

Minutes of Sevington with Finberry Parish Council
Meeting held at the Chamber of Commerce on Monday, 2nd October 2023

Present	Cllr Martin (Chair) Cllr Coppins Cllr Townsend	Cllr Bartlett Cllr Lemon
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In attendance: 4 members of the public and Tracey Block (Clerk)

To be actioned by:

<p>To receive and approve apologies for absence. Cllrs Bartram and Whybrow had sent apologies. These apologies were approved.</p>	
<p>To receive declarations of Interest (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests). The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. Cllrs Bartlett and Coppins declared an interest in the IBF and Waterbrook due to the proximity of their homes to the site.</p>	
<p>To approve the minutes Sevington with Finberry Parish Council meeting held on 4th September 2023. The minutes of the meeting on 4th September 2023 were signed as a true copy.</p>	
<p>To discuss matters arising from previous minutes that are not covered by the agenda. There were no matters arising for discussion.</p>	
<p>Public session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item. The full members of the public attended due to issues with HML and Crest Nicholson. <i>One member of the public stated that they lived in the new part of Finberry that had not yet been adopted by HML but they had had to pay some money up front and felt concerned about where the money is going and how much their bills might be.</i> <i>Another member of the public explained that they had moved in and should be paying HML but so far have only had confusion over who they are paying as money had been transferred into the wrong account but they continue to pay "Orbit" however there is no clarification over who they should be paying.</i> <i>The chairman of the newly formed resident's association explained that there were a lot of issues around HML some people have paid, others have not and those that have paid are not getting anything for their money. There does not seem to be a service standard, it was highlighted that if your neighbours do not pay their council tax it does not mean that the services stop. HML appears to be blaming the residents according to the most recent press release.</i> <i>The grounds maintenance has stopped because the invoices were not being paid, HML have not said how many people have not paid, there is no transparency of accounts. The chairman of the resident's association has lots of evidence of no paying, some overpaying, residents being chased for bills have already been paid. Some residents have had debt collection agencies chasing them for payment.</i> <i>There does not seem to be any transparency or advice as to how much people are going to be expected to pay.</i> <i>In addition to this there are issues with the lack of life belts around the ponds and who may have the liability should an accident occur in this area. There are health and safety aspects that are just as important as the financial issues including dog waste bins not being emptied regularly. There also does not seem to be enough bins available, often the play areas have</i></p>	

broken glass, antisocial behaviour and vandalism, dog fouling is also an issue and that needs tackling. A number of streetlights are not working, they have been reported but nothing has been done, the ponds are being fished, are the ponds ornamental or are they for fishing, it was noted that the jet is not being cleaned. The trees on Avocet Way that the residents paid for through their management fees are not being watered and are now dying, the grass has not been tended to, the hedges are not being cut and the reeds in the ponds are not being maintained. The marketing board that has been erected is ruining the Vista on the estate and there have been arson attempts recently on the waste areas. The residents are paying council tax to Ashford Borough Council and management fees to HML and action needs to be taken, HML do not appear to be taking accountability for the area.

Cllr Martin explained that the parish council has three councillors that live on Finberry and that Cllr Bartlett is also the Borough Councillor for this Ward. As a parish council we have been discussing the issues for a number of years and there seems to be a lot of counter blaming between HML and Crest Nicholson.

The parish council has no power other than to bring forward planning enforcement issues and is therefore not able to solve the issues here and now. We have worked hard to get communication with Crest Nicholson and HML and we believe that the management problem is a national issue. Cllr Bartlett agreed to discuss the problems with both the legal and the planning department at Ashford Borough Council because as part of the planning consent there was a structure around the maintenance discharge and resident representation on the management committee it is expected that the original planning consent structure and minimum service criteria around the lakes the littering the bins being emptied and the number of cuts the grass would need etc, a summary of these issues is to be provided to Cllr Bartlett who will ask the Borough Solicitor what action will be taken. Cllr Bartlett quote expect the church commissioners Crest Nicholson HML and Ashford Borough Council to come to a resolution over these issues.

Cllr Bartlett the meeting that he had discussed this matter with Damian Green MP who may be able to write a letter to the senior manager of Crest Nicholson.

Resolution: Cllr Bartlett to take this forward.

It was noted that Repton has very similar issues and HML managed there also Sevington Lakes and Bilham Farm may have a different management company.

There was a discussion around HML and Chris Nicholson and the integrated care board and where people might be registered as a patient with a different doctor's surgery.

Borough Councillors Report

Paul Bartlett's Borough Councillor Report had been circulated and was taken as read.

The report is available to read at:

<http://www.sevingtonwithfinberrypc.org.uk/community/sevington-with-finberry-parish-council-13425/abc-councillor-report/>

Financial matters:

a) To note/authorise the following:

i. To note the Parish Council's financial position.

The Parish Council has £20,485.53 in the bank.

ii. To authorise any payments.

Payments were authorised as follows:

	£	
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	HMRC	87.20		
	Room hire	60.00		
	Clerk	483.54		
	Bank Charges	18.00		
To consider any changes to the Risk Assessment.				
There were no changes to the Risk Assessment				
To consider involvement in D-Day 80 – June 2024				
This was deferred to the November meeting when it is hoped to have sought opinion from Cllr Whybrow.				
Planning matters: to authorise a response to any application(s) and to note any recent planning decisions by Ashford Borough Council or any correspondence on planning matters.				
There had been a TPO application for trees on Foster Road, this caused no concern.				
To consider and agree whether to investigate the separation of the Parish Council				
The Parish Council discussed the issues surrounding the separation of the Parish Council.				
Resolved: The Clerk is to contact the Borough Council Solicitor to have a scoping discussion about what would be necessary for this to be possible.				
To receive an update on any matters pertaining to Sevington Highfield				
There was not much update from Sevington Highfield.				
The next meeting is on 21 st November 2023 at 7pm.				
To receive an update on any matters pertaining to Finberry.				
There is a real litter issue in Finberry, there was much discussion regarding this.				
Resolved: The Clerk will contact McDonalds as much of the litter is from them and ask whether they will help with litter picks as a gesture of goodwill to the community.				
The Clerk will also ask HML if a bin could be provided on the path by the ponds.				
To receive an update on any matters pertaining to Sevington South.				
There was nothing to report this time.				
To receive any update on IBF or Waterbrook				
A Planning Application from HMRC is expected and the indication is that the application will contain the minimum amount of work. The Planning Officer is Roland Mills and he will be looking for input from residents of a diary of issues.				
To receive any update on Highways (to include the Bellamy Gurner Scheme)				
The Bellamy Gurner Scheme seems to be flowing well.				
Any Other Business (for information purposes only)				
The Parish Council noted disappointment with the response from Eurostar recently.				
Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.				
Monday 6 November 2023		Monday 8 January 2024		Monday 5 February 2024
Monday 4 March 2024		Monday 8 April 2024		Monday 13 May 2024