

Findon Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Monday 9 September 2024 at 7.30pm in Nepcote Hall

Present: Cllrs Smith (Chairman), Wilson, Hellett, Whitby, Kenna, Dean, and Toughey.

In Attendance: Clerk Miss F MacLeod, and members of the public.

| Item No | | <u>Action By</u> |
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| 24.98 | To receive and note apologies for absence | |
| | Apologies were received and noted from Cllrs Gilbert, Peskett, and Robinson, West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Cllr Urquhart and Arun District Council (ADC) Cllr Bicknell. | |
| 24.99 | Chairman's announcements | |
| | Name badges were given to Cllrs Dean and Toughey. | |
| 24.100 | Declarations of Interest on items on the Agenda | |
| | Cllr Wilson and the Clerk declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 24.114 b as they had expenses claims. Cllr Wilson and the Clerk would leave the meeting for this item and take no part in any discussion. | |
| 24.101 | To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 29/7/2024 | |
| | It was proposed and seconded that the minutes dated 29 July 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman. | |
| 24.102 | Update on implementation of actions not covered elsewhere on the Agenda | |
| | The report was noted. The consensus from the meeting was to take action as proposed in the Clerk's letter to the landowners regarding the Monarchs Way and Cllr Dean would contact them to discuss. Cllrs were reminded to complete their biogs for the FPC web site. | |
| 24.103 | To receive a report from WSCC and ADC | |
| | No update. | |
| 24.104 | Public Question Time (PQT) | |
| | <p>PQT opened at 7.44pm</p> <p>Mr Fullalove provided background into the damage done to his shed on the Allotment Gardens last year by a large branch from a tree on ADC land and the ongoing dispute over the insurance claim with ADC. ADC had told him that no buildings were allowed on the allotment and it was against the terms of the FPC Tenancy Agreement. However the FPC Agreement clearly stated under para 7e that this was not the case and he would be contacting ADC again. FPC would support him and contact ADC as well. Representatives from Simply D&B Construction reported that the giant hogweed near the Pre-School had been cleared and the roots sprayed. Grass seed would be put down however Cllr Wilson raised concerns that weeds would come through if no suitable membrane/woodchip was laid down. This could also take the form of a nature walk and Cllr Wilson would liaise with the Pre School. Simply D&B Construction would provide options re the above for consideration at a future meeting.</p> <p>PQT closed at 7.54pm.</p> | FM |

Signed:

Dated:

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| 24.105 | David Hutchison update | |
| | <p>The Chairman welcomed David Hutchison to the meeting to provide an update on proposed housing options in the Findon Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP) 2016-2035 (Amended February 2020) summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was being reviewed by government and out for consultation – is enough housing being delivered etc ? • The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) would identify the main settlements for any new housing ‘absorption’ that may be required; • A key starting point was Call for Sites and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which would identify and assess new potential sites and reassess previously rejected sites; • The sites at land east of Elm Rise and at Soldiers Field House would remain as allocated sites in the South Downs Local Plan; • Potential additional housing allocation sites, if required to meet SDNPA assessed local housing need, would include a review of possible sites identified in the FNDP, initially via confidential consultation with FPC; • The South Downs Local Plan, also currently under review, would take priority regarding policies, however should work alongside the FNDP, e.g. delivering dwellings with a focus on local need; and • The SHLAA update was due to be published this autumn and FPC should take the opportunity to comment on the assessments of Findon sites. The assessments were not site allocations, that happens later during the Local Plan Review, when FPC would have a further opportunity to comment. However, if a site was assessed in the SHLAA as ‘rejected’, perhaps wrongly or at odds with the FNDP assessment, it would be too late to change this status at the site allocation stage in the Local Plan Review. It was therefore important the FPC responded to the SHLAA update as well as the Local Plan Review. <p>David Hutchison left the meeting at 8.18pm.</p> | |
| 24.106 | Sheep Fair constitution | |
| | The signed copy by the Sheep Fair was still awaited for countersignature by FPC and Cllr Smith would write to Simon Stace on this matter. | |
| 24.107 | Defibrillators for the village | |
| | <p>Cllr Smith confirmed that the cabinet from an old defibrillator had been destroyed and therefore a new cabinet was needed. It was suggested that Cllr Wilson reschedule the training for November 2024 as this should allow sufficient time to promote the event including the used of a training defibrillator. Cllr Dean would draft a Facebook page for the event and circulate to councillors.</p> <p>Resolved: that the Clerk orders a new weatherproof heated and locked defibrillator cabinet from Andrew Deptford for approx. £495.00 + VAT.</p> | <p>JW</p> <p>KD</p> <p>FM</p> |
| 24.108 | Grass cutting tender process | |
| | Lead Cllr Smith advised that he working on a draft Tender document which would be circulated for councillors to review at a future meeting. Cllr Wilson would provide details of the locations and frequency of all current | |

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| | grass cuts to feed into the tender. The Tender would include both usage/cost options of a 3 rd party owned mower and an FPC owned mower. | |
| 24.109 | Use of WhatsApp by Findon Parish Council | |
| | The Clerk introduced the report (as previously circulated) regarding the potential use of WhatsApp. Cllr Smith suggested the set-up of a private group using individual personal names for urgent and immediate communications only. Resolved: that the Clerk contacts Maureen Chaffe, ProcessMatters2 to discuss the suggestion by Cllr Smith. | FM |
| 24.110 | Availability of Councillors | |
| | Cllr Smith introduced the item for a weekly roster of councillors to be available to provide support if needed. Roster dates would be circulated to councillors. Cllr Smith also suggested that as FPC was only one councillor short, in principle each councillor should have at least one live project to lead on, as well as membership of Working Groups. FPC was in agreement. | |
| 24.111 | Clerk Report | |
| | The Clerk referred to the report (as previously circulated). Attention was drawn to the Flood Risk Strategy item in the report and councillors could respond as individuals. FPC was happy with the proposed response from Cllr Smith (as previously circulated to councillors) to the NPPF consultation. Resolved: that Findon Parish Council 1. Wishes to take up the offer as outlined in para 1.3 (subject to availability) and extend it to wider Findon community groups; 2. Responds to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Consultation. | FM FM |
| 24.112 | Reports from FPC Committees for noting/ratifying | |
| | a) Planning | |
| | No update. | |
| | b) Finance & Governance | |
| | No update. | |
| 24.113 | Reports from Working Groups and Outside Bodies for noting/ratifying | |
| | 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) and the progress of the work schedule management with the Working Group (WG). It was unclear why work on behalf of St John the Baptist School had been included by the WG. Consideration could be given for the WG to be split into three distinct areas (special projects, regular activities, everything else) although it was recognised that not all volunteers are able to turn up every week. A response would be drafted to go to the Working Group via Mr Carr in response to his recent email regarding the WG activities. A Councillor would attend an Open Spaces WG session and explain the rationale behind the work schedule, prioritisation, and Health & Safety reinforcement to achieve a common goal for the village. Since the report had been published, a need for additional hi-viz jackets had been identified for the volunteers at a cost of £254.64 excl VAT. Resolved: that Findon Parish Council authorises the purchase of additional hi-viz jackets at a cost of £254.64 excl VAT. | |

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| | <p>b) Trees Working Group Lead Cllr Wilson reported that a couple of trees had minor damage due to grass cutting. A Tree meeting would be held on 10 September 2024 to discuss Autumn working arrangements. Cllrs Wilson and Whitby were thanked for their work in ensuring the plaques were clean and visible on the trees by the large hedge on North Verge. The Opens Spaces Working Group would include this in their agreed schedule for the future. Approx 80-90 saplings were in the nursery and will be planted throughout the village (including the north areas) and in conjunction with WSCC where appropriate.</p> <p>c) Allotment Gardens Lead Cllr Wilson advised the Clerk of the plot holders with overgrown plots and dilapidated shed for further contact to resolve. There had been a noticeable unauthorised build up of garden waste on the Allotments and Cllr Wilson would contact ADC to see if they would collect additional black bags. Should this incur a charge, then consideration would be given to an 'across the board increase' in plot rentals to cover the cost.</p> <p>d) Village Hall Trust. Lead Cllr Hellett reported that Chanctonbury Hall floor repairs had been completed, and the work on the toilets was underway. The Trust Chairman would be stepping down by the end of 2024.</p> <p>e) Community Resilience Plan (CRP). Cllr Smith advised that Cllr Toughey would also be involved with the Plan.</p> <p>f) Parking/Village Signage Working Group Lead Cllr Kenna referred to her comprehensive report (as previously circulated) and provided additional background information for the benefit of councillors. Discussion took place on the suggestions for action in the report and in particular regarding the potential to use the Village Hall car park for school pick up/drop off and to involve the pupils parents and PTA for maintenance and safety elements. The land referred to in section 2.2.3 5 was not considered appropriate as it was owned by The Willows. Resolved: that the Working Group carries out further investigation on the following as detailed in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.1 road improvements; • 2.2.1 signage (all); • 2.2.2 new village entrance signage (all); • 2.2.3 parking solutions (1, 2, 3, and 4) <p>g) Nephote Green Pond Restoration Lead Cllr Gilbert confirmed that the restoration project could now be closed. Cllrs Wilson, Kenna and Toughey would work to clear the pond of any weed etc this week and the lifebuoy would be put in place on 10 September 2024.</p> <p>h) Assets of Community Value (ACV) Cllr Hellett advised that the latest criteria/process for applying for the registration of an ACV had been reviewed, and Patching Village had been used as an example for successful ACV applications.</p> | <p>FM</p> |
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| | <p>i) Wattle House Feasibility Study Working Group Lead Cllr Gilbert advised that a meeting would be set up with the SDNPA Conservation Officer to discuss options and approach .</p> <p>j) Findon Village Pre-School Portacabin Working Group Cllr Dean offered to investigate relevant water saving grants/projects that might assist the Working Group.</p> <p>k) Provision of additional litter and dog bins Lead Cllr Whitby referred to her comprehensive report including an update from the Litter Collection Team (as previously circulated). Resolved that Findon Parish Council agrees to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of existing bins as per para 2.1 of the report; • Purchase of new bins as per para 2.2 of the report; and • Costings for seven new bins (four dog waste bins cost to buy and install £1423.44 incl VAT; annual fee for waste collection £1434.88 incl VAT) (three litter bins cost to buy and install £1426.76 incl VAT; annual fee for waste collection £1044.78 incl VAT) as per para 2.3 of the report. <p>l) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Working Group Following discussions with local teenagers, they were not in favour of any proposed outdoor gym equipment and would prefer an upgraded Mult Use Games Area (MUGA). Cllr Toughey had spoken to Steyning Parish Council regarding its outdoor equipment area which had received funding and was considered very successful.</p> | |
| 24.114 | Finance | |
| | <p>a) Receipts and bank reconciliation The bank reconciliations for July and August 2024 (as previously circulated) were noted and approved. Cllr Wilson and the Clerk left the meeting at 10.07pm and took no part in the following item.</p> <p>b) Payments. The payments of £8908.82 made in September 2024 to date (as previously circulated) were noted and approved.. Cllr Wilson and the Clerk rejoined the meeting at 10.08pm</p> <p>c) Resolved: that the annual FPC insurance renewal premium with Hiscox Insurance be approved at a cost of £2400.05 wef 1 October 2024.</p> <p>d) Resolved: that a Direct Debit be set up with EDF for the Wattle House electrical supply.</p> | |
| 24.115 | Items to be referred to next Agenda not already included in the minutes | |
| | <p>None. The meeting closed at 10.23pm – date of next meeting 21 October 2024.</p> | |