

STEDHAM WITH IPING ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2019

(Final Minutes subject to signature at next SIPC Meeting)

Minutes: Stedham with Iping Annual Parish Meeting 2019
Held on: Wednesday 24th April 2019 7:00pm at Stedham Memorial Hall

Present:
Lucy Petrie Chair of the Parish Council & Chair of the Meeting
Morag Birch Clerk to the Parish Council (took the minutes)

In Attendance:

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Sally Dreckmann | Head Teacher Stedham Primary School |
| Neil Ryder | START Community Trust |
| Dan Ross | Sussex Wildlife Trust |
| Bill Crawshaw | Stedham Memorial Hall |
| David Burton | Stedham Sports Association |
| Emma Blumlein | Women's Institute |
| Hannah Stanley | Horticultural Society |
| Sue Payne | Neighbourhood Watch & Lunch Club |
| Caroline Neville | Chichester District Council |
| Kate O'Kelly | West Sussex County Council |

Approximately 35 Parishioners including members of the Parish Council

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Reverend Trish Bancroft, Colin Hughes
2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Minutes of APM held on 11th April 2018, which had been previously copied to the scheduled speakers, were signed by the Chair.

3. STEDHAM SCHOOL

Sally Dreckmann introduced Emily, a Year 6 student, who gave a report on school activities over the year. Sally Dreckmann went on to provide an overview of school plans and also confirmed that she would be leaving after nine years at the school. A copy of the report is attached.

4. START

Neil Ryder gave a brief overview of the history and purpose of the newly formed Community Land Trust "Stedham, Trotton and Rogate Together (START)" A Community Land Trust (CLT) is a non-profit, community organisation run by volunteers to develop affordable housing for local people. A copy of the report is attached. A number of questions were raised as follows:

- A CLT is owned and run by its members, restricted to the residents of the 3 parishes. Members can buy shares for £1/share, but voting is one member one vote
- Funding is not restricted to sale of shares. Government and charitable grants are available plus various other routes to raise money.
- There is some degree of preferential treatment when a CLT applies for Planning Permission, eg a CLT could apply to build on a rural exception site, which is where there is a small plot of land the planning authority would not normally allow to be developed but is on the edge of the parish settlement boundary. CLTs will often then split the difference between the agricultural value and the market value of the land..
- How long would an individual lease be - not decided yet. This is one of the policies which has to be determined by the members.
- It will be possible for others not living within the 3 parishes but who are interested in supporting the CLT to make donations
- Current wording of both the Neighbourhood and Local Plans say that the affordable housing to be included on the Sawmills site will be provided by a CLT.
- What is the timescale – on average CLTs are taking about 3-4years, after registration, to reach the point of seeking planning permission

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- The geographical area covered by START is defined by the boundaries of the 3 parishes

5. IPING AND STEDHAM COMMONS

Dan Ross introduced himself as Director of Land Management at Sussex Wildlife Trust, appointed in January 2019.

He has spent two decades managing land for nature conservation and amenity, predominantly for local authorities within Sussex. Most recently, prior to undertaking this role, he was Parks and Foreshore Manager at Adur and Worthing Council.

The reasons for attending the Stedham with Iping Annual Parish Meeting are to introduce himself, and to establish clear and public lines of communication between organisations. Also, to acknowledge that whilst there have been some challenges and strains on the relationship and perception of Sussex Wildlife Trust within Iping and Stedham in the recent past, to continue the good progress that has been made in re-connecting and making sure there is good transparency and feedback mechanisms relating to SWT's management of the commons. Also, to ensure that what we are trying to achieve with our management is clear and understood.

SWT have been working hard to implement the site management plan, including implementing the Countryside Stewardship projects. This agri-environmental land management programme helps fund much of the practical land management on the commons and aims to maintain the favourable condition of the Common, in particular, the SSSI status and restore the heathland. Practical works over past winter have included scrub clearance, gorse thinning, Rhododendron control, a pine and birch thinning and increasing the fire breaks to 12m width throughout the common.

The commons have also been grazed by cattle throughout winter and this will continue this spring and summer.

SWT will be undertaking bridleway repairs in places, particularly around some of the boggy gates, and continue tree surveys to identify any required work.

If anyone has any questions or would like further information, they are welcome to contact either Dan Ross (danross@sussexwt.org.uk) or the Reserve Manager Mark Monks Terry who will be managing the site over the coming months. (MarkMonk-Terry@sussexwt.org.uk). A number of questions were raised as follows:

- Access from Iping Carpark to the common is extremely difficult as a result of very deep and water filled ruts. There are similar issues at other gates. SWT are looking at the infrastructure and path improvement will be part of the core works to be planned over the next few months.
- What protection is in place against cattle, on the Commons, passing on TB. There is no vaccination against TB available at the moment. SWT controls are rigorous and include not bringing in cattle from outside, the cattle from East and West Sussex are maintained as separate herds, SWT work closely with veterinary staff and cattle are checked on a regular basis
- Conflicting advice with regard to keeping dogs on leads. SWT currently reviewing what the signage will say.

6. STEDHAM MEMORIAL HALL

The Hall has had a busy and successful year, including a full year of showing films. The Maltings Theatre group, after a very successful evening, will be back again in November. Over 100 villagers attended the garden party on the Recreation Ground in June. The Tea party and Carols was well attended and it is hoped this can be repeated this year. Details of other events and classes are available on the website.

7. STEDHAM SPORTS ASSOCIATION

It is now 3 years since the new pavilion was completed and the members very please with it. Rentals have increased and the Association is nearly self-sufficient. The various sports associations active and well supported. The fireworks display on Armistice Day was attended by about 200 people.

8. WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Emma Blumlein is the new President of Stedham's WI, having taken over from Vanessa Blaber in November 2018. Emma thanked Vanessa for her and her committee's contribution and dedication.

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Stedham WI turned a 100years old in January 2019. Membership is now 44 with a diverse group ranging in age from early 40's to 80's. Each month, the WI runs a Supper Club, Walking Group, Knitter-Natter Club and a Theatre Group. A broad range of speakers are invited to the monthly meetings. The July meeting will be a supper by the lakeside in Redford.

9. HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The organisation is in its 40th year , so a Ruby Party will be organised. Current membership is now 50. There is an Annual Programme which is varied to suit all tastes, interests and ages. Talks are generally based on garden related/educational topics. The Spring Event was very successful with a near record attendance. The next speaker will discuss "Poisonous Plants in your Garden". There will be 2 formal visits to specialist gardens in Womersh and Tillford. The Village School annual "Grow in a Pot" competition continues and is well supported. Stedham Horticultural Society is an affiliate society to RHS Wisley which provides the opportunity for an annual free visit, this year's will be on 30th May. The annual Plant Bring & Buy sale will be on 18th May from 10:00 to 11:00am. The Flower Show will be at the end of July. Discounts are available to members at both Aylings Garden Centre and Rotherhill Nurseries. Annual subscriptions are £6/household. Contact details are displayed on the memorial Hall notice board.

10. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH & LUNCH CLUB

There are currently 80 residents in the Neighbourhood Watch scheme. The overall aims are to help prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime. The scheme works closely with the Sussex Police and provides "eyes & ears" for the community. The police send out a weekly bulletin which is forwarded as required.

The Lunch Club runs on the last Tuesday of each month and currently has 30 regular attendees, but there are a few spare places. It provides a 2 course meal with tea or coffee for £6/person.

11. PARISH COUNCIL

A copy of the Chair's Report is attached

SIPC Budget: 2019-20 – Olia Mitskevich

Copies of the slides used are attached. Questions raised were as follows:

- When was it agreed to spend over £10k in legal expenses – this is a contingency amount agreed by the Council in January 2019 at which time the insurer was unable to confirm which costs would be covered. Should the contingency not be used it will give a surplus of £1,862 and the Council can then decide how it should be spent, either on a capital project or a diminution of the Council Tax next year.
- Can it be confirmed that the 22% increase to the Council Tax was a result of setting the allocation for Legal Fees to £10k – the main reason for the increase was to budget for the expenditure related to legal costs. The budget was agreed at an SIPC meeting on 16th January 2019
- Subject to the results of the Tribunal will the Council have to find additional funding for either more legal expenses or an award – the Chair confirmed that it was not possible to answer questions relating to the Employment Tribunal. The Parish Council has insurance to cover costs resulting from anything other than those items that the PC would be obliged to pay under the terms of employment, eg if it was found that the Council had underpaid wages the Council is liable; if damages were awarded by the court the insurer is liable. If, for some reason, the insurer would not cover a cost the Parish Council would be liable and funds would have to be provided via the precept/Council Tax.
- When will the parish be able to hear details about the Tribunal – the Claim is published a week before the hearing is scheduled in the Court Lists, the hearing is in public and the judgement is published on the court website after the hearing.
- The Parish Council will hold a public meeting after the hearing has been completed to provide details of the findings.
- What will the £2k budget for parking be used for - this is a catch-all heading for monies which may be spent on addressing parking issues in the village, it is not intended for a survey by a 3rd party

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- Why has the annual grant of £300 to the SSA been cut – the Council reviewed expenditure to a view to finding savings. Cllr Martin Perry advised the SSA prior to its February meeting of the planned cut. No response had been received so the amount was cut. Objections to the cut were raised by several Parishioners. It was emphasised that the SSA provided their grounds free of charge for village events such as the School Sports, parking for Friends of Stedham School(FOSS) events etc. The £300 grant has been used to provide such facilities.
- What is the £250 allocation for the annual Spring Clean to be used for – it is intended to cover costs charged by CDC for equipment etc. The general consensus from the Parishioners present was there were no costs associated with the Spring Clean.
- A request was made to make the Financial Reporting included at each SIPC meeting clearer and more accessible on the website – a financial report/summary is included with the minutes of each SIPC Meeting except for one, when the RFO was not available.
- A query was raised about the availability, on the website, of a breakdown of the Annual Accounts – the latest Accounts, ie for year ending March 2019 are in preparation, they will be examined by the internal auditor and then reviewed at the next SIPC meeting due on 15th May. A break down of last year's accounts (2017-18), as used for the Annual Return, can be found under Budget 2018-19.
- What to date has the Neighbourhood Plan cost – it was confirmed that the NP had cost £12,422 in 2017-18 of which £11,600 was covered by grants. The costs for the NP in 2018-19 are wholly covered by grants.
- The change of contract for grass-cutting and general maintenance was queried. The general consensus of the Parishioners present was that the service was not of the standard previously provided and not satisfactory – it was confirmed that the first cut of the season had been done and it had deliberately not been cut short as is usual for the first cut. The Recreation Ground and Common View Playing Grounds would be done every 3weeks. It was requested that any comments relating to grounds maintenance be forwarded to the Clerk so they can be addressed with the new contractor.
- Clarification was requested about the requirement for 3 competitive quotes for the grass-cutting contract. It was thought that the Council's Standing Orders(SO) had been changed such that the grass-cutting/maintenance contract could not be awarded without obtaining 3 quotes and as a result the existing service provider could not automatically be awarded the contract as had happened in previous years. The Council confirmed that the SO had been changed, in accordance with recommendations from NALC, but this had not affected the requirements for awarding contracts. The rules concerning contracts are included in the Financial Regulations which have not been changed in recent years. It is stated in the Council's Financial Regulations – *“When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below [£3,000] and above [£100] the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates.”* (This is an extract from the Fin Reg available on the website). In order to be compliant with the regulations, invitations were sent to 4 contractors. One quote was received, which was accepted. The previous contractor withdrew their quote.
- Why the review of the status re. restriction on sale/consumption of alcohol on the Recreation Ground was included in an F&GP meeting and not in a full SIPC meeting – it was the earliest meeting available with a quorum of Councillors where a decision could be made. The F&GP meeting was cancelled so the item will be on the Agenda for the next SIPC Meeting due 15th May.
- A parishioner requested a show of hands from people present who are “not happy with the current leadership of the Parish Council”. Show of hands indicated that the majority of parishioners present agreed with the statement.

12. PARISH ACTION PLANS

- Tree pruning and planting of new tree on the Recreation Ground – Completed. Thanks go to Jon Parker who donated the new tree in memory of his father George Parker who was re-located to Stedham during the war

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- Defibrillator is installed. Training will be available courtesy of Lodsworth PC who are running a training course on 28th May. Further training will be provided locally at a later date.
- Parking Project – having gathered information from villagers, the next step is to formulate a plan for presentation to the full Council for a decision on the best way forward. A draft of a Code of Conduct is in preparation, this will be circulated and made available on the website for comment. The £2k included in the budget will allow for improved road markings, hardware and signage which will encourage more effective parking.
- Wild flower – a number of parishioners had suggested that some wild flowers could be planted. This has been started at Iping and Stedham Churches and there are plans to continue in other areas.
- Litter Picking Day – the 18th May had been proposed but this clashes with the Horticultural Plant Sale. It was agreed to bring the date forward to 11th May if possible
- Maintenance of the telephone box – this is managed by Sue Payne
- Invite further considerations – if local organisations would like to re-establish the Events Page – please send details to the Parish Clerk
- Fitness Equipment – no specific plans but possible expenditure has been included in the budget

13. CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

A key requirement for last year for the Council has been to save money. They are currently in the black but need to continue to control expenditure. There will be a significant reduction in the number of District Councillors, this will result in the approximate doubling in size of each ward.

It was recommended that parishioners sign up to “Let’s Talk” on the CDC website which allows local people to find out about and comment on matters arising in the Midhurst area.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to register Dumpford House, West Lavington as a community asset.

Work is continuing to try and keep the property within the community.

The Bluebell Inn at Cocking is in the process of being bought by Cocking locals. They are selling shares in the project and would welcome participation.

Careline has been taken over by PPP.

14. WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

Current WSCC annual revenue budget is £535million of which 36% goes on Adult Social Care, 17% on Children and Young People Social Care and 5.7% on Highways. The Council did receive £6.5million extra funding for highways this year, so work is getting done locally.

There is a full Council Meeting every 6 weeks. The next meeting is on 7th June and will be available on webcast.

Select Committees deal with more specific matters in greater detail. Kate O’Kelly is on the Health and Adult Social Care Committee which examine, for example, poor response times for the local ambulance service.

Currently 37% of carbon emissions come from transport. Government target for 70% of new vehicles to be electric by 2030, will require West Sussex to have 44000 public charging points. Strategy will have to accommodate both urban and rural requirements, it should be noted that 30% of cars in W Sussex don’t have off-street parking.

W Sussex are looking at mitigating the impact of budget cuts on the Bus Services.

W Sussex are also trying to improve and extend cycle routes.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was suggested and agreed that the Parish Council and the SSA arrange a meeting to discuss best use of funds allocated in the budget for Fitness Equipment to promote health and fitness in the village.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Suggested date is 20th May 2020, it has been moved to allow for the 4 yearly cycle of elections to ensure that this meeting takes place with the new Parish Council.

Meeting closed at 9:15pm

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Chair:

Date: