

Cowfold Parish Council
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 12 February 2024 in the Allmond Centre

Present: Mr S Reading (SR) (Chairman) Ms K Kingshott
Mr J Hooper (JH) Mrs J Newman (JN)
Mrs D Everest (DE)(Acting
Secretary)

Mrs L Lambert – Horsham District Councillor
Ms J Knowles – Horsham District Councillor
Mrs S Payne – West Sussex County Councillo

Public: 3
Press: 0

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs J Wright, Mrs M French, Mrs C Towle and Mr P Harsum.

2. Approval of the Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 8 January 2024 were agreed by all as a true and correct record.

3. Declarations of Interest

None.

4. Matters Arising

None.

5. Public

Members of the public were in attendance with interest in the Rampion2 project.

6. District Councillor Report

Mrs Lambert and Ms Knowles reported on the following:

- Grants available for Ecological initiatives
- HDC Planning Portal
- Battery Energy Storage System DC/24/0054
- Grants due to Southern Water price rises
- Green Business Grants
- Food Waste Seminar
- West Sussex Constabulary Meeting
- Rampion2 Community Fund

7. County Councillor Report

Mrs Payne reported on the following:

- West Sussex Main Budget Meeting
- Council Tax Increase
- Councillor Recruitment Programme
- WSCC Wellbeing Programme
- Rejection of Residents Application to have Picts Lane designated as a Quiet Lane
- Overnight Roadworks from Cowfold Village Hall to Littleworth Lane 26-31 March 2024
- Reliability of the No.17 Bus from Horsham to Brighton. (Feedback from residents would be appreciated email sarah.payne@westsussex.gov.uk).

Mrs Everest asked Mrs Payne if she could facilitate some guidance and support from West Sussex County Council's Environmental Team with regard to Ecological Initiatives.

8. Correspondence

None.

9. Battery Storage Farm

DC/24/0054 to be discussed at the Planning Committee Meeting immediately following the Ordinary Parish Council meeting.

10. Spring Community Event

Due to time and the curriculum constraints of St Peter's Primary School, the suggestion to reinstate a traditional Cowfold May Day celebration was deferred until 2025.

11. Purchase of a Bare Root Christmas Tree

Mrs Towle's proposal to purchase a bare root Christmas Tree to be planted in the verge outside the Village Hall was agreed. Investigation into the cost of a suitably sized tree will be undertaken.

12. Oak Tree Adjacent to 14 Acorn Avenue

The Parish Council upheld its support for a root barrier option to protect the tree being the most suitable. Mrs Wright will respond to the insurance company informing them of this and asking for evidence that it is the Oak Tree causing the problem as it had not been positively identified within the received paperwork. (All matters relating to insurance claims remain within the purview of the affected resident).

(JW)

13. Rampion 2 Update

Mrs Everest had attended the the Open Forum held between 6 and 8 February 2024 as an online observer in order to report the proceedings back to the Parish Council.

Mrs Lambert and Ms Knowles said that they would be attending a Rampion2

specific meeting at Horsham District Council on 14 February 2024 and would communicate the outcome of the discussion to the Parish Council.

14. Environment

Mr Hooper informed the meeting that all properties within Cowfold Parish (with the exception of four who declined engineer access) are now connected to Super Fast Broadband services. Mr Reading congratulated Mr Hooper on his perseverance on taking this project forward.

Mr Hooper reminded those present that the threats presented by Climate Change are very real with a loss, associated with global temperature increase, of 69% of species across the planet since 1970.

Mr Hooper had negotiated the planting of the fourteen village hanging baskets with the Cameliar Botnar Foundation. The cost of £350.00, an increase of only £50.00 from the previous supplier, will be met by the Parish Council's budget.

15. Neighbourhood Planning Update

Under the current Regulation 19 discussions being held by Horsham District Council, the yet un-made Neighbourhood Plan leaves the Parish vulnerable to speculative developers. Horsham District Council is due to write shortly to the four parishes with un-made plans defining the requirements to be included in respect of species habitat and water neutrality.

The Parish Council agreed that given the time lapse (five years) between the submission of the Neighbourhood Plan, after the changes in legal requirements, its likely adoption via public vote, residents should be reminded of the purpose and protective qualities of the Plan.

Currently, St Peter's Primary School now has only one hundred and four pupils. The senior classes have been boosted by children from the Cisswood Refugee Centre, but the reception and junior classes are very small in size. Any further drop in pupil numbers may see the primary school closed by County authorities as has recently happened in Brighton.

16. The Allmond Centre

Nothing to report.

17. Representatives Reports

Planning

Nothing to report.

Finance

In the absence of the Clerk, there were no payments to approve. These would be approved retrospectively.

Open Spaces

Nothing to report.

Allotments

Nothing to report.

Roads & Transport

The January-February 2024 statistics show that there has been a decrease in overall speeding into and out of the village on the A272, Bolney Road. However, hundreds of vehicles are still travelling above the 30mph speed limit.

Footpaths

Nothing to report

Streetlights

Nothing to report

HALC

Nothing to report.

Website

Nothing to report.

Youth Activities

Nothing to report.

The next meeting will be held on **Monday 11 March 2024**.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.