

# LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **MEETING** of **LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held on **THURSDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2023** 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 Garry Wall (WSCC)  
Cllr Wood (MSDC)

## 46. TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

46.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Burns, Matthews, & Upton. The reasons for absence were accepted.

## 47. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

47.1 The following declarations of interest were received:

- i. Cllr Blunden declared a personal interest in item 10 as an Allotment Holder
- ii. Cllr Webster declared a personal interest in item 10 as an Allotment Holder

## 48. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

48.1 There were no members of the public present.

## 49. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

49.1 The Chairman advised:

A review of the Standing Orders relating to whether a Councillor not being a member of the committee can participate in the discussion. Advice was being sought from the West Sussex Association of Local Councils.

Eastern Road Nature Reserve – The Council is aware of resident's concerns over the work being undertaken by MSDC's contractor. The Council has reported these concerns to our MSDC ward members and MSDC officers.

Autumn Clean 2023 – The event will take place on 14 October. Members are asked to advise the office whether they can assist at the event.

## 50. REPORTS BY COUNTY / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

### 50.1 West Sussex County Council

Cllr Wall reported the following:

- The challenges to the County Council's finances
- Updates on the Lewes Road TRO
- He will seek to engage WSCC officers on potentially replacing the roadside pond bollards.
- An update on reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) in WSCC buildings

### 50.2 Mid Sussex District Council

Cllr Wood reported the following:

- An update on the condition of the Lindfield Bowls club pitch
- Concerns from local education providers over access to specialist support

## 51. ACTION LIST

51.1 The action list was **NOTED**.

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

52.1 There were no active consultations to respond to.

## 53. PLANNING, TRANSPORT & TRAFFIC COMMITTEE (PT&T)

53.1 Report on matters considered at the meetings held on 18-Jul-23, 8-Aug-23, & 31-Aug-23.  
In the absence of the Chair & Vice Chair the Clerk read out the following report:

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- PTTC has considered 30 planning applications in its last three meetings, with no objections submitted to MSDC
- For two applications, one of which was the pavilion on Hickmans Lane Recreation Ground, responses raised questions as to whether sustainability issues had been considered, referencing DP Policies 39 'Sustainable Design and Construction' and DP 42 'Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment'. Consequently a draft policy in this regard has been approved by PTTC and is to be referred to the Climate Change Working Group.
- An appeal has been received by MSDC in respect of Site B, Land at the entrance of Green Meadows, The Welkin – following their refusal for No.2 three-bedroom houses at this site. PTTC submitted a further comment to the Planning Inspectorate objecting to this appeal.
- In respect of TROs (double yellow lines) both Black Hill and Backwoods Close were approved by WSCC.
- RTPI – the unit in the High Street has been installed and appears to have been well received. WSCC are considering the own plans for a wide roll out of RTPI units (Phase 1 expected in November 2023 and it is proposed to await their conclusions before assessing the need for any further units to be installed by LPC.
- Cycleways – SHLAT have finalised their study and identified ~£0.5m S106 monies to support around 50% of the overall costings
- Three Consultations relating to proposed changes to the planning system have been issued by the government and PTTC is considering responses accordingly, likely to be under the Delegated Authority in view of timescales

53.2 To receive the Minutes of the meetings of the PT&T held on 18-Jul-23, 8-Aug-23, & 31-Aug-23 & to confirm their recommendations. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the P&T Committee held on 18-Jul-23, 8-Aug-23, and 31-Aug-23 be received, and their recommendations confirmed.

### 54. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE.

54.1 Report by Cllr Blunden on matters considered at the meeting held on 3-Aug-23, to include any updates. Cllr Blunden reported the following:

Denmans Lane Allotments – Earlier this week it was noticed that native hornets have taken up residence in a tree on the border of the allotment site. Hornets are important pollinators and predators and beneficial to the local ecosystem. We have put up notices advising allotment holders to keep clear of the area where the hornets are nesting.

King Edward Hall Village Clock – It was agreed to accept the quotations for replacing parts and the provision of scaffolding. We are now waiting for a date that the work will be carried out.

Wilderness Field – We understand that the final 50% grass cut will be conducted shortly.

54.2 To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the E&A held on 3-Aug-23, & to confirm their recommendations. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the E&A Committee held on 3-Aug-23 be received, and their recommendations confirmed.

54.3 Climate Change – Update from Cllr Wood.

Cllr Wood advised that the Working Group would be meeting in the next couple of weeks. At the meeting in August, the group had been looking at splitting the existing Climate Action Plan into two separate documents. Cllr Wood also gave an update on a community shredding scheme that was being promoted by Colin McFarlin.

### 55. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.

55.1 Report by Cllr Pickett on matters considered at the meeting held on 7-Sep-23, to include any updates. Cllr Pickett reported that most of the issues covered at the meeting were covered by later agenda points.

55.2 To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the F&GP held on 6-Jul-23, & to confirm their recommendations. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the F&GP Committee held on 6-Jul-23 be received, and their recommendations confirmed. The minutes of the meeting dated 7-Sep-23 were not yet available.

55.3 Budget Progress including General Reserves expenditure to 31-Jul-23. Budget expenditure progress to 31-Jul-23:

Committee / Activity / Reserve	Expenditure	Budget
F&GP	£ 50,346	£ 175,849

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E&A	£ 8,212	£ 54,975
Allotments	£ 1,000	£ 2,500
P&T	£ (4,044)	£ 8,000
General Reserve	£ 85	n/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 55,743</b>	<b>-</b>

Income to 31-Jul-23:

Description	£
Precept	£ 108,000
Interest	£ 685
Rental	£ 3,232
Service Charge	£ 159
Licence Fees	£ 141
Christmas Festival Night	£ 0
Allotments	£ 1,124
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 113,342</b>

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

Bank Reconciliation at 31-May-23	£
Barclays current account	£ 14,621.64
Barclays premium account	£ 128,396.42
Nationwide building society	£ 93,000.03
Petty Cash	£ 117.55
Unpresented payments	£ 100
Receipts not on bank statements	£ 114.53
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>£236,150.17</b>

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

55.5 Summary of receipts and payments to 31-Jul-23

The list of receipts and payments were noted.

55.6 To note the list of payments to the 14-Sep-23 and authorise payments.

The list of payments drawn since the Council meeting held on 13-Jul-23 was tabled. **NOTED:** that the expenditure during this period under the powers granted by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 was £250 and that the Petty Cash balance as of 14-Sep-23 was £112.25.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments totalling £29,667.36 with VAT of £1,892.62. A copy of the list of payments was signed by Cllr Blunden.

55.7 Toilets on the Common – To consider the report.

Members had asked to consider the schedule of fees from our architects/agents for the anticipated work. A concern was raised as to what would happen if the grant application was unsuccessful and whether the Council would still be liable for the proposed fees. It was explained that only limited expenditure would be agreed upon with the architects before MSDC had decided on the grant application.

It was **AGREED:**

- a) to accept the architect's fee schedule (subject to successful grant application to MSDC).
- b) to instruct the architects to proceed with items

55.8 Village Orderly Vehicle

Members were asked to consider the recommendation from F&GP.

It was **AGREED** by a majority that:

- the vehicle type required for the role is a van.
- the van be electric-powered.
- to lease a used electric van on a two-year agreement, including a service contract (max value £7,000 for the contract length).
- to confirm that the expenditure will be met from the general reserve.
- to purchase insurance for the vehicle.
- to provide authority to the Clerk to sign the relevant contracts.

- the Clerk be provided delegated authority, in conjunction with the F&GP Committee Chair & Vice Chair, to make decisions relating to the running of the van.

55.9 Internal Auditor Arrangements 2023/24

Members were advised that our current auditor was offering to freeze their hourly rate for three years if the council agreed to appoint them for that period. It was felt that this offered good value for money.

It was **AGREED** to instruct Mulberry & Co for three years as the Council's Internal Auditor.

55.10 External Auditor – External Auditor Report and Certificate

Members **NOTED** the External Auditor Report and Certificate for 2022/23.

55.11 Budget 2024/25 – To agree on the procedure for setting the budget

Members were asked to consider a report setting out the proposed budget-setting process.

It was **AGREED** to: a) ratify the proposed timeline for the 2024/25 budget setting, and b) authorise the Committee Chairs & F&GP Vice Chair and officers to meet, when required, between now and January to consider the latest financial figures and how this impacts the proposed precept for 2024/25.

**56. COUNCILLOR APPOINTMENTS, INDUCTION & TRAINING**

55.1 Cllr Webster introduced his report. It was proposed that the Council create a Working Group to draft a policy and procedure document for appointments to positions within the Council, the induction of new councillors and the training of new and current Council Members.

The following points were noted:

- There would be benefits in having an agreed policy and procedure for the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs (to both Council and the committees), particularly when there is more than one candidate.
- A clear process should be agreed upon for the collection of Member's previous experience and skills is established that drives their appointment to appropriate Committees.
- A clear process should be agreed for how and when a training needs analysis should be conducted for each Council Member that leads to the provision and uptake of training

It was **AGREED**

a) to create a Working Group tasked with considering the points raised.<sup>(1)</sup>

b) The Working Group would be formed of the following members; Cllr Webster, Cllr Beecroft, Cllr Grace, & Cllr Upton.

c) To produce a report for the F&GP committee (4 January 2024), and the Full Council (18 January 2024) to consider.

d) In addition, the Clerk:

- i) advises the Working Group on the relevant legislation
- ii) obtains input from relevant third parties (West Sussex Association of Local Councils, Society of Local Council Clerks, and other local authorities).

**57. 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.**

57.1 There were no matters arising.

**58. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [AND PRESS]: TO CONSIDER WHETHER A RESOLUTION SHOULD BE MOVED UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 3(D) AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PUBLIC BODIES ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT 1960 SECTION 1(2), TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FROM THE FOLLOWING PART OF THE MEETING, BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED OR FOR OTHER SPECIAL REASONS (STAFFING MATTERS).**

58.1 It was proposed by Cllr Wood and seconded by Cllr Upton to exclude the press and the public. It was **AGREED** to exclude the press and public.

The public part of the meeting finished at 21:10

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 6 of the accompanying report.

**59. CLOCK TOWER HOUSE LEASE**

59.1 The Clerk provided members with an update.

The meeting finished at: 21:12