

STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held in The Chanctonbury Room, The Parish Hall, Thakeham Road, Storrington, on Thursday, 11th February, 2010, commencing at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Mrs. A. Worthington-Leese in the Chair, Mr. R. Jerman, Mr. J. Macey, Mr. A. Mullard, Mr. D. Roper and Mrs. L. Wheatley.

In Attendance: Mr. Will Jones, HDC.

126. Apologies for Absence were received from Mr. R. Dawe (prior engagement). The reason for absence was duly **ACCEPTED**.

127. To Receive Declarations of Interest from Members. There were no declarations of interest.

128. To Approve and Sign the Minutes of the Last Meeting held on the 14th January, 2010. Minute Number 113. third paragraph the word “ENVIRONMENTAL” should read “ENVIRONMENT” and Minute Number 113, final paragraph the word “MR.” should read “MRS”. With these amendments made the minutes were duly **APPROVED** as being a correct record of the proceedings thereat and were duly signed by the Chairman.

129. Presentation on Trees by Mr. Will Jones (H.D.C.’s Arboricultural Officer.

The Chairman proposed that this item be brought forward before Matters Arising and with the agreement of the meeting agenda item 5 was taken next.

Mrs. Worthington-Leese welcomed Mr. Will Jones, introduced him to members and invited him to take the floor. Mr. Jones explained that he would be running through the basics of what he did and did not do within his arboricultural role at H.D.C. Essentially there are three tasks:

1. Management of the T.P.O. System – where he can make, adjust and amend them.
2. Dealings with all applications regarding T.P.O.’s. These are dealt with differently as they are applications for consent to carry out work on T.P.O.’d trees. He has three options under these types of application i) reject outright, ii) permit outright or iii) permit with conditions e.g. reduce the percentage of crown reduction applied for. That said he can never increase the amount of work requested or indeed change an application e.g. from pruning to felling.
3. Notification of works in Conservation Area. With these, applicants are notifying Mr. Jones of intent to work on a tree.

Mr. Jones covers 42 or so Parishes and has a list of 1,400 T.P.O.s (some with 1,000’s of trees in each) so he does not visit each request. He does a careful desk-top exercise to ascertain whether a visit is required or not. Should he receive any objections, he will automatically attend site.

Mr. Mullard asked: How did he know that the applicant would not exceed the works requested and approved? Mr. Jones stated that he could put conditions on to ensure the job was done correctly and undertaken as approved, however what he could not do by law would be to dictate who the applicant used to undertake the job. Mr. Jones did state that should any members see any breaches to conditions, they should let him know in order that he could investigate.

Mr. Mullard also asked if applicants ignored T.P.O.s and damaged or felled the trees, what the penalty would be. Mr. Jones mentioned that the felling of a T.P.O.'d tree without authorisation could lead to a maximum fine of £25,000; should a T.P.O. tree be damaged that could also incur a maximum fine of £2,500.

As regards prosecution, should Mr. Jones go to his Legal Team to pursue a case, they would ask him what damage had been done and could it be proven. Technically the answers should be yes, however sometimes proving it can be incredibly difficult. That said however the owner/applicant has a statutory duty to replant any felled protected trees.

Mrs. Wheatley suggested that it might be an idea to ask that all tree applications be sent in with photographs. This was agreed to be a good idea in principle however, if H.D.C. were to implement this it would be likely to be seen as unreasonable. H.D.C. is restricted to asking for what is reasonable.

Mr. Jones announced that applications involving tree felling are done on an ad-hoc basis and he tends to rely on the relevant Case Officers' (as he trains them in what to look out for) opinions as to whether a site visit is necessary or not. Obviously he would take on board any concerns of the local Parish Council or neighbours.

Areas that Mr. Jones does not deal with are: District Trees – these are dealt with by Mark Pullen, Highway Trees (from the gutter to 1.5 metres in) these are dealt with by County and all other constraints e.g. A.O.N.B or S.N.C.I. or S.S.S.Is.

One problem which frequently occurs when assessing P.C. comments is that members tend to look at the application to see if there are any reasons not to permit the works, however Mr. Jones has to look at the application from the other way i.e. if the proposed work does not harm the tree or local area and is considered necessary the works would be permitted.

To close Mr. Jones said if some planning applications show trees to be removed ... let him know of any concerns. Likewise, if trees are not replaced within a certain timeframe – let him know in order that he can investigate.

Mrs. Worthington-Leese thanked Mr. Jones for his very interesting presentation.

Matters Arising:-

130. **Minute No. 133 : Village Design Statement – Update.** Following on from our meeting with Mr. Patrick, Griffin of H.D.C., the office had made some amendments to the Draft Design Statement. A meeting had been arranged to discuss these changes and the next steps for 11am on Tuesday 16th February.
131. **Minute No. 114 : Brook End House.** Mrs. Worthington-Leese reported that amended plans had been received which showed a reduction in size, height, scale, bulk and massing of the proposed dwelling. It had also been reduced to a three bedroom property. With these amendments, a comment of NO OBJECTION had been sent to Horsham.
132. **Minute No. 115 : Trees at The Glade.** A week after our January Planning Meeting the resident concerned had contacted the office to say that he would be more than happy to pay for the tree work himself, as he wanted to erect a new boundary fence. The office had informed the gentleman concerned that he should request a quotation for the relevant works and then forward it to the Parish Office for their consideration. It was **AGREED:** that:

Members would await receipt of a quotation for the requested works before any final decision would be made.

133. **Minute No. 118 : DC/09/2025 – St Joseph’s Abbey – Update.** Mrs. Worthington-Leese reported that a further letter had been sent to Mr. Gary Peck (H.D.C. Development Control-South) on 2nd February. This letter stated that until responses had been received regarding all our queries, members would not be in a position to make any constructive or informed comments on the proposals. To date, a response had not been received.
134. **Minute No. 11 - DC/07/1425 – Miramar (now Lionheart).** Mrs. Worthington-Leese announced that an application for the retention of close board fencing with a hedgerow planted in front along the front boundary had been received on 25th January. This application was strongly objected to and members were waiting to hear from H.D.C. regarding their decision.
135. **Budget Review.** Mrs. Worthington-Leese announced that the current budget balance for the period 01/04/09 to 31/03/10 inclusive was at £1,466, a total of £1,820 had been spent to date and there was one tree within the Parish Hall grounds that needed attention.
136. **Planning Applications Awaiting Comment – Appendix I.**
- (a) **DC/10/0099 - 2, Lime Chase, Fryern Road.** Members viewed this application electronically and **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that a comment of ***NO OBJECTION*** should be sent to Horsham District Council.
 - (b) **DC/10/0209 - Pinewood House, Warren Chase.** Members viewed this application electronically and the tree report sent in by Mr. Will Jones. Whilst it was considered a shame to have to remove so many trees, it was deemed necessary on health and safety grounds. It was therefore **AGREED** that a comment of ***NO OBJECTION*** should be sent to Horsham District Council.
 - (c) **DC/10/0235 - Tiptoes, Sandgate Lane.** Members viewed this application electronically. As the plans did not show the exact proximity of a beech tree to the proposed garage extension, it was **AGREED** that Mr. Jerman should undertake a site visit to establish its precise location. Should he consider the tree to be of a safe distance it was agreed that a comment of ***NO OBJECTION*** should be sent to Horsham District Council.
137. **Planning Application Decisions – Appendix II.** These were duly **NOTED**.
138. **Planning Applications, Comment Summary – since the meeting on the 14th January, 2010.** These were duly **NOTED**.
139. **Chairman’s Announcements.**
- (a) **Natural England Application.** Mrs. Worthington-Leese read out a letter from Mr. Aldridge which stated that after careful consideration by the panel it had been decided not to call him for an interview.

- (b) **HDC E-Planning Meeting – Update.** All members had received a copy of the Clerk's notes on this meeting held on 18th January 2010. Members were surprised to note that H.D.C. were planning to roll this out to all Parishes by end of March, yet none of the issues raised appeared to have been addressed. Members agreed that future applications received before the scheduled Planning Meeting should be projected on to the wall for all to view and comment on.
- (c) **HDC Guide to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).** All members had received a copy of this Assessment.
- (d) **South Downs National Park Advisory Forum – 25th February 2009.** Mrs. Worthington-Leese announced that Mr. Jerman would be attending this Forum.
- (e) **Angell's Sandpit Public Enquiry (9th February).** The office had spoken with Mrs. Corke at H.D.C. who had stated that a decision was expected towards the end of February/beginning of March. Whilst there were obvious issues regarding contamination on site, it would be down to the Inspector to consider whether the previously set conditions would be sufficient to satisfy those concerns.
- (f) **Appeal – Land East of Sawyards, Manleys Hill – Erection of 4 x 1-bed flats.** Mrs. Worthington-Leese announced that a decision had been received from the Planning Inspectorate today and that the Appeal had been allowed. Members noted that some conditions had been set although they were surprised by the decision. All members were given a copy of the Appeal decision.
- (g) **Appeal – Costs Application re. Land East of Sawyards, Manleys Hill.** Mrs. Worthington-Leese announced that a decision had been received from the Planning Inspectorate today and that the Appeal for costs had been dismissed. All members were given a copy of the Appeal decision.

140. **Documents for Councillors to Read.** There were no documents for Councillors to read.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.10 pm.