

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **MEETING** of **LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held on **THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2023** at King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 20:00

Parish Councillors:	Mr. W. Blunden (Chair)	Mrs. M. Hersey*	Mr. J. Stevens
	Mrs. V. Upton (Vice-Chair)	Mrs. A. Matthews	Mr. I. Wilson
	Mrs. L. Grace	Mr. R. Pickett	Mr. C. Wood
	Mr. S. Henton	Mr. R. Plass	

(*) Denotes absence

In attendance: Mr. D Parsons (Deputy Parish Clerk)

Also Present: Cllr G Wall, WSCC Lindfield & High Weald
Cllr J Ash-Edwards, Leader, MSDC and Lindfield Ward member

424. TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

424.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Hersey and the reasons for absence accepted. The Parish Clerk's apologies were also accepted.

425. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

425.1 The following declarations of interest were recorded:

Cllrs Blunden and Matthews advised that as allotment holders they had a personal interest in item 434.1. Cllr Grace advised that she is a member of the History Project Group, to whom a grant had been agreed by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

426. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF COUNCIL HELD ON 10th NOVEMBER 2022 (previously circulated)

426.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 November 2022. It was **AGREED** that the minutes would be signed by the Chairman as being a true record of that meeting.

427. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

427.1 There were no members of the public present.

428. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

428.1 The following announcements were made:

- **Business Plan Consultation** – Reminding members of the King Edward Hall session between 9:30am – 1pm on Saturday 14th January and seeking additional volunteers to the four members who had expressed their intention to attend.
- **Village Christmas Tree** – Thanking the 'removal group' of Andrew Funnell, Andrei Hadimbu, Richard Powell and Malcolm Grace for their work in clearing the tree and fittings away.

429. REPORTS BY COUNTY / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

429.1 West Sussex County Council

Cllr Wall provided the following updates:

- **Budget** – it was expected that the County Council would be utilising the additional percentage increase (up to 4.99%, from 2.99%) allowed by the government when setting its 2023-24 budget.
- **Health and Social Care** – the biggest single budget item, where significant challenges are being faced and efforts are being made to actively manage the situation and provide extra discharge beds and social workers, with daily update meetings and briefings being held.
- **Roads** – the Roads Minister recently visited Mid Sussex and was briefed on the challenges maintaining local roads. Until the cold snap in December WSCC had considered that the road repair approach had been working well but the extreme weather had proved extremely challenging, undoing much of the progress, and leading to a need for more emergency patching. 'what3words' had proved to be a useful tool in enabling residents to accurately report the location of problems. Cllr Wall advised that he was meeting with Richard Speller and John Cunningham, from WSCC Highways, in Lindfield on Tuesday 17th January to discuss current issues. He noted that Dukes Road was in a particularly poor state, recognising well known underlying issues, and that substantial

work is required to improve the situation. He considered it important that issues are clearly reported to WSCC as and when they are identified.

- **Traffic Restriction Orders (TROs)** the state of Black Hill was considered very disappointing and agreeing the proposed yellow lines at this location would hopefully allow MSDC enforcement to assist in turning the position around. The Wilderness TRO had received nine objections and he was taking account of these in formulating his recommendation as to the way forward. The TRO in Backwoods Close seemed close to reaching agreement. Finally, the van 'permanently' parked outside Flowercraft in the Lewes Road was of concern to many residents and a TRO may need to be considered to address the situation.

The Chair thanked Cllr Wall for his update, noting that the TROs were a no-win situation, as solving a particular issue inevitably would have some knock-on effects as affected vehicles sought other locations.

429.2 Mid Sussex District Council

Cllrs Lea, and Lea, were not in attendance. Cllr Ash-Edwards provided the following updates:

- **Roads** - the visit from the Roads Minister was well received and the County's Lane rental scheme for utilities undertaking works on the highway was considered a trailblazing model, which others are watching closely. Initial signs are that it is condensing the duration of works being sought. The duplicated trench works by different broadband providers was a concern and would hopefully also be improved going forwards.
- **Budgets** - the expectation is that MSDC will not need to use its reserves and will set a budget around a 2.75% increase. This would include plans to expand the bulky waste collection scheme, with a view to addressing fly tipping operators, and the green waste collection scheme, for which there is currently a significant waiting list.
- **Food Waste trial** – scheduled for one year, the biggest in West Sussex had received positive feedback, with c90% of Lindfield Residents fully participating. In 10 weeks, 88 tonnes of waste that would have gone to landfill has been collected across the three trial areas. Full roll out requires the county to invest in the infrastructure to deal with the increased food waste collected and other West Sussex Districts to participate to make this viable; further government support is also awaited.
- **Planning** - MSDC is working through the responses to the pre-Christmas consultation on the District Plan. This ends the approach of focussing developments on the largest settlements; noting that Lindfield simply can't take any more and looking more fully at the west of the district. It was hoped that the mooted changes in recent government announcements on planning would provide helpful flexibility going forward.
- **Hickmans Lane pavilion** – this is now largely signed off and works likely to commence in Q3.

The Chair thanked Cllr Ash Edwards for his update and questioned whether MSDC might outsource fly-tipping enforcement as had been seen elsewhere. Cllr Ash-Edwards advised this approach was not being considered, particularly as it had seen focus move towards 'minor' transgressions rather than addressing the material fly tipping problems as intended.

430. ACTIONS LIST

430.1 No issues outstanding.

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

431.1 None

432. PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE (P&TC)

432.1 Report by Cllr Plass on matters considered at the meetings held on: 22nd November 2022, 12th December 2022 and 10th January 2023.

34 applications were considered, of which 13 related to trees, two Lawful Development Certificates, and no objections were submitted.

- Lewes Road TRO –a meeting with HHTC is being arranged.
- Tree Applications – P&TC agreed a proposed policy to guide members on responses.
- Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) and Real Time Passenger Information / Bus Signs – new SIDs received and first one being tested in Lewes Road outside the office. Bus sign order now progressing.
- EV Charging – a robust response to WSCC is expected to result in the Appledore Gardens proposal being dropped and consideration will need to be given to potential alternative locations.
- Mid Sussex Constituency Review – objections were provided to the proposals to change the shape of Mid Sussex.

- Cycleways update - Cllr Grace has continued to attend this Scaynes Hill based group's meetings. Progress has effectively ceased as the proposed scheme does not fit with WSCC's focus on more urban routes and the group is considering its options.

432.2 To receive the Minutes of the meetings of the P&T Committee held on 22-Nov-22, 13-Dec-22, & 10-Jan-23 (if available), and to confirm their recommendations. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning & Traffic Committee held on 1-Nov-22, 22-Nov-22 and 13-Dec-22 be received, and their recommendations confirmed. The minutes of the meeting dated 10-Jan-23 were not yet available.

The Chair noted that the P&TC has a significant workload, meeting more frequently than other Council committees to be able to address the volume of applications and related matters considered. He thanked all those involved for their continuing hard work.

433. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE.

433.1 Report by Cllr Blunden on matters considered at the meeting held on 24 November 2022, to include any updates.

- Christmas festival – The Risk Assessment was agreed. Cllr Blunden considered the event to have been one of the most successful to date and he had received good reports from members of the public.
- Allotments – a request to remove branches from a tree which an allotment holder considered affects crop growth, was considered, and declined.
- Community Gardening – following a request, it was clarified that the Council's insurance cannot be used by independent groups to cover their activities.

433.2 To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the E&A Committee held on 24 November 2022 and to confirm their recommendations. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee held on 24th November 2022 be received, and their recommendations confirmed.

433.3 Climate Change (update from Cllr Wood) – the Sustainable Gardening Group continues to meet, with its members comprising Lindfield Horticultural Society, Lindfield Parish Council, All Saints Church gardening group, Fairer World Lindfield, NGS Open Gardens, Lindfield Rural Parish Council and Heather Martin. Cllr Grace advised that she attended the group's most recent meeting, during which it had decided to rename as 'Greener Lindfield' and proposed a monthly gardening tips article in Lindfield Life by volunteer writers, in turn hopefully generating interest for the group and future authors. Members **noted** these developments.

434. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.

434.1 Report by Cllr Henton on matters considered at the meeting held on 5-Jan-23, to include any updates. The various items below would cover the discussions held at the meeting.

434.2 To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the F&GP held on 3-Nov-22 and 5-Jan-23 (if available), & to confirm their recommendations. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the F&GP Committee held on 24th November 2022 be received, and their recommendations confirmed. The minutes of the 5th January 2023 meeting were not yet available.

434.3 Budget Progress including General Reserves expenditure to 31 December 2022 (if available).
Budget expenditure progress to 30 November 2022:

Committee / Activity / Reserve	Expenditure	Budget
F&GP	£95,034	£164,633
E&A	£33,223	£55,900
Allotments	£ 2,441	£2,500
P&T	£1,312	£5,000
General Reserve	£1,520	n/a
Total	£133,530	-

Income £189k precept, £6,464 rental plus miscellaneous £2,281, Total £197,745

434.4 Bank reconciliation (cash and investments) to 31 December 2022 (if available).

Bank Reconciliation at 31 December 2022	£s
Barclays current account	14,750.85
Barclays premium account	151,893.50
Nationwide building society	93,000.03
Petty Cash	158.78
Unpresented payments	0.00
Receipts not on bank statements	45.86
Closing balance	259,803.02

434.5 Summary of receipts and payments to 31 December 2022 (if available).

Not presented

434.6 To note the list of payments to 12 January 2023.

Not presented.

434.7 Toilets on the Common – Update.

Cllr Picket advised that MSDC are currently considering the revised Planning Application to address Changing Places legislation and the architects are reviewing potential contractors for the Council. In response to a question from Cllr Wilson, funding is to come from £84k allocated Capital Reserves and £106 monies held by MSDC.

435. BUDGET 2023/4

435.1 The Chair noted the work put in by F&GP and committee chairs in preparing the budget. Cllr Henton summarised the F&GP report dated 23rd December 2022, previously circulated to members, considering next year's budget. Total funds required £414,089 would require a precept of £226k (+£37k) which would represent a 20.12% increase over the previous year. Recognising the current cost of living pressures, F&GP proposed a precept of £216k (+14.29%, or £9.82pa for a Band D property) with the council running a £10k deficit. The report also modelled £5k and £15k deficits.

435.2 Cllr Upton proposed the 2023/4 budget of £414,089, with Councillor Plass seconding the proposal. Committee **agreed** the budget as proposed.

435.3 Cllr Plass proposed the 202/4 precept of £216k, which Cllr Stevens seconded. Committee **agreed** the precept accordingly.

435.4 The Chair advised that as usual the precept would be presented in the Council's Lindfield Life report, which should clearly explain the approach used to manage costs and the impact on residents. He also thanked the members of F&GP, alongside the Committee Chairs, Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer for the significant work that they had put in to compiling, reviewing, and exploring the appropriate options for the 2023-24 budget.

436. COMBERS TRUST

436.1 Committee **agreed** that Lester Corp should be (re)appointed as a trustee.

437. 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.

436.1 Members were reminded that with local elections due in May, care needs to be taken that all appropriate behaviours are respected, and a letter would be sent to all outlining the requirements.

436.2 Members reflected on the proposed yellow lines in The Wilderness highlighted by Cllr Wall at item 429 above and recognised that any queries in the interim could, if appropriate, be addressed by the Parish Office under the existing Delegated Authority.

The meeting finished at: 20:55.