

WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL
THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL HELD
REMOTELY VIA ZOOM
ON THURSDAY 3rd DECEMBER AT 7.00PM

Present: Cllr Gadd (Chair), Cllr C Moore, Cllr P Moore, Cllr Smith, Cllr Griffin, Cllr Edwards (in part), Cllr Murphy (Vice Chair, in part), Cllr Anderson (in part), Cllr Bulloch (in part) and Cllr Morris.

Also, in attendance: Claudine Feltham (CF) (RFO/temporarily covering Clerk's role), WDC Cllr Bob Standley, WDC Cllr Johanna Howell. There were no members of the public.

Cllr Morris referred to an email that he had sent to the Chair requesting that Private & Confidential matters are re-instated as a standing item on the agenda. Cllr Gadd advised this would only appear on the agenda if there were Private & Confidential items to discuss. However, this could be an item for full council to decide on and would be an agenda item for consideration in January 2021.

1. To receive apologies and reasons for absence.
Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Tincombe and Cllr Maggs.
2. To receive declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda and updates to members' register of interests.
Cllr Gadd declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 9.10 as she is a Trustee on the Wadhurst Institute Hall and Field.
There were no updates to members' register of interests.
3. Public Forum – time limit 15 minutes.
No members of public present at this meeting.
4. To receive reports from the County Councillor and District Councillor
The County and District Cllr reports had previously been circulated to all members of the parish council.
Cllr Standley commented that whilst Sussex were currently in Tier 2 of the COVID19 restrictions, we were lucky to avoid Tier 3, like those in Tunbridge Wells.
Cllr Standley had been corresponding with Cllr P Moore over Highways issues.
There may have been some confusion over whether the recycling centre at Forest Row would be re-opened by the district council, but this was not the case. There has also been a consideration that Forest Row Parish Council may look into purchasing the recycling centre.

Cllr Griffin expressed his dismay over not being able to have a constructive on-site meeting with East Sussex County Council Highways.
Certain works completed in the parish have to a very poor standard, and some works have caused even further issues. Cllr Griffin has been in correspondence with Christopher Tree, Ian, Ruby, Sale and Corinne at East Sussex County Council Highways.

Action: Cllr Griffin to forward his correspondence East Sussex County Council Highways to Cllr Standley for him to consider the next steps.

Cllr P Moore thanked Cllr Griffin for his continued efforts with the Highways issues. Approximately 2 months ago they took photos of 19 blocked drains, now there may be 18 blocked drains. Cllr P Moore also expressed his disappointment in the communications with East Sussex County Council Highways department. There were issues within the conservation area – one broken pavement drain was tarmacked over! The work to the drains should have been completed prior to the resurfacing of the High Street.

There is a stark comparison when you see the works carried out when driving towards Ticehurst where repairs have been completed properly. Cllr P Moore asked Cllr Standley how the parish council can move forward as the current method of communication between the parish and county council was clearly not working, and the role of the parish council was not to spend all of their time chasing the county council.

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Action: Cllr Standley noted the comments made and would take this up on behalf of the parish council.

Action: Cllr Griffin to update the list of all outstanding Highways items.

Cllr Gadd reported a problem at St James' Square where cars were parking over the markings and blocking Blacksmiths Lane. PCSOs have assisted in dealing with the offending vehicles as they have caused an obstruction. Ideally require NO PARKING in white paint. The PCSOs have said there is a need for the sign. **Action:** Cllr Standley to talk to Wealden Police District Commander about this.

Cllr Griffin asked if there had been any further update about the Section 106 funds being used at an alternative location to Sparrows Green Recreation Ground. Currently the vendors are insisting that the funds are spent at Sparrows Green, and without their agreement it would not be possible to change the legal agreement.

Action: Cllr Standley to write a letter to the vendors.

Cllr P Moore asked if Cllr Standley would be available for a meeting with the parent from Sacred Heart School who has raised Highways safety concerns. Cllr Standley has already spoken to the Head Teacher and has asked for them to consider having a lolly pop person.

Cllr Gadd raised a query over tenants who lived in social housing, if they had more than £6,000 in savings then they could not down size, and therefore not free a family home up. Cllr Gadd asked if this was a WDC or national directive. **Action:** Cllr Gadd to forward details to Cllr Howell for further enquiries.

5. Minutes

5.1 To approve the updated minutes of the meeting on 10 September 2020 as a true record.

One amendment; Cllr Morris had sent his apologies for not being able to attend this meeting.

Action: CF to amend the minutes.

There was a unanimous decision to approve the minutes with the above amendment.

5.2 To approve the minutes of the meeting on 5th November 2020 as a true record.

There was a unanimous decision to approve the minutes

Cllr Howell and Cllr Standley left the meeting 1931 hours

6. To determine matters arising from the meeting on 5th November 2020 for updating and noting.

6.1 Wadhurst Culture had written to WPC due to their dismay, that WPC had expressed their dissatisfaction that a grant issued by the parish council and used for an event, had profits passed onto a charity (not returned under clause 6 of the WPC grant policy as 'unused funds' or held for their next event. Cllr Gadd advised that this is partly the fault of WPC, as the grant policy wording does not make this requirement absolutely clear. The grant policy wording would be considered later in the meeting.

6.2 WDC recognition award. Not yet presented due to lockdown – but is planned for December 2020.

7. Chair's Announcements

Would like to thank our Clerk and Caretaker from us and our parishioners with a Christmas gift. Clerks and RFO email are now being backed up via iDrive on the RFOs laptop.

8. Finance items for decision and allocation of resources

8.1 To note the bank statements and bank reconciliations to 22 October 2020 (three bank accounts)

8.2 To note the RBS Income and Expenditure, Cash and Investment and Ear Marked Reserves reports for October 2020.

8.3 To agree the payment list (cheques and Direct Debits) for December 2020.

8.4 To note the conclusion of year end audit procedures (year ending 31st March 2020) and the external auditors report comments.

Resolved: agenda items 8.1 to 8.4 were dealt with together and were approved unanimously.

Proposed by Cllr Gadd and seconded by Cllr C Moore.

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8.5 To consider the quote from Spy Alarms for repairs and upgrade to the alarm system at the Pavilion. Cllr Gadd advised members that the CCTV system had not been working properly, and Spy Alarms were our current contractor. The new system could also include an app. **Resolved:** the parish council reached a majority vote to go ahead with the repairs and upgrade by Spy Alarms. **Action:** CF to contact Spy Alarms.

8.6 To ratify for Sureflow Plumbing & Heating to provide and install the new boiler at the Pavilion as agreed at the Amenities Committee 26/11/2020. Cllr Gadd advised that 4 quotes were sought. One was continually chased, one replied 'too busy' and two provided quotes. **Resolved:** the parish council reached a majority vote to approve for Sureflow Plumbing and Heating to carry out the required works. **Action:** CF to contact Martin Hall of Sureflow Plumbing & Heating.

Note: the parish council were aware that Cllr Bulloch was having technical difficulties with accessing the Zoom meeting.

8.7 Consideration of budget setting and precept request for 2021-2022

The finance report and spreadsheet had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting. Cllr C Moore requested for the committee members and Chairs to consider their budgets for 2021-2022 prior to the finance committee meeting which would be taking place on 17th December 2020. Cllr Gadd advised that she hoped that the parish council would be in a position to confirm the budget and precept request at the January 2021 meeting.

9. Items for decision.

9.1 Village verges – Cllr P Moore confirmed that this was for rural, not urban, verges. The trial with East Sussex County Council would mean the verges would be cut just once a year to allow for flowers and bio diversity to flourish. East Sussex would be preserving sight lines for safety. **Resolved:** Cllr P Moore proposed that Wadhurst Parish Council take part in this trial, it was seconded by Cllr Gadd and members reached a unanimous decision to approve this.

9.2 To adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 14th & 28th November 2020. **Resolved:** The minutes were adopted, proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr P Moore and unanimously approved by members.

9.3 To adopt the minutes of the Communications and Community Liaison Committee held on 19th November 2020

The Pavilion is not listed with the Postal Service. **Action:** CF to update this on the minutes. **Resolved:** the parish council reached a majority vote to adopt the minutes with the above amendment.

9.4 To adopt the minutes of the Amenities Committee held on 26th November 2020.

Resolved: the parish council reached a majority vote to adopt the minutes

9.5 To adopt the minutes of the Recreation Ground Management Committee held 2nd July 2020.

Resolved: the parish council reached a majority vote to adopt the minutes.

9.6 ESALC AGM – to formally appoint Cllr P Moore as the representative of Wadhurst Parish Council at the ESACL AGM so that he can participate in voting on behalf on the parish council.

Resolved: this was proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Smith and unanimously agreed by the members.

9.7 Small grant policy: to review and adopt the new wording of the policy – Cllr Gadd advised members that it had been brought to her attention that additional information should be added to the grants policy. If the parish council provide a grant to an event, and there is a profit from the event, then the funds should be passed back to the parish council or used by the grant recipient for their next event, with the aim of them becoming self-funded. **Resolved:** this was proposed by Cllr P Moore, seconded by Cllr C Moore and unanimously agreed by all members.

9.8 Local Government consultation on Standards Matter

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Action: Clerk to email the link to the consultation to all members, and for this to be an agenda item for January 2021.

9.9 Reopening of the Household Waste Recycling Centre – Cllr C Moore

Cllr Standley mentioned this earlier in the meeting, the information in the newsletter was not very clear. That one of the most important things that came up in the household survey was about the re-opening of the household waste and recycling centre, and so felt it would be good to write to Nus Ghani to ask for her support.

Cllr Morris added that hopefully this would help remind Nus Ghani about the previous petition and TV coverage. **Action:** Cllr Morris to make a DVD copy of the TV coverage.

Cllr Griffin suggested that we contact WDC and ask for data on the amount of fly tipping, and how much it is costing them to deal with this. **Action:** CF to contact WDC for this information.

This was proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Gadd and unanimously approved by all members.

9.10 To ratify the decision of the Amenities Committee for the creation of a working party for liaison with Wadhurst Institute Hall and Field CIO.

Cllr Gadd introduced this agenda item but then did not take part in the discussion.

Cllr Griffin proposed for a working party to be set up to negotiate a contract between the Parish Council and The Hall and Field Institute to formalise the arrangements for;

1. Provision of Public Toilets
2. Provision of land in which to site a children's playground on the Washwell Lane recreation ground
3. Provision of a Parish Hall

The working Party to consist of: Cllr Griffin (Deputy Chair of the Amenities Committee), Cllr Niell (Hall & Field Liaison) and Cllr C Moore (Chair of the Finance Committee). Cllr Morris queried whether someone who is a trustee of Hall and Field should be on this working party. Cllr Griffin confirmed that Cllr Niell would be on the working party as a member of the parish council, and as liaison with Hall and Field. Any decisions would be made by full council, not the working party. **Resolved:** this was proposed by Cllr Griffin, seconded by Cllr P Moore and reached unanimous approval from members.

9.11 To ratify private and confidential matters.

These items were not discussed during the Zoom meeting. **Resolved:** this was proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Smith and members reached unanimous approval.

10. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

10.1 Update on progress of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The following is an update from David Connoley:

Progress of the Neighbourhood Plan as at 29/11/20:

1. Despite the Covid pandemic and the associated restrictions of meeting up, the NP Steering Group have been regularly communicating and meeting via the Zoom video conferencing facility.

2. This has allowed us to progress 4 main deliverables:

- draft Policies
- Local Green Spaces / Green Gaps / Protected Views proposed designations (one document)
- draft Neighbourhood Plan (Reg 14 version)

- A slightly revised Wadhurst Vision has been agreed by the NP Steering Group as we did not feel the former Vision was strong enough to reflect the Focus Group findings. We would like formal WPC ratification of this Vision please: *'Wadhurst Parish will continue to be a collection of friendly and vibrant distinct communities. The Parish will retain its rural historic character and heritage. Justifiable, sensitive and sustainable development will be supported whilst robustly protecting the High Weald AONB. The Parish economy and its popular High Street will be revitalised by improvements to the roads, traffic control, parking and active support of businesses. Sustainable ways of improving travel and leisure activities, which promote wellbeing, will be sought wherever*

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possible.'

3. We have been in discussions with our Airs consultants on each of these deliverables and WDC on Local Green Spaces etc and received their feedback and are now at the point of finalising these deliverables during 1st quarter 2021. At this point we would like to present these to all WPC members at a time of their choosing for final debate and ratification before moving to the Reg 14 Planning.

4. We are still awaiting the outcome of the new Government Planning Consultation / White Paper to understand the impact on NP and District Planning.

5. We note that a new SHELAA (Call for Sites) map has been produced for Wadhurst Parish. This shows significant additional greenfield development threats for Wadhurst Parish, especially when WDC do not have a 5-year housing land supply.

6. We also note the WDC Direction of Travel communication regarding the future new WDC Local Plan. Section 14 : Options 1 - 3 for new housing development is particularly concerning as it mentions 'will require substantial development on AONB' for each option.

Cllr Gadd said she would ask for David Connoley to provide a presentation to the parish council so that Cllrs can have more opportunity to listen in details. SSALC have confirmed this can be done outside of a public meeting, as it is a working document. **Action:** Cllr Gadd to arrange this.

Cllr Smith advised that a second vision statement would be circulated to full council.

Cllr Griffin suggested that the NP noticeboard in the village centre could be used to publicise information.

10.2 Request for an increase in budget for Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

Cllr C Moore requested that the parish council consider whether some additional budget for the neighbourhood plan costs.

The last time that NP received funding it was to get them to regulation 14. Further funding would be required for the Planning Consultant and to get them to regulation 16. The costings are contained within the confidential documents. **Resolved:** Cllr C Moore proposed for funding for a further 5 days contingency for AiRS support for the NP, this was seconded by Cllr Gadd, and members reached a unanimous decision to approve this.

11. Items for noting

11.1 Update on pubs becoming an Asset of Community Value (ACV) – Cllr Anderson advised members that he had drafted a petition form, and thought he would be able to get 21 signed for the Old Vine within a day or so. Cllr Smith offered to help with the petitions for the White Hart and The Greyhound.

Cllr C Moore advised that she had learnt that the parish council could nominate the pubs to be ACVs without the petition. The parish council considered this and recognised that the petition would still be a good way of earning support for the project. Cllr C Moore has made some minor amendments to the form.

Action: CF to send the updated form to Cllr Anderson for approval, then create a form for each of the pubs. (Old Vine to Cllr Anderson and White Hart and Greyhound to Cllr Smith).

Cllr P Moore suggested that the parish council take positive steps to register the ACV with WDC as soon as possible, especially given the current financial climate.

Action: Clerk to investigate process with WDC.

12. Correspondence list

Noted

13. Urgent issues at the discretion of the Chair for noting or inclusion on future agenda

Cllr Gadd wished to record her thanks and gratitude to Wadhurst Warriors for the amazing job they had done with the Christmas Tree and lights, and commented that they looked amazing.

Action: Cllr Gadd to phone Wadhurst Warriors.

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The meeting closed at 2027 hours.

DRAFT