

## **MINUTES OF THE FULL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF LOWER PENN PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT VICTORY HALL, LOWER PENN HELD ON THURSDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**

Councillors: Ms H Fuller – Chair, Mrs K Brazenell – Vice Chair, D Everett, K Crane, Mrs C Taylor

Also in attendance: Mrs J Cree (new Clerk) and Mrs J Footman (former Clerk), County Cllr Mrs V Wilson and SSDC Cllr R Reade.

121/24. Apologies for Absence and introduction of the new Clerk and retirement of the former Clerk

Members thanked Mrs J Footman for her many years of service (37) to the Parish Council, as she is retiring this evening. She will be greatly missed by the Council and the Community of Lower Penn. The new Clerk was introduced to members.

Mrs Footman thanked members for their support and the wonderful leaving gift and flowers, and she is looking forward to her retirement.

Apologies of absence were received from Cllr S McEwen.

122/24. Approval of Minutes of Council Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 to be agreed and signed (copy attached with agenda papers)

The minutes of the meeting held on the above date were approved and signed as a true record of that meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs K Brazenell seconded by Cllr K Crane.

123/24. Declaration of Interests

Cllr D Everett declared a pecuniary interest in any battery farm applications or discussions on this topic and stated he would leave the meeting if any discussions took place. This is following advice from the Legal Officer at SSDC.

SSDC Cllr R Reade declared an interest in any new planning applications (including discussions on Battery Farms) and would take no part in the discussions.

124/24. To receive and agree the updated Code of Conduct and Civility and Respect Policy

The Clerk with the agenda papers circulated the updated Code of Conduct and the new Civility and Respect Policies.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Taylor and seconded by Cllr Mrs K Brazenell to adopt the above 2 policies. On a vote this was carried unanimously.

Cllr Mrs K Brazenell noted that on the policy it should be on declarations there should be more detail when declaring an interest in an item, so it is clear and transparent to the public and fellow members why there is an interest.

Having now adopted the respect policy, members should adhere to the principals of the policy and show respect to the public and their fellow councillors at all times.

Members discussed the process of declaring interests and clarified the requirements of declaring.

#### 125/24. County Councillors Report

County Cllr Mrs V Wilson addressed the Council on the following points:-

- The question on all residents' minds and the councils is what the changes in the Local Plan are. What we saw with the last Government administration was not as bad as it could have been for this area. However, with the new Government targets if all areas of developments were put forward then we would still be 6000 houses short (this is on top of the Safe Guarded land, the land they were going to build and the land that was discounted as it is the Greenbelt circa 9000). SSDC have gone back to the Government to ask that the Council can speak to the Inspectorate directly to reduce the numbers of the houses required and it was noted that regulation 19 cannot be implemented in our District. Teams of people at SSDC are reviewing the state of where the District are at the moment and there is no answer at this moment. There are over 100+ questions given to Council by MHCLG and a response is being prepared by Cllr Mrs V Wilson and the Officers. When this work is completed by the Officers at SSDC the public would like to see their response possibly in a statement form so that people are informed of the District Councils stance on this matter.
- S111 agreement – she was asked for an update from the County and Dale Arthur is dealing with this. The applicant is preparing to complete the section 111 and he will complete the required plans within the next few days from Carl and Nolans. This is now a Highways issue only.

#### 126/24. District Councillors Report

SSDC Cllr R Reade addressed the Council on the following points:-

- He noted that the Council were very fortunate to have the cabinet member of the local plan at the meeting, he noticed that an email has been submitted to him with questions which has been responded to.
- There was a further 2 issues outstanding – development outside the Red Line for the battery storage site (Langley Bess) the complaint re the hard standing outside the boundary line of the approved plan. The Enforcement Officer has been to the site and the hard standing are in question is a temporary compound whilst the site is developed as long as it is adjacent to the

site and upon completion must be returned to its previous state. The Officer has written to the applicant and informed them of this, this case will remain open until the development is completed. The second complaint re the works affecting the badgers set, they have spoken to the Senior Ecologist and there is no evidence of disturbance and he is satisfied the fencing is providing adequate protection. This copy to be forwarded to the Clerk for circulation to the complainant.

- The new tenants at Westcroft are trying to reinstate the original access to the farm off the Langley Road which has not been used for 60 years, he felt that this would be beneficial to the new tenant and be better than the current access where vehicles are driving over the green with a tractor etc. This is with Highways.

The gate is a standard gate, that is being re-instated. Severn Trent could use this access instead of Dirtyfoot Lane and use Langley Road. This was pointed out previously, but Severn Trent chose the alternate route.

It was agreed that in future all Parish Council enquires will come through the Clerk to the District and County Councillors, and responses circulated to all members, this is to stop duplicated requests coming forward. Matters of enforcement updates will be made by the Clerk and the 2 District Councillors will be copied in so they are aware of the request, again to stop duplication.

127/24. Public Participation – 15 minutes for members of the public to address the Council  
The Chairman explained that if a query can be answered in public participation it will be, if not it will be an agenda item for the next meeting with a response where possible.

Standing Orders were raised to enable members of the public to speak.

Mr T Gregory raised 2 Highways issues – the first issue is the traffic signage on Orton Lane is damaged (chevron), he was informed by County Councillor Mrs V Wilson that this needs to be reported directly to the County Council. She also added that Highways have changed, and they now consider how many people report a defect as well alongside the type so in some cases it may speed up the repair. The second question was are the signs for the diversion are they as good as they are going to get? – County Councillor Mrs V Wilson responded that this is the final signage. He suggested a one-way system on Greyhound Lane would have been a better solution in this situation.

Mrs Marion Grayson– She will forward her questions to the Clerk and will get an update on Enforcement later in the agenda.

Mr S Bull – He commented on the SCC app and stated that he cannot re report a fault that has been reported already. County Councillor Mrs V Wilson stated that the app should allow this to happen. He would like to ask if the Council has voted on the new 15-minute rule? He was informed that this part of the Parish Council’s Standing Orders, and a person should only speak for 3 minutes also.

Standing orders were re-instated.

128/24. Planning Matters to be discussed including 'NPPF response draft

- a) Current  
No Applications received.
- b) Mid-Meeting  
No items were reported
- c) Pending  
No items were reported
- d) Appeals  
None were received
- e) Enforcement

The Chairman read out the update on the application for Mrs Grayson on the building works. All other Enforcement item updates were circulated to all members of the council prior to the meeting.

Cllr D Everette prior to the meeting prepared a draft response to the new NPPF Consultation which was circulated to all members, he had taken advice from SSDC on the type of response required and was informed by them that a local argument was required. The Chairman asked if he could break down the response into sections that relate to the 100 + questions on the NPPF consultation document, so a response can be submitted on behalf of the Parish Council that will be aligned with areas that are relevant to a Parish Council for example Grey / Greenbelt.

Cllr Mrs C Taylor suggested that the questions that are not relevant are answered yes / no / etc, and put answers within the template of the question format and she agreed to complete this with a maximum of perhaps 10 questions by next Thursday she will use the draft and circulate it to all members, which Cllr Mrs H Fuller will convert into a shared document so all members can add their comments too.

**Action - Cllr Mrs C Taylor / All members**

Cllr Mrs K Brazenell circulated the slides from the Community Planning Alliance NPPF webinar to all members prior to the meeting and there are templates that residents can use to make a response also.

129/24. Items outstanding from Previous minutes

- a) Severn Trent Water – discussed previously in the meeting – when the last Community Speedwatch were operating in the area, it was noted that since the road diversions had been in place for the Severn Trent works, there a considerable increases in speeding and number of vehicles on this lane.
- b) Battery Storage Facilities – this was deferred until Cllr S McEwen is present.
- c) Community Speedwatch – Cllr Mrs C Taylor has undertaken several sessions and a new member has joined the group.
- d) Speed Indicator Devices – The Parish has 2 locations agreed on lampposts, instead of posts (as per the request of SSDC Officer A Aston) and have agreed to purchase a half price sign. The Clerk to seek clarification from the District Council as to what the current position is and what needs to be done to progress this further.

**Action – Clerk**

- e) Fly Tipping/Litter Picks – 2 litter picks have been undertaken since the last meeting.
- f) Victory Hall Update - bookings are on the increase.
- g) Castlecroft Playing Field – there was no update on this item.
- h) Role of District Councillors - this item was differed until Cllr S McEwen is present.
- i) Penstone Lane – Cllr K Crane has written to Cllr Mrs V Wilson on this matter and she has responded appropriately. Pavement works have been suspended for the past 2 years due to the installation of Fibre Broadband (which have been digging up pavements for their fibre installations), this is due to end shortly. It was noted that the water damage from burst pipes has contributed significantly to the deterioration of the pavement. Cllr K Crane suggested that some responsibility could be attributed to STW, which Cllr Mrs V Wilson acknowledged but commented that it would be difficult to prove legal responsibility. Cllr Mrs V Wilson stated that the faults need to be reported again. Cllr K Crane expressed that there are technical issues with the reporting site.

**Action – Cllr K Crane**

- j) Notice Boards – Cllr K Crane has had a look at the boards and will deal with the undergrowth / repairs when he can.

**Action – Cllr K Crane**

- k) Civil Law of Tort (DE) – Cllr D Everett had stated that he will ask Cllr S McEwen to bring this forward to the Council in a paper and will pass the relevant information to him, however as Cllr D Everett resigned this item will be removed from the agenda unless another member wishes to bring it forward at a future meeting.

At this point Cllr D Everett resigned from being a Parish Councillor with immediate effect and left the meeting. The Clerk will advertise the vacancy as per the required process.

**Action - Clerk**

130/24. To discuss and agree quote for replacing the white posts at the junction of Springhill and Dene Road

Cllr K Crane will investigate a further quote / idea to resolve the issue of cars going onto the grass and report back to the next meeting.

**Action – Cllr K Crane**

131/24. Clerks report

The following items were raised:-

Lower Penn Parish Council 05/09/2024

MacMillan Coffee Morning – is to be held on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025 in social club time 10am – 12pm.

Festive Fayre event - this is taking place on the 30<sup>th</sup> November – there is funding from SSDC to help with these funds (Community fund).

BKV – This was deferred to the next meeting – planting will be taking place in September on the green and undertake repairs to the planters.

Police report – Cllr Mrs C Taylor – she believes that a response should be sent expressing concerns re the lack of Police presence at meetings and the now quarterly reports which are in adequate.

**Action - Clerk**

132/24. Accounts for payment

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs H Fuller and seconded by Cllr Mrs K Brazenell to pay the accounts for payment detailed below (with the exception of the Clerks salary this will be agreed during the last item of the agenda). On a vote this was carried.

05/09/2024	£73.82 + £199.20 <b>£273.02</b>	15	200868	J Parkers & Administration	Bulbs / Expenses
05/09/2024	£330 + £405 <b>£735.00</b>	16	200869	B G Ground Maintenance	July / August grounds maintenance
05/09/2024	£100+£1263.48 <b>£1363.48</b>	17	200870	Administration	July / August / to Sept 5 <sup>th</sup> salary and accommodation costs (J Footman)
05/09/2024	<b>£250.00</b>	18	200871	Lower Penn Village Hall	Room hire
05/09/2024	£112.77 (JF) £133.40 (JC) <b>£246.17</b>	19	200872	Inland Revenue	HMRC Payment for September (J Cree)
05/09/2024	<b>£533.26</b>	20	200873	Administration	Clerks salary September (J Cree)
05/09/2024	<b>£31.35</b>	21	200874	Social Club	Expenses

133/24. To discuss and agree the following documents

The following documents were circulated with the agenda papers:-

Updated Standing Orders  
Updated Financial regulations  
New Media Policy  
New Public participation  
New Filming Policy

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs C Taylor and seconded by Cllr Mrs K Brazenell to adopt all of the above documents and policies. On a vote this was carried.

134/24. Items for future agendas

To be with the Clerk by September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

135/24. Date of next meeting – 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2024

136/24. To exclude the press and public on the grounds that the business to be transacted relates to staffing matters.

All members of the public left the meeting at this point as the business to be transacted related to Personnel matters.

137/24. To confirm the Clerks appointment and Terms of employment

It was agreed to employ Mrs J Cree in the position of Clerk / RFO to Lower Penn Parish Council on Salary £8000.00 per annum, 8 hours per week under the standard NALC terms of employment from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024. Therefore, in agreeing the above, the Clerks salary and HMRC payment under item 132/34 for September were approved.