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Ninfield Full Council Minutes 18th January 2024

Cllrs Present:

Chair K Williamson (KW), J Cheshire (JC), P Holland (PH), G Pharo (GP), S Guard (SG), J Langley (JL)

In attendance: J Scarff Clerk & 2 members of the public (MOP).

Public Questions:

In accordance with standing orders ten minutes are available for the Public to express a view or ask a question on **relevant matters on the following agenda**.

A MOP wanted to discuss what he considered conflicts of interest.

The clerk explained that there are strict rules about declaring interests in the meeting. The section allowing public questions is not part of the meeting. The clerk explained that MOP cannot speak during the meeting.

MOP asked what would happen if something was said that was demonstrably untrue and was going to be minuted could they then speak.

The clerk answered No.

MOP asked what the follow up would be how would they go about getting the minutes amended if it happened.

The clerk answered that the MOP could email the clerk. If it were found to be untrue the cllrs can adjust the minutes at the next meeting when they are presented for approval.

MOP commented about the wording of item 7g and the clerks report claiming they had not made 'a complaint'.

It was explained that the wording used reflected the wording used by the police when they notified the clerk and therefore would not be changed.

MOP stated that they wanted to work with the parties for the 2024 event to ensure that they could manage their animal welfare issues.

MOP asked cllrs if they think that horses 120m away from cat 4 fireworks are sufficiently far away?

MOP commented that they had a legal letter from the bonfire society and asked if the cllrs have any comments to make regarding the Bonfire Societies legal letter? And do cllrs support them having sent it?

The Bonfire Society read a statement.

The public session was closed.

Chairman's welcome to the meeting.

KW welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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To receive any questions on the reports from the County and District Cllrs.
There were no questions.

To receive reports from
Schools – There were no reports.
Church – A report was previously circulated.

Business to be transacted.

To receive and accept apologies and reasons for absence in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 S 85 (1).

Apologies received and accepted from Cllrs Coleshill and Collins for personal reasons. County cllr B Bowdler had sent apologies.

Disclosure of Interests

To receive any disclosure by Members of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of the interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Revised Code of Members Conduct.

To consider granting any dispensations.

Any changes to register of interests should be notified to the clerk.

Cllr Guard disclosed a pecuniary and personal interest in the item regarding the memorial hall and cllr Holland disclosed a personal interest in the same item. There were no requirements to grant dispensations.

Exclusion of the Public

To exclude the public for a particular agenda item the following resolution must be passed. 'Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.'

There was no requirement to pass this resolution.

Minutes of previous meeting to be considered for approval and signed as a true record.
Full Council Meeting of the Full Council 20th July 2023
KW Proposed, GP seconded. All agreed.

Resolved The minutes of the Full Council Meeting of the Full Council 20th July 2023 were agreed as a true record and signed by the chairman.

The chair asked permission of the cllrs to move item 7g to be the first item for discussion.
All agreed

To receive a report from the clerk regarding a complaint about the Bonfire and fireworks

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display and agree any actions required.

GP stated that he didn't feel able to answer the question as to whether he thinks that horses 120m away from cat 4 fireworks are sufficiently far away as he doesn't have horses but commented that he makes the decision to take both of his dogs elsewhere for the evening.

GP suggested it may be useful to have a meeting between parties and went on to say he wasn't aware of the legal letter which is between the MPO and Bonfire Society.

JC suggested a professional mediator is used.

SG supported the comments from other clls.

GP suggested that a date for a meeting before the end of February.

All agreed

a) **To receive an update on the Ninfield Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) and agree any actions required.**

JC reported that the plan had passed through the Reg 16 consultation, all responses are on the WDC website in the NHP section.

Agreement has been reached with WDC to appoint an independent examiner and the process will begin in February and will take 6-8 weeks. Its likely to be a paper-based exercise. The examiner's role is limited to assessing whether or not the draft plan meets the basic conditions.

Wealden have made lots of comments. Some issues the parties have agreed to disagree. Constructive comments were received from Rother District Council (RDC) and East Sussex County Council (ESCC). Other comments received from Tarmac, Gladmans and a number of residents. Strutt Parker on behalf of the Ashburnham estate have responded, it was after the deadline and concerned Coombe Wood reiterating that its private lane, residents should not enter and asking the Parish Council to remind residents. JC commented that he knows residents have been using it for over 80 years and he would like to propose that the PC respond to the letter.

The clerk asked if it would be counted as it was after the deadline. JC stated that Gladman submitted late at Reg 14 but WDC allowed it.

The clerk commented that the council have previously responded to Strut Parker to explain that it is not for the PC to remind residents. There is a process to apply to ESCC to create a formal right of way.

JC agreed to look into formalising the route through ESCC.

b) **To review the hire fees for Sparkes Pavilion for the year beginning 1st April 2024 and agree any actions required.**

SG reported that she had a pecuniary interest in this item and left the room during the discussion.

Resolved that the fees for hourly hire will be matched with the Methodist Hall. Proposed GP seconded JC All agreed.

The fees for football, cricket & stoolball will stay the same for the coming year ending

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March 2025. Proposed KW, seconded GP all agreed.

- c) **To receive a request from Ninfield School to use the recreation ground as access and storage to allow the construction of a trim trail at the school and agree any actions required.**

The clerk has been informed that it is programmed in for half term – w/c 12th February. The clerk commented that the lease may preclude this and will need to check.

Resolved that the cllrs would like to see the plans for the proposed trim trail and get some more information. Later in the year would be a better time. With more information a decision would be made by delegated powers.

- d) **To receive a report from the Highways, Verges & Safety Committee and agree any actions required.**

GP reported that at the meeting the committee agreed to encourage the voluntary 20 is plenty scheme, trying to reduce speed through the village as well as antisocial parking and protecting the verges.

JC clarified that at the moment the 20 is plenty is for Manchester Road and Lower Street. The ideas will need to be subject to resident consultation.

GP reported that the group are trying resurrect the SLR meetings.

- e) **Finance Matters**

- i. To receive the Statement of Accounts to 31st December 2023 for noting.
Noted
- ii. To receive the bank statement and corresponding bank reconciliation to 31st December 2023 for noting.
Noted
- iii. To receive and agree payment of the schedule of invoices.
The payments were agreed as presented.
- iv. To receive for noting the report from PKF Littlejohn for the year ending March 2023 and agree any actions required.
Noted and no actions required.
- v. To receive the mid-year internal audit report and agree any actions required.
Noted and no actions required.
- vi. To receive the spend v actual for the year ending March 2024 for questions and noting.
Noted
- vii. To review the councils Ear Mark Reserves and agree any actions required.
Noted, items in the budget for EMR can be moved.
- viii. To delegate the budget & EMR for Finger Posts to the Highways Verges and Safety committee to allow them to manage the maintenance of the fingerposts in the village.
Resolved that the budget be delegated to the Highways Verges and Safety committee.
- ix. To receive the first draft of the budget for the year ending March 2025 for discussion and amendment.
The budget was received and reviewed line by line the budget was changed as per the budget v 2.
- x. To agree the precept for the year ending March 2025.
Resolved that the precept be set at £64,000. Proposed SG, seconded KW all

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agreed.

- xi. To receive the NALC briefing on the local Govt Services Pay Agreement for 2023 and agree that the clerk can pass it on to the payroll company for calculation.

Resolved that the clerk pass on the details.

- xii. To receive a request from NVS for a sum of £500 toward the upkeep of Church Woods.

Resolved that £500.00 be paid to NVS for the upkeep of Church Lane.

To receive reports from Parish Councillors.

JL reported that the Health and Well being group is affiliated with NVS, The number of films being shown is being doubled. There are a number of groups that are part of the group. The second annual Christmas lunch went really well.

SG reported that the telephone box should soon be moved.

The Heart if Ninfield Event will be held in conjunction with the Village Annual Meeting 11th May 2024.

SG reported that the contractor for Broiler House Paddock has taken out the hedgerow at the back of the carpark. The clerk will check who owns the hedge.

The clerk reported that she has written to enforcement regarding Ingrams Lane works. WDC are declining to take enforcement action.

The cllrs agreed to extend the meeting past the 2 hours to finish the last item.

To brief the council on the meeting with the Memorial Hall and agree any actions required.

The clerk explained that the meeting was initially set up to express concern about the weekend fees being charged to village societies and for charity events. Prior to the meeting the Memorial Hall Committee had agreed a reduced rate.

The PC will give a free session to the HWBG for an event to support vulnerable people in the village.

The clerk explained the need to update the previous lease. There is a need for a committee to deal with this.

Resolved the committee be set up and KW, GP, JL & JC all agreed to be members.

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Date of next meeting.

To note the date of the next meeting is The Finance committee Meeting Thursday 15th February 2024, 6.30pm at the Methodist Hall.

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Correspondence – to note for possible inclusion on next agenda.

KW declared the meeting closed at 20:43