

Findon Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Monday 21 October 2024 at 7.30pm in Nepcote Hall

Present: Cllrs Smith (Chairman), Wilson, Gilbert, Hellett, Peskett, Whitby, Kenna, Dean, and Toughey.
In Attendance: Clerk Miss F MacLeod, West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Cllr Urquhart and members of the public.

Item No		<u>Action By</u>
24.116	To receive and note apologies for absence	
	Apologies were received and noted from Cllr Robinson.	
24.117	Chairman's announcements	
	Reference was made to the long duration of the meeting held on 9 September 2024.	
24.118	Declarations of Interest on items on the Agenda	
	None.	
24.119	To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 9/9/2024	
	It was proposed and seconded that the minutes dated 9 September 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman.	
24.120	Update on implementation of actions not covered elsewhere on the Agenda	
	The report was noted. The Clerk would contact local organisations before the New Year to garner interest on the Online Safety presentation.	
24.121	To receive a report from WSCC.	
	<p>WSCC Cllr Urquhart reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant improvement had been recognised with the Fire Risk Assessment and no aspects required action; • Sussex Police has opted out of the Safer in Sussex initiative. However the Police and Crime Commissioner, together with the Chief Constable for Sussex continue to lead on this at a national level. Speedwatch teams will continue to collect data; • The Re-Use shop in Billingshurst has proved successful and, as a result, WSCC is creating a grant funding scheme to help initiatives such as local Repair Shops. Further details are expected later in 2024. 	
24.122	Public Question Time (PQT)	
	<p>PQT opened at 8.06pm.</p> <p>Two representatives from the Findon Village Woodland Preschool raised the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The kitchen area had damp walls and flooring during the last two weeks and the portacabin roof was leaking again; • Funds were available for short-term fixes until summer 2025; • Options for a replacement structure included a new build (very expensive), modular portacabin using existing concrete base, change to a commercial basis rather than the current charity status (would need to accommodate 50 children to make viable); 	

Signed:

Dated:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funding opportunities were limited due to the Preschool receiving Early Years funding; 24 children will be attending from January 2025; and The Preschool was an important conduit for children to the St John the Baptist Primary School <p>The Portacabin Working Group would pick up the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr Smith – feasibility for options/grant funding ; Cllr Wilson – obtain quotes for short term fixes; and Cllr Gilbert and Hellett – consider longer term options and liaise with the Primary School. <p>PQT closed at 8.22pm.</p>	
24.123	Findon Winter Management Plan (WMP)	
	<p>The Clerk introduced the WMP documentation (as previously circulated). A request was made for the snow shovels etc to be moved to a more central location in the village such as the Open Spaces Volunteers area.</p> <p>Resolved: that Findon Parish Council approves the 2024/25 Findon Winter Management Plan for publication.</p>	FM
24.124	Community Orchard for Findon Village	
	<p>The Findon Tree Warden, Matthew Ward, introduced his report (as previously circulated) and discussion took place, summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six trees would provide sufficient evidence that the FPC-owned parcel of land behind the Village Hall and the Pre-School building was suitable; Child access to the orchard would enhance the Forest School activities; Villagers would be able to walk to the orchard using the existing track to the Multi Use Game Area (MUGA); Despite the recent clearance work, Giant Hogwood could return and further specialist work was required at a cost of £1400.00; There was potential for an orchard to be planted at an alternative site such as Nepcote Green/North Verge without impacting on the Sheep Fair and Cllrs Smith and Wilson would assess; and Reference was made to the orchards established in Slindon and Steyning and their community use and benefits. <p>Resolved: that Findon Parish Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Agrees in principle to the concept of a Community Orchard in an appropriate and accessible location(s); Approves an initial budget of £300.00 for a Community Orchard; and Approves the cost of £1400.00 for specialist work regarding Giant Hogweed removal. 	SS/JW
24.125	Proposal for partial double yellow lines in Cross Lane	
	<p>Cllr Dean introduced the item and provided background to the proposal. Cllr Dean explained that WSCC Highways were willing to fix the potholes at the location, however residents had cut back into the verges for parking and this had caused damage to the sub-structure and left large potholes constantly filled with water. In addition to continue reporting anti-social parking to Operation Crackdown, WSCC Highways had advised to apply for a Traffic Regulation Order for double yellow lines for 30 metres at the location. WSCC Cllr Urquhart advised that as residents in the Parish had</p>	

	previously objected to double yellow lines in the village, community support for this proposal must be evidenced. Additionally, white lines could be investigated as an alternative. Cllr Dean would discuss options with WSCC Highways.	KD
24.126	Sheep Fair constitution	
	Cllr Smith understood that the Constitution would be signed off on behalf of the Sheep Fair by the end of October 2024, ready for counter-signing by FPC at the meeting on 2 December 2024.	
24.127	Defibrillators for the village	
	Cllr Smith confirmed that the new cabinet had been delivered for installation at the Black Horse. Cllr Wilson would co-ordinate the installation.	
24.128	Grass cutting tender process	
	Lead Cllr Smith advised that the draft Tender document was being reviewed prior to circulating to councillors for consideration at a future FPC meeting.	
24.129	Availability of Councillors	
	Cllr Smith explained that a councillor 'on call' would only need to be available on a weekly rotating basis to assist the Chairman if appropriate.	
24.130	Clerk Report	
	The Clerk referred to the report (as previously circulated). Attention was drawn to the two benches on Pond Green, one of which could be replaced by the memorial bench detailed in para 1.2 of the report. This would be subject to a check for existing memorial plaques on the benches. Resolved: that Findon Parish Council 1. Agrees in principle to the request for a memorial bench as per para 2.1 of the report; and; 2. Does not wish to purchase additional items from the RBL Remembrance range.	FM
24.131	Reports from FPC Committees for noting/ratifying	
	a) Planning	
	Following a suggestion that the SDNPA should advise applicants when the FPC Planning Committee would be considering their applications so that they could attend the meeting if they wished, it was felt that as this information was already published on the FPC website and both Notice Boards, this would not be necessary.	
	b) Finance & Governance	
	The Clerk set out the process for setting the precept/budget/reserves for the financial year 2025/26. Councillors were asked to provide the Clerk with financial information to inform a working draft for consideration at a future F&G meeting.	ALL
	WSCC Cllr Urquhart left the meeting at 8.42pm.	
24.132	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). Following a recent Risk Assessment review, it was identified that additional items such as a fire extinguisher, protective gloves, hand sanitisers	

	<p>were needed and a budget of £500.00 to purchase items was requested. A second Working Group on Saturdays was under investigation. Cllr Whitby was congratulated on the positive progress on the work programme.</p> <p>Resolved: that Findon Parish Council approves a budget of £500.00 for additional protective items.</p> <p>b) Trees Working Group Lead Cllr Wilson reported it had been a quiet month, however it was expected to be busy again in the New Year. A meeting of the Working Group would be held on 6 November 2024.</p> <p>c) Allotment Gardens Lead Cllr Wilson advised that ADC had carried out the work on the fencing and the Open Spaces Volunteers would clear the garden waste. The Clerk would contact the two identified plot holders regarding the condition of their plots by the end of the year.</p> <p>d) Village Hall Trust. Lead Cllr Hellett would arrange for Cllrs Kenna and Smith to present parking proposals to the Trust Committee at its next meeting.</p> <p>e) Community Resilience Plan (CRP). Cllrs Smith and Toughy were working on the draft Plan.</p> <p>f) Parking/Village Signage Working Group Lead Cllr Kenna advised that a report would be brought for consideration at the December FPC meeting, together with quotes relating to ‘entrance to village’ signage if available.</p> <p>g) Assets of Community Value (ACV) Lead Cllr Hellett would bring a report on progress to a future meeting.</p> <p>h) Wattle House Feasibility Study Working Group Lead Cllr Gilbert advised that a positive meeting had been held with the SDNPA Conservation Officer to discuss options and approach .</p> <p>i) Findon Village Pre-School Portacabin Working Group No update. (see Agenda item 24.122)</p> <p>j) Provision of additional litter and dog bins Lead Cllr Whitby advised that the bins approved by FPC at its meeting on 9 September 2024 had been ordered and relocation of two bins was in hand with ADC.</p> <p>k) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Working Group Cllr Toughy would provide a report with details of outdoor gym equipment at the December 2024 FPC meeting. The Clerk advised that the CIL Annual Monitoring Return had now been received from the SDNPA which must be published on the FPC website no later than 31 December 2024. The Clerk would also upload all relevant background documentation to the Teams Working Group.</p>	
24.133	Finance	
	<p>a) Receipts and bank reconciliation The bank reconciliation for September 2024 (as previously circulated) was noted and approved.</p> <p>b) Payments and progress of new signatories Mandate</p>	

	<p>The payments of £15968.44 made in October 2024 to date (as previously circulated) were noted and approved. Cllr Wilson advised that an additional shed was now needed for the Open Spaces Volunteers to safely accommodate their equipment. A shed and base had been sourced at short notice from Skinner Sheds, who were relocating, at a highly discounted price of £1300.00 incl VAT. The completed Mandate was posted to HSBC on 30 September 2024 and no confirmation had been received to date regarding the updated Mandate.</p> <p>Resolved: that Findon Parish Council approves the purchase of a shed and base from Skinners Sheds for £1300.00 incl VAT.</p> <p>c) External Audit report The report was noted.</p>	
24.134	Items to be referred to next Agenda not already included in the minutes	
	<p>None.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9.28pm – date of next meeting 2 December 2024.</p>	