

**COCKING PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**6 JANUARY 2025, 6.30PM**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Miss F Russell (Chair), T Carter, A Cornwell, D Imlach, Mrs J Jackson, W Renney and D Summerfield.

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

G C Burt, Clerk to the Council

Approximately 25 Members of the Public

**1. Apologies**

None.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Members and officers were invited to make any declarations of pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda and were reminded to make any declarations at any stage during the meeting if it then became apparent that this may be required when a particular item or issue was to be considered.

Cllr W Renney declared an interest as Chairman of the Village Hall Committee.

Cllr A Cornwell declared an interest being involved with the Friends of the Blue Bell.

**3. SDNPA – Local Plan Review**

**To receive a presentation from Jonathan Russell CEO of the Cowdray Estate and Jacob Goodenough of Nova Planning, on their submission to the SDNP Local Plan Review of land in north east Cocking for housing.**

They were welcomed by the Chairman before giving some background to the Local Plan process. They had put forward several sites in their ownership, including some in Cocking, following the SDNPA's *Call for Sites*. As there was insufficient brownfield sites in the Park, greenfield sites had to be looked at. The site in question was only one of two sites in Cocking chosen to go forward by the authority for further consideration following their methodology process. The site was not prone to flooding and would offer much affordable housing, up to 50%.

The speakers then answered questions from councillors and members of the public and the following matters were mentioned:

The site abutted a Conservation Area and was bounded by a chalk stream which had great natural value.

Benefits to the community could be agreed if the site was allocated. They had worked closely with Easebourne PC to deliver community benefits there following development of a site.

Concern as to whether if 25 units gained permission, would subsequent requests follow? Cowdray admitted that the original intention had been for more units on this site.

SDNPA wanted to spread development across the Park area thinly.

Disappointment that the Estate had not engaged with the Parish Council much earlier, which did not lead to a good relationship.

The Park was the most densely populated of the parks in the UK.

That all the reasons listed in the site analysis by the SDNPA meaning it could go forward for consideration were equally good reasons for it not to!

Effect on water conservation and water neutrality.

Cllr Andy Cornwell advised that the date for the public exhibition at the Methodist Hall in Midhurst should be JANUARY and not March as cited in the recent edition of the Cocking Column.

#### 4. Questions from Visitors

See above

Peter Gibbon gave an update on the Blue Bell Public House; sadly its finances meant that new tenants could not be confirmed and local residents would be asked to help with donations.

#### 5. SDNP Local Plan Review ref. land in north east Cocking for housing

a) **To consider making a response.**

The Council **RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** to the inclusion of the land in north east Cocking in the new Draft Local Plan, for reasons detailed above and at the previous meeting.

b) **To consider use of consultants.**

Quotations had been received from several practices to assist the Council formulate a robust response, detailed below. Due to the detail contained in the quotation, **RESOLVED** that Tony Fulwood Associates be appointed accordingly. Cllrs Frances Russell and Tim Carter to liaise with consultant.

<b>Quotes from consultants to assist with Local Plan Response</b>	
Jackson Planning	I think the cost is going to be above £5,000 + VAT
Whaleback RTPI Planning Consultants	Declined to tender due to conflict as involved in other proposals, such as those under CH199, in other parts of the South Downs National Park.
Tony Fullwood Associates	I estimate the above would take 2.5 - 3.5 days @ £695/ day (excluding expenses). VAT is not payable.
Murray Planning	£560.00
Asher Planning	Response awaited

c) **To consider if response needs to be approved/consulted upon prior to submission.**

**RESOLVED** that the Consultant be asked to provide a draft submission in time for the 10 March meeting, in order to meet the mid-March closing date.

Note Cllr Tim Carter had prepared a draft letter of objection which he hoped to make available to residents for use as appropriate. The Clerk would try to ensure key dates in the consultation were placed on the website.

#### 6. To receive reports from County & District Cllrs.

None.

#### 7. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the 2 December 2024, previously circulated were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 8. Clerk's Report

None

## 9. Planning

There were no planning applications to consider.

## 10. Highways Updates

- a. Footpaths & Footways – Slippery footway at entrance to *The Croft* still to be reported.
- b. Cycleways – Nothing to report.
- c. Traffic Calming – Cllr T Carter reported on recent activity.
- d. Potholes in Mill Lane had been filled.
- e. SID – a meeting had been held with WSCC and a raft of sites agreed. Clerk to seek professional specification.

## 11. Updates on Parish Matters

- a. Playground – The annual ROSPA inspection had been undertaken.
- b. Village Hall – The Ctte Chair reported that agreement was still to be reached with the developer of the adjoining site, who had been allowed to park contractors' vehicles in the hall car park, in lieu of some works to the hall or grounds. Cllrs suggested a donation in lieu of work, to be put toward a future project at the hall.
- c. Policing – Nothing to report.

## 12. Finance

- a. Payments since last meeting were **RESOLVED** and any receipts NOTED – Appendix A.
- b. Bank Reconciliation to 11 December 2024 was **RESOLVED** – Appendix B and the corresponding bank statement was subsequently initialled by Cllr Miss F Russell.
- c. To resolve the Budget for 2025-26

A Draft Budget for 2025-26 was further considered. The Council Tax Base had increased slightly meaning that it was possible to increase the overall precept take without increasing the cost to an average Band D Council Tax payer. Mindful of the commitment made earlier in the meeting to appoint a consultant which had been un-budgeted, Members considered this prudent. **RESOLVED** a revenue budget of £18,718 (net of VAT) for the year 2025-26, Appendix C.

- d. To resolve the Precept for 2025-26  
**RESOLVED** that a precept of £19,358 be levied upon Chichester District Council for the year 2025-26.  
[Note: This equated to a rise in the total precept of £966 and no change in the Council Tax for a Band D property due to an increase in the tax base.]

## 13. Date of Next Meeting

**Monday 3 February 2025 6.30pm (Note March meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> due to hall unavailability)**

*The meeting closed at 8.24pm*

Chairman:

Date:

**APPENDIX A**

<b>COME &amp; EXPENDITURE SINCE LAST MEETING TO 6 JANUARY 20</b>						
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>						
06/01/2025	G Burt	1126	Clerk salary - Dec	£259.12		£259.12
			Playground Inspection reimb.	£354.00	£59.00	£295.00
06/01/2025	HMRC	1127	Clerk Tax - Dec	£64.80		£64.80
06/01/2025	Exigia Ltd	1028	Website hosting & maint.	£472.50		£472.50
				<b>£1,150.42</b>	<b>£59.00</b>	<b>£1,091.42</b>

**APPENDIX B**

<b>BANK RECONCILIATION</b>		
<b>CASHBOOK</b>		
Balance brought forward as at 01/04/2024		£8,778.43
Add Total Receipts		32,303.43
Less Total Payments		(17,692.46)
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£23,389.40</b>
<b>BANK</b>		
Lloyds Treasurers A/C (11/12/2024)		24,148.85
<b>Less unrepresented cheques</b>		
1073	144.00	
1124	£27.95	
1121	587.50	
		-759.45
<b>Plus unrepresented deposits</b>		
		-
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>23,389.40</b>

**TALLY**

**APPENDIX C**

<b>COCKING PARISH COUNCIL 2025-26</b>	
	<b>Budget</b>
Balances b/f at 1 April	20,556.06
<b>Receipts</b>	
Precept	19,358.00
Grant - fireworks	930.00
VH Broadband Reimb.	750.00
CIL	
VAT refund	100.00
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>41,694.06</b>
<b>Payments</b>	
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	
Gen Admin/office	300.00
Bank charges	50.00
Website	500.00
IT	600.00
Employment costs	3,900.00
Clerk's Travel & Office	400.00
PC Insurance	1,850.00
Meeting/APM room hire	170.00
Audit fees	150.00
Chairman's Allowance	150.00
Training	
Newsletter	350.00
Elections	
WSALC Subscription	165.00
<b>GRANTS</b>	
Churchyard	500.00
Other	400.00
<b>VILLAGE HALL</b>	
Ground Rent	325.84
Broadband etc	750.00
Other	
O/S Painting	-
<b>SPORTS FIELD</b>	
Ground Rent	200.00
Grass cutting	2,500.00
Fireworks	820.00
<b>PLAY AREA</b>	
Maintenance	1,000.00
Grass Cutting	2,500.00
Inspections	310.00
Litter bin emptying	100.00
<b>PUBLIC REALM</b>	
Bus Shelters/n'boards/benches	300.00
Footpath maint.	100.00
SID	
Other grass-cutting	200.00
War Memorial Maintenance	
Hist Column gd. rent	27.50
Defibrillator maint.	100.00
VAT	100.00
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>18,818.34</b>
Transfer to following year	<b>22,875.72</b>