



# Maresfield Parish Council

REPRESENTING THE VILLAGES OF MARESFIELD, NUTLEY & FAIRWARP

## Minutes of the Maresfield Parish Council meeting held remotely via Zoom on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllr Martin Craddock (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Sheila Cumming, Cllr Dr Penny Handley, Cllr Trevor Lewin, Cllr Mrs Lolita Reeves, Cllr Dr Birgit Smith, Cllr Mrs Laura Stevens-Smith, Cllr Alan Strevens, DCllr P Roundell, CCllr R Galley and Mrs C Goossens (Clerk)

### A. Public session.

A member of the public was in attendance who wished to watch proceedings.

**3581. To approve apologies for absence and to note other non-attendance.**

Cllr David Watson.

**3582. Declarations of Interest.**

Cllr T Lewin – Member of Maresfield Conservation Group

Cllr Mrs S Cumming – Member of Maresfield Conservation Group

Cllr Mrs L Stevens- Smith – Maresfield Village Hall Committee

**3583. To receive written requests for new DPI dispensations.**

None.

**3584. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020:**

1. For adoption.

The minutes as previously circulated were **Agreed** as a true and accurate record.

2. Matters arising from these minutes not elsewhere on the agenda.

Ref item 3474.3.i – There has been yet another crash at the garden centre south of Duddleswell crossroads; the incident was attended to by the fire and ambulance service.

The cattle grid on the Crowborough Road, Nutley has now been fixed.

**3585. Reports by and questions to:**

**1. County Councillors.**

The following points were noted:

- COVID – As part of the High Street initiative there are four officers who are giving advice to businesses.
- There are more cases being reported of late due to increasing numbers of people being tested. Rates in this area are amongst the lowest 20 places in the Country. The latest numbers for Wealden are 63 per 100,000 over the course of one week which equates to 6 people in 10,000 testing positive. It is not possible to drill down to report cases in smaller areas i.e. by Parish or village as there is a reluctance to report if the number is less than 2.
- Straight Half Mile, Maresfield Planning Application – the approval of this application by Planning Committee North was disappointing particularly as all previous information had seemed to indicate it would be refused.
- Ridgewood – 250 houses in phase one have been completed.
- Ashdown Business Park – this is now virtually full.
- School Admission Rates 2021 – will be decided imminently and there is no threat to either Nutley Church of England School or Bonners School.
- Cllr Mrs Stevens-Smith reported that Bonners school has not received any additional funding to compensate for the extra measures they have had to put in place during the COVID pandemic. Subsequently they are desperate for money and keen to know if there is any additional funding for schools from ESCC. **ACTION:** Cllr Mrs Stevens-Smith to tell Bonners to contact CCllr Galley direct.



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## 2. District Councillors.

The following points were noted:

- The results of the recent SHELAA have now been distributed to Parish Councils.
- This is a scoping exercise and does not mean those sites which have been identified will be permitted development. Sites need to be reviewed carefully ensuring that Parish views and concerns are considered. WDC will assess sites from a sustainability point of view and if deemed appropriate they will be put into the evolving Local Plan.
- The NDPSG at its recent meeting noted all sites as identified on the interactive map. Over the coming months, the NDP will contact all landowners who have put forward sites to ascertain their intentions.
- There has been no indication yet from WDC as to how many houses Maresfield will have to bear in the next 20 plus years.
- At the recent meeting of the Planning Cabinet Advisory Group the Government White Paper on Planning was discussed and, in particular, the lack of detail relating to the future role of NDPs is concerning. It is unknown whether NDPs will attain greater significance or whether they will merely relate to the design of houses.
- It would seem that in Wealden which does not have a five year housing land supply if a proposed development is considered vaguely sustainable then WDC leans towards approval.

*Cllr A Strevens joined the meeting.*

- Ridgewood Development – the houses are reportedly not selling very quickly. It was noted that there is a degree of phasing and that the “master” developer may have sold on the rights for further development.

## 3586. Parish wards – issues, needs & Councillors’ reports:

### 1. Fairwarp Ward.

- The Village Hall Committee is working hard to welcome hirers back when safe to do so. They have received encouraging feedback from hirers to date.
- The Fete Committee has convened a recent meeting with a view to reinstating the event in 2021.
- Two Fairwarp residents recently had issues with not being admitted to the local amenity tip with small trailers which is particularly frustrating as there is evidence of local fly tipping incidents. Trailers are not currently accepted due to the difficulty of accommodating them in parking bays when there are social distancing barriers in place. This is a temporary restriction and will be kept under review.

### 2. Maresfield Ward.

- The new traffic calming measure at the bottom of School Hill now has two new bollards on the verge to prevent traffic passing to the left of it. This measure is still considered to be dangerous and is a frequent source of complaint from Parishioners. It is the Parish Council’s opinion that the Budlett’s roundabout end of School Hill/High Street/London Road needs re-engineering.

### 3. Nutley Ward.

- Concerns re COVID and potential of future lockdowns. The Chairman highlighted that he continues to advertise the fact that the Parish Council in association of village groups/volunteers still offers support for those requiring it.  
**ACTION:** Clerk to refresh list of volunteers.  
**ACTION:** Clerk to update COVID website pages.

## 3587. Council bodies - To receive minutes and decisions, followed by reports from Chairmen and questions:

### 1. Finance & Administration Committee:

- i. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October. Noted.



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- ii. Month 6 2020/21 Accounts to be noted. It was noted that the second half of the precept (£42,500) has now been received.
  - iii. To Approve recommendation that the following policies be Adopted: Sickness & Absence, Training & Development and Disciplinary. All three policies were considered by the F&A Committee and are relatively straightforward. The Chairman proposed **Adoption** of all three policies, this was seconded by Cllr Mrs Reeves and **Agreed** unanimously.
  - iv. To Approve recommendation that Clerk, and Assistant Clerk be awarded a salary increase of one-point on the NALC Pay Scale. The pay scales as circulated with the meeting papers were noted. Both the Clerk and Assistant Clerk being part time, earn 20/37ths of the amount on the pay scale.  
The Chairman proposed the Clerk and Assistant Clerk be awarded a salary increase of one point on the NALC Pay Scale, new SCP 23 to 24 for the Clerk and New SCP 6 to 7 for the Assistant Clerk, this was seconded by Cllr Lewin and **Agreed** unanimously.  
Increase to be effective 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.
- 2. Planning Committee:**
- i. Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> September and Draft minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> October. Noted.  
Cllr Strevens reported that Wealden's Planning Committee North had at its recent meeting approved an application for up to 25 homes and a community facility on Straight Half Mile, Maresfield. This approval was carried despite fierce representations from the Parish Council opposing the application and numerous letters of objection from local residents. The concerns of the Parish Council were disregarded. It seems there is an indirect pressure on the committee to approve applications in a bid to address the issue of the lack of a 5-year housing land supply. No consideration was given to the associated parking needs of the proposed community facility. The proposal must provide for up to 9 affordable homes.  
**ACTION:** Chairman to write to WDC asking what steps are being taken via S106 agreement to ensure the proposed Community Facility is realised.  
**ACTION:** Chairman to draft press release detailing the Parish Council's dissatisfaction at the outcome of this application and thanking DCllr P Roundell for his support.  
It was noted that Maresfield Village Hall Committee has aspirations for a new village hall and that there are a number of possible sites in the village which could also provide associated parking and where the landowners could be amenable to such a proposal.
- CCllr R Galley left the meeting.*
- 3. Environment Committee:**
- i. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> October. Noted.
  - ii. To Adopt recommendation that Maresfield Parish Council declares a Climate Emergency.  
Lengthy discussion ensued. It was **Agreed** that a paper should be put together, detailing steps to be taken by the Parish Council in a bid to try to assist in the battle to halt climate change.  
**ACTION:** Parish Office/in conjunction with Environment Committee to coordinate list of proposals as to positive action the Parish Council can take in fighting climate change.



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- ii. Road Safety Update.  
The following points were noted in discussion:
  - Speedwatch has been active over the last month or so.
  - At a recent SLR meeting with East Sussex Highways numerous local issues were once again raised by the Parish Council and were almost universally turned down on the basis of being too costly.

#### 4. Neighbourhood & Community Development Plan Steering Group.

- i. Report from Chairman.  
The Chairman reported that the Steering Group has been asked to prepare a paper to justify the continued cost associated with this Committee ahead of budget planning for the coming financial year.  
**ACTION:** Clerk to investigate alternative funding opportunities.

*DCllr P Roundell left the meeting.*

#### 5. Maresfield Recreation Ground Committee.

- i. Report from Chairman.  
The following points were noted in discussion:
  - Football is going well.
  - Car parking does not seem to be too much of an issue of late.
  - The Fete Committee have cleared their shed to the rear of the Pavilion in readiness for the installation of a new concrete floor.
  - The Pavilion refurbishment contractor is lined up for February 2021.
  - Clubs are currently working on clearing the Pavilion ahead of the refurb.
  - **ACTION:** Working Party to ask contractor to appraise consumer board ahead of refurbishment to ascertain what works are required.

#### 3588. Outside bodies matters.

1. To note Cllr Strevens to lay wreath on behalf of Maresfield Parish Council at Maresfield Remembrance Service. Noted. There will be no formal ceremony at the Airman's Grave this year.

3589. **To receive a report from and put questions to, the Chairman.** None.

3590. **To receive a report from and put questions to, the Clerk.** None.

3591. **Matters arising from the meeting for public communication.**

Straight Half Mile, Maresfield Planning Application.

3592. **Date of next meeting – 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020.**

**The Parish Council Meeting will close and reconvene as Trustee of Maresfield Recreation Ground.**

#### 3593. Matters relating to Council as Trustee of Maresfield Recreation Ground (MRG).

1. Annual Financial Statements to be Agreed and signed by Cllr M Craddock and Cllrs Mrs L Stevens-Smith.  
This item was deferred to the next meeting due to the papers having been omitted from circulation. **ACTION:** Clerk.

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.34.*