

WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the full council meeting held at **The Pavilion, Sparrows Green Recreation Ground, Wadhurst at 1930 hours on Tuesday 4th June 2024.**

Present: Cllr Gadd (CG) (Chair), Cllr C Moore (CM), Cllr P Moore (PM), Cllr Anderson (IA), Cllr Smith (PS), Cllr Ramsden (MR) & Cllr Edwards (JE).

Also in attendance: Claudine Feltham (CF) (Clerk/RFO) and no members of the public

1. To receive apologies and reasons for absence.
Apologies were received from Cllr Tincombe, Cllr Shairp, WDC Cllr Howell, WDC Cllr Glynn-Ives and ESCC Cllr Standley
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 as interest in all matters relating the Wadhurst Institute Hall and Field CIO as she is a Trustee.
Cllr Anderson declared a prejudicial interest in all matters relating to the Lengthsman service.
3. Public Forum – time limit 15 minutes.
No members of the public were present at this meeting.
4. County Councillor and District Councillor reports.
The report from Cllr Howell had been circulated to members prior to the meeting and no questions were raised.
5. 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.
6. To approve the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 9th May 2024 as a true record.
Resolved: *as proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Edwards, and reached a majority decision the minutes were approved as a true record.*
7. To determine matters arising from the full council meeting held on 9th May 2024 for updating and noting.
None.
8. Correspondence List.
The correspondence list had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting and no questions were raised.
9. **Finance items for decision and allocation of resources.**
Members approved to consider items 9.1 to 9.2 together.
 - 9.1 To approve the updated payment list for May 2024
 - 9.2 To approve the initial payment list for June 2024
Resolved: *the payment lists were approved as proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Smith, and reached unanimous approval.*
 - 9.3 To approve the expenditure of £2.49 per month, per email address for a back-up system (it includes unlimited storage, includes SharePoint, OneDrive, Teams, Email, and the whole M365 Suite).
Resolved: *the expenditure was approved, as proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr C Moore, and reached unanimous approval.*

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9.4 Review and approve the updated Direct Debit list.

Resolved: *the Direct Debit list was reviewed and approved, as proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Edwards, and reached majority approval.*

9.5 To receive the end of year internal auditors' report (for year ending 31.3.24) from Mulberry & Co. for the audit carried out 9th May 2024.

Resolved: *As proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Smith, and reached unanimous approval, members received and accepted the end of year internal auditors' report (for year ending 31.3.24) from Mulberry & Co. and no questions were raised. (Members thanked the Clerk/RFO).*

9.6 For members to note that the internal audit report (for year ending 31.3.24) from Mulberry & Co. contained no advisories or points to carry forward.

Resolved: *As proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Smith, and reached unanimous approval, all members noted the report and that there were no advisories or points to carry forward.*

9.7 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) Section 1 of Annual Governance Accountability Return (AGAR) for financial year 2023-2024.

9.7.1 Members to note that no matters were raised on the external auditor report for the previous financial year (year ending 31.3.23)

Resolved: *As proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Anderson, and reached unanimous approval, all members noted that there were no matters raised on the external auditors report for year ending 31.3.23*

9.7.2 Members of Wadhurst Parish Council to review the effectiveness of the of the internal control system agree the assertions of Annual Governance Statement and approve the Annual Governance Statement by resolution.

Resolved: *As proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Smith, and reached unanimous approval, all members agreed the assertions of the Annual Governance Statement.*

9.7.3 Members to approve the signing of Annual Governance Statement by the Chair of the meeting and the Clerk.

Resolved: *As proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Edwards, and reached unanimous approval, the Chair and the Clerk signed the Annual Governance Statement.*

9.8 Accounting Statements – Section 2 of AGAR for financial year 2023-2024

9.8.1 Members to consider the Accounting Statements for the financial year ending 31.3.24, as prepared by the RFO in advance of the meeting.

Resolved: *As proposed by Cllr Ramsden, seconded by Cllr C Moore, and reached unanimous approval, members considered the accounting statements for year ending 31.3.24*

9.8.2 Members to approve the Accounting Statements by resolution.

Resolved: *The accounting statements were approved, as proposed by Cllr Ramsden, seconded by Cllr C Moore, and reached unanimous approval.*

9.8.3 Members to approve for the Chair of the meeting to sign the Accounting Statement.

Resolved: *Members approved for the Chair to sign the Accounting Statement, as proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Anderson, and reached unanimous approval.*

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9.9 Members to approve the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance and Accountability Return accounts for the year ending 31.3.24. for the period of 10.6.24 to 19.7.24 inclusive.

Resolved: As proposed by Cllr Ramsden, seconded by Cllr Edwards, and reached unanimous approval.

Action: Clerk to submit all required documentation to PKF Littlejohn and update the parish council with the documents to comply with the public rights.

Action: Cllr Gadd to place the audit documents in the parish council noticeboard

10. Planning Committee

10.1 To adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held 4th May 2024 and 18th May 2024.

Resolved: The minutes of 4th and 18th May were adopted, as proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Crawford, and reached unanimous approval.

10.2 To consider the request from the Planning Committee to full council that Bewl building be added to the ACV list.

Resolved; this was approved, as proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr P Moore, and reached a majority approval.

Action: Cllr C Moore to give a list of the exact buildings to the Clerk.

Action: Clerk to add them to the existing list of ACV applications which need to be completed.

11. Amenities Committee

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

Update: members considered the current position with the lease and the issues holding this up with the contamination of the ponds, and who is responsible for this.

It was agreed that an environmental survey should be undertaken to see exactly what the contamination is and recommendations for how this can be cleared up and prevented in future.

Members approved for Cllr Smith, Cllr Crawford, and Cllr Ramsden to form a working party to take this issue forward.

Action: Clerk to send the recent communications from our solicitor and ESFR to Cllr Smith, Cllr Crawford, and Cllr Ramsden.

Action: Clerk to contact ESFR and ask if they would be willing to pay 50% of the survey costs.

Action: Clerk to contact David Eyre to see if he could carry out the survey or recommend a company.

Cllr Gadd declared interest in agenda item 11.2. Cllr Smith took over as Chair of the meeting.

11.2 Public toilets at the commemoration hall:

- To consider the recent reports of damage and steps for prevention.
- To consider the proposal and quote for the CCTV system (if received in time for this meeting)
- To consider the repairs that need to be carried out: disabled toilet: cracked mirror, bent/damaged drop-down grab rail, broken toilet roll dispenser.

Cllr Edwards advised members that he had sent up an email group with the PCSO, Jemma Pantrey and the Head Teacher of Uplands, but so far had only received response from Jemma.

The Clerk advised that she was meeting with the CCTV equipment supplier 5.6.24 to consider options.

Jemma has advised that the temporary morning closure of the toilets was helping with issues.

As proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Crawford, and reached majority approval, members approved emergency expenditure of up to £500 (or up to £1,000 with approval of the Chair of Amenities if required).

Action: Clerk to liaise with the Lengthsman to see if they are able to assist with the required works.

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Action: Clerk to research very heavy duty/damage proof toilet roll dispensers.

Cllr Gadd resumed as Chair of the meeting

11.3 Woods Green defibrillator. (Members had previously approved the purchase of a defibrillator and cabinet for this refurbished telephone kiosk). For members to approve expenditure of for the defibrillator, cabinet, thermal carry case, insurance, and annual support from Community Heartbeat Trust (CHT).

Resolved: as proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Gadd and reached unanimous approval, the defibrillator with the thermal case and cabinet would be purchased from Community Heartbeat Trust.

Action: Clerk to liaise with owner of telephone kiosk.

Action: Clerk to place order with CHT.

Action: once the Woods Green defibrillator is in place, advise residents through Facebook, website, and Focus.

Action: after installation, arrange further training session – possibly in Woods Green/Cousley Wood area.

12. Highways Licence and Transport Committee

12.1 Quotes for streetlights repairs and replacements: to discuss and select a contractor in order for works to proceed.

Update from Cllr P Moore: The quote had not been received in time for this meeting. Correspondence had been received from Street Lights and some of the interim works had been completed, awaiting full report from them and then a quote for the additional works.

Action: Cllr P Moore to continue liaison with Street Lights.

12.2 Traffic congestion/parking issues in High Street, Wadhurst - Cllr C Moore/Cllr P Moore

Update: Cllr C Moore advised members that a quote had been received from a consultant, but it was way too expensive to proceed with.

Will be getting a list of works from the Neighbourhood Plan and then liaise with the consultancy arm of Balfour Beatty and request for them to produce a plan, and if possible, utilise S106 funds retained by ESCC.

12.3 Update on Durgates defib – Clerk

Update: the Clerk advised members that following a social media post, 2 volunteers had come forward for carrying out the weekly checks on the defibrillator, and a local gardener had said they would be willing to help with the area outside of the telephone kiosk.

Action: Cllr Gadd to forward the permission from BT to the Clerk.

Action: Clerk to thank residents on social media.

Cllr Smith and Cllr Crawford spoke of introducing a book exchange too.

12.4 To consider the options of refurbishment/replacement of the telephone kiosk at Best Beech from the working party (Cllrs Anderson, P Moore, and Crawford).

Action: Cllrs Crawford, P Moore, and Anderson to consider this project.

Action: Clerk to add to July agenda.

12.5 Request for WPC support for a wildflower verge application – Cllr C Moore.

A resident has approached neighbours to sign the petition for a wildflower verge application at Bankside.

Resolved: as proposed by Cllr C Moore, seconded by Cllr Gadd, and reached majority approval – members agreed to support this application.

Wildflower policy: Cllr C Moore to meet with Sally Bishop in a couple of months' time.

13. Communications and Community Liaison Committee

14. Finance and Resources Committee

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15. Neighbourhood Plan

To receive the Neighbourhood Plan update: it was noted that the Neighbourhood Plan had been made. **Resolved:** As proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr P Moore, and reached unanimous approval, a budget of up to £500 could be used as a thank you. (Cllrs would need to pay for themselves).

16. Other full council matters for consideration and decision:

16.1 St Georges Hall purchase

Due to other commitments within the parish Cllr Gadd had been very busy.

Action: Cllr Gadd to review the latest correspondence.

Action: Clerk to add to the next full council agenda

16.2 To set a new date for the July meeting as the Pavilion is required for elections on 4th July.

The next full council meeting will take place on 11th July 2024.

Action: Clerk to advise all members, WDC and ESCC Cllrs and update the schedule/website.

16.3 Removal of trees for the front of Uplands Academy, Wadhurst

Members discussed the recent tree felling.

Resolved: as proposed by Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Smith, and reached unanimous decision, members delegated the authority on this matter to the Planning Committee, with all members of the parish council to be kept informed by email.

16.4 Update from the Annual Parish Assembly held 30th May 2024

Members reflected on the success of the evening. It was very well attended and had received excellent feedback.

Action: Clerk to add Facebook post.

17. Items for noting or inclusion on a future agenda.

17.1 Internet at Wadhurst Train Station – verbal update from Cllr Edwards re the response from Southeastern Railway.

Cllr Edwards advised members that Southeastern Railway had declined for the parish council to install internet at the station.

Cllr Edwards would try to meet with the Station Master to see if there were any other options for installation of internet within the car park or café.

Meeting closed at 2050 hours.

Next Meeting Date: 11th July 2024.

Summary of actions:

OWNER	ACTION
CF	Submit all required documentation to PKF Littlejohn and update the parish council with the documents to comply with the public rights
SG	To place audit documents in the parish council noticeboard
CM	ACV at Bewl: supply a list of the exact buildings to the Clerk.
CF	Clerk to add them to the existing list of ACV applications which need to be completed.
CF	Jardin d'Aubers: send the recent communications from our solicitor and ESFR to Cllr Smith, Cllr Crawford, and Cllr Ramsden
CF	Contact ESFR and ask if they would be willing to pay 50% of environmental survey costs.
CF	Contact David Eyre to see if he could carry out the survey or recommend a company.

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CF	Liaise with the Lengthsman to see if they are able to assist with the required works. Clerk to research very heavy duty/damage proof toilet roll dispensers.
CF	Clerk to obtain dimensions of broken mirror and find a replacement.
CF	Woods Green defibrillator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with owner of telephone kiosk. • Place defib and cabinet order with CHT. • Once the Woods Green defibrillator is in place, advise residents through Facebook, website, and Focus. • After installation, arrange further training session – possibly in Woods Green/Cousley Wood area.
PM	To continue liaison with Street Lights re works required/quotes.
SG	Durgates telephone kiosk and defib: Forward the permission from BT to the Clerk.
CF	Durgates telephone kiosk and defib: thank volunteers on social media
PS/JC	Consider book exchange for telephone kiosk
PM, IA, and JC	Working party for Best beech for telephone kiosk – to consider this project and make recommendations to full council in July.
SG	St Georges Hall; review the latest correspondence.
CF	Add St Georges Hall to July agenda
Planning	Uplands Academy tree felling
CF	Advise all re new meeting date for July
CF	Annual Assembly post on website and social media
CF	Chase ESFR re tree works undertaken and request update re knotweed
JE	Continue liaison with Wadhurst Rail Station re provision of internet