

MARESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

REPRESENTING THE VILLAGES OF MARESFIELD, NUTLEY AND FAIRWARP

Minutes of the Maresfield Parish Council Meeting held at Fairwarp Village Hall on Tuesday 16th July 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr M. Craddock (Chair), Cllr Mrs. S. Cumming, Cllr A. Koeppen, Cllr T. Lewin, Cllr Mrs. L. Reeves, Cllr Dr. B. Smith, Cllr Mrs. L. Stevens-Smith, Cllr P. Taylor, CCllr R Galley, DCllr I Tysh and Mrs N O'Hanlon (Clerk)

A. Public session. Two members of the public attended.

Mr Clare advised Councillors that there will be works going on in Park Farm Lane and the surrounding area in the near future as UK Power Networks are due to replace the faulty cable so that the 140 homes and part of the Ashdown Business Park that have been affected will be able to have mains power again rather than the temporary fix of generators. Mr Clare will send further details once he has them so that they can be circulated to the public.

4173. To approve apologies for absence and to note other non-attendance. Cllr Dr P Handley and Cllr R Hunter.

4174. Declarations of Interest. None.

4175. To receive written requests for new DPI dispensations. None.

4176. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 18th June 2024: -

1. For adoption. The minutes as circulated with the meeting papers were agreed to be a true and accurate record. Cllr Craddock proposed **adoption**. Cllr Cummings seconded this and it was **agreed** unanimously.
2. Matters arising from these minutes not elsewhere on the agenda. None.

4177. Reports by and questions to: -

1. County Councillor. CCllr Roy Galley reported as follows:

ESCC have allocated another £1m for roadworks to include patching of 400 potholes, sites in the parish included in the scope of works are Nutley High Street and Cackle Street but unfortunately not School Hill in Maresfield.

The finances for the County Council are not looking good for next year and cuts in services may well have to be made if there is no financial relief from the Government.

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2. District Councillor. DCllr Ian Tysh reported as follows:

The Local Plan Consultation responses are now on the WDC website, available for the public to see.

There were 12,295 answers given from 1,508 respondents.

There is a degree of uncertainty now whilst the Council waits to see the effects of the new government's planning policy.

There are only 22 Councillors now in the WDC Alliance but they will get support from Labour Councillors.

There has been a Supreme Court decision regarding oil drilling in Surry, a project big enough to have required an environmental impact report. The new ruling says that the impact report has to include the whole process including the "downstream effects", not just the primary activity. This could have implications for the Ashdown Business Park planning application.

DCllr Tysh will be holding a public forum at Nutley Memorial Hall this Thursday at 7.30pm.

Cllr Smith asked DCllr Tysh if Parish Councils are able to access some of the excess CIL monies that WDC are holding? DCllr Tysh said that Parish Councils and the public are welcome to submit ideas for the money and these will be reviewed by WDC cabinet in due course.

4178. Parish Wards – issues, needs and Councillors' reports: -

1. Fairwarp Ward. Cllr Reeves reported that the Fete held last Saturday was a great success and the weather managed to stay fine for it.

Workmen had been to look again at the ongoing flooding outside Moorings Cottage but had not stayed to do any work.

Fairwarp Village Hall will be closed for the month of August to allow for refurbishment works to be carried out.

The lack of mobile signal continues to be of great concern to Fairwarp residents with CCllr Galley and DCllr Tysh both being unable to make any progress. **ACTION:** Clerk to write to the newly elected MP for East Grinstead and Uckfield, Mims Davies, to see if she can help with this.

2. Maresfield Ward. Cllr Lewin noted that work at Underhill Bridge is yet to commence with no start date given yet by ESCC.

Cllr Cumming reported that the Post Office in Maresfield has now closed and unfortunately the proposed opening of a new Post Office in the village shop is now not going to happen.

Cllr Stevens-Smith is concerned that the flooding outside of the village hall still happens every time it rains. CCllr Galley acknowledged that this is known to Highways but they are not sure what more they can do; CCllr Galley will follow up with them again as well as chase up about the School Hill road repairs that are urgent.

3. Nutley Ward. Cllr Smith asked for an update on the broken fingerpost. The Clerk advised that so far the post has not been located; the Forest Rangers had made enquiries but to no avail. A resident had advised ESCC but they insist on replacing the historic style of wooden fingerposts with modern metal ones.

Cllr Galley reported that there is a possibility of a Post Office, one day per week, for Nutley if a suitable site can be found. Enquiries are being made of the Nutley Arms Pub and the Social Club, both of which have hosted the part time Post Office in the past.

4179. Council bodies - To receive minutes and decisions, followed by reports from Chairmen and any questions: -

1. Finance & Administration Committee

- i. Review Month 3 2024/25 accounts. Noted.
- ii. Review and re-adopt Terms of Reference – Scheme of Delegation. Cllr Craddock proposed that these be re-adopted, as per the amended copy circulated with meeting papers this was seconded by Cllr Lewin and **Agreed** unanimously.
- iii. Update from Chairman. Cllr Craddock advised that spending is on track for this point in the year.

2. Planning Committee.

- i. Minutes from meeting held 24th June 2024. Noted.
- ii. Consider names for new roads being created within Straight Half Mile, Brookworth Homes development.
After consideration Cllr Smith proposed that Shepherds Way and Shelley Lane be submitted as the Parish Council's suggestions for the new roads that will be created. This was seconded by Cllr Lewin and **Agreed** unanimously.
- iii. Update from Chairman. Cllr Taylor reported that the only really contentious application recently had been Limestone Way which the Parish Council had objected to and the WDC decision is pending.

3. Environment Committee.

- i. Update from Chairman. The Chairman was not present.
- ii. Consider and approve replacement MVAS signs and discuss additional sites. The two existing MVAS speed signs need replacing as one no longer works and the other needs new batteries at a cost of £400 each. Dealing with the supplier, Swarco,, becomes ever more difficult now they have been bought out. Details of the three quotes obtained for replacement MVAS signs were circulated with meeting papers. Cllr Craddock proposed that 2 solar hybrid signs, battery charger and spare batteries are purchased from Elan City for £4540 + Vat with an additional provision of £500 for two new mounting poles. This was seconded by Cllr Reeves and **Agreed** unanimously.

- iii. Consider site A allotment allocation. Council agreed previously that priority when allocating allotments would be given to Maresfield residents and then to Parish wide residents. On checking the waiting list for allotments it was noted that two of the residents on the list, who are Nutley and Fairwarp residents have been on there in excess of 7years and 2 years respectively. This is much longer than the majority of other on the waiting list and it seems unfair that residents who have only been on the list for less than a year should get a plot before them, albeit they are not Maresfield residents. Cllr Craddock proposed that, just for the first round of allocations, the two longstanding Nutley and Fairwarp residents should each be offered one of the 12 plots before they are offered to the other remaining Maresfield residents. This was seconded by Cllr Stevens-Smith and **Agreed** unanimously.
- iv. Consider and approve the renewal of Parklands Play area Lease. Cllr Craddock proposed that the lease with Wealden DC is renewed for a further 10 years. This was seconded by Cllr Lewin and **Agreed** unanimously.

4. Maresfield Recreation Ground Committee.

- i. Update from Chairman. Cllr Stevens-Smith reported that the Fire Officer had carried out an inspection of both pavilions and both were considered low risk. His report will be submitted in due course.

Cllr Craddock reported that he and the Clerk met with a representative of the Dynamos to discuss the upgrade work they are hoping to carry out on the former Bowls Club Pavilion, now to be known as the Dynamos Club House. The proposed work, such as installing a new kitchen and amending some of the internal layout, which does not require moving load bearing walls, will give a new lease of life to the building and make it more fit for purpose.

The Clerk reported continued instances of dog fouling on the recreation ground, with some dog walkers continued failure to pick up after their dogs. Councillors discussed the options for trying to prevent this from happening, the main obstacle being the difficulty in policing the area. It was agreed that in the first instance additional signage would be bought and the situation monitored.
Action: Clerk to purchase signs from Amazon to be placed at regular intervals around the MRG.

- ii. Consider and approve cricket enclosure fence repairs. A quote to repair two panels and the gate had been obtained from the contractor who carried out the initial installation Their price for the repairs was £1275 + Vat. Alternatively, the Clerk had obtained a price for the PC purchasing the materials needed and getting the repair works carried out by Garden Force, this would give a total cost of £800. As there would be a significant cost saving by using Garden Force, who are our incumbent maintenance contractor and we are confident in the quality of their work, Cllr Stevens-Smith proposed we go down this route, this was seconded by Cllr Cumming and **Agreed** unanimously.

CCllr Roy Galley left the meeting.

- iii. Consider and approve new water heater quotation for Pavilion. An under sink water heater has been needed in the pavilion for quite a while, on health and safety grounds, but we have struggled to get quotes as both a plumber and an electrician are needed for the installation.

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We have now obtained a quote for £908 + Vat and Cllr Stevens-Smith proposed this is accepted so that the situation does not drag on longer. This was seconded by Cllr Reeves, who believes it is a fair price for the work required, and **Agreed** unanimously.

4180. Outside bodies matters. None.

4181. To receive a report from, and put questions to, the Chairman. None.

4182. To receive a report from, and put questions to, the Clerk. None.

4183. Matters arising from the meeting for public communication. Chairman to include the issue of dog fouling on the MRG in his next newsletter.

4184. Date of next meeting – 17th September 2024 (Maresfield)

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

4185. Matters relating to Council as Trustee of Maresfield Recreation Ground (MRG).

1. Consider resident's proposal for MRG parking. Councillors considered the proposal which was circulated with meeting papers. Similar proposals have been submitted in the past. As previously the proposal is not workable and has to be discounted. **Action:** Clerk to contact resident to advise of outcome.
2. Update on MRG proposed parking scheme. Cllr Taylor reported that WDC have informally considered the scheme and advised that planning permission is not necessary, we are able to carry out this work under permitted development. This being the case Cllr Taylor intends to revert to slightly enlarging the car park on the left hand side, as per the original design, to make up for the spaces that will be lost due to giving plenty of room around trees.
Cllr Taylor is awaiting architects drawings, once received he can obtain quotes and would hope that, depending on funds being available, work could commence in the Autumn.

Cllr Craddock advised Councillors that today a letter was received from HMLR in response to the Clerk asking in January for the MRG boundary to be corrected to the original stone to stone line shown on the 1899 drawing. HMLR have said that it is not appropriate for them to make that change as the land in question between the stone to stone line and the 2013 Title Plan line does not belong to the owners of Park Farm Lane and has been used by the Parish Council for many years and therefore we should be satisfied with the title plan as per our 2013 registration title deed. This matter is now deemed to be closed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.51