

Cowfold Parish Council
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 8 April 2024 in the Allmond Centre

Present: Mr S Reading (SR) (Chairman) Mr C Towle (CT)
 Mr J Hooper (JH) Mrs M French
 Mrs D Everest (DE)

Lee Dunkley – Locum Clerk
Mrs L Lambert – Horsham District Councillor
Ms J Knowles – Horsham District Councillor

Public: 4
Press: 0

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Jan Wright (Clerk), Cllrs Newman and Kingshottt. Cllr Harsum was absent from the meeting.

2. Approval of the Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 11 March 2024 were agreed by all as a true and correct record.

3. Declarations of Interest

None.

4. Matters Arising

None.

5. Public

Members of the public were in attendance and contributions included opinions on Rampion 2 consultations with regard to water neutrality and traffic.

6. District Councillor Report

Cllr Lambert and Cllr Knowles reported on the following:

- The consultation on the Local Plan received 1,644 comments – once all have been input, the comments will go live online.
- The Local Plan “Standard Methodology” housing figure need has been revised from 911 to 917 dwellings per year in the District.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner elections take place on 2 May.
- Two more markets are due to be introduced in Horsham (Antiques and Food/Craft) to total 5 markets per week.
- The Cobwood Solar Farm application will be heard at the HDC planning committee on 23 April – Parish Cllrs are able to register to speak.

7. County Councillor Report

None.

8. Correspondence

None.

9. Oak Tree Adjacent to 14 Acorn Avenue

Cllr Reading reported that Global 360 (insurer for 14 Acorn Avenue) claims that they have conducted root ID work which proves that the oak tree roots are causing the issue at hand. Cllr Reading was assured that the report detailing these findings would be forthcoming by 5th April but are still yet to arrive.

The Council may be faced with the implications and costs of:

- Removing the tree
- Funding the placement of a root barrier
- Funding legal advice

SALC have provided details of legal advisors but not specific legal advice and the Council were reluctant to spend on this. A decision should be arrived at at the next meeting.

(SR)

10. Rampion 2 Update

Cllr Everest – update. There was a rebuttal to the Parish Council submission by Rampion 2 which has raised a question about whether the Council should submit a further representations made, particularly regarding traffic issues. The Council did not have plans to submit a further representation as there is no new information forthcoming. After further discussion it was agreed, however, that Cllr Everest should contact Matthew Porter (HDC) to express the reservations raised at the meeting and liaise regarding if any further useful comment can be made by the Council.

Other matters discussed included the water neutrality and supply issue – it was noted that Rampion 2 have not calculated how much water they need for their construction process. It was further noted that a habitat survey is being expanded significantly.

(DE)

11. Environment

Cllr Hooper reported that:

Greening Cowold will be presenting a Bat Walk in St Peter's churchyard on Thursday 25 April 2024;

The Spring Cowfold Clean-Up day will take place on Sunday 7 April and 11 volunteers helped make an impact;

Tree sculpture/carvings – Cllr Hooper reiterated that there is an opportunity to pay a woodcarver/sculptor to ornament the large tree stump near to the play area on land owned by HDC. The majority were in favour of this in principle.

(JH)

12. Neighbourhood Planning Update

(1789)

Cllrs Hooper and Everest met with HDC officers and raised a number of points about the northern section of the Brook Hill site. There are suggestions that ownership could be handed to a Trust or the Parish Council. Cllrs Hooper and Everest raised queries with HDC about responsibilities and costs associated (i.e. drainage). An alternative to the Council taking on ownership of the land is that it could be run by a separate management company (which incorporates residents) with a covenant in place that ensures the land is maintained as open space in perpetuity and is available for community use. Cllrs agreed that Cllr Hooper should liaise with HDC to pursue a legal framework for having such a covenant in place.

(JH)

13. The Allmond Centre

Nothing to report.

14. Representatives Reports

Planning

Nothing to report.

Finance

All payments were presented and approved.

Open Spaces

Nothing to report.

Allotments

Nothing to report.

Roads & Transport

Cllr Everest reported that some vehicles continue to exceed 60mph in the 30mph area despite the installation of speed signs. There was discussion about the merits of seeking a phased speed limit reduction coming into the village (i.e. from 60mph to 40mph to 30mph). Council expressed frustrations and questioned if the police could attend and set up a speed trap.

Footpaths

Nothing to report

Streetlights

Nothing to report

HALC

Nothing to report.

Website

Nothing to report.

Youth Activities

Nothing to report.

(Clerk)

The next meeting will be held on **Monday 13 May 2024.**

The meeting closed at 8:15pm.