

SLINDON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Slindon Parish Council
Held on Monday 9th April 2018
At the Coronation Hall, Reynolds Lane, Slindon at 7pm

PRESENT: Parish Councillors Niki Adamson, Barbara Brimblecombe, Steve Chilver, Robert Parfey, Derek Thomas and Ann Watts.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Norman Dingemans, Arun District Councillor.
Katie Archer, National Trust.

1. FILMING OF MEETINGS AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- 1.1** Members and the public were reminded of the procedures for filming and recording the meeting and requested to switch mobile devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1** Apologies were received from Parish Councillors Peter Fenton and Lee Spencer-Smith and Derek Whittington, West Sussex County Councillor.

3. TALK WITH US

- 3.1** There were three members of the public present. A School Hill resident wished to make the Council aware of a complaint regarding the Gaston Farm Lambing. Acknowledging that residents may wish to address the Council on matters relating to the organisation of the event, the Chairman proposed that the session be postponed and the agenda item on this matter brought forward for discussion to allow everyone to have their say. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that Standing Orders be waived and the Public Forum be temporarily suspended.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

- 4.1** Councillor Thomas declared a personal and prejudicial interest matters relating to the Gaston Farm Lambing as he assisted at the event. He confirmed that he would leave the meeting when the Council came to consider the matter.

5. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 12th MARCH 2018

- 5.1** It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2018 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

6. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AND URGENT ITEMS

- 6.1 URGENT MATTERS** – there were none.

6.2 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman updated Members on progress with key areas of relating to tree maintenance at the Recreation Ground and GDPR compliance. She was also pleased to report that The Head teacher at the Primary School would be able to help with planting the wildflower meadows planned at both the Top Playing Field and the Recreation Ground. The annual Gaston Farm Lambing event had attracted a high volume of calls and letters and acknowledging the strength of feeling, it was **RESOLVED** that the public forum resume to hear representations.

7. FEEDBACK - GASTON FARM LAMBING

- 7.1** The Chairman opened the debate and summarised the current position. The Council had received an unprecedented number of communications regarding the organisation of the event. The recent Conservation Area review highlighted the rarity of having a thriving working farm at the center of a village. However recent events had demonstrated the potential disadvantages and it was becoming clear from the representations that some of the consequences had gone beyond what

was acceptable to residents. The Lambing event had raised issues ranging from the responsibilities of the local authorities and agencies to the effectiveness of the of traffic control measures. The landowner and the Farm also had a significant part to play and these issues were not easily resolved. It was noted that:

- The Lambing event did not require formal licensing. If required, the Licensing Authority was Arun District Council
- Advice and guidance regarding temporary traffic management and authorisation for road closures - West Sussex Council as the local Highways Authority.
- Traffic violations – Sussex Police control measures

The key issues that concerned residents were the safety of pedestrians particularly children and the elderly, emergency and amenity vehicle access, access for priority deliveries, damage to property and preserving access to private property and the duration of the event over a continuous period. In conclusion, whilst residents appreciated the value of having a working Farm in the parish, the added complication of a prolonged period of bad weather had tested residents good will.

7.2 A School Hill resident addressed the Council regarding a recent incident that had resulted in damage to her property. She explained that as a result of traffic congestion caused by the volume of visitors trying to get to Gaston Farm, a large vehicle had hit a pillar at the entrance to her property. Having visited the Farm to highlight the problems that traffic was causing throughout the village, she had been rebuffed. Observing that traffic marshals had been strategically placed on the main roads leading to the event, she concluded that the Farm must be aware of the problems that residents were experiencing and requested that better provision to accommodate visiting traffic, particularly during wet weather, be prioritised.

7.3 Councillor Thomas addressed the Council from the public gallery on behalf of Gaston Farm. He stated that the arrangements for this year's event had been severely tested by the prolonged spell of very wet weather. The safety of visitors, particularly young children was a priority. Aware of the need to keep the fields open for parking, trackway / mating systems had been investigated. The effectiveness of these had been assessed and because the fields were suited on sloping ground which could become more slippery and dangerous for both pedestrians and vehicles in wet conditions, they had been discounted. It was noted that flatter ground was prone to gathering standing water rendering it equally unusable for parking.

7.4 The main issue for the Farm had been the unforeseen and prolonged spell of wet weather and whilst it understood the difficulties that residents had experienced, this had affected all visitors not just those coming to the Lambing. Acknowledging the comments from the gallery regarding the incident in Church Hill, he apologised on behalf of the Farm and agreed to take these comments back to them. Councillor Thomas remained in the gallery and answered some factual questions regarding the organisation of the event and confirmed that in view of his personal and prejudicial interest, he would leave the meeting when the Council came to consider its response later in the meeting.

7.5 The following points were noted from the ensuing discussion:

- Cancelling the event was problematic because of the difficulties of communicating the message effectively. Experience had shown that even with widespread publication of a closure, visitors would still turn up on the off chance.
- The local geology at the Farm was similar throughout the parish, further restricting the availability of land suitable for parking.
- Investigation of park and ride arrangements showed that other large sites outside the parish had similar problems.
- The lambing event was programmed as an Easter activity and the farming cycle adjusted accordingly each year.

- A resident had directly approached the Farm for assistance, and this was encouraged as they would endeavor to make adjustments to help out.
- Event marshals had been posted at points along the A29 when the event was busy in an attempt to control traffic flows.
- The main routes through the village were unrestricted which gave rise to issues on two levels. It was observed that residents parking on the road encouraged visitors to act similarly and that not all visitors responded well to requests from residents who wished to preserve access to their property.
- Whilst traffic cones had been deployed by the Farm and the Parish Council's cones had been deployed by individuals, they were prone to loss / displacement. It was suggested that consideration be given making more cones available.

7.6 It was acknowledged that the weather this year had been particularly challenging, and it was suggested that robust contingency arrangements were required to avoid the situation recurring. In this respect it was noted that Arun District Council published guidance for event organisers which was considered to be very useful (see: <https://www.arun.gov.uk/event-safety> document found at: <https://www.arun.gov.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jjm4n3795.pdf&ver=3463>). The growing popularity of the village as a visitor destination was also acknowledged and it was observed that organisations like the National Trust had scaled back and reorganized some events accordingly. The issues raised also highlighted the growing problem of the lack of suitable parking in the Parish generally.

Councillor Thomas redeclared his interest and left the meeting at 7.45pm.

7.7 The Parish Council preceded to consider the issues and how it might respond to the call for action. There was a strong view that the Farm together with the landowner, the National Trust, had a responsibility to communicate better with residents regarding planned events. The issues raised had also brought into focus the growing need for better parking provision in the village generally. On the latter point, the parish Council would continue to press for more provision when the opportunity arose. However, the current situation and the problems faced by residents needed to be addressed promptly. The availability and effectiveness of the use of traffic cones was discussed. It was noted that the Parish Council had acquired a supply for use at local events and that blanket use of them may not be any more successful as they were easily moved and their use unenforceable. The event was however drawing to a close and residents clearly wished to see that policies and plans would be put in place to address the impact of wet weather on the events in the future. **The Parish Council therefore RESOLVED to:**

- 1) Write to Gaston Farm setting out information regarding the concerns of residents,**
- 2) Request a meeting with the Farm and the National Trust as the landowner to discuss managing future events, particularly in the event of exceptional weather conditions,**
- 3) Seek a named point of contact at Gaston Farm to whom residents can address questions and concerns.**

Councillor Thomas rejoined the meeting at 8pm.

8. PLANNING MATTERS

8.1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

8.1.1 SDNP/18/01362/TCA Mulberry House Dyers Lane Slindon BN18 ORE

The Council received details of a planning application (previously circulated) which contained a notice regarding proposed tree works. The Council had no objection to the work providing that access to Dyers Lane and Church Hill was maintained throughout the works.

8.1.2 SDNP/18/00999/LIS - South Lodge London Road Slindon BN18 OSG

The Council received details of a planning application and listed building consent (previously circulated) which proposed repairs to and the refurbishment of the

Lodge, out-building, related boundary treatments and the installation of new drainage and an LPG gas tank and had no objection to the plans.

8.1.3 SDNP/18/01096/LIS&SDNP/18/01095/HOUS Mill Cottage Mill Road Slindon BN18 0LY

The Council received details of a planning application and listed building consent (previously circulated) which proposed further extensive works that would see the demolition of an existing single storey extension and construction of single storey side extension to provide new kitchen / family room and link. The applicants also proposed a change of use of the dining room and kitchen to a bedroom and ensuite and replacing the detached single garage. This was in addition to work previously consented in Summer 2017 (SDNP/17/02965/LIS and SDNP/17/01723/LIS) which had already started and would replace all the windows and reconfigure the first floor to reinstate a larger rear bedroom and relocate the bathroom. The Parish Council had no objection to these proposals.

8.2 SDNPA DECISIONS / PRE-APPLICATIONS/ UPDATES

It was noted that builders were on site at Ray Cottage, Bridle Lane. It was understood that the new owner proposed to make improvements to the existing dwelling.

8.3 SLINDON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL & MANAGEMENT PLAN (CAAMP)

It was reported that the SDNPA were still waiting to hear from the National Trust. This has been followed up by the SDNPA Officer and Members would be kept informed of progress. This was also noted by the National Trust representative and **it was RESLOVED that the update be noted.**

9. HIGHWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY MATTERS - There was nothing to report.

10. WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS - There was nothing to report.

11. ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

11.1 Report from Mr Dingemans

Councillor Dingemans reported that there was considerable debate around "rural proofing", i.e. providing decent infrastructure such as high-speed broadband connectivity, to rural communities. It was noted that both the District Council and the National park were engaged in activities to promote the need for decent infrastructure for rural parishes such as Slindon. It was noted that a planning application for 157 houses in Wandleys Lane, Fontwell had recently been refused. The District Council whooped to be taking the Local Plan to Full Council in May.

12. NATIONAL PARK MATTERS

12.1 Councillor Dingemans reported that the National Park was engaged in several initiatives:

- Working with other National Parks and DEFRA to devise and discuss pilot schemes focused on landscape and biodiversity to replace the C.A.P. post Brexit.
- Encouraging large landowners to develop Whole Estate Plans for the longer-term management of land acknowledging the key aims of the National Park. It was noted that three plans had already been adopted.

13. REPORT FROM THE CLERK

13.1 The Parish Council received and noted the contents of the Clerk's Report (copy attached to the minutes).

13.2 Risk Register

The Council received an updated Register (previously circulated) which had been amended to reflect the evolving plan for the long-term maintenance of the trees at the Recreation Ground (section 17) and the requirements of GDPR (section 7). It was also suggested that the Register be updated to reflect the fact that the

Council now owned a supply of traffic cones that could be borrowed by community groups. It was noted that the control measure (i.e. the record book) provided information to track usage (i.e. the body taking responsibility for arrangements). This was agreed. The action required to comply with the new GDPR regulations was noted and the outcome of research into the need for individual email addresses under the “.gvo.uk” domain would be reported back to Council at the next meeting. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

Subject to the addition of the information regarding the Council’s supply of traffic cones and the internal control in place (i.e. the record book), the Risk Register be approved.

13.3 Parish Council Insurance

Members had before them (previously circulated) an insurance renewal quote for the forthcoming year. There was slight increase which reflected the upgraded play equipment (seesaw and double swings) at the Top Playing Field that had been installed last Spring. Members were satisfied that the schedule was correct, and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

The annual premium for 2018/19 in the sum of £512.31p be paid.

13.4 Draft Meeting Dates 2018/19

Council had before it a list of draft meeting dates proposed for 2018/19 (previously circulated). **It was RESOLVED that the draft meeting dates for 2018/19 be approved.**

14. FINANCE REPORT

14.1 BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION

The Parish Council received and noted the statement of account (copy attached to the minutes) showing that the Parish Council’s bank balances had been reconciled with the known expenditure and income as at 31st March 2018.

Slindon Parish Council		
HSBC C/A @ 31/3/18		£ 12,809.62
HSBC D/A @ 31/3/18		£ 25,584.92
Pettycash balance @ 31/3/18		£ 100.00
Less uncashed cheques *		-£ 510.00
Total @ 31/3/18		£ 37,984.54

*100245	19-Mar-18	Mill Farm Plants	Hedging plants and supports for the Recreation Ground	£ 510.00
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14.2 AUTHORITIES FOR PAYMENT

The Parish Council had before it the list of payments for approval (previously circulated). **It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:**

Payee	Amount (basic cost)	Amount (VAT)*	Total Amount	Description
Mrs J Harris	£362.96p	N/a	£362.96p	Standing Order - Clerk’s Monthly salary payment per timesheet attached for 12/3/18 –8/4/18
Coronation Hall Committee	£14.00p	N/a	£14.00p	Standing Order - Hall hire for March 18 Mtg
National Trust	£100.00p	N/a	£100.00p	D/D – Allotment rental March – Sept.18
Mill Farm	£425.00p	£85.00p	£510.00p	Chq Srl 100245 -

Plants				hedging plants & supports for Recreation Ground
Mrs J Harris	£87.98	N/a	£87.98p	Chq Srl 100246 – Petty cash expenses March 2018
Information Commissioner's Office	£35.00p	N/a	£35.00p	D/D – Annual registration fee
Came & Company	£512.31p	N/a	£512.31p	Chq Srl 100247 – Annual Insurance premium
Mill Farm Plants	£189.90p	£37.98p	£227.88p	Chq Srl 100248 – hedging plants & supports for Top Playing Field
SSALC Ltd	£17.00p	N/a	£17.00p	Chq Srl 100249 – 2018/9 annual subscription LCR

- 14.3 It was also RESOLVED that a direct debit mandate be approved in respect of the annual Data Protection Registration Fee to the Information Commissioner's Office with effect from 9th April 2018.**

15. COMMUNITY MATTERS

15.1 EVENTS FEEDBACK: ANNUAL PARISH MEETING (APM)

The APM had again been very well attended. The Clerk reported that the draft minutes had recently been completed and would be placed on the Parish Council's website for information. Recalling that there had been some discussion about the Slindon Community Land Trust, it was noted that a copy of the minutes would be sent to them for information.

- 15.2 SLINDON COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (CLT)** - There was nothing further to report.

15.3 RECREATION GROUND

It was noted that now that the weather had started to improve, the fitness equipment was being used again. The hedge planting had been completed and seeding the wildflower meadow would be the next project. The news that the Primary School would be interested in helping with this project was welcomed. In order to keep the grass in in this part of the field at a manageable level it was suggested that a hand mower be sourced. It was agreed that a message be put out via the round robin to see if there was one available. It was also noted that the Sports Association were holding a community day to carry out maintenance at the pavilion on Saturday 14th April. Volunteers were welcome, and it was suggested that a reminder be circulated via the round robin.

15.4 THE TOP PLAYING FIELD

Councillor Thomas reported that the field had been mowed. He also reported that the base log of the netted climbing frame had had rotted and broken. As a precaution he had removed the broken log and taped up the unit with red and white hazard tape to prevent it being used. It was noted that the equipment was monitored by the District Council's play equipment engineers who provided regular reports to the Clerk and that the frame, which was comprised of substantial wooden logs was deteriorating. Councillor Thomas advised that it was possible to replace the base log and it was agreed that this option be pursued. It was noted that the situation regarding the climbing frame would continue to be monitored by the District Council's play equipment engineers and Councillor Thomas agreed to keep the Clerk informed of progress with the fix. **It was RESOLVED that the update be noted.**

- 15.5 NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH** – There was nothing further to report.

15.6 THE COMMUNITY BUS - There was nothing further to report.

15.7 NATIONAL TRUST

Ms Archer reported that the Trust was preparing planning applications for a hut at Northwood and the learning space at Downs Farm Barn. Regarding the latter project, it was noted that the bridleway leading to the new facility would be brought up to the standard of a track for occasional use. The Trust asked for assistance in contacting the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust to progress plans for the WW1 memorial in Northwood. The Clerk agreed to take this forward.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – MONDAY 14th MAY 2018

The date of the next meeting was noted.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Minutes signed as a true record.....Date:

Chairman, Councillor Ann Watts.

DRAFT