

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **MEETING** of **LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held on **THURSDAY, 18 JANUARY 2024** at King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 20:00

Parish Councillors:	Mrs. A. Beecroft	Mrs. A. Matthews *	Mr. I. Wilson *
	Mr. W. Blunden (Chair)	Mr. S. Nisbett	Mr. T. Webster
	Mrs. I. Burns	Mr. R. Pickett *	Mr. C. Wood
	Mrs. L. Grace	Mrs. V. Upton (Vice-Chair)	Mr. D. Woolley

(*) Denotes absence

In attendance: Mr. A. Funnell (Parish Clerk)
Cllr Wood (MSDC)
Cllr Cooke (MSDC)

80. TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

80.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Matthews and Pickett. The reasons for absence were accepted.

81. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

81.1 The following declarations of interest were received:

- i. Cllr Blunden declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 as he is an allotment holder.
- ii. Cllr Webster declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 as he is an allotment holder.

82. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 9 NOVEMBER 2023

82.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 9 November 2023. It was **AGREED** that the minutes would be signed by the Chairman as being a true record of that meeting.

83. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

83.1 There were no members of the public present.

84. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

84.1 The Chairman wished everyone a Happy New Year and made the following announcements:

- i. MSDC Civic Service – The Chair had attended the service held in Hurstpierpoint. It was a good service and Cllr Rodney Jackson was congratulated for the arrangements.
- ii. Members were asked to look out for vulnerable residents during the very cold temperatures.

85. REPORTS BY COUNTY / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

85.1 West Sussex County Council

Cllr Wall has given his apologies for the meeting.

85.2 Mid Sussex District Council

Cllrs Cooke and Wood reported the following:

- i. Cllr Wood, WSCC Cllr Wall, and the Parish Office had jointly put pressure on WSCC/ENERVEO to ensure the streetlights in the footpath between the Welkin and the High Street were cleared of obstructions and working.
- ii. Hickmans Lane Dog Waste Bin – The bin had been moved to a more suitable location.
- iii. Eastern Road Nature Reserve – Cllr Wood advised that the Friends of Eastern Road Nature Reserve group had held a productive meeting with MSDC. It was hoped that MSDC would provide the group with mulch to help mark out the footpaths.
- iv. Clair Hall – An update on the process of reviewing the applications was provided. Further information on this will come out soon.
- v. District Plan – The Council had agreed amendments to the District Plan, with cross-party support, to back the Plan. Only one MSDC member had voted against the Plan.
- vi. In addition, members were made aware the Haywards Heath Council scheme 'Leave no one behind' was expanded to include Lindfield residents.

The Chair thanked Cllrs Cooke and Wood for their reports and observed that MSDC was one of only two district authorities in West Sussex that is currently debt-free.

86. ACTION LIST

86.1 The action list was **NOTED**.

87. CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS - TO CONSIDER CURRENT CONSULTATIONS AND AGREE ON WHETHER TO RESPOND.

87.1 It was **AGREED** to ask PT&T to consider the District Plan Regulation 19 Consultation.

88. PLANNING, TRANSPORT & TRAFFIC COMMITTEE (PT&T)

88.1 Report on matters considered at the meetings held on 28-Nov-23, 12-Dec-23, & 09-Jan-24

Cllr Upton reported the following:

In its last three meetings, PTTC considered 23 planning applications and raised objections to two proposals:-

- **DM/23/2814 at 54 Sunte Avenue** - objecting to the felling of a tree in the absence of evidence that this was necessary.
- **DM/23/2304 at The Old Bakery** – objecting to the application for residential (as opposed to commercial) use.
Three planning appeals were noted:
- **AP/23/0056, Wincote, 63 High Street** –following MSDC’s refusal of the application for new double-glazed windows and doors.
- **AP/23/0062, Barrington House, Portsmouth Wood Drive** – following MSDC’s refusal of the application for a new 1 bedroom, 2 storey family annexe.
- **AP/24/0001, Allens Wall, Black Hill** – following MSDC’s decision to refuse permission for the construction of a replacement dwelling on this site
PTTC was advised of the following decisions by MSDC:
- **DM/23/2237, 50 By Sunte** – permission for this application included a requirement for a replacement tree, in line with the consultation response given by LPC.
- **DM/23/1737, 15 Summerhill Grange** - MSDC refused the application to reduce limbs and raise the crown on two lime trees, as they considered the proposed works to be detrimental to the health and amenity value of the trees.
- **DM/23/2390, The Pavilion, Francis Road** –MSDC had given permission to crown lifting and pollarding rather than the removal of the trees as was originally proposed. LPC had objected to the removal of the sycamore and spruce trees in the absence of a justifiable reason to do so.
The following actions were undertaken under the **Scheme of Delegation**:-
- Response to WSCC Draft Active Travel Strategy and LCWIP Consultation Survey.

Other matters

- **Cycleways** - the SHLAT group met with WSCC, who were impressed at the level of support that this scheme had obtained and that, whilst it did not fit the current county expenditure plans, it was now on the radar for the future. It is understood that this is considered the best outcome which could be achieved, noting also that the developers at Walstead were now working with MSDC to enhance the proposed footpaths to be cycle and pedestrian-friendly.
- **Lewes Road TRO** – WSCC have declined the proposal and, pending an LPC/WSCC officer meeting, PTTC plans to review the membership of the TRO working group before considering the next steps.
- **Kerbside EV Working Group** – following an interim paper presented to PTTC, the Committee agreed that the finalised version should be put forward to the Full Council at its next meeting.

88.2 To receive the Minutes of the meetings of the PT&T held on 28-Nov-23, 12-Dec-23, & 09-Jan-24 & to confirm their recommendations. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meetings of the PT&T Committee held on 28-Nov-23, 12-Dec-23, and 09-Jan-24 be received, and their recommendations confirmed.

88.3 Kerbside EVWG Report

Cllr Woolley provided members with a briefing on the report, which had been considered at PT&C 9-Jan-24, and the draft letter. Members **NOTED** the report and letter. It was **AGREED** that the Deputy Parish Clerk send the letter to West Sussex County Council.

89. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE.

89.1 Report by Cllr Blunden on matters considered at the meeting held on 30-Nov-23, to include any updates. Cllr Blunden reported the following:

Tree Stock – The approved tree work on the Wilderness Field and Allotments was carried out at the start of this month.

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Denmans Lane Allotments – The working group have met to discuss various items. This included inspections, serving notices, and waiting lists.

Festive Lights – The lighting installation took place at the end of November. A few niggles were dealt with before the switch-on date. One subsequent issue was resolved by the Village Orderly. The display received good feedback from the public.

Christmas Festival Night – The event took place on the 5th of December and was very successful. Positive feedback has been observed on social media. The Chair thanked all the members who helped out on the evening and the staff who organised and ran the event. The Chair also thanked the staff, volunteers and members who installed and removed the Christmas tree.

Wilderness Field – The committee agreed to register the Wilderness Field on the Weald to Waves initiative. The initiative aimed at establishing a nature recovery corridor from the High Weald to the Sussex coast.

89.2 To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the E&A held on 30-Nov-23, & to confirm their recommendations. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the E&A Committee held on 30-Nov-23 be received, and their recommendations confirmed.

89.3 Climate Change – Update from Cllr Wood.

Cllr Wood advised the following:

- The group had met on Tuesday.
- Fairer World Lindfield had arranged a meeting in the Stand Up regarding the Weald to Waves initiative.
- Two representatives from each of the local councils would meet to discuss good practice regarding the environment and Climate Change
- Cllr Grace provided an update on Greener Lindfield. Articles were planned up until July. A seed and plant swap event would take place in April at the Lindfield Repair café. This would include an activity for children.
- Cllr Nisbett and the Clerk would be looking at improving the Climate Change page on the Council's website.
- Cllr Woolley would assist in looking at solar panels for the Denmans Lane toilets.

90. **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.**

90.1 Report by Cllr Beecroft on matters considered at the meeting held on 7-Dec-23 and 4-Jan-24, to include any updates.

Cllr Beecroft reported that at the meeting, the following was agreed and/or noted:

Budget 2024/25 - Members considered the committee budgets and resulting precept request. This will be considered in more detail on a later agenda item.

Grants - A grant of £300 was made to St Peter and St James Hospice.

Communications – It was agreed to sign up for a Mail Chimp subscription.

Risk Management – It was agreed to approve risk assessments for the Van and Financial Management.

Interim Internal Audit – Members noted the report.

Rialtas Software - It was agreed to sign a 3-year contract for year-end closedown support and maintenance.

90.2 To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the F&GP held on 7-Dec-23 & 4-Jan-24 & to confirm their recommendations. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the F&GP Committee held on 7-Dec-23 be received, and their recommendations confirmed. The minutes of the meeting dated 4-Jan-24 were not yet available.

90.3 Budget Progress including General Reserves expenditure to 30-Nov-23. Budget expenditure progress to 30-Nov-23:

Committee / Activity / Reserve	Expenditure	Budget
F&GP	£ 105,146	£ 175,849
E&A	£ 31,756	£ 54,975
Allotments	£ 1,297	£ 2,500
PT&T	£ NIL	£ 8,000
General Reserve	£ 3,430	n/a
Total	£ 141,630	£ 241,324

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Earmarked Reserve	Expenditure	Budget
Toilets on the Common	£ NIL	£ 84,170
Wilderness Field S106 Maintenance	£ 2,850	£ 18,696
Council Elections	£ NIL	£ 5,400
Traffic Improvement/Planning Support	£ NIL	£ 4,500
Total	£ 2,850.00	£ 112,766
Accrued 22/23 - Traffic Study Improvements	£ 4,044.26	

Income to 30-Sep-23:

Description	£
Precept	£ 216,000
Interest	£ 1,634
Rental	£ 6,464
Service Charge	£ 378
Licence Fees	£ 141
Christmas Festival Night	£ 785
Allotments	£ 1,135
Total	£ 226,573

90.4 Bank reconciliation (cash and investments) to 31-Dec-23 – To sign the statement.

Bank Reconciliation at 30-Sep-23	£
Barclays current account	15,153.70
Barclays premium account	101,136.33
Nationwide building society	85,000.00
Unity Trust current account	500.00
Unity Trust savings account	57,500.00
Petty Cash	81.50
Unpresented payments	NIL
Receipts not on bank statements	153.70
Closing balance	£ 259,371.53

It was **AGREED** to sign the bank reconciliation statement.

90.5 Summary of receipts and payments to 30-Nov-23

The list of receipts and payments were noted.

90.6 To note the list of payments to the 18-Jan-24 and authorise payments.

The list of payments drawn since the Council meeting held on 9-Nov-23 was tabled. **NOTED:** that the expenditure during this period under the powers granted by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 was £600 and that the Petty Cash balance as of 18-Jan-24 was £163.41.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments totalling £56,000.59 with VAT of £4,753.91.

A copy of the list of payments would be signed by Cllr Blunden.

91. BUDGET 2024/25

91.1 Cllr Beecroft, as F&GP Chair, introduced the draft budget to members. Each committee had provided F&GP and Full Council with its budget request.

A) Income	£ 14,625.36
Interest	£ 1,500
Clock Tower House Rental	£ 9,696
CTH Service Charge	£ 1,400
Licence Fee	£ 142.96
Christmas Festival Night	£ 800
Allotments	£ 1,243.20
B) Estimated Funds at 1 April 2024	£ 169,845.09
C) Expenditure	£ 441,580.58

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General Reserve	£ 70,000.
Committee Budgets	£ 262,215
Reserves	£ 109,365.58

D) Possible precept (A+B-C) £ 257,110.13

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Beecroft, **SECONDED** by Cllr Webster and unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the Council's budget of £262,215 for 2024/25.

It was therefore recommended to round the precept to £257,000. It had been calculated that the increase in precept would result in an annual Council Tax increase of £13.45 to a Band D property.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Nisbett, **SECONDED** by Cllr Beecroft and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the precept to be requested from Mid Sussex District Council for 2024/25 should be £257,000

The Council would produce an article on why the precept was being increased and what the money was being spent on.

92. APPOINTMENTS

92.1 Cllr Webster introduced the report and proposed policies. The policies set out the process a) for appointing Chair and Vice for Council and b) for appointments to committees (including Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs and appropriate training. The timescales during a council election year would be slightly different due to fitting in with statutory requirements. Cllr Webster thanked the Working Group for their work and Cllr Woolley for his comments regarding the policies.

It was **AGREED:**

- a) To implement the policies recommended by the Working Group.
- b) The Working Group be tasked with continuous review of the process and supporting procedures.
- c) Provide Full Council/F&GP with any recommendations relating to appointments and training.

The policies would be implemented with immediate effect. The Clerk would email members regarding timescales/key dates.

93. MATTERS ARISING AFTER THE PREPARATION OF THIS AGENDA, WHICH THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT. ANY SUCH MATTERS WILL BE FOR NOTING OR REFERRAL TO A FUTURE MEETING ONLY.

93.1 The Clerk hoped that the Clock Tower House Lease renewal would be resolved shortly.

The meeting finished at: 20:57.

DISCLAIMER

The attached minutes are DRAFT minutes. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information, statements and decisions recorded in them, their status will remain that of a draft until they are confirmed as a correct record at the subsequent meeting.

Next meeting:

21 March 2024