

## MINUTES OF FUNTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

### 06 April 2022

**PRESENT:** Sheena King (SK)Chair  
 Pat Young (PY)  
 Kate Du Port (KDP)

Bob Mousley (BM)  
 Jean Simmonds (JS)  
 Richard Littler (RL)

District Councillor David Palmer (DP)

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** 11

AGENDA ITEM	NOTES/COMMENTS
<b>1. Apologies</b>	David Ash (DA), County Councillor Julian Joy (JJ)
<b>2. Welcome to All</b>	Chairman Sheena King welcomed Councillor’s and Parishioners and Introduced this year's speaker.
<b>3. Speaker</b>	<p><b>Alison Dring - Area Manager – Eco Verde Energy Limited</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eco Verde Energy (EVE) deliver Operational, Advisory and Back Office Support for Anaerobic Digestions (AD) Plants. Anaerobic digestion is the process by which organic matter such as animal or food waste is broken down to produce biogas and biofertiliser. This process happens in the absence of oxygen in a sealed oxygen-free tank called an anaerobic digester. The energy in biogas can be used like natural gas to provide heat, generate electricity and power cooling systems, among other uses.</li> <li>• Broadley Copse Farm houses an on-site AD plant to make use of the large quantities of manure for generating electricity with the by-product being used back on the arable land, benefiting the soil by adding nutrients to replace bagged fertiliser.                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>PROCESS:</b> Straw waste → AD Unit → through the plant → maturation in the digestors (approximately 58 days) → screen pressing producing:                                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) solid waste which is pasteurized and then straight back onto the land.</li> <li>(2) digestive liquid which is also used.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ The importance of this process is that it uses materials either produced on the site or locally (e.g. locally grown maize) reducing the carbon footprint.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There are different versions of AD sites including a pilot site running near Manchester. This is a municipal digester</li> </ul>

	<p>processing two and a half tonnes of black bag waste a week and uses a conveyor belt system with magnets to separate the fractions: plastics (recycled), metals, inerts and material (recycled) all while feeding the AD plant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving forward this method of creating energy needs <u>land for sites</u>. These sites need to be located as near as possible to the matter being digested. This is understandably difficult as the plants are not always welcome due to the smell they produce.</li> <li>• There is even the potential to dig up landfill to <u>feed into AD plants</u>.</li> <li>• The UK is behind in the field of <u>sustainability supporting the conception of a less “throw away” society and work from individual level on thinking about the waste we generate</u>.</li> <li>• There are of course other systems also <u>being created ie use of Hydrogen and Pyrolysis</u> (Pyrolysis is the thermochemical decomposition of organic matter into <u>non condensable gases, condensable liquids</u> and a solid residual coproduct, biochar or charcoal in an inert environment (ie, in the absence of oxygen)). These sites can be as small as 40ft containers.</li> <li>• An issue facing the AD industry is the <u>UK’s reliance on subsidies to move forward demonstrating that there is now a need to start building AD plants without these</u>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Overview of 2021-2022</b></p>	<p><b>Sheena King:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has been another challenging year for the Council as it has for everybody.</li> <li>• The year began with PC meetings still being held via Zoom but in June “face to face” meetings recommenced.</li> <li>• The work of the PC was impacted by the ongoing Covid restrictions but despite those restrictions the PC managed to achieve a number of things which are set out in the annual report (available on the website).</li> <li>• The return to “face to face” meetings allowed for a change of venue and these are now held alternately in West Stoke Village Hall and St Mary’s Church Room, Funtington. It is hoped that this will enable Parishioners who have previously been unable to attend our meetings, to now attend.</li> <li>• Whilst two councillors left the council during the year we welcomed two new Councillors: one from East Ashling and one from Funtington. We also welcomed our new West Sussex County Councillor who regularly attends meetings.</li> <li>• A number of initiatives were undertaken during the year and these included:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A number of litter picking events.</li> <li>○ Appointment of an alternative contractor to look after the playground in West Ashling.</li> <li>○ Removal of the two leylandii trees from the West Ashling playground to open up the grassed area.</li> <li>○ Repair to the telephone kiosk in West Stoke.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Planning Report</b></p>	<p><b>Jean Simmonds:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has been another relatively quiet year in respect of planning applications, primarily due to the pandemic.</li> <li>• The number of applications considered was 48, compared to 67 last year and 98 in 2019-20.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition, there had been 22 tree applications, for which no comments or objections were felt necessary.</li> <li>• Of the 48 applications reviewed by the Planning Committee, written objections were lodged against five, one of which was from the Gypsy and Traveller community.</li> <li>• We are awaiting dates for hearings concerning a number of appeals made by the Gypsy and Traveller community. Those appeals are being heard due to such as: refusal of planning permission; enforcement and stop notices.</li> <li>• In addition to these appeals, Planning Enforcement at CDC is dealing with further stop notices. In particular those placed on property in Southbrook Road and for which the three month grace period has expired.</li> <li>• The 17 house development at Portal Close, West Ashling has now been granted permission.</li> <li>• Commencement of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) has finally begun after being delayed primarily due to Covid. A Steering Group (SG) has been formed and Planning Consultants instructed, with inception meetings taking place earlier in 2022.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Finance Report</b></p>	<p><b>Clerk:</b></p> <p><b>Precept</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Precept for 2021-22:           <b>£ 24,220</b></li> <li>• Precept for 2022-23:           <b>£ 25,557.20</b></li> <li>• <b>£1,337.20</b> - increase in the annual precept</li> </ul> <p><b>Payments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total Gross Payments - <b>£28,592.19</b></li> <li>• The biggest Community spends this financial year were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SIDs posts and associated signs for Hares Lane, Funtington and Mill Road, West Ashling <b>£1,857.78</b></li> <li>○ Tree work at West Ashling Playground <b>£5,895</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Along with supporting various improvements, the Parish Council's finances also offer us the opportunity to make donations to various organisations including: Citizens Advice; Good Neighbours; Samaritans; Victim Support and the Church - Total Donations: <b>£2,500</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Receipts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As well as the Precept we received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ VAT refund of <b>£2088.74</b>.</li> <li>○ SDNP Community infrastructure Levy (CiL) payments of <b>£9,544.38</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Parish Council financial situation is reported at each monthly meeting. Our end of year figures for 2021 - 2022 show a final balance of <b>£77,586.28</b></li> <li>• This figure includes CiL receipts totalling: <b>£39,755.93</b> of which <b>£23,794.08</b> is allocated for West Ashling and Funtington District Village Hall refurbishment leaving <b>£15,941.85</b> unallocated CiL money which can be allocated towards</li> </ul>

	<p>community projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are further allocated ringfenced funds of <b>£15,000</b>,</li> <li>• The PC has been awarded and spent the grant money for the Neighbourhood Plan. This year the PC was awarded <b>£3,870</b> which covered the costs of the Planning Consultants until April 2022 and further funding will be applied for in April 2022 as soon as the bidding process opens.</li> <li>• This leaves a total of <b>£22,830.35</b> for regular spending and future projects. Full details will be available on the website.</li> <li>• The budget is managed by the Parish Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer and the Finance Committee. Our financial governance and probity is monitored through internal and external auditors.</li> <li>• All figures are included in the written Annual Report which is available on the website under Full Council Minutes and Agendas (APA additional documents) as are the full 2021 – 2022 Expenses and Receipts under Finance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Looking Ahead to 2022-2023</b></p>	<p><b>Sheena King:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The initiatives for 2022-23 being discussed are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The introduction of 'White Village Welcome Gates' to reduce vehicular speed.</li> <li>○ An additional Community Notice Board on Downs Street, West Ashling – delivery scheduled for April 2022.</li> <li>○ Further Defibrillator training - now booked for May 2022.</li> <li>○ Further fingerpost improvements in West Stoke and West Ashling.</li> <li>○ Support for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.</li> <li>○ Equipment improvements in the West Ashling playground.</li> <li>○ Support for Residents Against Vehicle Excessive Noise (RAVEN), which is a new campaign launching in Chichester District south of the Downs to tackle the troublesome issue of excessive noise from anti-social driving.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Questions from the Audience</b></p>	<p><b>Q. To which villages are the white gates to be added as East Ashling already has them financed and organised by the Residents' Association?</b></p> <p>A. The intention is to add them to the three other villages.</p> <p><b>Q. How will the Queen's Jubilee money be distributed?</b></p> <p>A. Unfortunately current grants are only for lasting commemorations and not for celebrations. Therefore, the PC will assist with advertising etc. but currently there are no funds to distribute.</p> <p><b>Q. What is the PC going to do about the ongoing issues with the Gypsy and Traveller (G and T) sites at the bottom of Scant Road? Issues raised by attendees:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Anti-social behaviour</b></li> <li>- <b>Parties on the Dell and Mill Pond</b></li> <li>- <b>Renting caravans to people who are not part of the Traveler community</b></li> </ul> <p>A. It was proposed that the PC should contact the Police Commissioner to arrange a meeting with a resident and SK as Chair of the PC to ask why the police are not doing more to stop the alleged increase in crime in the area. A complete body of</p>

	<p>evidence will first need to be gathered to detail the exact instances where it is believed the Police have not acted.</p> <p><b>Q. With regard to the current issues with crime in West Ashling, were the police invited to the APA?</b></p> <p>A. Unfortunately the PC was not aware that this issue would be raised tonight, as it had never been raised at a Parish Council meeting and, as the APA is not always supported, the PCSO was not invited. PCSO’s attend 1 or 2 meetings a year and the PCSO for Funtington attended the October 2021 Full Council Meeting. The Clerk will contact the PCSO in the light of the issues raised and ask both for up to date crime statistics and invite him to attend the next FPC meeting.</p> <p><b>Q. Why does the PC not know about the extent of problems with G and T crime in West Ashling?</b></p> <p>A. The PC continues to work extremely hard on communication but unfortunately can only respond to issues if they are made aware of them. No one had raised any of these concerns with the Clerk or Chairman and, as noted above, they have never been brought to the attention of the Parish Council at any of the monthly meetings.</p> <p><b>Q. There are now a number of illegal sites all with enforcement notices and concerns that the number of sites just seem to be growing. What representation is the PC organizing for the upcoming Planning Appeals for the G and T sites?</b></p> <p>A. It is on the Agenda for the Full Council Meeting (to follow APA). Discussions have taken place regarding the appointment of a Barrister to represent the PC at the Appeals but this has so far been considered as unnecessary. Only this week the research has begun on employing a Planning Consultant in response to a parishioner’s email. The Clerk has spoken to the CEO of West Sussex Association of Local Councils (WSALC) who is arranging for an experienced impartial Planning Consultant to advise. The decision has to be made in accordance with all the evidence and by the Full Council as it is essential that if public money is to be spent, the appointment of a Planning Consultant should be beneficial.</p>
<p><b>9. Summary and Closure</b></p>	<p><b>Sheena King:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reiteration of thanks to all Councillors including those that have now left and also to County and District Councillors and the Clerk who over the year have given their invaluable support.</li> </ul>

Signed..... Chairman

All reports are available in full on the website: <https://www.funtingtonpc.org>