



LAUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 19th June 2024 at 7.30pm at Laughton Village Hall

Present:

Chairman: Cllr Alison Wilson, Cllr Jane Alford, Cllr Sally Huggett, Cllr Stephen Whiting and Cllr Kay Syrad

East Sussex County Councillor Nick Bennett

Wealden District Councillor Alison Wilson

One member of the public attended

The Clerk was also in attendance

1. Public Session

A member of the public who resides close to the proposed solar farm development in Darp Lane asked members if they were aware of the varied species on the proposed site, including Red Kites, Kingfishers and Great Crested Newts. The massive site proposed will have a huge impact on the environment in this beautiful area in East Sussex. The lanes surrounding the proposed site will not be able to withstand the heavy traffic necessary to construct such a site.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Holly Hallam and Cllr Rob Bishopp

3. To accept the minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 15th May 2024.

The minutes were agreed and duly signed

4. Declarations of interest and notification of any changes to the Register of Interests To receive notices of declarations personal and prejudicial, in respect of items on this agenda.

There were no declarations of interest or changes to the Register of Interests

5. Members to agree confidential items on the agenda for the exclusion of the press and members of the public.

It was agreed that item 11.11 was a confidential item

6. East Sussex County Council and Wealden District Council reports

ESCC Cllr Nick Bennett – The scoping applications for Colbran's Farm Estate had been raised at other local parish council meetings and objections were being submitted. ESCC planners have been alerted, and although County is limited on planning matters comments can be made regarding highways issues. Cllr Bennett stated that he was 'onto it'.

The State of the County report had been released on Monday, funding for Adult Social Care and Special Educational Needs was continuing to have a very significant impact on budget. For the first time reserves of £14.3 million were being used to provide a balanced budget. County may not be able to provide a balanced budget by using reserves in future.

WDC Cllr Alison Wilson – the responses to the Draft Local Plan Consultation were being processed, Cllr Wilson will check and report back when the process has been completed. Rumours have been circulating about social and affordable housing being bought by outside councils, this is not true. The agreements for the provision of such housing dictate that 100% of social and affordable housing must go to Wealden residents. Cllr Wilson highlighted the Wine Trail, which can be found on the Explore Wealden website, features several local vineyards.

7. Sewage issues in the Parish – to agree to form a working group to investigate the issues

The problems of sewage in the parish have been discussed at previous meetings, and it was considered important to understand sewage routes and the issues. It was **agreed** to form a working group to include Cllrs Wilson, Huggett and Syrad, it was hoped that residents would also take part.

8. Working Groups – to receive reports and agree further actions

a) Dangerous Traffic on Shortgate Lane

The working group are due to meet in early July and will report back to the Parish Council meeting on 17th July 2024.

b) D-Day Commemorations

D-Day the commemoration event that was held in conjunction with The Roebuck Inn had been a success and was appreciated in the Parish. Thanks were given to those who assisted during the evening.

c) Infant Playground

Cllrs Wilson and Alford attended the playground on 1st June and had carried out cleaning works, the Clerk will contact the caretaker at Laughton Community Primary School regarding replacing the caps, which have been purchased by the Parish Council.

d) Laughton Fete

The fete was a great success, and many compliments were received. Additional members of the Fete Working Group will be needed next year to build on the success of this year. Although some lessons have been learned members of the working group were very pleased with the event. The working group was congratulated and thanked for their hard work.

e) Broadband provision in the Parish

Although no report has been received. It was noted that a member of the working group was present on the Parish Council stand at the fete and spoke with residents

Councillor Alison Wilson left the meeting room at 8pm

9. Planning and licence applications

a) Planning applications received

i. WD/2024/1276/F

FIVE OAKS, LEWES ROAD, LAUGHTON, BN8 6BJ

5.5M REAR EXTENSION TO EXISTING GYM WITH SMALL SIDE

FACING DORMER TO AND NEW SINGLE STOREY DOUBLE GARAGE

Following review of the application documents and discussion it was **resolved** that Laughton Parish Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application

ii. WD/2024/6503/SCO

COLBRANS FARM ESTATE, LAUGHTON

REQUEST FOR A SCOPING OPINION FOR A SOLAR INSTALLATION AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE

Following review of the application documents and discussion it was **resolved** that Laughton Parish Council **OBJECTS** to this application:

- The site is very large with a number of ponds within the boundary attracting several protected species
- The high fencing will impact wildlife migration
- There will be a huge impact on biodiversity
- Footpaths on the site will be lost
- Part of the site is in a high-risk flood area
- Access to the site during construction by HGV's will have a very detrimental effect on rural habitat. The site can only be accessed by rural single-track lanes not capable of sustaining such traffic
- Damage to the soil and ecosystems beneath the solar panels from rainwater run off
- There will be noise and vibration affecting ecosystems

Councillor Alison Wilson returned to the meeting room at 8.20pm

iii. Appeal reference: APP/C1435/W/24/3343246

CHELWOOD, POUND LANE, LAUGHTON, BN8 6BE

ERECTION OF TWO DWELLINGS, ACCESS, LANDSCAPING AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE

Following information received from planning officers it was noted that more appeals, including smaller appeals, are being dealt with at hearings held locally. Attendance can be in person or online. The hearing date for this appeal is 23rd July at 10am at Wealden District offices. The hearing can be watched on the WDC website

b) Planning applications approved, refused, referred, withdrawn or appeals

Application No. WD/2024/0562/F & WD/2024/0445/LB

VIRGINIA COTTAGE, LEWES ROAD, LAUGHTON, BN8 6B

NEW 2 BAY ATTACHED GARAGE WITH SECURE STORE

Councillors **noted** that this application has been approved

c) Other planning matters – to discuss or note any other planning matters brought to the attention of the Parish Council

None

d) Licence applications received.

None

10. Financial Matters – Authorisation of payments of accounts –To approve accounts for payment – (a schedule of receipts & payments will be presented at the meeting) – list of payments on separate sheet.

- a) Bank reconciliation May - **APPROVED**
- b) June payments - **APPROVED**
- c) Direct Debits - **APPROVED**
- d) Grant applications – No applications were received

11. ITEMS FOR DECISION AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

11.1 - Village Maintenance

11.1.1 Ditches/Flooding

Nothing to report

11.1.2 Bus shelters

The bus shelter on The Green has been repaired but still requires repainting

The bus shelter on the B2124 – clearing work has begun around the shelter

11.2 - Community Engagement

It was agreed that drop-in surgeries would be suspended in July. The PC is engaging with residents in relation to a number of issues (e.g. broadband and sewage) A 'Beating of the Bounds' event to familiarise ourselves and residents with Parish boundaries was suggested.

11.3 - Defibrillator for the Parish

Cllr Alford informed the meeting that the cost of the post for the defib is £165 +VAT.

Funding opportunities would be open again in September.

11.4 - Community Speedwatch

Cllr Whiting confirmed that the Speedwatch equipment was now available, sites have been approved and training undertaken. However more volunteers are required to take the initiative forward.

11.5 - Parish Emergency Plan

Cllrs Alford and Huggett will meet to link the Parish Emergency Plan with Neighbourhood Watch. Cllr Alford will speak with East Sussex Fire and Rescue regarding wildfires and flooding.

11.6 - Cycle Rail/Rack at The Green, Laughton

The clerk produced costings and confirmed that funding opportunities were being investigated. Funding bids would be submitted as soon as possible.

11.7 - Tennis/Sports Court at Pelham Field

The Earl of Chichester had been contacted and there was no objection providing residents were consulted. It was agreed that Cllr Wilson will contact Laughton Community Primary School and the resident who had originally submitted the proposal.

11.8 - Tree Warden

Nothing to report

11.9 - Laughton Community Primary School – to agree a request from LCPS to erect a banner/sign on The Green regarding available school places

It was **resolved** that a banner could be placed on The Green, Cllr Wilson will contact the school regarding placement.

11.10 - Employment terms for the Clerk

It was **resolved** that the Clerk's salary should be increased to NALC Rate L28 in line with neighbouring parishes, the Clerk's hours will be increased to ten per week, this would be reviewed in 6 months, a contribution towards the Clerk's training costs for CILCA would be made over 2 years.

12. REPORTS (by leave) NOT FOR DECISION

- Cllr Alford informed Councillors that the sign on the gateway on the western approach to the village needs replacing.
- Changes to the Parliamentary constituency boundaries have been made. Laughton now forms part of the Lewes constituency.
- The process of fact finding regarding the Oakleigh Garden Community was at an early stage. It was noted that the proposals were not part of the Draft Local Plan.

The next Full Council Meeting will be held on 17th July 2024, items for the agenda need to be with the Clerk by Friday 5th July 2024.

DRAFT