



# Loxwood Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council of Loxwood held on  
Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 8.00pm in the main hall North Hall.

174/2022 ATTENDANCE: Parish Councillors: Rick Kelsey (Chair); Charles Todhunter; James Hume; Jamie Lynch; Annette Gardner; Tony Colling. WSCC and CDC Janet Duncton (left the meeting after 179/2022). Jane Bromley, Parish Council Clerk. Two members of the public.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: CDC Gareth Evans. Parish Councillors: Roger Newman; Hannah Carey; and Simon Bates.

175/2022 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS: None.

176/2022 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS – The Parish Council RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Parish Council meetings on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022, and the Planning Committee Minutes of the 7th November 2022 are accurate accounts of those meetings.

177/2022 **APPENDIX 1** ACTION POINT LIST: The Parish Council updated the list of Actions.

178/2022 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – Two residents spoke regarding item 182. They spoke on behalf of the owner of the Brewhurst Weir. The owner bought the weir from the Environment Agency (EA). The EA had not intended to invest anything in the weir. Methods of automating the weir have been looked into and whether this would confer a public benefit such that the Parish Council could consider funding the automating of the weir. Automated monitoring would regulate river levels far better than could be done manually and it was thought this would assist in mitigating flooding in the area. The weir gates cannot be left open as in drier weather it would drain the river.

Cllr Colling asked that the owner submit a grant application including a cost/benefit analysis and how much the resident is willing to invest. Research will need to be done with evidence, to establish any public benefit to enable the Parish Council to consider the application. The Onslow Arms landlord should be asked if they would contribute as well. The Clerk would send the application form to the owner. **ACTION Clerk**

179/2022 REPORT FROM WSCC JANET DUNCTON-

The new fire service building is being built in Broadbridge Heath.

The Epic Awards have gone ahead in Worthing recently. This is for foster children and parents. A good day was had by all.

The new East Grinstead special needs school is under construction.

WSCC Duncton asked any problems with sewerage overflow in heavy rain in Loxwood be reported to her.

Cllr Colling pointed out the issue of foul water storage temporary solutions that have been agreed with Southern Water by CDC for the Nursery Site and the Thakeham Site. Cllr Colling wondered whether WSCC would be interested in questioning this approach and calling a meeting with Southern Water and the concerned North east Parishes. The Clerk would write to the other four NE Parishes to suggest a meeting to coordinate such a meeting and WSCC Duncton would help out with this. **ACTION Clerk**

180/2022 REPORT FROM CDC GARETH EVANS- See attached report.

181/2022 **APPENDIX 2a and 2b** Wey and Arun Canal Trust Grant application for £6000.

The Parish Council recognised how well used the canal path was, used by both residents and tourists to Loxwood alike. The Parish Council had granted £5000 in the current financial year. Those Councillors using the path local to the village did not consider the path in too bad a state of repair.

The Parish Council RESOLVED not to pay a further grant at this time but would consider the situation again in the next financial year if another application were submitted.

182/2022 BREWHURST WEIR REPAIR AND AUTOMATION. Estimate of cost £25K to £40K discussion. See item 179/2022.

183/2022 SOCIAL HOUSING MAINTENANCE ISSUE: Discussion as to the help the Parish Council can offer residents regarding this matter.

The Parish Council recognise that CDC Gareth Evans had publicised the established procedure whereby Hyde needed to be reported to at first but secondly this could be escalated through Environmental Health at CDC and CDC Evans could help with this escalation. The Parish Council would advertise the reporting system on Facebook and the website. **ACTION Clerk**

184/2022 **APPENDIX 3 SPY LANE DOG BIN**: Resident suggested relocation sites for the Spy Lane dog bin and resident complaint that the complaints of the dog bin removal from three residents were not taken seriously enough as they outnumbered the request for the bin's removal. For discussion.

By way of background a resident had written to the Parish Council expressing the problem they were experiencing with regard to the odour emanating from the dog bin positioned at the end of the pathway leading onto Spy Lane. The resident also provided the contact details of two other

households similarly affected. The resident suggested the bin be moved to the opposite side of the road where the path continued across fields and was reasonably far away from other houses. Permission was granted from Chichester District Council (CDC) to move the bin so long as the new location was acceptable to them and their criteria was the bin had to be adjacent to a highway and permission sought from the landowner for the relocation. CDC advised if the new position was West Sussex County Council (WSSC) land a licence from WSSC would be required from them, and for WSSC to supply this licence they would need to consult with residents as to the acceptability to them of the location.

The Parish Council researched the location suggested by the resident but as the area was owned privately, landowners were not willing for this relocation and adjacent areas owned by WSSC opposite would have hindered access to the field. When investigating this site, the Councillor advised the odour from the bin was noticeable on the opposite side of the road.

Chichester District Council were asked to clean the bin but this had little effect on the odour in a short time.

Other areas for location were in private ownership where the location seemed acceptable or near housing if owned by WSSC where a consultation ahead of their granting a licence for the bin location would, it was thought, result in objections.

North Hall was chosen as a location for a second bin as the original bin regularly overflowed in between emptying and also the land was owned by the Parish and away from private property and adjacent to the highway.

It is to be noted that CDC will not supply new dog bins. CDC have a Policy of educating dog owners to take dog bags home and not to create the extra cost of bins and emptying for the district, whose finances are already stretched.

The Parish Council in the light of the resident's renewed complaint regarding the relocation of the dog bin reconsidered their decision. The resident felt the number of complaints warranted this reconsideration. The Parish Council looked at the sites suggested but both were near housing and the same problem may arise even if the original consultation were favourable.

The Parish Council **RESOLVED** that the correct decision had been made and the bin would remain relocated at North Hall. The householder's distress from the odour from the bin out weighed the convenience to dog walkers to be able to deposit dog bags in a dog bin.

The Parish Council **RESOLVED** as a matter of principle any future location or relocation of dog bins would not be near residential housing.

185/2022 **APPENDIX 4** HERITAGE TRAIL: Discussion following update. Cllr Kelsey advised the website was ready to go and the leaflets ready to be printed. The leaflets will be placed at the Onslow Arms, North Hall and John Murrays. The Titchborne Pub was also a possibility. The suggested sign boards were similar to those used on the Wey and Arun Canal Trust and would be

placed on the Wey and Arun, near the Village Sign and North Hall. The Parish Council would obtain quotes for the sign boards. **ACTION Clerk**

To publicise the launch of the website it was considered there should be a launch in the new year once the boards were up and the leaflets distributed. Cllr Gardner will look into this. **ACTION Cllr Gardner.**

186/2022 PAYMENT SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER: Circulated separately. The payments of £5799.68 were approved and in addition a deposit of £5052.52 paid for the North Hall Photovoltaic Panels was ratified.

187/2022 UPDATES AND ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION: -

(a) Highway/Roads.

The accident involving the toppling of a mobility scooter at the new Thakeham dropped curb area which occurred to a resident attending the North Hall Jubilee event had been reported to Thakeham and WSCC Highways. Thakeham considered that had conformed with the regulations regarding the curb's construction and were not prepared to reposition it. The Parish Council had reported the event to both Thakeham and WSCC Highways and considered their response was insufficient for the danger that the situation presented.

A zoom call was held with the Traffic Consultant employed by the Parish Council to deliver traffic calming proposals for the village. The proposals had been commented upon by WSCC and amended to accommodate the comments. The amended Traffic Calming proposals were explained in detail. This would be consulted upon with residents once WSCC had further approved the scheme and a safety audit had been carried out. In addition, the plans needed to be updated for the recent Thakeham Traffic Calming and the S278 agreement had been applied for by the Consultant from WSCC Highways to enable this update. The Clerk would write to WSCC Highways to ask if the Traffic Calming was complete which was not clear from what had been done or else ask what else needs to be done to achieve completion. **ACTION Clerk**

(b) Drainage/ Sewerage Infrastructure.

A meeting was to be arranged between WSCC, Southern Water and the NE Parishes (subject to their willingness) to discuss the current temporary arrangement for foul water sewerage. This was because a connection to the main system was currently not possible due to infrastructure short comings. **ACTION Clerk**

(c) School- The Chair had attended the Christmas lights switch on event. The school are looking for more Governors.

(d) North Hall: Nothing further.

(e) Thakeham /Stonewater site. Nothing further

(f) Neighbourhood Plan/ IPS statement. Nothing further.

188/2022 NEWSLETTER ARTICLES. Hyde Housing reporting. Annual Parish Meeting 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

189/2022 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA. Precept. Heritage Trail. NE Parishes response re a meeting regarding foul water storage.

190/2022 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: MONDAY 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023

### 191/2022 Session closed to the public

192/2022 Staff Matters. The Clerk described an issue regarding email correspondence from a resident in relation to the Spy Lane dog bin relocation. The emails received had contained inappropriate language, they had been persistent bordering on obsessive and asked for information which the Clerk was unable to provide without authority from third parties. The CDC Monitoring officer had been involved by the resident and upheld the Clerk's response as to third party emails. This was not an isolated incident.

The Clerk found it difficult to factor in resident correspondence in her work load especially when this could result in multiple requests for information.

The current Freedom of Information request sent by the resident and previous emails were discussed and it was RESOLVED by the Parish Council that the request was vexatious according to the Parish Council's Habitual and Vexatious Complainants Policy and an appropriate response would be sent by the Parish Council. ACTION

The Parish Council also felt the inappropriate language in the emails should be addressed and the Chair of the Parish Council was to write to the resident concerning this. ACTION Cllr Kelsey

The Parish Council had an obligation to their employee with regard to inflammatory and vexatious correspondence and RESOLVED that any future correspondence from residents with "Vexatious Complainants Status" would be dealt with by the Parish Council once a month in a sub- committee rather than as it arose by the Clerk. Councillor input is often required to reply to such correspondence and a once- a- month discussion would reduce the amount of going back and forth to collate responses. The Sub Committee will be closed to the public, although residents whose correspondence is being discussed may be invited to attend. Terms of reference for the Sub Committee will be drawn up and approved at a full Parish Council Meeting. ACTION Clerk

The meeting closed at 10.10pm