positive health check, we submitted the plan for examination in January and as you can imagine we were disappointed to find that a second examiner rejected it. However, the examiner was supportive of most of the policies and requires further evidence to support others and clarification of some wording. We are working closely with Horsham District Council to make the necessary changes and hope to be in a position to resubmit the plan in the autumn. In the meantime it remains a material planning consideration and continues to be taken into account by the District Council in its decisions. So if developers tell you it is dead and buried please do not believe them!

It would seem that the requirements for Neighbourhood Plans have been changed and we are told that some plans that were 'made' a year or so ago would probably not pass examination now. This obviously makes them vulnerable to challenges by developers and although the delay in the making of our plan is disappointing and frustrating, we firmly believe that the

# STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting Minutes  
4<sup>th</sup> May 2016

end result, having effectively been through 3 examinations, will be extremely robust and able to withstand any challenge that may be mounted against it. In the mean time we continue to fight speculative applications by developers trying to get in before our plan is in place. No doubt you will hear more of those in the report about the work of the planning committee.

The Horsham District Planning Framework has now been adopted and is in place and this also provides us with some protection.

As you know, we have the Police & Crime Commissioner elections coming up so make sure you vote. The Parish Council is very concerned about the reduction in police and PCSO numbers but a meeting with the current Police & Crime Commissioner, Katy Bourne, resulted in the statement that crime figures for our area have increased not because there are fewer police but because reports of crime are dealt with more accurately... I am sure you will all reach your own conclusions about that!

We are also increasingly concerned about the lack of action by the Highways Authority (WSCC) as the answer to every request is currently "we have no money". The sign-cleaning programme has been dropped and our request to ban HGVs from turning left out of School Hill and right out of Manley's Hill was refused. We were however told that we ourselves could erect 'advisory' signs routing HGVs down Water Lane, providing we had an appropriate feasibility study done and approved by WSCC. We are currently progressing this as we believe that this is an obvious and low-cost solution to the problem of large vehicles repeatedly hitting the buildings on the corner of School Hill / Manley's Hill and the obvious danger to pedestrians.

Air Quality continues to be of great concern and the Low Emissions Trial Zone has not been as successful as hoped. The Steering Group is meeting in May to discuss the final results of the trial but there have been problems, unsurprisingly, with phone signals resulting in poor transmission of data so it remains to be seen what the outcome will be.

You will all be aware of the proposals in respect of Rydon School and one of our councillors, Richard Eves, a former headmaster, has been heavily involved with that and is continuing to work with the governors to achieve the best outcome for all of our children. We continue to support Rydon in their efforts to provide secondary education for our area and thank Richard for all his hard work in that respect.

The seemingly never-ending saga of Waitrose goes on. The precinct now has a new owner and we are waiting to see whether we will now get a much-needed extension to the store.

The second never-ending saga of the need for a new doctors' surgery is also on-going and we will be discussing that later on this evening so I won't say any more for the moment.

We continue to fund a youth worker following the decision by WSCC to withdraw funding for that and we are looking at doing some work to the Hurston Field to make it suitable for

## STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting Minutes  
4<sup>th</sup> May 2016

children's' football and other activities. Despite all this we have not increased our precept this year.

The life of the Parish Council is very varied and can be extremely frustrating but we, as councillors, could not do all this without the sterling work of our Clerk, Tracey and Deputy Clerk, Caroline so I would like to thank them for all their hard work this year and also Tim, our Premises Manager, for all his hard work.

I would also like to thank all of our councillors who give up their time to sit on the Council and thank them for their support to me this year.

I will now hand you over to the Committee Chairmen for their reports.

#### 4. **INFRASTRUCTURE, COMMUNICATIONS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT.** Mr. Eves presented the following report:

The last 12 months have proved to be uncharacteristically busy for this committee.

##### **Village Events.**

Three Italian Markets and a French Market were staged during 2015 and proved popular. Both are returning this year and will, we hope bring more people into Storrington.

Storrington Summer Festival took place in July 2015 and although we received great feedback from the public in general, the event itself did not prove to be profitable enough for the organisers to repeat this year. We are delighted that the local Classic Car Club (SADCASE) will be hosting its largest event on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July involving a display of classic and sports cars with food, drinks and entertainment on offer. This will provide a high profile and very enjoyable alternative. We hope to re-introduce the annual village day for 2017 and would welcome any volunteers who might like to get involved or provide ideas for a successful event.

Once again we were able to support an excellent Storrington Christmas Night with a very good turn out by the community. The new businesses in the village added to the community spirit and new street light motifs also helped to lift the atmosphere.

Piazza Italia District Tour – another successful event jointly arranged by HDC, the Parish Council and SADCASE saw a convoy of supercars visit the village and join the SADCASE classic car display. A local market was organised to coincide with the event and the Parish Council would like to thank SADCASE for its support with this and other village events.

For the last few years we have adorned the High Street with flags to celebrate special dates and occasions and will continue to do this.

# STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting Minutes  
4<sup>th</sup> May 2016

## **PC Communications & website.**

We will shortly be introducing the Parish Council's new website and will be making more of social networking sites to communicate with the public and to highlight our activities. We also hope to re-introduce the Parish Council Newsletter this year.

## **Storrington Memorial Pond**

We hope that the community will agree that some significant improvements have been made to the pond area over the last year, making it a really enjoyable place to visit. The installation of ceramic poppies on the Island and the renovated Bug Hotel are two new additions and the children from Storrington First School have been invited to monitor the different species of insects that visit. We hope to work with the School to design a new information board highlighting all of the special features of the pond area to be installed during this year.

## **STARS Area Schools.**

We have campaigned vigorously to keep Secondary education in the village. We see this as an important element in the emerging Neighbourhood plan and believe that a secondary school for children between the ages of 11 and 16 is vital for the village. As we grow larger and as more houses are built in our neighbouring villages this will become even more important. We are not convinced that closing Rydon CC and reopening a small annex of Steyning Grammar is in the best interests of our children or of our community. No evidence has been produced to demonstrate that our children will enjoy an education at least as rich as that enjoyed by children elsewhere in the County. We await the Cabinet Member's decision

5. **RECREATION AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT**. Mrs Wheatley presented the following report:

A major focus for the committee this year has been the recreation ground at Storrington. A new fence was erected around the perimeter to replace the old one and to improve pedestrian access. The task of maintaining the grass areas to keep the surface the best it can be whilst hosting cricket, junior football and day to day use is an ongoing challenge. The committee recognises the need for grassed areas for multi use activities and this year we are hoping to reinstate the Hurston Lane field to allow for this.

The project to erect a skate park and provide new toddler equipment at the Storrington Recreation ground has taken longer than anticipated due to the long term involvement in the Neighbourhood Plan. We are waiting to hear if planning permission is needed. Following

# STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting Minutes  
4<sup>th</sup> May 2016

clarification we will be seeking grants to progress the scheme. Our aim is to complete the project during the council year.

We continue to support the leisure centre following its rejuvenation project by providing S106 funds for new equipment and by endorsing further projects, which could be funded under C.I.L.

Both allotment sites are being maintained to a high standard with all plots taken and waiting lists at both sites. The lease at the Amberley Road allotments has been renewed.

Splash continues to provide well-attended and valued youth services. They have employed a dedicated youth worker to provide the type of activities that young people want. Costa Coffee nights, Friday youth club and school holiday activities all form part of their program.

I would like to thank Mark Lewis, vice chair and all of the committee members for all of their hard work and support throughout the year.

## 6. **PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT.** Mr Jerman presented the following report:

This year the Planning & Development Committee dealt with a total of 150 applications. This number is virtually flat with last year after the large increase in volume over the April 2014 to March 2015 period. However, as you will hear, the scale of the individual developments is very substantial with very large associated detail submissions.

There were also 9 appeals of which 6 were dismissed and 3 are at hearing stage. The most significant of those still at the hearing stage are the two applications concerning Bax Close. Those who attended this meeting last year will remember that the proposal by Bovis Homes for the development of 45 dwellings, some as large as 5 and 6 bedrooms, adjacent to and with access through Bax Close had been both objected to by this Parish Council and refused by Horsham District Council. However, whilst the proposal still does not comply with the evolving Neighbourhood Plan in either projected number of houses, type of dwelling or access by way of Amberley Road, Bovis have seen fit to proceed to appeal with two scenarios, one of the original number of 45 houses and a second of 35. We await the outcome.

There were also 7 enforcement notices ranging from over-sized, highly coloured play equipment and unsightly full size window sticker advertisements to someone living out of a converted fire-engine by the side of the road.

The two largest applications we had to review and comment on were the demolition of existing buildings and the erection of 112 new dwellings on the old Paula Rosa site and Gladman Developments application for 160 dwellings off Fryern Road. With regard to the Paula Rosa site, whilst the number of houses was in excess of that envisaged by the

# STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting Minutes  
4<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Neighbourhood Plan it was a site that was included in that document. No commercial/industrial company had been forthcoming to procure the site, indeed our hope for future employment developments has always been in the A24 corridor rather than off Water Lane. The developer has now agreed to reduce the number of dwellings and will be resubmitting the application shortly.

The Gladman development site was not in our Neighbourhood Plan “call for sites” nor in the Horsham District Plan therefore for these and many other reasons we strongly objected to such works. The Gladman application for up to 107 dwellings off the Storrington Road, although not in our Parish, was also strongly objected to for similar reasons. We are pleased to report that the emerging Neighbourhood Plan has been taken into account in many of these decisions.

It should also be noted that Wates have not “gone away” from the land North of Melton Drive and put in for around 70 houses against the original 102 but have subsequently withdrawn the application. Watch this space!!

Along with all of the above, committee members have frequently attended planning meetings at Horsham in order to voice Storrington & Sullington Parish Council’s reasons for agreeing or objecting to an application; dealt with numerous tomes and consultation papers from West Sussex County Council, Horsham District Council and The South Downs National Park Authority which are required to be reviewed and commented on and of course reviewed and in some cases visited sites and properties prior to making any decision within the committee. So it has been quite a heavy but worthwhile workload again this year.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Paul Marshall for his input before he left the committee on his successful election as a District Councillor at Horsham and welcome on board Robert Carter and Bob Dent, who have joined us during the year.

7. **FINANCIAL REPORT.** (See Appendix I). The figures for the financial year 1st April, 2015 to 31st March, 2016 were available to view from the Parish Office. These were duly **NOTED.**
  
8. **THE GLEBE FIELD AND SURGERY- PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.** The Parish Council had received a number of enquiries from members of the public regarding the proposed development of the Glebe Field for up to 32 homes plus a new surgery. There had been much publicity about the plans and differing opinions had been expressed. Mrs Worthington-Leese outlined the Parish Council’s position in that it would be difficult to support any housing development on the field as it was allocated as a Local Green Space in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Whilst the Parish Council could not comment on specific planning grounds until a formal application had been submitted to Horsham District Council, Mrs Worthington-Leese pointed out a few obstacles, which would need to be overcome as part of that planning application.

# STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting Minutes  
4<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Dr Newsom was in attendance and explained that when the Millstream Surgery was closed by NHS England, the Glebe doctors agreed to take on those patients that wished to be transferred to them. This had led to an increase in patient numbers to 12,000 and these were projected to rise further to 16,500 over the next 4 years. The Glebe Surgery was originally built to accommodate 4,000 patients and there had been some extensions to provide for 6,000. Whilst two porta cabins had been installed, Dr Newsom reported that the doctors were struggling to manage with the facilities they had. The Diocese had offered to provide some land at the Glebe field at minimal cost, which meant that the doctors could apply for NHS funding to build the extension that they need. However this offer of land was conditional upon the Diocese being given permission for a housing development on the field. Dr Newsom also reported that the funding from the NHS was conditional upon the expansion being underway by 2018.

Members of the public enquired about the possibility of moving the doctors to the Millstream Surgery and expanding there and Cllr Dawe explained that this had been the reason that HDC bought the Millstream. He had been in discussion with the doctors and the Diocese for some years about the need for improved medical facilities but so far, the Diocese had refused to lift a covenant that prohibits the building from being used for anything other than a doctors' surgery, which prevents them from selling up and moving to another location.

It was reported that the Diocese had a duty to maximise their assets and believed that a housing development on the Glebe Field would do this. However Cllr Dawe pointed out that if an application for housing was declined, then the only way to maximise this particular asset was to sell part of it for the surgery expansion. He suggested that pressure should be put on the diocese to release the doctors from the covenant, or to allow them to purchase the land for the expansion as a separate matter to any application for housing development.

A discussion took place amongst members of the public with differing views being expressed and Cllr Dawe and Dr Newsom answered questions.

- 9 **MOBILE PHONE SIGNAL – TO DISCUSS INSTALLATION OF MOBILE MAST IN STORRINGTON VILLAGE.** Councillor Hurley had been exploring ways to improve mobile phone coverage in the Village and Mrs Worthington-Leese read aloud extracts from a report of his findings. This subject had been discussed during a recent meeting of the Infrastructure, Communications and Environment Committee where the suggestion of installing a mast in the village had been raised. Due to the controversial nature of this suggestion, it was agreed that the public's opinion should be sought before any investigation into the possibility of this should be undertaken. Members of the public commented on the very poor reception and it was pointed out that the style of masts had changed considerably over the years. Further exploration of this subject would take place.

# STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting Minutes  
4<sup>th</sup> May 2016

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** – No further matters were raised.

The meeting closed at 8:35pm.

Members of the Public were invited to take refreshments.