

# POYNINGS PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council  
Mr Colin Warburton

Minutes of the Virtual meeting of Poynings Annual Parish Council using Zoom on  
Wednesday May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 7.00pm

Present: John Digby  
Neville Searle  
Michael Crowther  
Paula Seager

Colin Warburton - Clerk to the Council  
Alison Bennett - District Councillor  
Colin Trumble - District Councillor

13 members of the public attended.

## 1. Election of a Chair and Vice chair

The clerk welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that the first item is the election of the chairman. Cllr Searle proposed Cllr Digby; seconded by Cllr Seager. The vote by hand was unanimously in favour. Cllr Digby was duly elected as Chairman of Poynings Parish Council for 2021/2022.

It was unanimously agreed that a vice chair was not needed.

## 2. Outgoing chairman's report

By JD

As the outgoing chairman left the village a while back and the council has not had a chair for a while, I will be giving the report as have chaired the last 3 meeting, although not as the Council Chairman.

Thank you to Nigel and Will, both of whom have moved away. New councillors have been co-opted onto the council N Searle July 2019, M Crowther January 2020, P. Seager October 2020 and me November 2020. And Colin has remained in post as our clerk.

It has been a difficult year for all councils due to Covid restriction as it has not been possible to meet face to face.

In saying that, things have still been achieved.

The Facebook page that the council set up for the community at the beginning of the lockdown is proving very popular and is now working well.

Although work has not started yet, the council have agreed that MSDC will repair the flint wall at the front of the Church and the retaining wall to the right of the steps, this should start in May. With the resurfacing of the path and replacement of the Oak handrail in the previous 2 years, the council has been very successful in getting MSDC to part with cash they hold onto very tightly! It is also good to see the church and the PC working closely together.

The council has continued to support the planting of Cora's Corner which should give a great display this year, and the maintenance of the roundabout. Thanks to all those who gave labour and funding.

You may have noticed the litter that was spoiling our lanes in Poynings is no longer there. WSCC have reduced their expenditure on road cleaning so Poynings Parish council removed all the rubbish, and we plan to set up a group to continue this work a bit more formally. Potholes continue to be a problem as WSCC budget has been reduced for this. Poynings has its fair share but their roads are a lot better than many other villages. Rest assured that the PC reports all potholes to WSCC promptly and chased.

There is an ongoing program to put a "passing place" on the road from the Royal Oak to the garage to alleviate the ongoing gridlock on busy Sundays. WSCC highways have not been very supportive, and we are still looking at ways to achieve this.

Speeding traffic is still a problem, and over the years groups have been set up to find a solution, both in and separate, to the Council, with little success due to legal restrictions. However, this year the council has submitted a request to have the speed limit reduced to 20mph which, if successful, should help.

The sewage leak from the Devils Dyke Hotel this year was not very pleasant. Once the Council was aware of the leak, they got MSDC to arrange to stop the leak fairly promptly. Although unfortunately they did not feel it necessary to remove the discharge. As the restrictions are now hopefully being eased, the Council is writing to all concerned parties to ensure that something is done to stop it happening again.

Due to Covid there was not a bonfire event last year. Let's hope we can have one this year. The Faster Broadband initiative (Fibre to the Premises (FTTP)) has been fully submitted to Openreach now and the council liaised with Fulking and Newtimber to submit as many addresses as possible. Hopefully, we will learn if the application for the 2 grants have been successful later this year.

The SDNP are reviewing their Conservation Area character Appraisal Plan and the council asked for comments from the village. There was good feedback which was passed onto the SDNP.

Due to the influx of dog walkers in the area there has been an increase of "dog waste bags" being left in bushes or just chucked over the fence etc. This has always been a problem but was much worse last summer. The parish council posted flyers in the village and surrounding area to try and reduce the impact with limited success. Extra dog bins were considered but on the advice of the National Trust, who has tried this in the past, this was abandoned as they said it makes the situation worse.

The finger post at the roundabout that was demolished last year has been replaced. Unfortunately, due to Covid it can't be installed yet, so it is sitting in the workshop.

As you may be aware, Downlands School had a problem with their intake this year and couldn't offer places to everyone in Poynings and Fulking. The PC supported the appeal, which was successful, and all have been offered a place in Downlands now.

The Council has arranged for a VE day celebration this year, with the Church, to be held at Cora's Corner on Saturday

### **3. Apologies**

Joy Dennis sends her apologies; she can't make it as at a funeral.

### **4. Minutes**

The Minutes of the previous meeting, as circulated, were agreed.

### **5. Matters Arising**

JD reminded the council and residents that in the public participation section, (if included) members of the public can speak for 2 minutes if they wish to ask a question and the meeting should only last 1.5 hours with a maximum of 2 hours.

## 6. MSDC

Colin Trumble

CT congratulated JD becoming Chair

Councils cannot have virtual meetings after 6<sup>th</sup> May

Tim Slaney is in favour of a green/amber/red planning system that Gary Marsh had raised.

The SDNP does not have it, nor does East or West Sussex.

HPP and Pyecombe are planting trees on the Downs but has problems as the chalkland downs are a scarce commodity.

Alison Bennett

There is a consultation about boundary changes. Going from 44 to 38 Wards.

The problem of fly tipping is being looked at over the next few months

## 7. Public Participation

None

## 8. Expenditure for Feb 2021 and March 2021

The following amounts have been paid for February 2021 and March 2021

Date	Payee	Amount
23/03/21	Castle Water - Cemetery	£25.46
23/03/21	Clerk wages Jan - Feb 2021	£679.34
23/03/21	HRMC	£77.20
23/03/21	Parish Online annual sub	£36.00
23/03/21	WSALC annual sub	£88.61
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£906.61</b>

Receipts for February 2021 and March 2021

Date	Payee	Amount
30/04/21	MSDC precept	£3,838.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£3,838.00</b>

This was unanimously agreed

## 9. Planning Applications

a) SDNP/21/02207/FUL | Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of single replacement 3 bed dwelling. Replacement of existing detached garages and workshop and consolidation into a single garage and home office building | Orchard Cottage Dyke Lane Poynings BN45 7AA

As JD has an interest in this application, he went in the virtual waiting room and took no part in this discussion.

Nig Digby, the applicant, outlined the reasons for the new design. They had looked at various designs so that the building would blend in with existing housing styles in Poynings. This is difficult as there is not a style that is prominent, it includes 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century cottages, Victorian properties, post war housing, flats, barns, flint etc. They were advised by the SDNPA that the design must be simple/unfussy with not too many types of materials. Planting of native hedging etc has been carried out to enhance the visual impact. The North elevation does not have windows to protect the privacy of neighbours. As advised by the SDNP the design is in line with SD4, SD5, SD9 and SD15.

Also it complies with SD8 (Dark sky's)

NS commented that he has visited the property, liked the design and felt that the materials used would blend in well with the surrounding countryside along with the simplicity

of the design.

PS commented that the PC supported the previous application and as far as she was aware the design now meets planning requirements and the applicant has worked closely with the SDNPA. The view was that the Council had no objection to the application.

JD re-joined the meeting.

b) SDNP/21/01631/TCA | Common Ash tree REF: 09MN - Section fell down to close to ground level. Tree canopy appears to be at least 50% dead. Ivy removal from around stem base revealed bark coming away with ease. | Holy Trinity Church Poyning's Road Poyning's. It was felt that this was not a controversial application, and no comment was necessary.

#### 10. Insurance

The insurance taken out last year was for 3 years to reduce cost and the Clerk suggested the cover was renewed. The policy had been duly circulated before the meeting. This was agreed.

#### 11. Financial Report

The clerk advised the council that the internal Audit has not yet been carried out due to Covid and will be presented at the next meeting.

#### 12. Virtual Meetings

The Clerk outlined the situation concerning virtual meetings.  
Situation after this week.

Remote Meetings - the law is clear - they are not 'lawfully' permitted from 7th May. (Consequences of holding a remote meeting are unclear. Risk of challenge that decisions are unlawful. Qualified audit?)

Attendance of public at Council Meetings - This was not determined by the Courts and it was left open for the parties to return with their case. Most councils have agreed to follow the interpretation of Government guidance (issued on the 25th March 2021) that the public can attend Council Meetings remotely.

COVID guidelines - any in person meetings must meet the social distancing guidelines, hand sanitisers must be available, ideally introduce one way systems, and display notices reminding of the importance of compliance. Hard copy papers should only be used if absolutely necessary.

Meeting Venues - can take place (i) outside in the open air and outside the Parish; (ii) in licensed premises if no alternative (no alcohol);(iii) at other venues regardless of whether the venue is owned /controlled by the Council, eg principal authorities meeting rooms (cost should not be a consideration).

Tests - negative lateral flow tests cannot be imposed on attendees.

Delegation to Clerk - where councils have difficulties with in-person meetings they could, as an interim measure, delegate actions to the clerk but, in the interests of good governance, this should only apply to matters where the decision cannot be reasonable deferred and must be made in order to comply with a statutory or commercial deadline.

#### 13. Volunteers

JD asked if anyone would be interesting in overseeing a litter picking rota, there were no volunteers.

JD also wanted to set up a volunteer group to clear the stream south of the Forge Garage to the Pond as the Farmer has agreed to allow this in consultation with him. The clerk will

email out to see if there is a response. Other areas can also be looked at. MC agreed to investigate the water running across the road from the ditch at Toots corner.

**14. Co-opting Councillor.**

Report by the Clerk.

Purpose of the report:

To recommend a councillor to be co-opted onto Poynings Parish Council

Background:

Since 2 councillors have left the village and resigned from the Council, Poynings Parish Council only have 4 councillors out of a total of 5 needed. It was decided at a previous Parish council meeting to co-opt 1 more. Notices were put up, it was advertised on the Parish Council website, the local website and emails sent out. Also, the vacancy was advertised by word of mouth.

Three residents put their name forward.

Action taken:

Interviews were carried out using Zoom by the John Digby and Paula Seager during the day on the 30th of April.

All interviewees were asked the same twelve questions and their answers recorded by the clerk and circulated to the other councillors.

Based on the answers to the questions, knowledge of the applicants and the need for a diverse mix of skill sets, the councillors found it hard to decide as the quality and enthusiasm of the applicants was very high.

By email (due to covid restrictions) over the weekend from the 1st to the 3rd of May the councillors voted to nominate Fiona Weir as a Parish councillor.

Proposal. I recommend that Fiona Weir, is co-opted onto Poynings Parish Council.

This was proposed by Paula Seager and seconded by John Digby.

Fiona Weir was hereby co-opted as a councillor and will be able to participate as soon as she has signed the acceptance form in the presence of the clerk.

**15. VE Day**

JD invited all to attend the VE celebrations that have been arranged by the Council for this Saturday the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

**16. Chairman's allowance**

The clerk advised the council that the chairman can receive an allowance for duties carried out and supplying refreshments, as necessary. This has been £155 for the last few years.

This was unanimously agreed, and the Chairman accepted it.

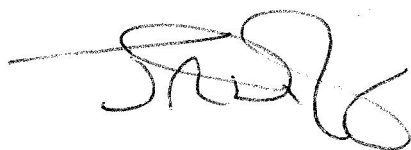
**17. Items for next month's Agenda**

Councillors to contact the clerk if they have any issues before the next meeting.

**18. Dates of next meeting.**

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.05pm



2/6/2021