



ARDINGLY PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk: Bernadette Cox
c/o The Post Office, 37 High Street, Ardingly, West Sussex, RH17 6TB
Tel: 01444 226 209 Email: ardinglypc@hotmail.co.uk

Minutes of the Remote Ardingly Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 12th January 2021 at 7pm on the Microsoft Teams Platform

Present

Councillor D. Stutchbury (Chairman)
Councillor C. Hotblack (Vice Chairman)
Councillor R. Chalk
Councillor L. Davis
Councillor J. James
Councillor K. James
Councillor M. Meldrum
Councillor G. Taylor

In Attendance Mrs. B Cox (Parish Clerk)
Mr. R. Wheatley (RFO)

1629.1 Public Questions

The following issues were raised by members of the public:

Sarah Chapman mentioned that the Climate Change Group would be happy to support a review of the Parish Council Environmental policy and suggested that Councillor Meldrum be part of this review as a member of the Finance Committee. The Chairman asked the Clerk if this was permitted, the Clerk explained that any policy would need to be adopted by Full Council so the Climate Group assisting PC representatives to review the policy would be permitted as long as the reviewed policy was then put before the PC for approval. Councillor K James explained she is both a member of the Finance Committee and the PC representative on the Climate Change group so would be happy to be involved in the review of the policy. It was AGREED that the Climate Change Action Group supported by Councillor K James would review the PC environmental policy for approval by Full Council.

David Port raised the issue of a commercial business operating from the North Gate of the Showground and asked Councillor Stutchbury if he recalled this being approved at the recent Showground Council Meeting. David shared that it may need to comply with planning and felt its operation potentially didn't align with the Showgrounds Charity Status. Councillor Stutchbury agreed with David Port's comments and explained he did not recall it being discussed at the recent Showground Council Meeting and that the Clerk would contact the Showground and see if they had more information for the Parish on this issue.

Councillor Hotblack did explain that there was an agenda item at the December meeting to invite the Showground to the January PC meeting to outline their plans for the year but this had not happened and that hopefully this would happen at the February meeting.

Neil Cooper approached the Parish Council on behalf of the Football Club enquiring if the Gents Toilets in the Recreation Ground had been repaired and as although at the moment Football was unable to resume, he felt that should things change, the very least the Football Club would need to host visitors would be toilets. The Chairman explained the toilets had been repaired and as long as there was no further vandalism the toilets would remain open for use.

<p>1630</p>	<p>Procedural Matters 1630.1 To accept apologies for absence Councillor Strutton offered his apologies 1630.2 To accept any declarations of interests There were no declarations of interest received 1630.3 To confirm and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 1st December 2020 The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 1st of December 2020 were duly APPROVED by the Council and the Chairman will sign a copy of the same as a true and Accurate record of the proceedings once the government restrictions in place for Covid19 are lifted.</p>	
<p>1631</p>	<p>Clerks Report 1631.1 To receive the Clerks Report Members had been supplied with a copy of the Clerks Report prior to the meeting. The contents of the Clerks report were accepted and APPROVED</p>	
<p>1632</p>	<p>Finance 1624.1 To receive and approve the schedule of payments since the last meeting The RFO explained that the noticeable payments since the last meeting were the 1st of the Biannual payments to the Public Loans Board and three other payments to WSCC for salary payments in Sept/Oct/Nov but this now means all salary payments are upto date. The RFO also explained he will be setting up the December salary payment to WSCC in the next few days and this will require authorisation from Councillors. 1624.2 To receive the Finance Report The RFO explained there was very little income in December, only the expected refund of 1&1 Internet excess charges. He explained he had not completed the application for the PC Charge Cards as his printer was not currently working. The Clerk suggested emailing the forms to her and she would print them for him. The RFO informed the PC that he will be submitting the PC VAT return for the 6 months leading up to the end of December shortly, as, as a PC "we" are allowed to claim VAT back on allowable expenses. Councillor Hotblack asked how he can claim reimbursement of costs connected to the Village Christmas Tree and he was advised to submit an expense form to the RFO including receipts and on that expenses form to give details of the bank account he</p>	

	<p>would like to receive reimbursement into.</p> <p>Councillor Meldrum asked if the expense form could be made available on Teams for Councillors to access. Councillor Hotblack also asked if the meter readings had been submitted to the utility companies the Clerk advised no meter readings had been taken yet.</p> <p>1632.3 To review and approve the Ardingly Parish Council draft budget for 2021/22</p> <p>The RFO asked if all Councillors had, had chance to review the draft budget circulated before the meeting, they acknowledged they had. The RFO explained that the Finance Committee met a number of times to review and amend the budget prior to today's meeting and they felt that there should be no increase on the previous year's precept. He stated that approving this draft budget will mean this year's precept will be within a few pounds of last year's precept.</p> <p>After discussion the Council voted via role call "To approve the draft budget for 2021/22" the draft budget was unanimously APPROVED.</p> <p>1632.4 To review and approve the recommended precept figure for 2020/21 to be submitted to Mid Sussex District Council</p> <p>The RFO asked if all Councillors had, had chance to review the draft precept figure circulated before the meeting, they acknowledged they had.</p> <p>Councillor Horsman asked if given the pressures of Covid on all authorities it might be wise to factor this into the precept figure should Parish Councils be expected to shoulder more in the future.</p> <p>Councillor Stutchbury asked District Councillor MacNaughton if he was aware if the Parish Councils would be expected to shoulder more due to the pressure at District level. Councillor MacNaughton explained he was not aware that the District Council would be pushing any extra responsibilities onto Parish Councils. He did mention that if the Parish has had any new houses built that they can higher their precept without much of an increase.</p> <p>The Council voted via role call "To approve the draft precept figure of £87,902 for 2021/22 to be submitted to Mid Sussex District Council" the draft precept figure was unanimously APPROVED. The RFO explained he will be submitting the figure to MSDC prior to the 31st January deadline.</p>	
<p>1633</p>	<p>Planning Committee</p> <p>To consider planning applications as below and any others which may arise in the meantime</p> <p>1633.1 DM/20/4635 Change of use application; Section 73A Retrospective Planning Application for change of use of land to private residential curtilage, including the erection of a retaining wall and fence, 3 Sumners, Ardingly</p>	

Councillor Hotblack asked the Councillors to confirm they had reviewed the application for discussion they unanimously acknowledged they had.

Councillor Hotblack explained that this was a retrospective application and the wall/fence had already been erected. He explained he had viewed it and to him it did look very oppressive. He explained that the planning officer had commented that it was unlikely it would have been approved due to height and the oppression against the street scene.

Councillor Hotblack went on to say that the applicant has hired consultants to mitigate the oppressive nature of the wall/fence but they have suggested removing some of the fence panels and planting climbers etc.

After discussion, the key concerns of which being, the height of the wall and its impact on the street scene and whether it was too close to a public right of way, the general feeling was that the Councillors needed to view the wall/fence before making a decision.

It was AGREED that the Clerk is to arrange for three Councillors to attend the site and report back to the Council

1633.2 DM/20/4598 Proposed conversion of roof store above garage to habitable space, Old Knowles Cottage Church Lane, Ardingly

Councillor Hotblack asked the Councillors to confirm they had reviewed the application for discussion they unanimously acknowledged they had.

During discussion there concerns that the conversion would be used for commercial purposes vs friends and family. Concern was also raised around the parking should it be used as another dwelling as apposed to an extension of the main house.

Councillor Stutchbury recalled the Parish Council had before objected to a similar application very near by to this one and felt that the council should apply consistency on planning matters.

District Councillor Mac Naughton explained that a standard condition is applied to these applications that restrict use of the conversion to friends and family.

Councillor Stutchbury voiced his concerns that the applicant might put in a retrospective application later to convert the conversion to normal residential.

Councillors Hotblack and J James voiced that they had no objections but were concerned about the insulation in the conversion and felt this should be considered.

The Parish Council voted "To submit a comment of NO OBJECTION with a caveat that they expect to see the conditions that this conversion not be permitted to be used for paying guests or as a separate dwelling applied. They would also like the applicant to consider the level of insulation required as this appeared to be neglected on the application". This was AGREED with a vote of 8/1 with one abstain.

1634.1

General Matters

1634.1 To receive a brief from the Pavilion Working Party on the Pavilion Refurbishment to date

It was discussed that there was concern that the plans for the Pavilion Refurb that were sent out as part of the Tender process may differ from those held by MSDC against which Planning Permission has been granted. Councillor Stutchbury advised that the only difference between the two was that the Tender Plans had more detail for Building regulation purposes. The Clerk suggested that there had at least been movement of doors in the Tender plans and the Chairman advised internal changes do not need to be provided to MSDC.

The recommendations from the Pavilion WP in respect of moving the Pavilion Refurb forward are as follows:

That Comber and Son be given 21 days from the date of today's meeting to provide an updated and itemised tender for the Pavilion Refurb works.

Councillor Stutchbury advised he had been in contact with Comber and they advised that they will provide this next week. Councillor Stutchbury also explained that on top of the Tender quote there will be further costs of fixtures and fittings, Project Manager, Building Regulations.

Councillor James raised the issue of the difference between the plans held by MSDC vs the Tender Plans (Alan Sharpe drawings) being that it looked as though there were a different number of Dorma's. Councillor Stutchbury advised that the extra Dorma was no longer included and had been "red penned" by MSDC. The Clerk explained that the MSDC plans she had circulated came straight from the portal and that the Alan Sharpe drawings had not been communicated to MSDC. Councillor J James suggested that this difference in drawings needed to be cleared up with MSDC.

Prolonged discussion took place on whether there was a need for the refurb to go ahead as per the plans against which planning permission had been given or whether the refurb needed to be reviewed and an alternative refurb solution found. The Councillors who had been on the Parish Council when the Pavilion Refurb was originally planned focused their reasoning on the need for the Refurb to stay as originally planned including the extension to allow for modifications such as a disabled toilet and usable space that could create income via hiring and the amendments requested by the Cricket and Football clubs. Reasons suggested for the review of the current planned refurb were that the needs of the Parish may have changed and more specifically in the last ten years and it was felt it is likely that funding will be an issue in the aftermath of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Councillor Chalk advised that the PC currently had ringfenced funds of appx 130k for the Pavilion refurb. The Clerk asked Councillor Chalk where specifically she had identified these funds as the Clerk herself was only aware of an available 81k appx. Councillor Chalk explained she and the RFO had looked at the funding in detail. The Clerk advised that all S106 funds have specific conditions and that in her opinion there was only £81k appx that could be used for the Pavilion refurb.

Councillor Meldrum asked how Comber became the preferred Tender and it was explained that three sets of tender documents were sent out and out of those three, only two came back. Councillor Stutchbury could not recall the name of the company that didn't return their tender but he advised that David Smith Contractors came back

and were 100k more expensive than Comber and Comber was accepted as the preferred tender via a vote at a full council meeting.

There was discussion around whether a lesser refurb such as the one suggested by David Port who is a member of the Pavilion WP may be more appropriate. Councillor Stutchbury felt it would be inappropriate for the Parish council to spend Public Funds on a lesser refurb when eventually the full refurb would be required. Both Councillors J James and Hotblack suggested the idea that starting a small refurb whilst funding was secured and planning cleared up may be a responsible action to ensure the Pavilion did not deteriorate further and was in a usable state for when the Covid 19 restrictions are removed.

Councillor K James suggested that next steps on this issue need to be Clarification on the Plans and then Clarification on the current Tender before any decisions can be made.

There was then further discussion on the suggestion that it might be wise to look into specs for a lesser refurb as a “fall back” option should funding not be secured for the refurb as planned.

The Clerk reminded Councillors at this point that the meeting had almost exceeded the 2.5 hour limit as per standing orders and there were further items on the agenda to discuss.

After discussion it was suggested that the Parish Council vote on the following items.

“To give Comber and Sons 21 days from the date of this meeting to provide an updated and itemised Tender for the Pavilion Refurb”

It was unanimously APPROVED that Comber and Son be advised by letter that they have 21 Days with which to provide the Parish Council with an updated and itemised Tender for the Pavilion Refurb

“That Councillors Stutchbury, Chalk and Meldrum obtain quotes for the unbudgeted costs such as a “Project Manager” and all “Fixtures and Fittings”

It was unanimously APPROVED that Councillors Stutchbury, Chalk and Meldrum obtain quotes for the unbudgeted costs such as a “Project Manager” and all Fixtures and Fittings

“That Councillors Stutchbury, Chalk and Meldrum obtain specifications and then quotes for a scaled down refurb of the Pavilion similar to the one emailed to the Council by David Port”

It was unanimously APPROVED that Councillors Stutchbury, Chalk and Meldrum obtain specifications and then quotes for a scaled down refurb of the Pavilion similar to the one emailed to the Council by David Port

1634.2 To receive and approve the specification for the Parish Maintenance contract

The Clerk shared the previously circulated document live and it was AGREED that the document be cross referenced with Councillor K James’s work on identifying the areas of responsibility for a maintenance contract and then circulated via email to all Councillors to review.

1634.3 To receive and approve the specification for the Pavilion and Public Toilet cleaning contract

The Clerk shared the previously circulated document live and minor amendments were suggested and it was AGREED that the Clerk would make these amendments and then circulate the document via email to all Councillors to review.

At this point the Chairman chose to adjourn the meeting using Ardingly Standing Order 3.w which states “A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2.5 hours”

Discussion was had around when the meeting would be reconvened and it was AGREED the meeting would reconvene within 7 days.