



Maresfield Parish Council

REPRESENTING THE VILLAGES OF MARESFIELD, NUTLEY & FAIRWARP

Minutes of the Maresfield Parish Council meeting held remotely via Zoom on Tuesday 12th January 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr M Craddock (Chairman), Cllr S Cumming, Cllr Dr P Handley, Cllr T Lewin, Cllr Mrs L Reeves, Cllr Dr B Smith, Cllr Mrs L Stevens-Smith, Cllr A Strevens, CCllr R Galley, DCllr P Roundell and Mrs C Goossens (Clerk).

A. Public session.

Three members of the public were in attendance and made the following comments:

- Reference the NWMCIO – there are concerns that due to the current pandemic many older members in the community may not be able to sign up to the CIO meaning they are not privy to information nor will they be able to vote.
- It is vital that all members of the Nutley community can have a say in a public forum.
- There are a number of queries and concerns raised by Nutley residents which have not yet been addressed by the Trust.
- There seems to be no reason for the vote to proceed with such urgency.

The Chairman stated the Parish Council both understands and sympathises with these views and that Councillors will discuss the matter under agenda item 3625.3.ii. If deemed appropriate a statement from the Parish Council addressing these issues will be published. The statement will be included in the Nutley Parish Magazine, sent to all groups and organisations within the village via email for distribution to their mailing lists, fixed to the noticeboards and posted on the Parish Council Website and social media. It was noted that the Chairman of the NWMCIO has recently resigned.

3620. To approve apologies for absence and to note other non-attendance.

Cllr D Watson.

3621. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Dr B Smith – Governor, Nutley Primary School

Cllr Mrs Cumming – Member, Maresfield Conservation Group.

Cllr T Lewin – Member, Maresfield Conservation Group.

3622. To receive written requests for new DPI dispensations. None.

3623. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 15th December 2020:

1. For adoption. The Chairman proposed **Approval** of the minutes as previously circulated as a true and accurate record, this was seconded by Cllr Lewin and **Agreed** unanimously.
2. Matters arising from these minutes not elsewhere on the agenda. None.

3624. Reports by and questions to:

1. County Councillors.

CCllr Galley reported as follows:

- Given the economic circumstances of many residents, he is currently lobbying County not to increase its share of Council Tax for the coming year.
- Safety concerns at the junction of Nursery Lane with the A22 – CCllr Galley has urged local residents to put together a petition for him to present to the Chairman of County Council which will hopefully result in the commissioning of a full investigation.

The Chairman reported that the last communication from East Sussex Highways on this subject was unhelpful. **ACTION:** Asst Clerk to enquire whether, irrespective of cost or policy, a mirror would help to remedy the visibility issue. Councillors were urged to assist local residents in getting the petition together.

- It was noted that there is an ongoing strain on funding for adult social care and that these costs tend to squeeze out Highways funding. Suggestions/requests at SLR meetings are repeatedly met with the response that there is insufficient funding. Highways issues are considered by residents to be a key priority.



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CCllr Galley confirmed that there are a number of County Councillors campaigning for more money for Highways.

- Cllr Mrs Stevens-Smith highlighted reports of new refreshment facilities on the Forest serving tea and coffee, resulting in large numbers of people congregating. The gathering of large numbers and adherence or otherwise to COVID restrictions is a matter for Police enforcement.

ACTION: CCllr Galley to investigate.

It was noted that all car parks along the Crowborough Rd are fuller than ever during the current lockdown.

2. District Councillors.

DCllr Roundell reported as follows:

- Wealden District Council has recommended there be no increase in their share of Council Tax for the coming year.
- The Clerk to the Conservators has reported that the Forest is suffering from extreme visitor pressure. Many byelaws are being breached and the Police are becoming involved in some instances.
- The Direction of Travel Consultation closes at midnight on 18th January. As of the previous week only 130 responses had been received. Responses are encouraged from individuals and Parish Council's alike.
- This consultation currently seeks views in principle. In approximately 15 months' time, a draft Local Plan will seek wider community involvement.
 - It is hoped that the "Cluster" meetings will keep dialogue open with Parish Councils and that the issues covered in the Direction of Transport Consultation can be further discussed.

3625. Parish wards – issues, needs & Councillors' reports:

1. Fairwarp Ward. None.
2. Maresfield Ward.

The following points were noted:

- The hedge at The Lodge has recently been cut back.
- There is much through traffic in the village despite the current lockdown.
- The village is extremely busy with walkers/people exercising.
- The streetlights in Parklands have now been fixed.
- There has this week been a burst watermain outside Robian Close which has been reported to SE Water.

3. Nutley Ward.

The following points were noted:

- Traffic along the Crowborough Road seems significantly heavier than normal. Visitor numbers to the Forest seem significantly higher.
ACTION: Clerk to write to Police Commissioner expressing concern regarding visitor numbers to the Ashdown Forest.
- i. To consider and approve a statement regarding the NWMCIO.
The following points were noted in discussion:
 - The NWMCIO is in a similar situation in terms of what it does as the Parish Council and therefore there seems to be no reason why the CIO should not adopt similar levels of governance and transparency as the Parish Council.
 - The intended consultation and subsequent vote should be suspended whilst the Country is in the current COVID crisis.
 - The consultation options are not a matter in which the Parish Council should become involved. The Statement seeks that the Trust acts in a fair, transparent, and inclusive way. (The possible lack of transparency relates to emails stating that minutes of meetings are not available for



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public scrutiny. It was noted however, that this may be on the advice of solicitors).

The Chairman proposed **Adoption** of the amended statement. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Reeves and **Agreed** unanimously.

ACTION: Clerk to distribute statement via Nutley Parish Magazine, email to all groups and organisations within the village for distribution to their mailing lists, hard copies placed on the noticeboards and posted on the Parish Council Website as well as Facebook and Twitter.

- ii. Junction of Nursery Lane with A22 in Nutley. As discussed under item 3624.1.

3626. Council bodies - To receive minutes and decisions, followed by reports from Chairmen and questions:

1. Finance & Administration Committee:

- i. Month 9 2020/21 Accounts to be noted. Noted.

2. Planning Committee:

- i. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 4th January. Noted.
- ii. WDC Local Plan – Direction of Travel Consultation Document.

ACTION: Clerk to edit, collate and submit response to WDC on behalf of Parish Council as per draft circulated with the meeting papers. Clerk to send final submission to Councillors for information.

3. Environment Committee:

- i. Update from Chairman. The next Committee meeting will take place on 9th February. The first meeting of the Climate Change Interest Group will take place on 18th January and has 8 members.
- ii. COVID response.

The Clerk reported that there have been no calls for assistance via the Parish Office in the last few weeks. It was noted that this area is advanced in terms of the number of individuals who have received vaccinations. The Meads surgery is reported to have vaccinated 1000 people over the past weekend.

4. Road Safety:

- i. Update from Cllr Strevens.
 - It was noted that a temporary access will be constructed between the Batts Bridge and Blackdown Roundabouts for the duration of the build the new SIGMA (previously Rydon Homes) development in Maresfield.
 - The MVAS batteries will be replaced on the next visit from the Forest Row Maintenance Team.
- ii. Speedwatch. Speedwatch continues subject to appropriate completion of Risk Assessments.

5. Neighbourhood & Community Development Plan Steering Group.

- i. Report from Chairman.

The NDPSG has now started working on assessment of sites put forward under the latest Wealden District Council call for sites. Most of these sites are in Maresfield Village. Work has also started on preparing the questionnaires for the Housing Needs Survey and the General Survey which will be sent to the whole of the Parish. The NDP is likely to go forward for inspection in 2022.

6. Maresfield Recreation Ground Committee.

- i. Pavilion refurbishment update.

Peter Penfold is slightly behind with his work schedule due to difficulties obtaining materials and expects to start on the Pavilion Refurbishment in early February. Graham Parr is arranging a pre-commencement meeting and will oversee the project. There is no sport at present, so the Pavilion is currently not being used. Cllr Mrs Cumming regularly visits to check all is well.



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Cllr Galley & DCllr Roundell left the meeting.

3627. Outside bodies matters.

The Parish Council's representative on the URLPC has resigned due to the fact he is no longer commuting. **ACTION:** Clerk to write to URLPC notifying them of the resignation but asking to be kept informed.

3628. To receive a report from and put questions to, the Chairman. None.

3629. To receive a report from and put questions to, the Clerk.

The Clerk informed Councillors that she would be working flexible hours for the coming weeks to accommodate home schooling her son.

3630. Matters arising from the meeting for public communication.

ACTION: Cllr Dr Smith to put Chairman's Newsletter on Facebook.

ACTION: NWMCIO Statement to be circulated as Agreed under item 3625.3.i.

3631. Date of next meeting – 16th March 2021.

The Parish Council Meeting closed and reconvened as Trustee of Maresfield Recreation Ground.

3632. Matters relating to Council as Trustee of Maresfield Recreation Ground (MRG). None.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.56.