**THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL HELD**

**REMOTELY VIA ZOOM**

ON THURSDAY 8th APRIL 2021 AT 7.00PM

Present*:* Cllr Gadd (Chair), Cllr Murphy, Cllr C Moore, Cllr P Moore, Cllr Griffin, Cllr Edwards, Cllr Crawford, & Cllr Morris.

Also, in attendance: Claudine Feltham (CF) (RFO/Deputy Clerk) and WDC Cllr Bob Standley. There were 2 members of the public present.

1. To receive apologies and reasons for absence.

*Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Maggs (key worker) & Cllr Tincombe (key worker).*

1. 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 item 10.5 of the agenda as she is a Trustee on the Wadhurst Institute Hall and Field CIO.*

1. Public Forum – time limit 15 minutes.

*Brian Wates spoke about a potential planning development In Wadhurst by his company called Audax Ltd, and shared some slides to those present at the remote Zoom meeting.*

*They are currently in the process of buying a property called Magpie (next to the Commemoration Hall), with the intention of developing three terraced (three bedroom) houses on the land to the rear of the property, where there is currently a tinned roof industrial type building.*

*The aim of the project is for it to be a local development, for local people, using local trades. The properties would be to fill the gap between flats and mansions, and to enable younger families to remain in the village. Consideration would be given to the environment and would include electric vehicle charging points.*

*The properties could be offered at a discounted price, along with a loan from the company, to help assist the buyer with their LTV (Loan to Value) rate.*

*At the bottom of the site there is a small triangle of land that Audax Ltd would like to talk to WIHF CIO about as it maybe of use to the proposed new play area.*

*The front part of Magpie’s is listed, and so their design for the new houses would be to take the traditional design into consideration, and make them in keeping with the surrounding properties, whilst considering the conservation area.*

*Cllr Griffin queried how the loan would work. Brian confirmed that this is something they are still considering for the best way for it to work.*

*Cllr Gadd thanked Brian for his time to introduce this project to the parish council, and prior to any planning permission being sought from WDC.*

1. County Councillor and District Councillor

*There were no reports this month due to being within the period of purdah.*

*Cllr Gadd asked if Cllr Standley had any news on white road markings/writing by St James’ Square. Cllr Standley was going back to discuss this with Ian Johnson, ESCC to consider this from a safety angle.*

*Cllr Gadd advised that there was an issue with a drain outside of 33 Jonas Drive, and the difficulty in trying to ascertain who was responsible for the drain. The drain is blocked and during winter it spreads water all over the road which freezes in bad weather and becomes like an ice rink. The side of the road has fallen away and has made it worse.* ***Action:*** *Cllr Standley to attend and take a look at this.*

1. To consider, and approve if appropriate, which agenda items are sufficiently confidential as to warrant exclusion of members of the press and public under the provisions of the Public Bodies (admissions to meetings) Act 1960.

*None*

1. Minutes. To approve the minutes of the meeting on 4th March 2021 as a true record.

***Resolved:*** *The minutes of 4th March 2021 were approved as a true record. This was proposed by Cllr Crawford, seconded by Cllr C Moore and reached unanimous approval from members.*

1. To determine matters arising from the meeting on 4th March 2021 for updating and noting.

*Update from the Clerk: at the previous meeting Cllr Crawford asked if some of the S106 funds from Waters Reach could be used for maintenance costs of existing equipment at Sparrows Green, and if some funds could be used towards the re positioning of current basketball equipment, that needed new ground works.*

*Update from WDC CIL and S106 Officer Kirstin Roberts: ‘I think this would be an acceptable use of the Youth and Adult Equipment money. The release of money can take a little time so as much notice as possible is good.  Usually, it is necessary to draw up and have signed and Indemnity Agreement which is what takes the time’.*

*Cllr Griffin added that in the legal S206 document it says the funds can be used for maintenance, and also in response letter from the Vendors they said for funds to be used for maintenance of current equipment.*

*Cllr Murphy agreed with Cllr Griffin.*

*Cllr Standley added that he was surprised at the answer from WDC, as he thought it was for only for maintenance of new equipment.*

*Cllr Murphy referred to her comments made at the previous meeting about predetermination. Having looked into the matter further, she requested to correct her previous statement.  Pre-determination means to come to the meeting with a closed mind.*

1. Chair’s Announcements

*None*

1. Finance items for decision and allocation of resources

9.1       To note the bank statements and bank reconciliations to 22 February 2021 (three bank accounts)

9.2       To note the RBS Income and Expenditure, Cash and Investment and Ear Marked Reserves reports for February 2021

**9.3       To agree the updated payment list (cheques and Direct Debits) for March 2021 and to agree the payment list (cheques and Direct Debits) for April 2021.**

***Agenda items 9.1 to 9.3 were considered together. Resolved:*** *The bank statement/reconciliations (up to 31st March 2021) were noted.* ***The updated payment list (cheques and Direct Debits) for March 2021 and payment list (cheques and Direct Debits) for April 2021 were approved. This was proposed by*** *Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Crawford and reached a majority approval.* ***Cllr Edwards internet seized during this item and so abstained from the vote***

**9.4 To agree the payment for Office 365 from general reserves**

***At the Finance and Resources Committee (18/3/2021) it was resolved to*** *move to Office 365 via Element Hosting who work in collaboration with NetWise (then proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Gadd and members agreed). Approval is required by full council for this expenditure to come from general reserves.* ***Resolved:*** *proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Gadd, and reached unanimous approval.*

**9.5 To note the award of the WDC COVID restriction grants**

***Noted:*** *following on from the Finance and Resources Committee meeting (18.3.2021), with the approval of Cllr Gadd and Cllr C Moore the RFO contacted WDC to ask which grants we would be eligible to apply for. We were advised that we could apply for three grants. The grants were quickly approved and funds received into the Parish Councils accounts totalling £9,907.43.*

*Members thanked the Clerk/RFO. Cllr Gadd added that the parish council has lost a significant amount in income from rentals of the Pavilion during this financial year, and these grants would cover that, alongside the additional costs of cleaning the playa areas, sanitisers etc.*

1. Items for decision.

**10.1** To adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 13th March 2021.

***Resolved:*** *the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 13th March 2021 were adopted. Proposed by Cllr Murphy, seconded by Cllr C Moore, and reached unanimous approval.*

**10.2** To adopt the minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee held on 18th March 2021.

***Resolved:*** *the minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee held on 18th March 2021 were adopted. Proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr P Moore, and reached unanimous approval.*

**10.3** To adopt the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council held 25th March 2021.

*Cllr Morris advised that one slight amendment was required, to add in the words in the last year to the sentence: ‘I challenged the comments of Cllr P Moore specifically in that the residents of Wadhurst had seen little of the plan’.* ***Action:*** *Clerk to update the minutes of 25th March 2021 and add the updated version to the parish council website.*

***Resolved:*** *with the amendment as detailed above the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council held 25th March 2021 were adopted. Proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Morris, and reached unanimous approval.*

**10.4** To ratify the decision of the Amenities Committee with regards to the contractor for the Jardin maintenance – *Cllr Griffin advised that four companies had responded to the tender invitation. These were circulated to the Amenities Committee members who had considered them and reached a clear decision to approve for J C Redwood (Ticehurst) to be the contractor from 1st April 2021 for the period of 1 year.*

*Cllr Morris had a number of concerns about his contractor and would confine himself to commenting on two; he was concerned over the spraying near to the pond, where there are great crested newts, and for the removal of all waste wood from the site.*

*Cllr Griffin confirmed he will speaking to the contractor to discuss works in finer details, and that he had also been in contact with the environmental officer at WDC for information, as well as the Wild Wadhurst group. Cllr Morris asked to be involved in the future plans.*

*Cllr Murphy commented that she had not seen all of the documents relating to this, and queried why it was coming to full council for ratification.*

*Cllr Griffin confirmed that the contract was due to start on 1st April 2021 and so this was the soonest meeting to ratify the decision.*

***Resolved:*** *Cllr Griffin proposed that full council ratify the decision reached by Amenities Committee for the contract to be awarded to J C Redwood, this was seconded by Cllr Crawford and reached a majority approval. Cllrs C Moore, Murphy and Morris abstained from the vote.*

*Cllr Gadd requested for the following agenda item to be dealt with at the end of this meeting (after agenda item 13) as she had declared an interest in the item, and for Cllr Murphy to Chair when this was considered.*

**10.5** Approval to go ahead with the Washwell Lane playground based on the lease terms as circulated – Cllr Griffin

***Resolved***

**10.6** To request another Cllr to join the Amenities Committee – Cllr Griffin

*No Cllrs volunteered. Cllr C Moore commented that maybe some Cllrs were not so keen whilst dealing with meetings remotely.* ***Action:*** *add to agenda for 6th May 2021*.

**10.7** To change the date of the May parish council meeting to 6th May 2021. ***Resolved:*** *members agreed to hold the May 2021 parish council meeting on 6th May 2021.*

**10.8** To consider arrangements for meetings due to be held between 7th May 2021 and 21st June 2021 – as the remote meeting authorisation will no long be in place.

*The current guidance from NALC is that the government have refused to extend the deadline for allowing parish councils to hold remote meetings after 7th May 2021. Cllr Standley added that there is a court case scheduled for 20th April to extend the deadline. Members already approved for the May 2021 meeting to be held on 6th May 2021, and for the parish council to re consider the options for future meetings once they know the outcome of the court case. Cllr Morris suggested that the Clerk find out the correct wording for a resolution at 6th May 2021 meeting that would allow the delegation to the Chair of the Parish Council for decisions and day to day running of the parish council during the time when the parish council could not meet in person, nor by remote online meeting. This suggestion was proposed by Cllr Murphy, seconded by Cllr C Moore, and reached unanimous approval.*

*Cllr Standley left the meeting at 1954 hours.* ***Action:*** *Clerk to speak to ESALC and establish the correct wording for this.*

**10.9** To resolve for the planning committee to consider and agree responses for planning applications by email (7th May 2021 and 21st June 2021 – as the remote meeting authorisation will no long be in place. *Cllr Murphy was concerned that this was lawful and how the mechanics of this would work.* ***Deferred:*** *add this as an agenda item to 6th May 2021 for consideration and decision.* ***Action:*** *Clerk add to 6th May agenda.*

**10.10** To ratify private and confidential matters dealt with by email – Cllr Gadd

*None*

**10.11** To agree to allow a parishioner to carry out litter picking on the Recreation Ground as the voluntary part of his Duke of Edinburgh award.

*Cllr Murphy enquired whether the parish council insurance covered minors. Cllr Gadd agreed to check this.* ***Resolved:*** *Cllr Morris proposed that this should be allowed subject to the outcome of the insurance check. This was seconded by Cllr Crawford and reached a unanimous decision.*

**10.12** To consider the request from Wadhurst Warriors to hold an outside cinema evening on the recreation ground in the summer – *Cllr Edwards explained that the Wadhurst Warriors (WW) had been considering locations for an outside cinema evening this summer. One consideration was the Sparrows Green recreation ground and another was Hall and Field in the center of the village,*

*Cllr Gadd advised that Wadhurst Junior Football Club (WJFC) look after the recreation ground, so if this was something being held at the recreation ground then WW would also need to speak to the WJFC.*

*Cllr C Moore commented that she thought that this was a really lovely idea od the WW and would have no objection for the parish council to approve this.*

*Cllr Griffin asked if Uplands had been considered as a location, Cllr Edwards explained that a lot of building works had been carried out and so this wasn’t a consideration just at the moment.*

*Cllr Murphy explained her only concern would be noise disturbance for the properties around the recreation ground.*

*Cllr Edwards confirmed that this would be an evening event, as it would need to be dark for the screen to be seen.*

*Cllr P Moore added that he also felt that this was a lovely idea and enquired if it was a one-off event. Cllr Edwards confirmed that for this year it was a one-off event, but if successful maybe there could be more next summer.*

*Cllr P Moore suggested that the parish council support this idea in principle subject to talking to neighbours and WJFC. Cllr Gadd proposed this, Cllr Crawford seconded this and members reached unanimous approval*.

**10.13** Removal of the Washwell Lane telephone kiosk.

*Update for noting: The parish council had previously been approached to see if they wished to adopt this telephone kiosk, they agreed to do this, but the adoption was not proceeded with (by the previous Clerk). If we wished to reinstate the heritage telephone kiosk it would be a lot of work and expensive.*

**10.14** To approve the updated Asset Register

*Updates required: old Christmas lights to be removed, new Christmas lights (£12,000) to be added. A physical check of assets to be carried out once COVID restrictions allow.* ***Action:*** *Clerk to make these amendments to the document.*

***Resolved:*** *With the above amendments, the Asset Register was approved, proposed by Cllr P Moore, seconded by Cllr Gadd and reached unanimous approval.*

**10.15** To approve the updated Risk Management document

*Cllr C Moore requested an addition of pandemics. Cllr Murphy requested an addition under Staff for a control measure to be added in for the agreement of using the services of HR Services*

***Action:*** *Clerk to make the above amendments.* ***Resolved:*** *with these amendments the Risk Management document was proposed by Cllr P Moore, seconded by Cllr Crawford and reached a unanimous decision for approval.*

**10.16** To re-approve the Financial Regulations (no changes made) for the purposes of the audit.

***Resolved:*** *The Financial Regulations were approved, this was proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Edwards and reached a unanimous approval.*

**10.17** To consider adopting the NALC model Standing Orders in place of the current Wadhurst Parish Council Standing Orders.

*The Clerk advised that the current WPC Standing Orders are quite different to the, lengthy, NALC model Standing Orders, and wished to make the council aware of this.*

*Cllr Gadd added that usually the council like to follow the model guidelines issued by NALC and so would like to consider this.* ***Action:*** *Clerk to go through the NALC model Standing Orders and add the current WPC information to them, whilst highlighting new areas on the model Standing Orders that are not within the current WPC Standing Orders.* ***Deferred:*** *all members approved for this to be deferred for further consideration at the May 2021 parish council meeting.*

1. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) – update from Cllr C Moore.

*The NPSG met on 7th April 2021 and are still drafting the policies. When ready, they would like for the council to look at the draft policies in fine details and respond with any comments. The NPSG were very thankful for the agreement of the Design Code, which would be in the form of an interactive map. And Wadhurst would be one of the first councils to use this.*

1. Items for noting
   1. Update on the bid for the Household Waste Site (if received by the time of the meeting

*No update at this point on the bid at this point. Cllr C Moore added that, as previously circulated to full council, there is a remote Zoom meeting, this Friday 9th April at 7 p.m., with the Forest Row working group who are setting up their CIC They are willing to share their experience and knowledge so far with WPC and would encourage as many members of the parish council as possible to attend the meeting.*

* 1. Update on the toilet agreement between WDC and Wadhurst Parish Council (if received by the time of the meeting).

*Not received.*

* 1. Great British Spring Clean 28th May 2021 to 13th June 20201 ([Great British Spring Clean | Keep Britain Tidy](https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean))

*Members considered the difficulties of arranging a group Spring Clean due to the current COVID restrictions.* ***Action:*** *Cllr C Moore to liaise with Wild Wadhurst who were already carrying out litter picking. Cllrs Crawford, P Moore and Griffin to discuss possible options too.*

1. Correspondence list

*Noted.*

*Cllr Gadd left the meeting as she had declared an interest in the following agenda item, Cllr Murphy took over as Chair of the meeting.*

**Agenda item 10.5** Approval to go ahead with the Washwell Lane playground based on the lease terms as circulated. *Cllr Griffin explained that some time ago WIHF CIO proposed a Heads of Terms which was unacceptable to the parish council. This has been considered and discussed further with the proposal now being a 10-year lease, with WPC paying WIHF CIO £100 per year rent, and agreement to pay their legal fees.*

*Following discussion over the legal fees and Land Registry fees Cllr Griffin proposed for the Heads of Terms to state:*

* *10-year lease*
* *£100 per year peppercorn rent payable to WIHF CIO*
* *Agreement to pay legal fees, including Land Registry, up to a maximum value of £1000.*

*This was seconded by Cllr C Moore, and reached a majority approval. Cllr Morris voted against the proposal.*

*Cllr C and P Moore thanked Cllr Griffin for all of his work and efforts in getting the project to this point.*

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

*None*

**The meeting closed at 2039 hours**