

WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL
THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL HELD
REMOTELY VIA ZOOM
ON THURSDAY 4th FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.00PM

Present: Cllr Murphy (Chair), Cllr C Moore, Cllr P Moore, Cllr Smith, Cllr Griffin, Cllr Edwards, Cllr Crawford, Cllr Bullock, Cllr Morris, Cllr Tincombe and Cllr Niell.

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 present.

1. To receive apologies and reasons for absence.
Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Gadd (family commitments), Cllr Maggs (key worker) and Cllr Anderson.
2. To receive declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda and updates to members' register of interests.
There were no declarations of interest made
There were no updates to members' register of interests.
3. Public Forum – time limit 15 minutes.
There were no members of the public present.
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 Howell referred to her report which had been previously circulated to full council, and invited any questions. No questions were raised.
Cllr Standley referred to his report previously circulated, and asked if there were any questions or other items to be raised.
Cllr Griffin asked if there were any Highways issues to be considered. Cllr Standley advised that East Sussex Highways (ESH) were looking at the projects of the 20-mph zone, the village gateways and the red tarmac.
*Cllr P Moore asked if there had been any update from James Vaks, and asked if Cllr Standley could follow this one up. **Action:** Cllr Standley to make contact with James Vaks.*
5. Minutes. To approve the updated minutes of the meeting on 7th January 2021 as a true record.
The minutes of 7th January 2021 were approved as a true record.
6. To determine matters arising from the meeting on 7th January 2021 for updating and noting.
6.1 Wealden Heroes awards – *due to the restraints of meeting in person, the awards will be posted to the recipients.*
7. Chair's Announcements
None at this meeting.
8. Finance items for decision and allocation of resources
 - 8.1 To note the bank statements and bank reconciliations to 22 December 2020 (three bank accounts)
Noted, no queries raised.
 - 8.2 To note the RBS Income and Expenditure, Cash and Investment and Ear Marked Reserves reports for December 2020.
Noted, no queries raised.
 - 8.3 To agree the payment list (cheques and Direct Debits) for January 2021 and February 2021.
Resolved: *The parish council reached a unanimous decision to agree the payments for January 2021 and February 2021.*
 - 8.4 To review the conclusion of the 2019-2020 audit from PKF Littlejohn and note their comments.
Cllr C Moore thanked the RFO for her help in finalising the audit.
Cllr Murphy queried a word on the report from PKF, CF clarified this.

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Resolved: The parish council noted the conclusion of the audit and comments raised by PKF Littlejohn.

8.5 To review the interim audit for 2020-2021 by Mulberry & Co and note their recommendations
Cllr C Moore commented on the fact that all Councillors should ideally be using the parish council email address.

A number of Councillors confirmed that they had issues with their parish council emails.

Action: all Councillors who are having troubles with their council email addresses to contact the Clerk and detail the issues, and she will take this up with NetWise in a view for resolving all issues.

8.6 To review the current Direct Debits paid by Wadhurst Parish Council

Resolved: the current Direct Debits were reviewed, no issues raised.

9. Items for decision.

9.1 To adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 2nd January and 30th January

Resolved: The minutes of the Planning Committee's held on 2nd January and 30th January 2021 were adopted.

9.2 To approve the 2021 meeting dates

It was noted that there would be two meetings within a few days on two occasions this year, but this was hard to avoid with the planning committee meeting fortnightly.

Resolved: the 2021 meeting dates were approved by full council.

9.3 Councillors abstaining from voting in agenda items – Cllr Murphy

Cllr Murphy confirmed that this was an item for noting, rather than decision.

The item was noted by full council.

9.4 To finalise advertisement wording for bus shelter design and replacement (opposite Wadhurst Train Station) – Cllr P Moore

Cllr Bullock commented that currently all of the bus shelters are of different designs, but it would be good if they were all the same.

Cllr P Moore confirmed that if the design was agreed then this could be used as standard for when other bus shelters needed replacing.

Cllr P Moore suggested the following wording for the advertisement:

In line with the Parish Council's desire to encourage the use of public transport, we are looking to replace the bus shelter opposite the railway station. The new shelter will be a traditional green-oak and clay-tiled-roof shelter using techniques typical of the High Weald.

The parish council are seeking a craftsperson, skilled in traditional construction methods, to help us design and build what we hope will be a showcase structure.

For further details please contact the clerk on phone: 07470 837213 or

email: clerk@wadhurst-pc.gov.uk

Resolved: The parish council reached a unanimous decision to approve this wording.

9.5 Sparrows Green Recreation Ground

Cllr Griffin provided an update on what had happened to date. The parish council had employed the services of a professional to carry out a COVID risk assessment and specifically requested that this includes any actions needed to safely open the playground. Unfortunately, the professionals report did not include this detail.

Cllr Anderson had previous experience of this and so volunteered to work through the Risk Assessment and recommend actions. Cllr C Moore commented that the Risk Assessment provided by Cllr Anderson was far more useful as it had control measures to put in place to minimise any risk.

Councillors considered, at length, the advantages and disadvantages of opening the play area whilst minimising risk to both staff and users of the play area, during this pandemic, as well doing the best thing possible to prevent further spread of the virus. Whilst some Councillors were in favour of opening the play area, if this could be done as safely as possible, other Councillors felt that the play area should remain closed at this time.

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Any additional signage, sanitising equipment, safety wear and cleaning services, would need to be budgeted for and Cllr C Moore suggested an additional £1000 be available from general reserves to fund this, should it be required.

Cllr P Moore proposed that a working party (to include any member of the parish council who wished to be involved) be set up in order discuss the mitigation measures to be put in place to reduce risk where possible and put a proposal forward to the Amenities Committee for a decision at their meeting on 11th February 2021. In addition, for an additional £1000 to be added to the budget for these costs (from general reserves). This was seconded by Cllr Smith, and reached a majority vote for approval. Cllr Tincombe and Cllr Morris voted against this proposal.

9.6 Private and confidential agenda items – Cllr Morris

Cllr Morris highlighted the fact that the Finance and Resources Committee have a standing agenda item for the discussion of private and confidential items, whilst this was no longer a standing item on the full council agenda.

Cllr Morris proposed that private and confidential items are a standing agenda item at full council meetings. This was seconded by Cllr C Moore and reached a majority approval.

9.7 Telephone Kiosk Refurbishment and Defibrillator Project update for agreement and decision

The proposal is to add the telephone kiosk in Wood Green (plus defibrillator) and a defibrillator in a cabinet in Cousley Wood to the project. And for all of the defibrillators to be managed under the same services contract.

Cllr Edwards asked if the parishioner who suggested the additional defibrillators was on board with this. Cllr C Moore confirmed that she had spoken at length to the parishioner. The parishioner was in agreement and would like to be involved in raising awareness of the project, training etc.

Resolved: *Cllr C Moore proposed for an extension to the initial defibrillator project, to include the refurbishment of the telephone kiosk at Woods Green, up to a cost of £1500 and the purchase of a defibrillator up to a cost of £2400, plus a defibrillator and cabinet, up to cost of £2900 for Cousley Wood (location to be confirmed), and for these to be purchased through CIL funds. Cllr Crawford seconded this proposal and reached a unanimous approval.*

9.8 To ratify private and confidential matters dealt with by email – Cllr Murphy

Resolved: *all members were in favour of both items considered by email*

10. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – update

Cllr C Moore referred to the full update circulated within the supporting papers and requested that as many Councillors as possible attend the virtual meeting at 7 p.m. 24th February 2021.

11. Items for noting

None

12. Correspondence list

Noted, no issues raised.

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

Wadhurst Parish Council have been contacted by Wealden District Council, to ask if the Pavilion at Sparrows Green can be used for the Polling Station for the elections due to take place on 6th May 2021.

Update: *this item will be considered at the Amenities Committee meeting on 11th February 2021.*

The meeting closed at 2037 hours