

PLAISTOW AND IFOLD PARISH COUNCIL



MINUTES of a **Meeting** of the **Full** Plaistow and Ifold Parish **Council** held on **Wednesday 13th January 2021** at **19:30**, via remote conference calling technology (Zoom).

Present Cllr. Allan Pearson (Chair); Cllr. Sophie Capsey (Vice Chair); Cllr. Paul Reynolds; Cllr. Paul Jordan; Cllr. Jerusha Glavin; Cllr. Nicholas Taylor; Cllr. Nick Whitehouse; Cllr. Phil Colmer and Catherine Nutting (Clerk & RFO).

Chichester District [Cllr. Gareth Evans](#) and West Sussex County [Councillor Janet Duncton](#)* were in attendance.

*[Cllr. Duncton](#) is also a Chichester District Councillor for Loxwood Ward

Mr Doug Brown, Applicant (for agenda item 4)

Mrs Sara Burrell, Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (for agenda item 11 and 17)

Mr David Lugton, Parish Council Tree Warden

Mr Jon Pearce, Chairman of Ifold Estates Limited

Two (2) Members of the Public were present.

C/21/001 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Matthew Hardman and Cllr. David Ribbens.

C/21/002 Declaration of interests by Members in matters on the Agenda. To consider and agree any requests for Dispensation.

None received.

C/21/003 To receive for confirmation Minutes of the Full Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council held on 8th December 2020.

Actions:
Clerk & Chair

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes, which will be signed by the Chair via Secured Signing as a true record.

Co-option procedure to fill a casual vacancy.

C/21/004 To receive written applications for the office of Parish Councillor and to Co-opt a candidate to fill the existing vacancy.

One (1) written application was received before the deadline of 4pm, 6th January 2021. The candidate, Mr Doug Brown, was invited

to attend the Co-Option meeting and his application form was circulated to Members on 7th January 2021, at least three (3) clear days before the Co-Option meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to **ACCEPT** Mr Brown's application form for the position of Parish Councillor.

C/21/005

Resolve to adjourn the meeting to allow candidate(s) to present themselves to Members and answer questions *(the meeting will reconvene at item 6 below)*

It was **RESOLVED** to **ADJOURN** the meeting. Mr Brown gave a short presentation to Members and answered questions in relation to his application.

C/21/006

Exclusion of the Press and Public –

To consider whether to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting during the consideration of item 7 below in accordance with S1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that it may involve the likely disclosure of exempt Information.

The meeting reconvened and it was **RESOLVED NOT TO EXCLUDE** the Press and Public from the meeting in relation to agenda item 7.

C/21/007

Deliberation of candidate(s)

Members considered that Mr Brown's application and personal address at **C/21/005** satisfied the Person Specification. Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that **NO DELIBERATION WAS NECESSARY** and to move directly to agenda item 8.

C/21/008

Voting by way of signed ballot and declaration of successful candidate duly elected

(After signing their Declaration of Acceptance of Office the newly elected Councillor may take their seat immediately)

The Parish Council's [Co-Option policy](#), which was provided to Mr Brown upon his initial enquiry of the vacancy, provides for voting by way of signed ballot. Due to the digital nature of the meeting, each Member sent their vote to the Clerk either by private message (on Zoom) or via email.

Members **VOTED SEVEN (7) to ONE (1) IN FAVOUR** of Co-Opting Mr Brown. The Chair declared Cllr. Doug Brown duly elected. Cllr. Brown signed his Acceptance of Office via Secured Signing before officially joining the meeting – see Appendix A.

C/21/009

Representations from Members of the Public: To receive and act upon, if considered necessary by the Council, comments made by members of the public either in person, or in writing provided they were sent via email to the Clerk no later than 4pm Wednesday 13th January 2021.

None received in advance of the meeting, or requested at this item on the agenda.

C/21/010

To receive reports from County and District Councillors.

District Cllr. Evans' report is appended to these minutes at B.

County and District Councillor Janet Duncton's report is appended to these minutes at C.

Actions:
Clerk & District
Cllr. Evans

It was **RESOLVED** to **ACCEPT** Mr Andrew Frost's* offer to meet with Kirdford and Plaistow and Ifold Parish Councils in relation to Lagoon 3 and the impending Enforcement Notice deadline in May 2021. The offer was extended via District Cllr. Evans' address. Cllr. Evans will liaise with the parties and set up the meeting in the coming weeks.

*Head of Planning at Chichester District Council

Cllr. Capsey advised that some elderly residents within the Loxwood Ward, who are registered with Chiddingfold Surgery, received their first Covid-19 vaccination on 18th December 2020. Cllr. Evans agreed to update colleagues at Chichester District Council.

C/21/011

Complaint update

The Chair reminded Members that Mrs Burrell, Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, had made a formal complaint against Cllr. Taylor in relation to personal comments made about her in his Regulation 16 response. In accordance with the [Complaints Procedure](#), the matter had been referred to Mr Bennett, Monitoring Officer, at Chichester District Council. Further to Mr Bennett's consideration of the complaint, Cllr. Taylor agreed for his personal comments to be redacted from his Reg 16 submission and to issue a public letter of apology, which is appended to these minutes at D.

Actions:
Clerk

Mrs Burrell was concerned that Cllr. Taylor's apology failed to address the harmful impact of his comments on her professional and personal integrity and the Neighbourhood Plan itself. Further guidance was sought from the Monitoring Officer, who advised that the Parish Council could consider making a resolution at a full

Council meeting distancing itself from Cllr. Taylor's personal comments.

The Clerk confirmed the remit of the [Code of Conduct](#) and reminded Members of the guiding legal principle which governs the behaviour of all Members; that public responsibilities supersede private rights. The Code of Conduct as drafted does not protect against Members making comments which would otherwise be in breach of the Code, if those comments are prefaced with a statement that they are made in the Member's personal capacity as a private individual. A new Code of Conduct has been drafted by the Local Government Association, along with further legislative sanctions against Councillors who breach its requirements. Chichester District Council's Standards Committee will review the new Code of Conduct in January and the Full Council will be asked to adopt it in March. Thereafter, all lower tier Authorities such as the Parish Council should adopt the new model.

Cllr. Taylor was not in breach of paragraph 2 of the Code of Conduct as he clearly stated within the document that his comments were made in his capacity as a private individual.

Before the meeting, Mrs Burrell was invited to issue a written statement outlining her position. She confirmed that she sought a resolution of the Parish Council distancing itself from Cllr. Taylor's comments. Mrs Burrell similarly addressed the meeting and stated that Cllr. Taylor's comments cast doubt on the correct drafting of an official Parish Council document and her suitability to remain as Chair of the Steering Group. Mrs Burrell sought confirmation that the Parish Council is satisfied there had been no misconduct on her part and that Cllr. Taylor's views are his own and not supported by the Council.

The Chair invited Members to consider Mrs Burrell's request that the Parish Council resolve to publicly distance itself from Cllr. Taylor's personal comments.

Members agreed that they felt uncomfortable discussing the matter in a public meeting. The Clerk confirmed that legal guidance had been sought from the Monitoring Officer and the Parish Council was acting lawfully and appropriately in considering Mrs Burrell's request during a public meeting.

Cllr. Taylor said that since the Code of Conduct did not apply to his comments made as a private member of the public, the Parish Council could only legitimately consider distancing itself from his personal views. However, such deliberation falls outside of the complaint's procedure, which had been properly dealt with by the Monitoring Officer and the matter concluded.

Members agreed that they had full confidence in Mrs Burrell as the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group; however, felt that further guidance about how to properly consider Mrs Burrell's concerns and request outside of a public forum, should be sought from the Monitoring Officer before proceeding further.

Please refer to C/21/021 below, on page 8, for details of the RESOLUTION of this matter.

C/21/012

Highway Matters

Actions:
Clerk

a. Matters to be reported by Members
None to note.

b. Traffic Calming update along Rickman's Lane, Plaistow
SW Transport Planning Ltd has confirmed that the two ATC locations were selected such that they covered the de-restricted section of Rickman's Lane. The objective is to extend the 30mph zone beyond its current limit; therefore, the ATCs were not positioned in such a way as to monitor the speeds within the existing 30mph zone. One of the ATCs was positioned at the start of the proposed new 30mph zone – the 'welcome to our village' sign.

Due to the current lockdown restrictions, it was **RESOLVED** to **POST** the public consultation letters to Rickman's Lane residents.

c. Additional SID & SID location post
Additional SIDs will need to be considered by the Parish Council in due course to support the extension of the 30mph speed limits around the Parish.

C/21/013

Financial Matters

Actions:
Clerk

a. To approve Order for Payments
The Order for Payments was circulated to Members in advance and is appended to these Minutes at E.
It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Order for Payment, which will be

signed via Secure Signing.

b. Lady Hope Playpark project update

Last year, Users of the playpark were asked to participate in an online public consultation. Analysis of the results can be found on the Parish Council's website [here](#). The Lady Hope Playpark Steering Group has listened carefully to the feedback and worked with Redlynch Leisure to create an exciting new design, which is appended to the minutes at F. In addition to the new design, it is recommended that a zip-wire be situated on the Upper Green, running in parallel to Common House Lane aside the hedgerow. The work can start in March and the playpark re-opened for the Easter holiday. The playpark would be closed for the duration and fenced off by Redlynch Leisure.

The Parish Council **RESOLVED** to: -

1. **APPROVE** the minutes of the Lady Hope Playpark Steering Group which are appended to these minutes at G.
2. **APPROVE** the new design, including the zip-wire and detailed cost breakdown received from Redlynch Leisure.
3. **INSTRUCT** Redlynch Leisure to undertake the works.

The Parish Council extended its thanks to the Lady Hope Playpark Steering Group.

c. FSG Meeting Minutes and 3rd Quarter Budget Forecast Comparison

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes of the Finance Steering Group and all the **RECOMMENDATIONS** therein and the 3rd Quarter Budget Forecast – see appendix H.

d. To agree 2021/22 Precept including PWLB & 2021/22 projects

It was **RESOLVED** to: -

- a. **APPROVE** the FSG's 2021/22 draft budget
- b. **REQUEST** a £92,000 Precept from CDC
- c. **APPROVE** a £50,000 Public Works Loan for FIVE (5) years to finance the Lady Hope Play Park renovation works

C/21/014

Ifold Bus Stop Regeneration project update

Due to the latest lockdown, it was inappropriate to publish Cllr. Glavin's volunteer recruitment film on Facebook. Day one of the groundworks, scheduled for 23rd January, will need to be deferred.

The project is now on 'hold' until the lockdown restrictions are eased. The tree surgery remains outstanding; the Clerk is liaising with the contractor to schedule the works in a Covid-Secure way. The bus shelter needs to be dismantled before the groundworks can commence; this will be undertaken by volunteers post lockdown.

C/21/015

Consider responses to the Parish Council's Lagoon 3 letter

Further to a resolution to write to CDC and the EA expressing concerns regarding Lagoon 3 as an unstable AD plant (see minutes of Extraordinary Meeting dated 3rd December [C/20/171](#)) please refer to Appendix I for CDC's and the EA's responses.

The meeting to be arranged between CDC and Kirdford and Plaistow and Ifold Parish Councils will address the responses (see C/21/010 above).

C/21/016

WSALC Value for Money Project update

The Value for Money report, being undertaken by Colin Copus and which was due for circulation to WSALC Members at the end of November, has not been received. Some WSALC Members have written to Jonathan Owen, Chief Executive of NALC expressing their concerns over the conduct of the WSALC's Board of Directors; they do not want to find themselves without a County Association.

C/21/017

Neighbourhood Plan update

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the report of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group appended to these minutes at J.

C/21/018

Winter & Emergency Plan Committee update

The W&EPC met on 11th January. Of note, Mr Guy Wicker of the Winterton Hall Management Committee has been Co-Opted (no voting rights) to support the W&EPC in relation to progressing the legal investigations into the Winterton Hall. The Committee resolved to seek Wellers Hedleys Solicitors fees (the firm who provided the initial advice to the PC back in May 2020) and draft a letter of instruction. The W&EPC will circulate the letter to the full Council in advance, for comment and keep the full Council updated throughout.

C/21/019

Clerk's Update

a. CiLCA

The Clerk will undertake the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) between February 2021 – February 2022.

Actions:
Clerk

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Learning Agreement between the Clerk, Parish Council and Tutors.

b. Newsletter

The final draft will be circulated via email for approval prior to sending off for print.

c. Renew SSE Contract for Cricket Pavilion electricity

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the contract renewal offer from SSE.

C/21/020

Correspondence

a. Artemis response to Parish Council's email re their consultation

Please refer to appendix K.

C/21/021

Items for inclusion on a future agenda

Cllr. Reynolds addressed the meeting in relation to C/21/011 above and stated that given guidance had already been sought from the Monitoring Officer there was nothing to be gained from perpetuating the issue and adding it to a future agenda; it would be advantageous for all concerned to resolve the matter immediately during the current meeting. Members agreed with Cllr. Reynolds in this regard.

It was **RESOLVED** to **ISSUE** the following public statement: -

Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council has full confidence in Mrs Sara Burrell as Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The views and comments expressed by Cllr. Nicholas Taylor in his Regulation 16 submission, which were made in his personal capacity, do not represent the views of Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council.

For clarity, this matter is resolved and will not be added to a future agenda.

C/21/022

Date of next meetings

20th January 2021, 19:30 – Planning & Open Spaces Committee

9th February 2021, 19:30 – Planning & Open Spaces Committee

10th February 2021, 19:30 – Full Parish Council Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 21:40

Appendix A – C/21/008 – Acceptance of Office, Cllr. Doug Brown: please refer to separate pdf document.

Appendix B - C/21/010 – District Cllr. Evans’ Report

District Councillor Address

Covid-19

We are now in a national lockdown and CDC continues to support the residents and local business during this time. I received a number of calls from concerned residents who flagged that there seemed to be a delay in getting vaccinations. This seemed to be a Chichester wide issue and the CEO at CDC was brilliant in getting this resolved and the first vaccinations started on Friday 8th January – including my father who was delighted that the risk of living with me is reducing 😊

Update on COVID Grants

The Covid Recovery Grants scheme was launched on the 20 August 2020. CDC have so far received a total of 77 applications for the large business grant. A total of 51 applications have been successful which totals a grant amount of £172,028.09. Fourteen applications have successfully passed through the first two stages of checking and will be going to panel. If all these are successful then the total grant amount will be £46,575.51. CDC have received 132 applications for the small business grant. A total of 81 businesses have already received their small grant which totals £68,404.92. CDC have 28 applications ready to be signed off, totalling a grant amount of £20,712.47. It has been really encouraging to see the Council’s Covid Recovery Grant being awarded across a broad range of businesses, right across the District From small grants towards the additional expense of implementing

and operating Covid-safe shopping premises, to larger grants being awarded towards the costs for investing in additional facilities to attract new or extend services to existing customers - the grant really has made a difference. Feedback from the businesses who have been awarded the grants has been very positive and without exception they really appreciate the extra support being made available to them from the Council. Please note that the recently launched Local Restrictions Grants are the government-funded grants and entirely separate to the Chichester District Council-funded Covid Recovery Grants. The Additional Grants Scheme is a discretionary scheme using government funding. Further information on both these schemes can be found at <https://www.chichester.gov.uk/businessratesnovember2020>

Test and Trace New package to support self-isolation update

Since 12 October 2020 the Council has been administering the Test and Trace Support Scheme to eligible residents. average 27% of all applications made across West Sussex have been successful meaning that a resident has received a £500 support payment covering their period of self-isolation. This scheme is currently running up to 31 January 2021 pending a further review by central government.

Southern Water

In my last address I reported that the CEO had written to OFWAT as a response to a motion put forward by my group at the last full council meeting. The CEO received a response to this on 22nd December 2020 in the form of what is essentially a holding email. Within this letter they stated “we are aware of the widespread concern in the Chichester area about this company. I recently met with Gillian Keegan MP to discuss the company, the performance improvements and the investment that we expect it to make in the area”. They also confirmed they would reply to the letter more fully in the New Year.

Census

I reported at the last meeting that the census is due to take place on 21st March 2021. I do not yet know if this will be delayed as a consequence of the National Lockdown.

Green Homes Grant

CDC have successfully bid for government Covid green recovery programme money to reduce fuel poverty and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from homes in the district. Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Phase 1A will fund improvements to homes that are Energy Performance Certificate rated E, F or G and where household income is below £30K pa. See www.warmerhomes.org.uk for details of the local implementation. If a household is not eligible, they can contact the CDC’s Wellbeing Home Energy Advisor Jo Williamson who may be able to find another scheme for which they are eligible.

Draft Contaminated Land Strategy for Consultation

The Clerk at Kirdford contacted me to raise a concern that Lagoon 3 was omitted from this document. She has since written to Simon Ballard who has informed the Parish:

“Thank you for your response to our consultation on the revised Contaminated Land Strategy. The reference to ‘Part 2A Inspections’ at Appendix 1 in the draft document has a specific meaning as set

out within the statutory guidance for the regime. CDC is continuing to consider the matter of lagoon 3 at Crouchlands and both the Councils Planning Enforcement and the Environment Agency have more enforcement regimes underway. We are working with all partner agencies to bring a resolution to the issue and are highly aware of its importance to your parish and local community.”

Billingshurst Waste and recycling Centre

A quote from a Horsham District councillor was published in the County Times last week regarding the potential closure of this centre. As a number of residents have contacted me concerned about this, I have investigated the validity of this claim and I have liaised with our County Councillor. I understand that this has been reviewed and there is a plan to remove Waste and Recycling centres from the list of cuts but this will be voted on and confirmed at the next WSCC Full Council Meeting.

Loxwood Claypit

The campaign group I am supporting remain very active and are working hard to build a good case to fight this application. It is attracting widespread interest and is being supported by a wide range of

people include Mike Rutherford who kindly recorded a short film in support of this campaign. The final Webinar was hosted by protreat on the 15th December. We await the planning application to go in.

Hyde Housing

At the last full council meeting in November, I raised the issue residents in the ward who are tenants of Hyde Housing had had in reporting and getting issues resolved with Hyde Housing. CDC have now updated the complaints procedure following changes in the staffing structure. I have followed up with those residents who had had issues and am pleased that their issues are beginning to get resolved. However with lockdown being in place some work may be delayed as a consequence of national restrictions.

Surgery

As always please contact me with any issue, feedback, problem or question and I will do my best to help: gbevans@chichester.gov.uk / 07958 918056. Although I have not been able to resume normal Saturday surgeries yet, I am available to meet and visit residents (whilst observing social distance measures) or for online meetings or surgeries upon request. I look forward to hearing from you!

The next full Council meeting is Tuesday 19th January at 2pm

Finally I would like to wish the Parish Council a very successful New Year.

Appendix C - C/21/010 – WSCC Cllr. Duncton's Report

There is no intention to close any of the Household Waste and Re Cycling sites. Final decision at full Council on the 12th February. Open Cabinet on 22nd January.

Children's Services which as you all know have been told, nearly 2 years ago now, that they needed improvement and if it didn't improve the Government department would be looking to put it into a Trust. We have an excellent Commissioner John Caughlin who is also Chief Executive of Hampshire County Council. He pulls no punches and says it as it is. He has advised the department that West

Sussex Children's Services has made such good progress that they should not look at putting it into a Trust but of course will look at how we are doing in another 12 months. We will get there.

Likewise, we have a pretty good Fire and Rescue Service, but when Her Majesty's Inspectors came they found that some improvements were needed. This was more in the line of our Community safety work which was getting behind. Government set up a special committee to make sure improvements were made, this was chaired by an MP and included the Chairman of the Fire and Safety committee on the LGA. They are now completely satisfied that all issues have been dealt with and this committee has disbanded.

I think I said that we had a Members Workshop on the budget on the 14th. We held this workshop online of course and every Cabinet Member gave an explanation on their Portfolios and where savings

could be made and what was no long being considered (HWRS among the 5 no longer considered). If anyone wants to watch the Cabinet on the web it's at 10am on the 22nd January.

The Hubs dealing with Covid issues and other things are still operating for those in the community who need help.

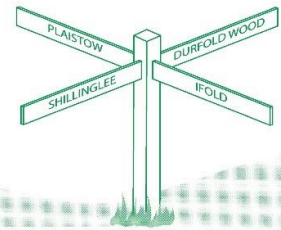
If anyone wants to contact me it's janet.dunton@westsussex.gov.uk or my mobile is 07979152898

Janet Dunton
County Councillor Petworth division
Chichester District Councillor Loxwood ward

Appendix D - C/21/011 – Cllr. Taylor's Letter of Apology to Mrs Burrell, Chair – Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Please refer to separate document

PLAISTOW AND IFOLD PARISH COUNCIL



Appendix E - C/21/013a – Order for Payment

Schedule of receipts and order for payments for Dec 2020 - Jan 2021
To be approved at the Parish Council meeting on 13.01.2021

Agenda Item: 13a

The signed original document is filed in the Accounts file, YE 31/03/21

RECEIPTS

Payer:	Detail:	Cost Centre/Code	Amount:
HMRC	VAT Return	105	£2,717.66
		Total	£2,717.66

PAYMENTS

Payee:	Detail:	Cost Centre/Code	Amount:
Miss C E Nutting	Expenses – monthly subscriptions for Zoom 31.12.2020 – 30.01.2021 Secured Signing Dec 2020 Instant Ink 27.11 – 26.12.2020 WFHA Dec Milage Dec	Subscriptions: 4120 / 102 WFHA: 4102 / 101	£76.05
SLCC (Soc of Local Council Clerks)	CiLCA Qualification Registration Fee		£410
		Total	£486.05

EXPENDITURE TO BE RATIFIED – paid since last Parish Council Meeting:

Payee:	Detail:	Cost Centre/Code	Amount:
BT	Winterton Hall Wifi charges 01 – 31st January 2021	4123	£35.94
Moore	External Auditor Fees	4115	£360
Bankline	Bank Charges for Nov 2020	4140	£2.40
Bankline	Bank Charges for Dec 2020	4140	£2.40
WSCC	Salary and oncosts for December 2020	4101	£2,818.24
Miss A J Palmerton	Ifold Bus Stop Regeneration project design and practical works (C/20/182 08.12.2020)		£420
		Total	£3,638.98

Total receipts **£2,717.66**

Total expenditure **£4,125.03**

Signed by Chair: Date:

Signed by Councillor: Date:

Signed by Clerk/RFO: Date:

Appendix F - C/21/013b – Lady Hope Playpark design & costs

Please refer to separate documents

Appendix G - C/21/013b – Minutes of the Lady Hope Playpark Steering Group Meeting 06.01.2021

Please refer to separate documents

Appendix H - C/21/013c – Minutes of the Financial Steering Group Meeting 07.01.2021

Please refer to separate documents

Appendix I - C/21/015 – Letters from CDC and EA in response to the Parish Council's letter

Please refer to separate documents

Appendix J - C/21/017 – Neighbourhood Plan Report

Report to Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council Meeting 12 January 2021 Update on the Neighbourhood Plan

Regulation 16. The consultation has been completed and the Parish Council has submitted responses on these comments to the Planning Inspector. A copy of the PC response is on the NP website.

Examination. Janet Cheesley, the appointed Examiner has been reviewing the NP documentation and will be making a visit to the Parish before completing her draft report. However, she has now informed CDC and the PC, she is unable to undertake the Parish visit until the current covid pandemic restrictions are lift. Therefore further delays will now occur as she will not release her draft report to CDC and the PC until the visit is complete.

Steering Group Meeting

No Steering Group has been arranged as the date for the release of the Examiners report is unknown.

Professional Consultant

Colin Smith Planning Ltd have been appointed but no actions have been required on their part. They are being kept informed of progress of the NP.

VDS

The updated VDS has been submitted to CDC and acknowledged. A further response is awaited from CDC. A chasing e-mail has been sent by the Parish Clerk. It may be necessary to ask our District Councillor to follow up the progress of the VDS with CDC Officers.

Newsletter

Attached is a proposed article on the NP for the Parish Council Newsletter for approval.

Sara Burrell, Chair Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Appendix K - C/21/020 – Artemis response to Parish Council’s email re their consultation

From: Artemis

Sent: 10 December 2020 18:20

To: clerk@plaistowandifold.org.uk

Subject: Crouchlands Farm - 'Whole Farm Plan' Planning consultation

Dear Catherine,

Thank you for your email following your Parish Council meeting last night; I very much appreciate you passing on the feedback. However, it is obviously very disappointing to learn that some local people have reacted in this way, particularly as we take the issue of openness and transparency very seriously.

Emphatically it is wrong for anyone to think that the financial backers lack openness and transparency regarding the site. Particularly since my team arrived at the site, openness and transparency have been our watchwords and we have very much been encouraged in this by the financial backers.

Over two years ago the financial backers took the decision to clean up the mess on site that had been created by the previous owners and operators of the Crouchlands Farm biogas plant (much of the debt from which still sits with the financial backers) and also to invest in the future of the Farm. The alternative would have been to leave the local community with a major headache and no realistic solutions.

The fact is they stepped up to the plate to address the many problems caused by the previous owners/operators, including to the financial backers themselves, and continue to do so. Yet we seem to get little or no credit for the immense amount of work and resources that has been expended to date to remediate the site for which there is abundant evidence.

As stated in the first line of the email, the Public Consultation we have launched relates solely to the proposed regeneration and rural diversification of Crouchlands Farm – the ‘Whole Farm Plan’. It was during the initial pre-application discussions with Chichester District Council that ***the Council directed that in any proposal we submitted for the Whole Farm Plan we had to exclude any proposal for residential development and that any such proposal would need to be made through a separate planning application process.*** For the avoidance of doubt, we will make this clear on the consultation website.

For clarification, our Regulation 16 response relates only to the Neighbourhood Plan and the proposed Plaistow Village Extension, full details of which we shared with the Parish Council in a timely way. As I understand it, this is currently with the Examiner for determination. In any event, should our proposal be adopted, any subsequent planning application would, of course, be subject to a separate and extensive Public Consultation.

Nevertheless, we have not been silent on housing. As you know, when we met with members of the Parish Council for the first time nearly two years ago, we set out our broad objectives for residential development and, as the Parish Council and the community are aware, we submitted a representation to Chichester District Council for consideration in the emerging Local Plan. This is clearly some way away from coming to fruition and, as with our Regulation 16 response, any subsequent planning application would, of course, be subject to a separate and extensive Public Consultation.

We will continue to seek to engage with the Parish Council and the wider local community as we have done from the outset. There will be no change to our consistent policy and philosophy to be open and transparent.

I do hope that the Parish Council will recognise this and recognise that our objectives are intended to improve Crouchlands and also to do so to the benefit of the local community. As always, I am happy to meet with members of the Parish Council as and when required to provide any clarification that I am able to. As before, also feel free to call me if this would be of assistance.

With best wishes,

Anthony Fairbanks Weston TD DL | Chairman