

CRONDALL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held Monday 24th July 2023

PRESENT	Councillor G Smith - Chairman Councillors D Argent, S Gregory*, G O'Connor, I Taylor, F Williams, and S Worthington (<i>*following appointment during the meeting</i>)
APOLOGIES:	Councillor R Freeman-Griffiths Councillor J Glen – Hampshire County Council Councillors J Kennett, and J Hale - Hart District Council
IN ATTENDANCE	Councillor C Dorn – Hart District Council A Angove - Parish Clerk

The meeting commenced at 7.27 pm and ended at 8.39 pm.

Members of the public – 0

44/24 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest had been submitted and none were made at the meeting.

45/24 Minutes of 26th June 2023 Month Meeting

Cllr Worthington raised a question, asking that the Clerk check that the vote in favour of the proposal for the Penn Croft Farm (23/01009/FUL) planning application was correct. The Clerk double checked her written notes from the meeting and confirmed that the Minutes were correct, and that the proposal was agreed unanimously.

No further questions were raised. The Minutes of the Council meeting were proposed for acceptance as an accurate record by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Taylor and **AGREED** unanimously.

46/24 Matters Arising

The Clerk confirmed that the ongoing issue of HDC Planning attendance at the Wilson Plant meetings had been raised by Cllr O'Connor at the most recent HDAPTC meeting. The response was unsatisfactory, and the Clerk confirmed that they would continue to pursue the matter. Cllr O'Connor confirmed that the next Wilson Plant meeting is scheduled for 4th September.

47/24 Appointment of new Parish Councillor

The Clerk gave a brief overview of the election process and confirmed that one candidate had put themselves forward within the timescales. The Clerk requested the candidate, Ms Sharon Gregory, provide the councillors with a brief introduction and respond to any questions, which she duly did.

A number of questions were raised by Councillors, including confirmation of Ms Gregory's availability to attend monthly meetings, and taking on additional roles and responsibilities within the council.

Sharon Gregory was elected to the role by a unanimous vote and, having signed the Acceptance of Office, formally joined the meeting.

48/24 Announcements from the Chairman, Clerk and Members questions received in advance

There were no announcements.

49/24 District Councillor's Reports

Cllr Dorn provided a verbal update:

- First meeting since the recent elections and delighted not only to be voted back in but with an increased majority. Continues as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) with three areas being their main focus – CCTV review, fly tipping and traveller sites.
- Discussions with the Environment Agency re the flood monitor continue. The monitor in the village pond is faulty and will be checked by a specialist. In the meantime, it is planned that they will move to a more integrated system. The EA will be liaising with the Clerk to arrange a community information drop-in event hopefully in October.
- Glass Recycling has been removed from Bowling Alley. Whilst there was no consultation, with the decision being announced once it was a fait accompli, it forms part of money saving initiatives and with roadside collections, was felt to be superfluous.
- HDC are looking to roll out a roadside small electrical goods recycling initiative in late 2023/early 2024. The scheme, where small electrical goods are put on the top of the normal recycling bin, is currently being trialled in two areas.
- A review of the process for identifying and appointing consultants to support parish councils in reviewing their conservation areas has been completed, with a number of useful recommendations being made. Cllr Dorn thanked CPC for their contribution to the process.
- The Hart Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan is currently out for consultation. In Cllr Dorn's opinion the proposals have both positive and negative aspects. It is generally focussed on towns and larger residential areas and the transport hubs, only affecting Crondall by referring to cycle paths down the A287.

Cllr Taylor confirmed that he had received a copy of the Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and would be reviewing it, with a view to agreeing CPC's response. The Clerk had also forwarded details to parishioners, encouraging them to respond. The lack of a safe means, such as a bridge, of crossing the A287 was raised by a couple of councillors, although it was noted that the cost would probably be prohibitive.

Cllr Argent raised Michael Gove's published criticism of the planning system, in particular relating to the performance of council planning departments, with Cllr Dorn confirming that with the new Planning Team at HDC, they are now fully staffed, and all signs are positive.

(Cllr Dorn left the meeting)

50/24 Representations by the public

The Clerk confirmed that there were no representations from the public.

51/24 Planning Applications

Applications were considered in line with the previously circulated Planning Report and presented Cllr O'Connor.

23/01462/PREAPP	Oak Park Heath Lane Crondall	Demolition of existing shed and driving range and proposed redevelopment of 27-hole golf course and driving range for 12-hole golf course, eco-lodges, driving range, putting course, racquet area, education building and retention of club house with associated parking and landscaping.
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RECOMMENDATION: with very little substantive change between the first and second PREAPP, the Parish Council respond as follows:

1. Crondall Parish Council (CPC) supports, in principle, proposals that will retain a golf course at Oak Park as a community facility as set out in Policy 8 of the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan. This is on the basis that proposals respect local character, residential amenity, and highway safety. In this regard, the applicant's stated intention to improve biodiversity and sustainability on the site is welcomed (although the details would need to be reviewed and how it is to be secured legally and in perpetuity considered).
2. Despite the changes, including the loss of the Well-Being building, the proposal would involve the change of use of the wider site from a golf course to a mixed leisure use, including a 12-hole golf course; short-game centre of excellence; refreshment cabana; stand-alone restaurant/bistro; racquet sport building (pickleball) and tourist accommodation (eco cabins). The existing club house would be repurposed to provide the new stand-alone bistro/restaurant building. The proposal would therefore comprise a mixture of re-use of existing buildings, and the erection of new buildings, all in a countryside location. Some of the new buildings would also not be on previously developed land, such as the eco-cabins, and thus would be contrary to HLP NBE1.
3. What is concerning, is that the Applicants do not consider this to be a mixed-use leisure scheme, instead assessing the scheme as a golf course. However, it is clearly a mixed-used leisure facility, with accommodation, stand-alone restaurant and other entertainment which will attract a wider pool of people from a wider catchment area.
 - a. The application site, whilst adjoining the settlement of Crondall on its southern site, is not within a defined settlement as shown on the Policies Map. Hart's Settlement Hierarchy (2010) defines Crondall as a 'main village'. In terms of the HLP32, the 'Main Villages' designation sits at the bottom of the hierarchy of settlements in terms of both its size and the services and facilities it offers. Therefore, whilst the village of Crondall is within walking distance to the site, there is very little in this location to sustain tourist stops.
 - b. Whilst there is a public footpath network in the area, visitors to the site would be likely to drive to other nearby towns such as Farnham and Fleet for other day trips and activities off site. In addition to the lack of other tourist facilities in the area, there is a concern about transport sustainability in relation to the site. Whilst by its very nature, the existing golf course generated private car journeys, it was likely that a significant proportion of those car journeys were short trips from the local area. In contrast, the proposed destination leisure use is likely to generate a significant amount of longer, car-dependant journeys from visitors vacationing outside of the immediate golf club catchment area given the accommodation offering and indeed the restaurant.
 - c. Therefore, there is a concern that the Transport Assessment is underplaying the potential transport impact of the proposal on Crondall's already congested road network. As a result, there is the risk that the proposal would potentially conflict with the spatial strategy set out in Policy SS1 of the HLP32.
4. The proposed number of 54 eco-cabins, whilst not for housing, would still represent a significantly large development in the village. Without access to the full Financial Viability Assessment, it is not possible to judge the assertion that no fewer than 54 cabins are necessary for it to be viable. The presence of these cabins would be out of character for the village, contrary to the CPNP and HLP32, as in effect a camp site is being created with 54 pitches.

5. As we discussed on the First Pre-Application, the eco-cabins would be connected to both mains electricity and water and probably mains sewerage. The environmental impact of installing these connections would be considerable with potential harm to wildlife and biodiversity. None of this is mentioned. Furthermore, there is a risk that Councillors should be aware of that if these cabins are connected to services, then should the venture fail, their presence may provide an argument for previously developed land and therefore increase the risk of wider development on Oak Park.
6. No mention is made in the Pre-Application material of the impacts on residential amenity in terms of noise – with people staying in cabins, they will be sitting outside in the evening eating and drinking, music playing etc.) – and light – the current ‘dark skies’ attribute of the site will be severely compromised.
7. Finally, should an application come forward, then given the impacts raised above, we would recommend that an EIA is submitted with the Application or, at the very least, environment reports particularly assessing the construction of any eco-cabins included in the proposal (which, for the avoidance of doubt, CPC disagrees with any need for such cabins in the proposal).

Following a short discussion, where it was noted that not much had actually changed since the first pre-application, with the concerns remaining much as before, Cllr Smith proposed as listed. Seconded by Cllr Worthing and AGREED unanimously.

REPORTS

52/24 Clerk's Report

A full written report having been distributed prior to the meeting; the Clerk confirmed that unfortunately the tennis court resurfacing had been delayed due to inclement weather. The online court booking system has been set up and will go live on the Clerk's return from annual leave. It was hoped to co-ordinate the opening of the refurbished court along with the booking system, but this is increasingly unlikely due to weather issues.

No questions were raised, and the report was NOTED.

53/24 Conservation Area Review

An update by the Clerk having been distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting, Cllr O'Connor provided a brief verbal update. A meeting between Cllrs Freeman-Griffiths and O'Connor to discuss the responses received is scheduled for 29th July, after which it will be necessary to liaise with ABA. The timescales are dependent on this and potentially on HDC availability, but it is hoped that the results with recommendations will be reported at the next parish council meeting in August. The report was NOTED.

54/24 Roads & Traffic

Cllr Taylor provided a brief verbal update. It was noted that whilst the potholes on Dippenhall Street have been marked up some time ago, no action has taken place, with HCC having no record of the activity. Cllr Argent confirmed that he had received the following response from HCC Highways:

Thank you for your recent enquiry 21683301, regarding Dippenhall Street, Crondall. After speaking with our local highways engineer, they have advised that the markings will fade over time and are only used for surveying and photographic purposes. All data has been captured and a job has been raised and sent on to our contractor which will be delivered in due course within this current financial year.

Cllr Taylor confirmed that he continues to keep County Cllr Glen updated with the aim of pushing through the required remedial work. The report was NOTED.

55/24 Hook Meadow Pill Box Project

Cllr Worthington confirmed that the gate for the pill box has been finished and will be fitted soon. It is understood that the gate will not be padlocked but will have a code to prevent unauthorised access.

56/24 Ratification of payments

The circulated list of 14 items including Payroll, valued at £36,716.31 was proposed (with explanatory notes) by Cllr Argent, seconded by Cllr Worthington, and AGREED unanimously.

57/24 To CONSIDER and AGREE a list of items for spending

No items for spending were listed.

58/24 To NOTE the Income and Expenditure report and Balance Sheet to 30th June 2023

No questions were raised, and the Council NOTED the report.

59/24 To NOTE the independent examination of the Bank Reconciliation for June 2023

The Clerk confirmed that she had undertaken an independent examination of the Bank Reconciliation for June 2023. No questions were raised. Council NOTED the Clerk's report.

60/24 Correspondence

All email correspondence has been circulated to Councillors and any physical correspondence was made available at the meeting.

61/24 Any Other Business

No other business was raised.

Signed as a true record dated 21st August 2023