

Findon Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Monday 29 July 2024 at 7.30pm in Nepcote Hall

Present: Cllrs Smith (Chairman), Wilson, Gilbert, Hellett, Robinson, Peskett; Whitby, Kenna, Dean (part), and Toughey (part).

In Attendance: Clerk Miss F MacLeod, West Sussex County Council (WSSC) Cllr Urquhart, and members of the public.

Item No		<u>Action By</u>
24.77	To appoint a Chairman for the ensuing year	
	Cllr Smith had been acting as the Interim Chairman following the resignation of Linda Martin on 28 June 2024. There being no other nominations, Cllr Smith was appointed Chairman for the ensuing year. The Chairman and Councillors recognised and appreciated the hard work by Linda Martin.	
24.78	To appoint a Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year.	
	There being no other nominations, Cllr Wilson was appointed Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year.	
24.79	To receive and note apologies for absence	
	None.	
24.80	Chairman's announcements	
	None.	
24.81	Declarations of Interest on items on the Agenda	
	Cllr Wilson declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 24.96 b as he had an expenses claim. Cllr Wilson would leave the meeting for this item and take no part in any discussion.	
24.82	To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 17/6/2024 and 27/6/2024	
	It was proposed and seconded that the minutes dated 17 June 2024 and 27 June 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman.	
24.83	Councillor co-option and vacancies	
	Two Expressions of Interest were considered at the meeting. At the invitation of the Chairman, Kelly Dean and Stephen Toughey separately provided background to their applications. Both candidates left the meeting and. Following a vote, both were unanimously co-opted to the Council. Resolved: that Findon Parish Council 1. Co-opts Kelly Dean and Stephen Toughey to the Council with immediate effect; and 2. Appoints Kelly Dean and Stephen Toughey to the Planning Committee. Cllrs Dean and Toughey completed their Declaration of Office and would complete their Register of Interests and Code of Conduct to return to the Clerk. Cllrs Dean and Toughey joined the meeting.	

Dated:

Signed:

24.84	Update on implementation of actions not covered elsewhere on the Agenda	
	The report was noted.	
24.85	To receive a report from WSCC	
	WSCC Cllr Urquhart recorded her thanks to Linda Martin for her work with FPC. In addition, FPC had done all it legally could regarding the traveller incursion in June 2024, and that all anti-social behaviour must be reported by residents to Sussex Police to increase the priority level. The Safer Schools initiative was being rolled out and could prove very useful for Findon during the next round. A Local Flood Risk Survey consultation was taking place by way of an on-line survey. £40m had been allocated for road resurfacing/potholes, which was not funded by Government.	
24.86	Public Question Time (PQT)	
	PQT opened at 7.56pm A representative from the North Green Rescue Group recognised that FPC had taken positive action regarding the new bunding and that the recent traveller incursion had brought the community together. Thanks were also due to Simply D&B Construction Ltd providing the soil etc for the bunds and the volunteers that helped with the build. The retractable metal post in the Wattle House could be used behind the vehicle access at the eastern end. He suggested that urgent action be taken to future-proof the village at Homewood and The Oval. Cllr Wilson advised that the land was owned by Arun District Council (ADC) and he had already contacted ADC on this matter. Cllr Smith advised that FPC was required to go through the planning process with the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) and it would be helpful to have an evidence base to support the retrospective application for the bunds. Cllr Wilson proposed to keep the orange tape in place until the bund had been completed. PQT closed at 8.11pm.	
24.87	Findon Village Woodland Pre-school	
	The Chairman invited Yvonne Wilson and Steve Smith to provide an update on progress, summarised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OFSTED inspection in February 2024 was unfavourable and parents had been unable to use free school places as a result; • A further inspection in July 2024 was favourable and meant that funding could be given for all children after the Autumn 2024 term; • Although only 13 children were currently registered (down from 34 as some have moved up to St John the Baptist School) enquiries were starting to come in; • The School could weather a £10k loss in Autumn 2024; • All staff had been retained; and • The School had invested in a Forest School practitioner and equipment. There were access issues to the woodland area including Giant Hogweed and stinging nettles, a the ability to have the site cleared and kept clear all year round was a priority. Water butts were suggested as an alternative to the soakaway and grants could be available from Rampion2, Biffa, and Southern Water. Cllrs Dean and Smith offered to research grants and external contractors respectively. It was noted that there was only 5 weeks	

	<p>before the Autumn term started. FPC raised no objection to games such as hopscotch being played on tarmac.</p> <p>Resolved: that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Findon Parish Council allocates a maximum of £3k for ground clearance; 2. Three quotes are requested as a matter of urgency to complete the work before the start of the Autumn term; and 3. Cllr Whitby to factor in maintenance of the woodland area into the Open Spaces Volunteers work schedule. 	
24.88	The North Verge	
	<p>Cllr Smith reported that the construction of the bund was fully funded and that the robust new fencing had been installed. Some of the old fencing would be stored in the Wattle house for potential reuse. Cllrs Smith and Wilson will visit the site again on 30 July 2024.</p>	
24.89	Sheep Fair constitution	
	<p>The signed copy by the Sheep Fair was awaited for countersignature by FPC.</p>	
24.90	Defibrillators for the village	
	<p>Cllr Smith reported that the defibrillator at the Black Horse was awaiting installation. Cllr Wilson advised that training had been tentatively arranged for 9 August 2024, run by Yvonne Wilson. It was agreed that the training be rescheduled and Cllr Wilson would ask if a training defibrillator could be made available.</p>	
24.91	South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) award.	
	<p>Following Linda Martin's resignation a Working Group needed to be set up to progress the potential for history interpretation boards/trails at Nephcote and Pond Greens, utilising the CIL award of £2575.00. The amount of CIL funding awarded to FPC in 2023 was £6338.00 had not yet been allocated to a specific project.</p> <p>Resolved: that a Working Group of Cllrs Gilbert, Robinson, Dean, and Toughey be set up to progress the use of CIL.</p>	
24.92	Public Works Loan (PWL) – use of contingency funding	
	<p>Lead Cllr Hellett introduced the report (as previously circulated) regarding the balance of PWL funds available, and provided the background of the PWL for the benefit of the new councillors.</p> <p>Resolved: that Findon Parish Council ringfences the amount of £14,616.00 pending clarity of the future works in the Village Hall car park.</p>	
24.93	Clerk Report	
	<p>The Clerk referred to the report (as previously circulated) and updated that since the report was written an offer of Code of Conduct training had been received from Aldwick Parish Council, taking place on 5 September 2024.</p> <p>Resolved: that Findon Parish Council</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognises the contribution of Linda Martin by way of an appropriate gift; 2. Seeks guidance from ProcessMatters2 regarding the use of WhatsApp. 	
24.94	Reports from FPC Committees for noting/ratifying	
	a) Planning	
	No update.	

	b) Finance & Governance	
	No update.	
24.95	Reports from Working Groups and Outside Bodies for noting/ratifying	
	<p>a) Open Spaces Working Group/Wild Flower Working Group Lead Cllr Whitby referred to the report for the Open Spaces Volunteers Working Group (as previously circulated). It was agreed that there was a need to create a work management programme for the Open Spaces Working Group, which would also provide an audit trail of activities. Resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Cllrs Whitby, Smith, and Wilson draw up a draft work management programme and scope to bring to a future meeting; 2. The purchase of two safety helmets be purchased by Mr Carr at a cost of £6.99 each . <p>b) Trees Working Group Lead Cllr Wilson reported that no further trees would be planted until Autumn 2024.</p> <p>c) Allotment Gardens Lead Cllr Wilson would advise the Clerk of the plot holders with overgrown plots and dilapidated shed for further contact to resolve.</p> <p>d) Village Hall Trust. Lead Cllr Hellett reported that Chanctonbury Hall would be closed in early August to enable floor repairs, and that the toilet floors now also needed attention.</p> <p>e) Community Resilience Plan (CRP). Cllr Smith requested that another councillor take the lead on the CRP due to his high commitments with FPC. To be agreed at the September 2024 FPC meeting.</p> <p>f) Parking/Village Signage Working Group Lead Cllr Kenna had drafted an initial report and would circulate it to all councillors for feedback prior to consideration at a future meeting.</p> <p>g) Nepcote Green Pond Restoration Lead Cllr Gilbert reported that a padlock was needed for the gate at the west end of the pond and he would action this and circulate the key combination to all councillors. Pete the Pond would provide a team for a day to tackle the weed and silt accumulation. FPC would 'shadow' the team to enable future work to be carried out in house. The Open Spaces Volunteers would carry out other vegetation maintenance. Resolved: that Findon Parish Council allocate £900.00 for the pond work by Pete the Pond.</p> <p>h) Assets of Community Value (ACV) Cllr Hellett advised that this was still work in progress. A report would be taken to a future meeting.</p> <p>i) Wattle House Feasibility Study Working Group Lead Cllr Gilbert provided background on the Wattle House for the benefit of the new councillors.</p>	

	<p>j) Findon Village Pre-School Portacabin Working Group Lead Cllr Wilson advised that the cost per shed to replace the existing container was £1200.00. Resolved: that two sheds at a cost of £1200.00 be purchased to replace the existing container.</p> <p>k) Provision of additional litter and dog bins Cllr Whitby reported that she was in negotiation with Arun District Council on prices and costs on existing/contracts.</p>	
24.96	Finance	
	<p>a) Receipts and bank reconciliation The bank reconciliation for June 2024 (as previously circulated) was noted and approved. Cllr Wilson left the meeting at 9.17pm and took no part in the following item.</p> <p>b) Payments. The payments of £10435.74 made in July 2024 to date (as previously circulated) were noted and approved. A new invoice from Simply D&B Construction Ltd for £2660.00 regarding bunding work as approved for payment. Cllr Wilson rejoined the meeting at 9.19pm</p>	
24.97	Items to be referred to next Agenda not already included in the minutes	
	<p>Use of WhatsApp for councillors; roster for availability of councillors, update on Findon Swimming Pool. The meeting closed at 9.23pm – date of next meeting 9 September 2024.</p>	