

# WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

Minutes of Wadhurst Parish Council Annual meeting, which was held at The Pavilion, Sparrows Green Recreation Ground, Wadhurst at 1930 hours on Thursday 9th May 2024.

Present: Cllr Gadd, Cllr C Moore, Cllr P Moore, Cllr Anderson, Cllr Shairp, Cllr Crawford, Cllr Edwards ESCC Cllr Standley, WDC Cllr Glynn-Ives, and Claudine Feltham (Clerk/RFO).

There were 4 members of the public present.

*Cllr Shairp opened the meeting and acted as Chair until the Chair was elected (agenda item 1.1 ).*

### 1. Annual Meeting

1.1 To elect a Chairman for the next council year.

**Resolved:** as proposed by Cllr C Moore and seconded by Cllr Crawford, and reached a unanimous vote, Cllr Gadd was elected as Chair of Wadhurst Parish Council.

1.2 To receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Gadd signed the acceptance of office form in front of the Clerk who also signed the form.

*Cllr Gadd took over as Chair of the meeting.*

1.3 To elect a Vice Chairman for the next council year

**Resolved:** as proposed by Cllr C Moore and seconded by Cllr Gadd, and reached a unanimous vote, Cllr Smith was elected as Vice Chair of Wadhurst Parish Council

1.4 To receive the Vice Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Smith was not present at this meeting so the form will be signed at the next meeting.

1.5 To receive all Councillors Acceptance of Office/ receiving Parish Council documentation via electronic means (email/Sharepoint/OneDrive etc. form and Register of Interest (ROI) forms.

All members present had submitted their Acceptance of Office form in May 2023 following the elections.

The Chair asked if any members had any changes to their ROI. Cllr Edwards had a change as was now part of the Mullins Trust and so would need to resubmit his ROI form. **Action:** Cllr Edwards.

No other members had any changes to their ROI, so it was noted that the forms submitted in May 2023 were still valid for them.

1.6 To elect a Chairman for the Planning Committee

**Resolved:** as proposed by Cllr Gadd and seconded by Cllr C Moore, and reached a unanimous vote, Cllr Shairp was elected as Chair of the Planning Committee.

1.7 To elect members of the Planning Committee

**Resolved:** the planning committee members are Cllr Shairp (Chair), Cllr Anderson, Cllr C Moore, Cllr P Moore, and Cllr Smith. Any other member of the parish council could act as substitute if required.

1.8 To elect a Chairman for the Finance & Resources Committee

# WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

**Resolved:** as proposed by Cllr Shairp and seconded by Cllr Gadd, and reached a unanimous vote, Cllr C Moore was elected as Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee.

Add DS to F & R

1.9 To elect members of the Finance & Resources Committee

**Resolved:** the Finance & Resources Committee members are Cllr C Moore (Chair), Cllr Crawford, Cllr P Moore, Cllr Shairp, Cllr Smith, and Cllr Tincombe.

1.10 To elect a Chairman for the Amenities Committee

**Resolved:** as proposed by Cllr Gadd and seconded by Cllr C Moore, and reached a unanimous vote, Cllr Crawford was elected as Chair of the Amenities Committee.

1.11 To elect members of the Amenities Committee

**Resolved:** the Amenities Committee members are Cllr Crawford (Chair), Cllr Anderson, Cllr Tincombe, Cllr Ramsden (and Cllr Edwards maybe able to assist with practical duties).

1.12 To elect a Chairman for the Highways Lighting and Transport Committee

**Resolved:** as proposed by Cllr Shairp and seconded by Cllr C Moore, and reached a unanimous vote, Cllr P Moore was elected as Chair of the Highways, Lighting and Transport Committee.

1.13 To elect members of the Highways Lighting and Transport Committee

**Resolved:** the Highways Lighting and Transport Committee members are Cllr P Moore (Chair), Cllr Anderson, Cllr Crawford, Cllr C Moore, Cllr Smith, Cllr Shairp, Cllr Tincombe and Cllr Ramsden.

1.14 To elect a Chairman for the Communications and Community Liaison Committee

**Resolved:** Cllr Smith to remain as Chair of Communications and Community Liaison Committee

1.15 To elect members of the Communications and Community Liaison Committee

**Resolved:** the Communications and Community Liaison Committee members are Cllr Smith (Chair), Cllr C Moore, Cllr Edwards, Cllr P Moore, and Cllr Tincombe.

Cllr Gadd congratulated members of the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group (past and present) including Cllr P Moore, Cllr C Moore, Cllr Smith, and Cllr Shairp for the passing of the Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Gadd welcomed back Claudine to continue with the Clerk and RFO role following her study leave.

2. To receive apologies and reasons for absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Ramsden, Cllr Smith and WDC Cllr Howell.

3. To receive declarations of personal, prejudicial, and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda and updates to members' register of interests.

Cllr Anderson declared a pecuniary interest in respect of all agenda items relating to the Lengthsman Contract and High Weald Heritage Ltd.

Cllr Gadd declared an interest in respect of agenda item 10 as Trustee of Wadhurst Institute Hall & Field CIO.

# WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

## 4. Public Forum – time limit 15 minutes.

One member of public spoke in connection with the grant application for PTA and gave some additional information on how the funds would be used, confirming that it would only be on extracurricular activities.

## 5. County Councillor and District Councillor reports.

The County Councillor report has been received 8.5.24 and printed copies were made available to the Cllrs.

ESCC Cllr Standley advised members that he had responded to the letter sent to Uplands Academy, but members may not have had chance to see it yet.

Cllr Standley had written to the Assistant Director of East Sussex Highways with regards to significant number of streetlights that were not working in Wadhurst. Balfour Beatty had advised Cllr Standley that their policy had not changed, however, the older lights were becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. (Cllr Standley read out correspondence between himself and Balfour Beatty).

Cllr P Moore: raised significant concerns and did not necessarily agree with what Balfour Beatty had advised Cllr Standley. The parish council now have a bill of almost £40,000 to deal with streetlights, whilst having a contract with East Sussex Highways for them to maintain the streetlights. Communication has been made with Dark Skies Organisation to seek information on requirements to become Dark Skies Friendly, with the aim of being compliant within 3 years.

Cllr Standley commented on the consultation about the possible closure of Mayfield Fire Station.

There were issues in the area with getting retained fire fighters.

Cllr P Moore raised his concerns that Wadhurst Fire Station were now being called out to incidents further afield (for example Bexhill) and queried what would happen if there was then an incident in Wadhurst.

Issue with getting retained firefighters – there is a consultation re potentially closing Mayfield fire station. He also mentioned that Wadhurst Fire station has been successful in recruiting additional retained fire fighters, due to more people working from home.

Cllr Gadd raised an issue with Cllr Standley about how East Sussex Highways (ESH) had tarmacked over the grass verge outside of the Old Balaclava Pub. Cllr Standley advised for the Clerk to write to ESH and request that they remove the tarmac and return it to a grass verge (and to copy him and WDC Cllr Glynn-Ives into the email). **Action:** Clerk.

**Action:** Cllr Standley to also make enquiries and request this is returned to a grass verge.

WDC Cllr Glynn-Ives congratulated members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for passing of the Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan.

The deadline for the 'expressions of interest' in the Wealden Community Green Space fund was tomorrow. Members advised that we had submitted our expression of interest and would be making an application (deadline 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024).

WDC Cllr Glynn-Ives also commented on the useful and informative parish council Facebook page, the Local Plan consultation was ending 10<sup>th</sup> May 2024, the EV charges would be installed in Washwell Lane in the next few weeks and Wealden Crematorium were celebrating 5 years of operation.

Cllr C Moore commented that parishioners of Wadhurst had been focused on the Wadhurst NP consultation and had not really had time to consider to Wealden Local Plan. The parish council formally asked WDC for an extension of 1 month but this had been declined. Would respectfully request WDC Cllr Glynn-Ives to ask again for them to re consider this extension request. **Action:** WDC Cllr Glynn-Ives

# WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

6. 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.

Cllr Gadd requested for agenda item 18.4 to be considered as Private & Confidential – and all members approved this.

7. To approve the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024 as a true record. On the apologies section WDC Cllr Glynn-lves name was incorrect. **Action:** Clerk to correct this and add amended version to the website.

**Resolved:** with the above correction the minutes were approved, as proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr C Moore, and reached unanimous approval.

8. To determine matters arising from the full council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024 for updating and noting.

8.1 Cllr Standley to update members on the enquiries with ESCC and Balfour Beatty about the removed streetlights. **Action:** Cllr Standley to follow up on this and report back to the next meeting.

9. Correspondence List

The correspondence list for May 2024 had been circulated prior to the meeting and no questions were raised.

*Members approved 11.7 to be moved to this point on agenda (grant request for PTA).*

Cllr Gadd advised that the parish council could not pass funds directly to school but could help PTA with extracurricular activities.

The representative from Wadhurst Primary School PTA confirmed that the grant request was for extra curricular activities and advised an outline of the plans.

**Resolved:** as proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Crawford, and reached unanimous approval, a grant of £2500 would be awarded.

**Action:** Clerk to arrange for the funds to be paid.

10. To elect parish council representatives for the following:

- Bewl Water (Monitoring Group and Friends of Bewl water)  
Representatives: Cllr C Moore, Cllr P Moore, Cllr Shairp.
- Uplands Academy  
Representatives: Cllr Edwards and Cllr Crawford.
- Wadhurst & District Business Association  
Representative: Cllr Smith
- Wadhurst History Society  
Representatives: Cllr Smith and Cllr Gadd.
- Wadhurst Institute, Hall and Field  
Members agreed that we needed a representative and not a Trustee. **Action:** Cllr Gadd to speak with John Mitchell about this again.
- Sussex Police  
Representatives: Cllr P Moore and Cllr Shairp
- East Sussex Association of Local Councils  
Representative: Cllr P Moore
- Wealden District Association of Local Councils  
Representative: Cllr P Moore
- Wealden District Council Parish Planning Panel  
Representatives: Cllr Shairp and Cllr C Moore
- Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group  
Representatives: Cllr Shairp, Cllr P Moore, Cllr C Moore, Cllr Smith

# WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

- Flag Team  
Representatives: Cllr P Moore, Cllr Anderson, Cllr C Moore.
- Dark Skies:  
Representative: Cllr Smith

**Resolved:** the above representatives were proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Gadd, and reached unanimous approval.

**Action:** Clerk to update the Committee Members document and add to the website.

## 11. Finance items for decision and allocation of resources.

*Members agreed to consider agenda items 11.1 to 11.5 together:*

- 11.1 To approve the updated payment list for March 2024
- 11.2 To approve the updated payment list for April 2024
- 11.3 To approve the initial payment list for May 2024
- 11.4 To approve the bank reconciliations for the 2023-2024 financial year end (31.3.24).
- 11.5 To receive the RBS finance reports for the 2023-2024 financial year end (31.3.24)

**Resolved:** items 11.1 to 11.5 were approved as proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Crawford, and reached unanimous approval.

- 11.6 To note that the internal audit by Mulberry & Co is scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
The Clerk advised that the end of year internal audit had been carried out and has passed without any advisories or points to carry forward. There would be an agenda item for June full council to receive the internal audit report.

- 11.7 To consider Wadhurst PTA grant request – Cllr Gadd  
*Item bought forward.*

- 11.8 For members to approve for Wadhurst Parish Council to sign up to the Dark Skies Community and the payment of the membership costs of £250 - Cllr C Moore.

**Resolved:** approved as proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Gadd, and reached a unanimous approval.

## 12. Planning Committee

- 12.1 To adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 6<sup>th</sup> April and 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

**Resolved:** as proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Anderson, and reached a majority approval (one member abstained as hadn't been present) the planning committee minutes of 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> April were adopted.

## 13. Amenities Committee

- 13.1 Jardin d'Aubers lease from ESFR – update and decision (if documentation received in time for this meeting).

**Resolved:** as proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Anderson, and reached unanimous approval, members considered the supporting paper submitted by Cllr Gadd and agreed that the contamination issue could be dealt with outside of the lease, and for an inclusion in the lease to say that this would need to be dealt within a specified period of time. **Action:** Clerk to advise solicitor.

# WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

13.2 To consider and approve the design and quote for the L shaped oak building at the recreation ground – Clerk/RFO.

Members noted that we had received the initial information from one contractor, but they would need to supply a full specification.

Due to the value of the works, three quotes would need to be obtained.

The Clerk had submitted an enquiry to WDC to see if planning permission would be required for this structure and was awaiting a response.

**Action:** Clerk to liaise with Cllr Anderson to agree a specification to be able to arrange additional quotes.

**Action:** add to agenda full council meeting if additional quotes had been received by that time.

## 14. Highways Licence and Transport Committee

14.1 Street lights repairs and replacements – verbal update from Cllr P Moore.

Considered earlier in the meeting, the outstanding bill is approx. £39,000, but we are looking for alternative quotes.

14.2 Traffic congestion/parking issues in High Street, Wadhurst; to consider the quote from the Consultant – Cllr C Moore/Cllr P Moore

Cllr C Moore: this is a very expensive consultation, and we are unsure what East Sussex Highways will allow. Would like to give more consideration to other options, such a wooden 'village gateways' and see if can obtain any other quotes.

**Action:** add to June full council meeting agenda

The considerations for extending the Greyhound car park onto an area with Uplands Academy were still underway by Cllr P Moore and Cllr Standley. They are liaising with the school, WDC and ESCC Legal Team and are awaiting costings. They are also waiting to hear if the Department for Education would allow the project. **Action:** Cllr Standley to chase East Sussex Legal Team. **Action:** Cllr P Moore and Cllr Crawford to attend the meeting with Uplands Academy that is already planned for 16<sup>th</sup> May.

*Cllr Standley left the meeting at 2040 hours.*

*Cllr Anderson left the meeting whilst agenda item 14.3 was considered.*

14.3 To consider the Lengthsman contract – Cllr P Moore.

**Resolved:** as detailed in the supporting paper, proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Crawford, and reached unanimous approval.

*Cllr Anderson returned to the meeting.*

14.4 To consider what improvements should be carried out in the area around the refurbished telephone kiosk at Durgates – Cllr Gadd.

Members discussed possible options for the area, as well as the lighting options.

Action: Clerk and Cllr C Moore to consider a Facebook post to ask residents of their opinion for the area, and to try to seek a volunteer who could carry out the required weekly check.

**Action:** Lengthsman to install the defibrillator/cabinet within the telephone kiosk.

**Action:** Clerk to look at options of battery-operated motion sensor lighting.

**Action:** add to June full council agenda.

# WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

The Clerk updated members that she was back in contact with the owner of the telephone kiosk in Woods Green and would be looking at options for an electrical supply to this telephone kiosk, and if that was not possible, then would look at the insulated bag defibrillator option instead.

**Action:** add to June full council agenda.

Cllr P Moore raised the issue of the telephone kiosk at Best Beech needing considerable works/righting.

**Action:** Cllr P Moore, Cllr Crawford, and Cllr Anderson to be in a working party to look at options for taking this project forward.

## 15. Communications and Community Liaison Committee

## 16. Finance and Resources Committee

## 17. Neighbourhood Plan

17.1 To receive the Neighbourhood Plan update.

Members appreciated that the successful Neighbourhood Plan had been a very significant and time-consuming project, over a period of 7 years, by both the current and past members, chaired by David Connolly.

**Resolved:** Members would like to formally thank those involved and approved a budget of £250, proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Anderson, and reached majority vote (Cllrs P Moore, C Moore and Shaip abstained).

## 18. Other full council matters for consideration and decision:

18.1 St Georges Hall purchase – update and decision.

Cllr Gadd advised members that we were awaiting documentation and once the solicitor was ready to proceed, we would request a Zoom meeting, for all Cllrs to be able to attend, to ensure all matters were resolved.

18.2 For members to consider and adopt the Vexatious Complaints Policy

**Resolved:** members approved adoption of the Vexatious Complaints policy, proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Gadd, and reached unanimous approval.

**Action:** Clerk to date the policy and add to the website.

18.3 For members to consider and approved the proposed changes to the parish council grant policy.

Members considered the policy and potential issues with regards to liability. **Resolved:** members approved to adopt the policy with the changes recommended by the Clerk, and to also seek advice from Surrey Hills Solicitors (budget of £250 approved). Proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Gadd and reached unanimous approval. **Action:** Clerk to contact Surrey Hills. **Action:** Clerk to finalise the policy and add to the website.

18.4 Land surveys – Cllr Gadd

Dealt with in P & C

## 19. Items for noting or inclusion on a future agenda.

ACV's

**Meeting closed at 2127 hours.**

**Next Meeting Date: 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

# WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

## Summary of actions:

<b>Owner</b>	<b>Action</b>
Cllr Edwards	Submit new Register of Interest form to the Clerk to include Mullins Trust.
Clerk	Write to ESH and request that they remove the tarmac outside Balaclava Inn and return it to a grass verge (copy Cllr Standley and him and WDC Cllr Glynn-Ives into the email)
ESCC Cllr Standley	To also request to ESH for the tarmacked verge to be returned to grass – as above
WDC Cllr Glynn-Ives	To request that WDC re consider the parish council's request of a one-month extension to respond to the Local Plan.
Clerk	Amend April minutes to correct name, then add to website.
ESCC Cllr Standley	Liaise with Balfour Beatty re the removed streetlights.
Clerk/RFO	Pay PTA Grant
Cllr Gadd	Speak with John Mitchell about having a WPC rep rather than Trustee for WIHF.
Clerk	Update the Committee Members document and add to the website.
Clerk	Advice solicitor re contamination issue being included within lease document, with a time frame.
Clerk/Cllr Anderson	Liaise re specification for oak framed structure.
Clerk/RFO	Obtain quotes for the oak framed structure.
ESCC Cllr Standley	Chase East Sussex Legal Team re car park
Clerk/Cllr C Moore	Clerk and Cllr C Moore to consider a Facebook post re Durgates telephone kiosk area and volunteer for checks.
Clerk	Continue enquiries for power supply re Wood Green telephone kiosk or propose order with insulated bag for the defib.
Cllr P Moore, Cllr Anderson and Cllr Crawford	Working party to look at options for Best beech telephone kiosk refurbishment or replacement.
Clerk	Date and add Vexatious complaints policy to website
Clerk	Seek legal advice re grant policy wording form Surrey Hills Solicitors.
Clerk	Amend and add Grant Policy to website