West Itchenor Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the West Itchenor Parish Council held on Monday 12 December 2016 at 9.00 am in The Itchenor Memorial Hall.

Present: Mr J Dunn, Mr A Spencer (Chairman), Mrs A Trevelyan, Mr C Mead-Briggs, and Mr C Watson

In attendance: 10 members of the public

108/16C Chairmans welcome.
The Chairman welcomed members of the public to the meeting.

109/16C Questions and comments from the Public.
Questions and comments were made later in the meeting.

110/16C Apologies for absence.
Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Colbourne and Cllr Taylor.

111/16C Declaration of interests.
There were no declarations made.

112/16C Proposal to make a financial contribution to Birdham Village Residents Association to assist with the preparation of a Landscape Assessment for use in the appeal hearing for the Birdham Farm Travellers Site.

The Chairman opened the debate by explaining that the Parish Council had asked Cllr Mead-Briggs to join the sub-committee of the Birdham Village Residents Association (BVRA) in order to offer support and that he had been keeping councilors notified of the progress and recommendations made. Therefore, members of the Parish Council were aware of this debate which two members are unable to attend (Cllr Colbourne and Cllr Taylor). He made all present aware that both of them do not support the proposal and had asked for their views to be duly recorded at the meeting.

The Chairman continued by saying that in his opinion the purpose of the contribution was to obtain a landscape assessment of Birdham Farm and its immediate area and that this was worthwhile and should be supported. He had noted from minutes of the BVRA sub-committee that the barristers to be appointed by Chichester District Council (CDC) and the Chichester Harbour Conservancy (CHC) both considered that such a report would be of assistance. The Chairman proposed that the Parish Council should should make a pledge to match fund the sum pledged by Birdham Parish Council up to a maximum of £2000, subject to a) that the Parish Council be shown a draft of the report beforehand and b) that the Parish Council have the use of the report in case it may be helpful in other matters.

Cllr Dunn spoke in support. Cllr Watson considered that it was the task of CDC and CHC to make the case. Cllr Trevelyan also felt CDC and CHC should take the lead.

The Chairman then closed the meeting and invited residents to make comments.
A resident asked why an additional Landscape Assessment was needed to be prepared on behalf of the Birdham Village Residents Association (BVRA). It was explained that whilst the case prepared by Chichester District Council (CDC) and the Chichester Harbour Conservancy (CHC) both relied upon AONB landscape character assessments (dating from 2005 and 2009) those reports were very broad and covered the whole AONB; in one of the reports, Birdham Farm is situated within a numbered area stretching from Birdham Pool to the Birdham Straight. It was felt by the BVRA that by seeking another landscape assessment which covers just the appeal land, a more focused approach would assist.
A resident pointed out that there were other decisions awaited within the District. If these were lost, resulting in additional pitches being approved, the "flood gates" to more sites may not open.
A resident also mentioned two other appeals which may affect the future.
A resident believed there to be 300 houses in Itchenor; he considered that if £2000 was the sum to be offered it would only represent £6 per house which is not much of an encumbrance.
A resident asked how far the Parish Council support would extend if for example we were asked to help in Sidlesham. Cllr Spencer considered that Birdham Farm was very close to Itchenor and each request would be considered on its merits and but the offer of help would extend wherever it could assist.

The Chairman thanked the public for their comments and reopened the meeting.

The Chairman asked Cllr Mead-Briggs for his view. He replied that the committee of the BVRA had been advised that such an assessment of landscape would assist the case and that its proximity to Itchenor warranted approval of the proposal. All Members voted in favour with one abstention.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council should should make a pledge to match fund the sum pledged by Birdham Parish Council up to a maximum of £2000, subject to a) that the Parish Council be shown a draft of the report beforehand and b) that the Parish Council have the use of the report in case it may be helpful in other matters.

113/16C Urgent matters requiring ratification.

The Chairman called for a vote to adopt draft comments on the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Supplementary Planning Document circulated by Cllr Mead-Briggs.
RESOLVED that the comments as circulated be submitted.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.30am.

Signature _____Date: _____
Chairman, West Itchenor Parish Council