

08-Jun-2009

## **ICKLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on the 8th June 2009 at 7.15pm at Rye Harbour Village Hall**

Present: Councillors Mrs F Bates, C Bronsdon, B Chishick, R Comotto, J Horsman, Mrs S Lyward, Mrs C Merricks, T Moore, Mrs J Stanford, H Sutton, M Terry, B Thompson.

In Attendance: Cllrs. N Ramus (RDC), K Glazier (ESCC), J Cannings (Assistant to the Clerk). Members of the public were also present.

#### **09/121 The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting at 7.15pm.**

#### **09/122 The Chairman will invite members of the public to comment or ask questions on any matters they wish to raise, relating to today's business of the Council (15 minutes).**

Mr Slavin of Rye Harbour said that, although not on tonight's agenda, he would like to ask about progress with the Rye Harbour Emergency Plan. Cllr. Mrs Stanford advised she was waiting for questionnaires to be returned before being able to move forward.

Rye Harbour resident, Mr Alford, congratulated Cllrs. Horsman and Mrs Stanford on their election as Chairman and Vice Chairman. He went on to request a re-arrangement of the fencing in the play area behind the village hall. The Chairman asked for the request to be made in writing.

#### **09/123 To receive reports and ask questions of Cllrs. K Glazier, N Ramus and P Osborne concerning County Council and Rother District Council matters.**

Cllr. Glazier also congratulated Cllrs. Horsman and Mrs Stanford. He said that he did not have much to report due to the recent elections. He had received communications from both the Clerk and Cllr. Comotto concerning various Winchelsea matters and read them out, along with his responses, but requested IPC to streamline its system so that all questions were sent to him via the Clerk. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Glazier and asked all councillors to address questions to Cllr. Glazier through the Clerk, with a copy to himself.

Cllr. Ramus referred to the Rye Harbour Emergency plan. He had requested the relevant RDC Officer to get involved. Cllr. Mrs Stanford said this is already happening and they have been in communication. Cllr. Ramus reported that he had been appointed to the Tourism Committee of the 1066 area. The committee aims to build up tourism for the benefit of local businesses but they have a small budget. ESCC does not contribute to the tourism budget. He went on to talk about a recent planning application in Rye Harbour. A petition had been sent in by local residents electronically. However, petitions have to be an original copy. Mr Slavin said the petition had been sent in by email on the recommendation of RDC and he felt there were inconsistencies in advice

given by the planning department.

**09/124 The meeting was formally opened at 7.40p.m.**

The Chairman stated that from this point the meeting would be recorded

**09/125 To receive and record any apologies for absence.**

All serving members of the parish council were present.

**09/126 Disclosure of interests.**

Cllr. Mrs Merricks declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 11. Cllr. Mrs Stanford declared a personal interest in item 15. Cllr. Comotto declared a personal interest in item 10(a).

**09/127 To consider and approve the signing of the minutes by the chairman of the meeting of the 11th May 2009.**

Cllr. Chishick proposed an amendment to item 09/113 (Emergency Plan - Rye Harbour) in that it was recorded in the minutes that "Winchelsea councillors offered the Winchelsea Emergency Plan as a template". With this addition, it was proposed by Cllr. Mrs Lyward, seconded by Cllr. Chishick, that the minutes be approved. Agreed.

**09/128 Matters arising.**

a) Current Activity & Programme of Works Schedule (list previously circulated). Members were asked if there were any questions on current activity/projects. Cllr. Comotto asked for clarification on the item signage for Icklesham Memorial Hall. The Clerk's Assistant explained that the reply from Highways indicated a misunderstanding of our request in that they thought we were requesting two directional signs (The Memorial Hall and Disabled Parking) for the same entrance. The Clerk has written again explaining that disabled parking is in a separate area and the sign for this would be further down the road. Cllr. Comotto noted that the contract for Winchelsea street lighting had been agreed and asked if the contractor could be asked whether the timer could be changed. This will be investigated. Cllr. Comotto also advised that Cllr. Osborne (RDC) had secured two new bins for outside the Winchelsea public conveniences so the item of purchasing one bin for Winchelsea could be removed from the list. Cllr. Mrs Bates asked what was delaying the provision of the two bins for Icklesham. The Clerk's Assistant said it was just a case of working through items. She hoped to progress the matter soon.

b) Council policy on the management of large projects. Cllr. Comotto said this, and the next 2 items were for information. They had been requested under matters arising for discussion at the last meeting but not included on the agenda. Council policy was supposed to be to seek professional assistance on large capital projects. He referred members to item 05/51 of the minutes of 11/7/05, and to the minutes of 24/04/06, on the continued problems of the management of large projects. He felt council should bear this matter in mind.

c) The warding of parishes (Trevor Leggo's recent email). Cllr. Comotto said reference had been made to the email by the Chairman at the April meeting. It appeared to suggest that the only reason for warding was electoral convenience. Cllr. Comotto stated that warding also serves a democratic

purpose and referred members to the legislation in the 1972 Local Government Act. The Chairman said that before going any further on this, a response was awaited from Trevor Leggo and if everyone was in agreement, discussion would be deferred until this was received. Cllr. Mrs Merricks asked if Cllr. Comotto had actually received the email. He said he had received it via the last Chairman. Cllr. Mrs Merricks said this again raised the issue of such things going through the Clerk and that it would be helpful if councillors could have a copy of items on the agenda to clarify what was being discussed. Cllr. Mrs Merricks requested that councillors be provided with a copy of the email. The Chairman said he did not think that was necessary at the moment; a copy would be provided when a full response had been received from Trevor Leggo.

d) The review of Standing Orders. The Chairman said that a new model was about to be published and felt there was no point in a review by council before this was available. Cllr. Comotto said the minutes make reference to the fact there was a previous working group report. On a point of clarification, Cllr. Mrs Merrick stated that the last time Standing Orders were agreed by council there wasn't a working party; it was the time before that. The Chairman said the Clerk will advise council when the new model had been received.

#### **09/129 Financial Matters.**

a) Receipts and payments report for year to 31st May 2009. Enclosed. Proposed by Cllr. Comotto, seconded by Cllr. Bronsdon, that the report be approved. Agreed.

b) To approve items of payment for June 2009. The Assistant Clerk tabled items of expenditure totalling £7,287.33 for June which concerned cheques numbered 2102 to 2114 sequentially plus £730.00 Standing Orders. Cllr. Comotto noted that the first grant payment to village halls was on the list and said there was a decision in Feb 09 that the Clerk would undertake a risk assessment before releasing money and asked if this had been done. The Clerk's Assistant said the Clerk had done a risk assessment and had approved the first payments being made. Cllr. Comotto asked if councillors could see the risk assessment. Proposed by Cllr. Mrs Lyward, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Stanford, that the payments be approved. Agreed.

c) The Clerk seeks approval to submit the Annual Return to the external auditors. Enclosed. The final date for this return is 30th June. Cllr. Comotto referred to the section 2 declaration on risk assessment which stated 'yes' to assessment on financial and other risks. He said that when discussed during the February meeting, the then Chairman had denied we had any responsibility for assessing risk and said there was no policy to do so. Cllr. Bronsdon asked if Cllr. Comotto was referring to financial or ward risk assessments as they were different matters. Cllr. Comotto said ward risk assessments were variable. The Chairman said that there was a time when that was so but he thought they were now back on track. He was asked if the matter could be brought back to the next meeting and said he had no objection to risk assessments being brought back for review to ensure they were being carried out correctly but reassured members that they are now being carried out regularly in the four wards. The councillors responsible in

their wards for assessments confirmed that they were being submitted to the Clerk on a regular basis. Cllr. Mrs Lyward thought it would be a good idea if the returns were circulated to all councillors. Cllr. Bronsdon said that discussion was needed on what is classified as a risk and what is maintenance, together with the point scoring system. It was agreed that risk assessments would be brought back as an agenda item for a future meeting. In the meantime, he asked to proceed with the matter of the annual return. Proposed by Cllr. Bronsdon, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Stanford, that the return be approved. Agreed.

d) The Clerk seeks approval to proceed with the installation of play equipment at Harbour Field, Winchelsea Beach. Quotations enclosed. Cllr. Mrs Lyward had brought to the meeting a brochure showing the item favoured by the parents and toddlers group in Winchelsea Beach. Cllr. Terry said he would like to raise an issue, mentioned before, that individual councillors should not seek tenders. Although fine for councillors to have input, the Clerk, as an independent authorised individual, should seek tenders, on a standard template, to make sure they are on a like for like basis. Cllr. Mrs Lyward said the Clerk had received brochures and been involved with all the estimates. Cllr. Terry said the three quotes mentioned different BS Standards. Cllr. Mrs Lyward said she had sought advice from ESCC and the three estimates were from companies used by them. The Chairman stated that, whilst he understood Cllr. Terry's point, not every contractor can supply the same product so he did not think it could apply to every single thing purchased for the parish. Cllr. Mrs Merricks pointed out that play equipment is entirely different to, say, fencing which can be of a standard specification. Cllr. Mrs Stanford agreed with Cllr. Terry in that she thought estimates should be addressed to the Clerk. Cllr. Bronsdon said ward councillors were best placed to listen to the wishes of residents who could then pass this information on to the Clerk who would then bring it to council. He further said it was not possible for different contractors to supply an identical equipment. Proposed by Cllr. Mrs Merricks, seconded by Cllr. Bronsdon, that the estimate from Wicksteed Leisure, be approved. Agreed. Cllr. Comotto asked if the issue of concerns on procurement could be on the next agenda. It was agreed by the Chairman that this would be brought back for debate.

### **09/130 Correspondence.**

a) Reply from Winchelsea Corporation re Spring Steps. Enclosed for information.

Cllr. Comotto said that as a member of the Winchelsea Archaeological Society he had declared an interest but offered to give an update. The Society had been engaged in research into the Steps by the County Archaeologist and a meeting had taken place on 28th May. A phased approach to cleaning the steps has been taken, to be followed by a survey. On the basis of the survey, ESCC may be able to consider what options can be taken and the costs. Cllr. Comotto said he strongly advised against a site meeting as the steps are far too dangerous. However, it should be possible to view them from the end of the lane. The Chairman said he would like to attend the meeting.

b) Reply from Dr Barry Yates, Manager of the Rye Harbour Nature Reserve, offering a tour (approx 2 hours) of the reserve. The Clerk's Assistant said a

date and numbers needed to be decided. 10 councillors indicated interest. Cllr. Mrs Merricks said that Dr Yates vehicle could take 6 but she was happy to follow in her car with passengers. It was decided that a date would be agreed first with Dr Yates and circulated to councillors for their attendance.

Cllr. Mrs Merricks left the room for the next item.

**09/131 Cllr. Mrs Bates submits the following resolution:**

"At its meeting on the 8th December 2008, Council agreed to make payment of £1000 to each Village Hall Management Committee in the parish, by means of two payments in April and September, subject to provision of audited accounts. Due to loss of revenue as a result of the refurbishment of Icklesham Memorial Hall, the Trust Committee has asked whether all of the money could be paid as soon as possible, in their case, rather than wait until September. It is proposed that this request be granted on this occasion only."

Cllr. Mrs Bates first said how excellent the Memorial Hall looks after the refurbishment and also thanked to council for resurfacing the car park. She went on to give some background to the request and said every endeavour was being made by the Memorial Hall Committee to improve their financial situation by fund raising events. The Chairman said the Clerk had confirmed that the council were able to make this payment early. Proposed by Cllr. Mrs Lyward, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Stanford, that the second grant payment be paid as soon as possible. Agreed.

Cllr. Mrs Merricks rejoined the meeting.

**09/132 Bench at Winchelsea Beach.**

The two suggested locations for the donated bench were discussed. Cllr. Mrs Stanford pointed out that if it is sited on the sea wall, which is the responsibility of the Environment Agency, the council would not be able to carry out future maintenance. Cllr. Comotto stated that the council is not responsible for replacing donated benches but it was agreed, however, that council does maintain them. Cllr. Sutton said seating was needed in the play area. Cllr. Mrs Lyward said she felt the donor (grandparents) should be made aware of the possibility of vandalism if sited in Harbour Field. Cllr. Sutton said that there was provision in the budget for two new benches for Winchelsea Beach and asked if all three benches could match. Proposed by Cllr. Mrs Stanford, seconded by Cllr. Terry, that the bench should be sited in the children's play area in Harbour Field, the donor advised of council's choice, along with possibility of vandalism. Agreed.

**09/133 Pear Tree Marsh allotment site - update.** The Clerk's assistant advised that Highways have agreed to rotovate and replace the topsoil. They are chasing their contractor, InterRoute, for a date. Hopefully, the work will take place shortly.

**09/134 Parish Tree Survey - update.** The Chairman said a preliminary report and estimate for a full survey from Houlbec Forestry had been received. The preliminary report had been available to councillors on request. Further estimates were being obtained. The dangerous tree identified in the report has been disposed of. He asked if there were any questions. There were

none.

#### **09/135 Harbour Field - car parking.**

Cllr. Mrs Stanford explained that the request to use Harbour Field for parking had been made on behalf of residents who were organising a fund raising event in aid of the Friends of the Mary Stanford Lifeboat House. Cllr. Mrs Lyward advised that when involved in a similar activity in the past, car parking was not allowed due to restrictions on the land covenant. Cllr. Sutton confirmed this and also pointed out that footballers are still using the field in summer and thought dates should be checked. The Chairman said the insurance cover aspect had been looked into and as long as certain safety precautions were taken, there shouldn't be a problem. It was agreed that the Clerk would look into the terms of the covenant, formalise the insurance requirements and report back at a later meeting.

#### **09/136 Annual Parish Assembly - Chairman's update.**

The Chairman said how successful he felt the meeting had been. Attendance was good, including residents from all four wards. Speakers from CAB, RDC's Advice Centre and the police, as well as Cllr. Glazier, had taken questions and a number of issues were raised, some of which the Clerk will take forward. It was clear that communication between residents and the council was welcome and that there is need for ward meetings, open to everybody. He said he will be bringing this back to the next meeting as a resolution, proposing four meetings in September, prior to budget discussions. The Chairman also said that he would like to thank Cllr. Mrs Lyward for doing such an excellent job in providing food and drink at the meeting. Cllr. Mrs Lyward she said that this was the second year running that Winchelsea ward councillors did not attend the annual meeting and she had found this embarrassing. Cllr. Comotto asked if he could reply. He said the annual meeting is not a council meeting, it is supposed to be a community meeting with local organisations giving presentations. The meeting had appeared to be a Chairman's meeting. He said full council should be involved in discussing the agenda, as well as taking into consideration items from residents. Winchelsea councillors had wanted traffic as a major item but only SIDs were included. Cllr. Mrs Merricks said she commended the Chairman on conducting such a very good annual meeting. She, too, found it sad and embarrassing that no Winchelsea councillors had been present to talk to the local community. She felt strongly that they had no right to criticise if they did not attend and thought that, had they done so, they would have been pleased as many interesting matters were discussed. She very much hoped they would attend next year. Cllr. Comotto said he wanted to make clear that Winchelsea councillors were elected to create a separate parish of Winchelsea and do not want to be part of this parish. The Chairman said that until Winchelsea is a separate parish, councillors should attend all Icklesham Parish meetings. He said the council would endeavour to provide a united front at the next annual parish meeting. Cllr. Terry said he had given his apologies for not being able to attend due to being on holiday.

#### **09/137 Reports from Council Representatives.**

Cllr. Moore reported that he had attended a recent meeting of the Rye Bay

Young People's Services. The Youth Centre in Rye had recently been destroyed and was not covered by insurance. He asked if the Youth Centre in Pound Field was insured. The Clerk's Assistant said it was on council's asset register so thought it would be but would check.

**09/138 Matters to be referred to the next agenda.**

These had been noted throughout the meeting.

**09/139 Councillor Training by RDC's Monitoring Officer.**

This was arranged for Monday 15th June, commencing at 7.00pm, at the Winchelsea Beach Community Hall. The Chairman hoped all councillors would attend.

**09/140 Date and venue for the next meeting.**

The date of the meeting was confirmed as Monday 13th July at the New Hall, Winchelsea, commencing at 7.15pm, preceded by a planning meeting at 6.00pm and a Police Panel Meeting at 6.45pm.

The meeting closed at 8.50.m.

Unapproved