

GUESTLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF GUESTLING PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD THURSDAY 22 OCTOBER 2020 6PM VIA ZOOM ONLINE

CHAIR: Cllr MARION ROBERTS

GUESTLING PARISH COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Cllr GRAHAM FURNESS Cllr ANDREW ELDRIDGE

Cllr PETER KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN Cllr PETE MUNRO Cllr MARION MUNRO

PARISH CLERK: BRYONY YOUNG

Cllr MIER Cllr VINE-HALL 2 MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
1	APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE: Cllr Bird Cllr Maynard	
2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None	
3	MINUTES RESOLVED/MATTERS ARISING: That the Chairman of the Council is authorised to sign the minutes of the Parish Meeting 4 August 2020 Matters arising: THREE OAKS BRIDGE – see agenda point VILLAGE HALL SIGN – see agenda point Cllr Mier joined meeting BEECH WALK – ONGOING – Ownership of land still in question, formal decision due from ESCC FIBRE BROADBAND IN GUESTLING – Cllr Vine-Hall is doing a project in Sedlescombe, advised need 50 to commit to community scheme via Openreach and they apply for all the grants for you- BY to investigate further BRADSHAW TRUST – ONGOING – PK-H and AE	BY
4	CORRESPONDENCE: Chair read out Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to the meeting, regards Guestling Clay Pigeon Shoot	
5	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Cllr Vine-Hall - Advised Malcolm Johnson is now Chief Executive of Rother District Council and that planning department vacancies were being advertised and filled. Sedlescombe are buying a Black Cat system for speed checking, will be loaning out to other Parishes for a fee Cllr Mier – Queried Friars Hill 40mph speed, Cllr K-H advised he had been approached by members of the public regards this. Chair advised Cllr Mier that Guestling PC had tried to get the speed limit reduced but that the very high cost quoted by ESCC was prohibitive Cllr Munro advised that volunteers for Speedwatch from the Friars Hill area are required to facilitate Speedwatch in that area – to be brought up in Marsham Meeting (Cllr Roberts)	
6	THREE OAKS BRIDGE/NETWORK RAIL UPDATE: Cllr Furness spoke to Network Rail who will grant access but say Highways responsibility. Cllr Furness to contact Highway Steward	GF
7	COMMUNITY LED HOUSING: Cllr Roberts advised this is going ahead	
8	GUESTLING SURGERY: Inspection has taken place, current owner advised most issues can be dealt with - ONGOING	
9	VERGE CUTTING: Vote to have same as last year (£642) via ESCC	
10	REMEMBRANCE SERVICE GUESTLING/WREATH – PC happy to finance wreath and send attendee – Service is happening at Guestling Church – Communion service with wreath laying	
11	VILLAGE HALL SIGN: Quote for signs £1128 (CIL can be used- see below) Cllr Munro to approach Village Hall Committee re funding assistance	PM
12	MARSHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – AGENDA POINTS – Speedwatch, BY to chase ref date and offer to host	BY
13	CIL SPENDING REPORTING 2019/2020 (£904.62 NOV 2019) – See village hall sign agenda point	
14	LOCAL PLAN, GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER – PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE – RISK TO LOCAL AREAS – Cllr V-H to send around details of AONB response, representation to MP is worthwhile	
15	COVID HELP PLAN FOR SECOND LOCKDOWN – PC happy to rota phone again if required, send out another card if 2 nd lockdown occurs. Got previous database of volunteers that can be used Cllr Vine-Hall left meeting	
16	TREE PLANTING – New lot of trees on way from Woodland Trust, organise group to plant and tidy up previous area. Involve Football Club?	BY
17	FINANCE: 3 months grass cutting (£504.75), RALC Subscription (£30), ZoomPro 1 year (£143.88)	
18	PLANNING APPLICATIONS: RR/2020/1423/O - 8 DENEHURST GARDENS GUESTLING TN35 4PB Certificate of lawfulness for an existing use of conservatory Recommend approval	

	<p>RR/2020/1507/P – COGHURST HALL CARAVAN PARK IVYHOUSE LANE GUESTLING TN35 4NP Use of land for the siting of floating holiday lodges, construction of jetties and associated facilities</p> <p>Recommend refusal. The current map of the site would indicate there is already in excess of the 535 caravans permitted by RR/2002/870/P Whilst accepting these units would only generate a relatively small addition to the traffic, with the vast majority of these units being occupied for the 11 and a half months, the traffic has already increased to much more than is sustainable for this narrow rural lane. Most of the traffic leaves the site and heads south. This part of the lane has a long stretch that is single track. The traffic projection presented for this application would suggest traffic movements of more than 3200 just from the occupants of the caravans not withstanding deliveries, staff movements, visitors etc.</p> <p>RR/2020/1696/O – SHIRE HOUSE ROCK LANE THREE OAKS TN35 4NY Certificate of lawfulness for the existing use of building as residential</p> <p>Recommend refusal. The council accepts that the comments made in support of the application are correct. Their decision is based on the understanding that the Section 106 agreement entered into by the owner is a legal agreement that cannot simply be put aside. The agreement restricts use of the property to a holiday cottage which shall not be occupied by any one person for more than 56 days per year plus other restrictions. It also states that the agreement SHALL be enforceable by the council. An extension appears to have been added to the property that would also contravene the Section 106</p>	
18	<p>A.O.B : Cllr Sallie Cox has resigned from the Parish Council – The Parish Council would like to thank her for all of her hard work and support whilst on the Parish Council Graffiti on train bridge on 8 Acre Lane – MR has reported Chair would like to thank the Clerk for organising Zoom to enable Parishioners to attend the meeting Cllr Munro asked about support for Coghurst Holiday Park residents if a 2nd lockdown occurs – Chair to ask RDC what the provision is 3 vacancies for Parish Councillors to be filled MEETING CLOSED 7.42PM</p>	
	<p>BRYONY YOUNG – PARISH CLERK Tel : 07563 805152 guestling.clerk@gmail.com NEXT FULL PARISH MEETING MONDAY 14 DECEMBER – ZOOM ONLINE</p>	

Appendix 1

GUESTLING PARISH ONLINE COUNCIL MEETING 22/10/2020 AGENDA ITEM 4. CORRESPONDENCE – GUESTLING CLAY PIGEON SHOOT

Dear Members,

Having spent the previous 18 months and finally completing the purchase of land in Rock Lane, Three Oaks in March 2020, we obtained the required licence, insurance & Risk Assessment to start our clay shoot upon the 13/09/2020 and have run additional shoots on the 27/09/2020 & 11/10/2020.

This is a lawful, recreational activity and in addition to these requirements for any clay shoot, we have chosen to purchase extended insurance for every individual member attending the shoot. We are also experienced shooters of 30 + years, have run previous shooting clubs and are national accredited CPSA Safety Officers and Instructors.

The purpose and intentions for the shoot has always been to run as a traditional local shoot (not as a completion ground) having bought out another local shoot which was retiring after 35+ years in Stonestile Lane, Westfield (approximately 1.5 miles away). The shoot was to reflect the previous club, for 3 hours on alternate Sunday's of the month. Some Members attending our shoot are from the previous club as well as some new faces from the local community. It is a supportive and friendly club.

Our understanding on purchase was that the land was previously used for pheasant drives, which was popular and known locally to be one of the best. We were also aware of clubs clay shooting in past in Guestling, and surrounding area, but there had been none since closure of Stonestile around the time we started the purchase of the land. Therefore the nearest clay shoot on same day we run, is a competition ground (very different to local club) in the county of Kent. Other shoots are held in Catsfield, Robertsbridge, Crowhurst and Stonecross on the alternative Sunday of the month. There remains various game shooting in the local area during the respective season.

The purpose of our correspondence is to express that we are keen and open to any fair discussion, in order to allow informed and proportionate action, or decisions to be made to any issues raised. This is important to prevent any further unnecessary speculation fuelling the disproportionate behaviour towards us and others associated with the shoot.

You will be aware that we have raised a complaint with the RDC Monitoring Officer regarding the conduct of some Parish Council Members (past and present) towards the shoot. For creating hostility by inciting matters within the community, rather than being objective in their response, for failing to respond with impartiality, acting with personal bias and a clear purpose to close the shoot, all based on little knowledge and any fair investigation. Their response was disproportionate, lacking inclusivity, integrity & accountability by (alongside other action) supporting (and potentially being part of) secret groups who have taken covert recordings without consent, of us and upon our land. We have nothing to hide and therefore ask for the same open communication.

We have spent over 50 years between us representing our community and upholding the law and the rights of every member of society. We are not here to intentionally break any laws or be unreasonable in our actions that are lawful, however, we are here to stand up for our own rights and entitlements upon our land and towards our person. The shoot is currently lawful and reasonable, if that changes, we will address as necessary to ensure we comply, even if that means closure.

A noise complaint is not justification for a personal crusade, therefore we would like to, again, bring to attention of the local parish that we have been subject of criminal acts, of multiple damage, of theft, subject of threats to our personal safety, the safety of our animals and our property, and also faced verbal abuse. We are trying to understand how these matters appear to be of little interest to the Parish Council, however a noise complaint, which already has a clear process in place with the local Council, has made the agenda, especially without any approach to ourselves. We hope therefore us bringing this to your attention for your meeting today, will assist in bringing some perspective to the complaint itself, and highlight the importance of the nature of any response by the Council, to be considering all members of the Parish.

Equally since our first shoot, we have had many messages of support from the community which have been very welcomed. We have also had messages of thanks from local village members, who were initially concerned regarding the shoot, for the measures we have taken - posting in advance of any shoot, displaying a red flag for indication of horse riders, ensuring the shoot is no more than 3 hours, restricting the numbers attending, allocating allotted shoot times (allowing us to finish well within 3 hours, more towards 2 without the current disruptions we face), in full compliance with the footpath etc. We are working with and awaiting the report from environmental health. All of these measures require the support and cooperation of our members. We are extremely thankful to them for remaining positive, respectful and cooperative, despite some inconvenience and restrictions upon them, the unnecessary disruption to their recreation and some unacceptable behaviour that they too have had to experience.

We intend to remain members of this community for the foreseeable future and wish to do so in a fair, respectful and transparent manner. We only ask for the same in return from the Council, accepting however that some community

members may act otherwise as individuals. We believe any example set by the Council at this opportunity, could assist in reducing further crime and abuse, and ensure a fair and balanced outcome for all.

We understand the format of your current meetings may not allow us to attend, but we are happy to address any questions and would appreciate a copy of the minutes (and any previous minutes discussing the shoot and/or our land) to be made available to us as soon as possible, as current minutes do not appear to be uploaded on the Parish website.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

We look forward to a positive outcome for everybody involved.

Dom and Paula Witham
Brickfields Clay Shooting

Appendix 2

Update from Rother Community Protection Team October 22nd 2020:

I refer to your request for an update on the noise assessment of the clay target shoot in Three Oaks. Please be advised that the Community Protection team is currently undertaking an assessment of the noise arising from the clay target shooting. This assessment is based on the criteria and assessment method laid down in the CIEH Clay Target Noise Control Guidelines published in 2003. It is a complex and time consuming method and as such a resolution to the problem will not be achieved overnight. In order to assess the noise correctly it is necessary to undertake sound level measurements at different locations around the shooting grounds while a shoot is in progress.

I would reiterate that my teams intervention is focused solely on the noise impact of the events and not any of the other issues raised by residents

I understand that the first shoot occurred on 13th September 2020 . Following this the council received a significant number of complaints . As a result background sound levels were measured at different points on Sunday 20th September.

Further sound measurements were made on Sunday 27th September and 11th October at various points around the shooting ground. The measurements made on 27th cannot be relied on due to the weather conditions. Primarily due to the wind speed being far in excess of the 5 m/s threshold.

I would like to thank residents who have allowed officers to use their properties as measurement locations and also the residents who have offered their properties going forward.

It will be necessary to undertake further sound measurements going forward and the validity will depend on the weather conditions during the shoot . Ideally it is necessary to have still and dry conditions. I understand that there will not be any shooting on 25th October or 1st November .

Since further data is needed I am not in a position to offer any results of the monitoring to date. This will be provided to all parties once our investigation, measurement and assessment is concluded.

I can advise that from a subjective assessment of the noise , the worst affected location to date is at the properties immediately to the West of the shooting ground in Rock Lane.

I will keep residents updated in the coming weeks about shoot dates and times and when possible officers will be out undertaking monitoring. It will be necessary to monitor at least one more shoot going forward , however two would be better.

Two other matters have arisen regarding the use of social media and the use by some local residents of the public footpath at the bottom of the site during the last two shoots.

1. I understand that there has been a degree of activity on social media by aggrieved residents concerning this case and that one particular individual associated with the shoot has been allegedly accosted in the street. It is acknowledged that there is strong feeling in your neighbourhood about the shoot, however it will only inflame relations if unhelpful or potentially defamatory comments are posted
2. During the shoot on 11th October I understand that it was necessary on safety grounds to stop the shoot while certain individuals decided to use the footpath. While I appreciate this is a public footpath, the necessity to stop the shooting for 15 to 20 minutes meant that the measurements had to be restarted and less monitoring sites could be covered during the 3 hour shooting window. This is obviously prolonging the investigation process.

I hope this clarifies the situation and thank you for your co-operation. I will be sharing this email with Mr Witham, who , I understand has indicated he is willing to enter into constructive discussion with anybody in the community who wishes to do so.

I would also politely request that residents do not email me personally as due to the volume of messages I would not be able to respond to everybody individually.

Steve Biggs