

WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the full council meeting held at the Pavilion, Sparrows Green Recreation Ground, South View Road, Wadhurst, TN5 6TW on 1930 hours on **3rd October 2024**.

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

Also present: ESCC Cllr Standley (BS), WDC Cllr Howell (JH), WDC Cllr Glynn-Ives(SGI), Claudine Feltham (Clerk - CF) and no members of the public.

1. To receive apologies and reasons for absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Shairp, Cllr Tincombe and Cllr Crawford.

2. 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 prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 11.8 (Fire Risk Assessment). Cllr Gadd declared an interest in respect of agenda items relating to Wadhurst Institute Hall and Field CIO due to being a Trustee.

3. Public Forum – time limit 15 minutes.

Cllr Standley made Cllrs aware of the outside lights not working outside of the Pavilion, including the pedestrian steps – which could be dangerous.

Cllr Gadd enquired if there was a rule about the height of the lights – BS wasn't aware of any height restriction. Cllr Gadd advised that the parish council would soon be replacing the lights.

4. County Councillor and District Councillor reports.

The reports from ESCC Cllr Standley, WDC Cllr Howell and WDC Cllr Glynn-Ives had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting.

ESCC Cllr Standley: the budget is an issue (approx. £40 million short), expenses are going up for adult care, however the income is not going up to reflect this. There is rumour that the council tax cap maybe lifted or increased. ESCC have opened up three special schools, but the students are at times from outside of the area.

JE enquired if East Sussex used the services of Care Cubed?

Action: BS to make enquiries.

WDC Cllr Glynn-Ives

SG suggested that re opening the household waste tip could assist in reducing the fly tipping issues and would save travel for residents attending tips outside of the area.

CM commented that the old tip has a planning application for it to be used as a concrete crushing plant.

Members mentioned that they were concerned about the weight that the bridge would be able to take.

SGI: as a community we could arrange smaller initiatives like metal van coming in once per month and similar initiatives.

Continuing to make enquiries to the land behind Queens Cottages.

Road outside of Queens Cottages is in very poor condition. BS has made the Highways Steward about this.

IA: made Cllrs aware that an elderly lady lives at 25 Queens Cottages and has an issue of flooding down there drain/path has collapsed. This has been ongoing since January 2023.

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Action: BS to make enquiries at ESCC.

SG there is a hedge at bottom of Mayfield Lane which is falling into road.

Action: BS to make enquiries at ESCC.

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.

Resolved: Cllr Gadd proposed for agenda items 15.1 and 15.2 to be considered in closed session, this was seconded by PM and reached unanimous approval.

6. To approve the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 12th September 2024 as a true record.

Resolved: as proposed by CM, seconded by PM and reached majority approval, the minutes were approved as a true record.

7. To determine matters arising from the full council meeting held on 12th September 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.

- 9.1 To approve the updated payment list for September 2024

Resolved: the updated payment list for September 2024 was approved as proposed by PS, seconded by IA and reached unanimous approval.

Link to document on parish council website: [Payment-Analysis-1-30-SEPTEMBER-2024-CORRECTED.pdf \(wadhurst-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

- 9.2 To approve the initial payment list for October 2024

Resolved: the payment list for October 2024 was approved as proposed by IA, seconded by JE and reached unanimous approval.

Link to document on parish council website: [October-2024-initial-payment-list.pdf \(wadhurst-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

- 9.3 To receive the bank reconciliations for September 2024

Resolved: the bank reconciliations were received and accepted, as proposed by PS, seconded by CM and reached unanimous approval.

Link to section on parish council website: [Finance & Resources – Wadhurst Parish Council \(wadhurst-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

- 9.4 To receive the RBS finance reports for September 2024

Resolved: the RBS financial reports for September 2024 were received and accepted, as proposed by CM, seconded by SG and reached unanimous approval.

Link to section on parish council website: [Finance & Resources – Wadhurst Parish Council \(wadhurst-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

- 9.5 To note that the interim audit will be held 21st November 2024

Noted.

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9.6 To consider and adopt the new NALC financial regulations (adapted to suit Wadhurst Parish Council), BACS payment policy and list of regular payee list.

*Financial regulations: CM advised that there were two typos in items 1.5 and 13.6. **Action:** CF to amend.*

Resolved: with the corrections mentioned, the new financial regulations were adopted by full council as proposed by CM, seconded by SG and reached unanimous agreement.

Resolved; the BACS payment policy was adopted as proposed by SG, seconded by PS and reached unanimous approval.

Action: CF to add review of bank mandate to agenda.

Resolved: the Regular Payments List was adopted, as proposed by SG, seconded by PS and reached unanimous approval.

Action: CF to update the documents and add to the parish council website.

9.7 Grant application from the History Society (regarding additional expenses incurred from the D Day event) – Cllr Gadd.

£531.20

Members agreed that the D-Day event was a real success and appreciated that it was probably a greater deal of work that the History Society first anticipated. All the children that attended to seemed to love it.

Resolved: subject to receiving a grant application form, members approved the additional funds of £531.20, as proposed by CM and seconded by SG.

9.8 Grant application from Wadhurst Warriors (regarding their fireworks event)

SG remarked that as the parish now have General Power of Competence (GPOC), consideration could be given to a financial contribution rather than a grant.

CM commented that as this is a Wadhurst Warriors event then it would be better to do as a grant, however, when considering Christmas events then a financial contribution may be considered. Members continued to discuss the events and methods of how we can financially support them.

Resolved: as proposed by CM, seconded by IA and reached unanimous approval, a grant of £2,750 was approved for the fireworks event.

10. Planning Committee

10.1 To adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held 24th August and 10th September 2024.

Resolved: as proposed by CM, seconded by PS and reach majority approval, the minutes of 24th August and 10th September were adopted.

11. Amenities Committee

11.1 To review the rental prices charged by Wadhurst Parish Council.

Resolved: as proposed by SG, seconded by CM and reached unanimous approval, the rental prices were reviewed, and no changes would be made at this time.

11.2 To note that the annual PAT testing at the Pavilion is taking place 9.10.24.

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Noted.

CF advised members that the PAT testing invoice and report included both the Christmas Lights and the Pavilion items. (The Wadhurst Warriors had said that they wished for the Christmas Lights to be part of the PAT testing).

- 11.3 To consider and decide upon the quotes for replacement outside lights at Pavilion/Recreation Ground.

Whilst two quotes had been received prior to the meeting, the lights offered would not be Dark Skies Compliant. Also, the cabling would need to be dug down into the ground – as per Health & Safety Executive rules.

Action: Clerk to go back to companies and ask them to update their quotes to include Dark Skies compliant lights. TRT offer such lights.

Resolved: as proposed by PS, seconded by SG and reached unanimous approval; a budget of up to £5,000 for the outside lighting on the Pavilion, driveway and steps was agreed and delegated authority was given to IA and PM.

Resolved: as a safety matter, members also approved for the Lengthsman to supply and fit temporary solar PIR lights for the recreation ground driveway and steps. **Action:** CF to advise Lengthsman.

- 11.4 Spinner play equipment item – to note that following further information supplied by the Clerk, Playdale Playgrounds (the original supplier) have been advised to carry out the repair work. *Noted, and the works have been scheduled for week commencing 21st October 2024.*

PS took over as Chair for agenda item 11.5.

- 11.5 A volunteer has come forward to carry out the weekly checks of the defibrillator (outside of the Commemoration Hall – members to confirm acceptance of this assistance.

Resolved: members approved for the volunteer to take over the checks from the Commemoration Hall Caretaker and thanked them for their kind offer.

Action: Clerk to meet with Volunteer to show him defibrillator and the WEBNOS reporting system. CM commented that following a recent course, WPC should consider having a Volunteer policy in place. **Action:** CF to research this an add to next agenda.

SG resumed as Chair.

- 11.6 To note that we are in the final year of a three-year agreement with the grass cutting contractor for the recreation ground field. (£65.46 + VAT per cut x 16 cuts per year). *The Clerk will look at getting further quotes for the new contract commencing 1.4.25.*

Correction: we are in second year so quotes will not be required just yet. Resolved: members approved to continue with the current contractor for years 2 and 3 of the three-year agreement, as proposed by SG and seconded by PS.

- 11.7 5-year electrical safety test at the Pavilion; to consider the quotes received and decide upon a contractor.

Members considered the two quotes which had been received. It was noted that one contractor already had experience/knowledge of the Pavilion building. **Resolved:** as proposed by CM,

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seconded by IA and reached unanimous agreement, EDA Electrical were approved for these works.

IA left the room whilst agenda item 11.8 was considered and decided upon and took no part in any discussion.

11.8 Fire Risk Assessment – The Pavilion, Sparrows Green; to consider quotes and decide upon a contractor.

*Members considered the two quotes which had been received. **Resolved:** as proposed by CM, seconded by PS and reached unanimous approval (of the members within the room), CSS Compliance were agreed to carry out the Fire Risk Assessment.*

Note: following the recent building works at the Pavilion, the Building Regulations Officer had requested for the lock on the 'tennis room' door to be changed. This was carried out, but contravened safeguarding matters. IA liaised with Building Regulations Officer who approved for the lock to be changed back, which has now happened, and the works have been signed off.

12. Highways Licence and Transport Committee

12.1 Street lights maintenance contract: to consider the revised contract received from East Sussex County Council for maintenance of streetlights and consider the Street Lights Co contract for maintenance – and decide upon a contractor (*taking into consideration dark skies policy*).

PM advised members that the contract is more complicated than we first thought, and we need some assistance from BS to liaise with Balfour Beatty, who are trying to change the liability aspect of the contract. WPC and other parishes are not in the position to resume the liability.

PM, CM and MR attended a meeting with other parishes where this has been raised as a problem and great concern. Other parishes have agreed that they cannot sign the new contract. WPC cannot make a decision on these matters at present.

Action: *WPC would like for BS to write to ESCC to clarify the position on this, as well as the Railway lighting pricing structure which appears to be included.*

12.2 Quotes for streetlights repairs and replacements: to discuss and select a contractor for works to proceed (*taking into consideration dark skies policy*).

Note: ESH have been requested to forward copies of some quotes, and Street Lights have also been requested to do the same.

*PM advised members that some repairs need urgent attention. However, if East Sussex Highways (ESH) will not warrant their works, where would the liability sit?
There are some lights that need urgent attention (leaning, not working and potentially dangerous) which need to be sorted as soon as possible – then work out a longer-term plan.
All plans will need to ensure lights are Dark Skies compliant.
The High Weald Partnership have suggested that Wadhurst could be used as a pilot for Dark Skies lighting design. CM is liaising with them.
PS arranged with David Field of the Recovery Network to meet with Lighting supplier at 1100 on 12th October 2024.
CF commented that consideration should be given to the Waters Reach S106 funds for High Street improvements, particularly if replacing lights with heritage style.*

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Action: CF to send copy of the S106 agreement and correspondence from WDC CIL/S106 Officer to PM and BS.

Resolved: as proposed by PM, seconded by SG and reached unanimous approval – a working party consisting of PM, MR, CM and PS would be set up with a budget of up to £20,000.

12.3 Traffic congestion and parking issues:

12.3.1 High Street

PM advised that a short time ago some members of the parish council met with members of Wadhurst Primary School to discuss parking and congestion issues. It was suggested that they have a bus (that the parish council may assist with), or car shares – asked them to provide us with information about locations for where transport should come from and to, unfortunately the school did not seem that keen on these suggestions and members requested that this was formally noted with the parish council's minutes.

12.3.2 Faircrouch Lane; to consider the Waste Transfer Report and agree the next steps.
No further update.

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).
Deferred – add to November 2024 agenda.

13. Communications and Community Liaison Committee

14. Finance and Resources Committee

14.1 to note that correspondence about the budget setting for 2025-2026 will be circulated to all members and Committee Chairs will need to respond to Cllr C Moore and the RFO by 18th October 2024.

Noted

Action: CF to prepare budgeting setting spreadsheet and send to Chairs of Committees.

15. Other full council matters for consideration and decision:

15.1 St Georges Hall purchase: to receive an update and decide upon any proposals.
Considered in private and confidential session.

Action: SG to send information to our solicitor following latest discussion.

15.2 Lease for Jardin d'Aubers; ESFR have given a deadline of 8th November for our final responses.

Considered in private and confidential session.

15.3 Request from Wadhurst Primary School to be able to use Sparrows Green Recreation Ground in event of an emergency evacuation of the school.

Members approved this request and commented that Wadhurst Primary School would need to accept full liability if this was actioned. Members also suggested that the fields behind the Commemoration Hall may be a suitable additional location for this.

Action: CF to advise Wadhurst Primary School of the above.

15.4 Community / Youth Centre, Lower High Street – to consider any response from East Sussex County Council (if received in time for this meeting).

CF/CM to follow up enquiries.

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Action: add to November full council agenda.

15.5 Christmas Fair / market – Cllr Gadd

Update: SG is arranging the fair part of this event (6th December 2024). Stalls would be £10 each. Members encouraged to invite suitable businesses to have stalls at the event.

SG advised that some signage would be required.

Resolved: as proposed by SG, seconded by CM and reached unanimous approval, a budget of up to £500 was set for event expenditure.

Members went on to consider the assembly of the Christmas lights by Wadhurst Warriors. The Warriors would need to pay the shops (that supplied electricity for the lights) from now on, as the arrangement would be directly between the Warriors and the shop owners.

Members approved for WPC to continue arranging the PAT testing of the Christmas lights as they are stored at the Pavilion and so can be tested along with all other Pavilion items.

The PAT test report should be forwarded to the Warriors upon receipt, as the liability for the lights remains with the Wadhurst Warriors (as the owners of the lights).

Resolved: as proposed by PM, seconded by CM and reached unanimous approval, a contribution of £2500 would be given to the Wadhurst Warriors for Christmas/Christmas lights related expenses, providing that the lights would be on timers (being on approximately 1600-midnight) so that Dark Skies compliance adhered to.

15.6 VE Day 80 – 8th May 2025 – A shared Moment of Celebration. Parish Councils are being encouraged to light the beacon at 9.30 p.m. and where possible hold parties of celebration through the day. *including possibility of proclamation and beacon lighting.*

Action: CM & SG to liaise with Wadhurst Warriors about the event.

PM suggested doing annual parish assembly the same evening, but members were unsure if this would be appropriate.

PS took over position as Chair for the following agenda item.

15.7 Working parties with residents – Cllr Gadd.

Resolved: as proposed by MR, seconded by CM and reached unanimous approval, a budget of £50 per working party meeting (with resident) was approved.

15.8 Rural Services Network subscription: for members to consider if we wish to sign up to the subscription following our free trial.

Members noted that the majority of topics were a higher level than parish and decided not to sign up for this subscription.

Action: CF to advise Rural Services Network.

15.9 ESALC AGM and Conference (Cllr P Moore is already a nominated rep with voting rights, WPC can choose another representative with voting rights – if wish

Member approved for CF to attend this event and delegated voting rights to her.

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

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Meeting closed at 2122 hours.
Next Meeting Date: 7th November 2024

Summary of actions:

OWNER	ACTION
BS	To make enquiries to see if East Sussex use the services of Care Cubed.
BS	Road and path outside of 25 Queens Cottages – road is in very poor condition. Path/drain has sunk outside 25 Queens Cottages which is causing flooding into 95 yr old ladies property.
BS	<i>Hedge at bottom of Mayfield Lane which is falling into road.</i>
CF	NALC financial regulations (adapted to suit Wadhurst Parish Council), BACS payment policy and list of regular payee list. Correct documents and add to the website.
CF	Add review of bank mandate to November agenda
CF	Add review of all policies to November agenda
CF	Outside lights at Pavilion/Recreation Ground: Clerk to go back to companies and ask them to update their quotes to include Dark Skies compliant lights. TRT offer such lights. Also ensure that cabling would be dug and installed below the ground – as per Health & Safety Executive rules.
CF	Task for Lengthsman to install motion sensor solar lights at Pavilion/Rec as temporary measure.
CF	Meet with Volunteer to show him defibrillator and the WEBNOS reporting system.
CF	Research and create Volunteer Policy and add to next agenda.
BS	To write to ESCC to clarify the position on the new Street Lights contract, as well as the Railway lighting pricing structure which appears to be included.
CF	Locate and send copy of the Waters Reach S106 (High Street) agreement and correspondence from WDC CIL/S106 Officer to PM and BS.
CF	Prepare budgeting setting spreadsheet and send to Chairs of Committees.
SG	Send information to our solicitor following latest discussion re SGH
CF	Write to Wadhurst Primary School: <i>Members approved this request and commented that Wadhurst Primary School would need to accept full liability if this was actioned. Members also suggested that the fields behind the Commemoration Hall may be a suitable additional location for this.</i>
CF	Community / Youth Centre, Lower High Street – add to November agenda
SG/CM	CM & SG to liaise with Wadhurst Warriors about the event: VE Day 80 – 8 th May 2025 – A shared Moment of Celebration. Parish Councils are being encouraged to light the beacon at 9.30 p.m. and where possible hold parties of celebration through the day. including possibility of proclamation and beacon lighting.
CF	Advise Rural Services Network that we not going to continue subscription.