

FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Gabriella Paterson-Griggs

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MINUTES of the Ordinary Meeting of **FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL** held on Monday 5th September 2022 in the Village Hall, High Street, Fletching (7 - 9pm).

PRESENT: Councillors C Rothery (Chairman), D Greenish (Vice-Chairman), N Collum, R Hannay, K Minch, A Shaw and W Constantinou.

Also in attendance: Gabriella Paterson-Griggs (Clerk and RFO) and Councillor R Galley (District and ESCC Cllr)

Members of the Public in Attendance: 1

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Borton and D Kerwood.

22/165. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest RECEIVED in respect of items on the agenda, as required by the Members' Code of Conduct:

Minute 22/177 iv – Councillor Hannay as a friend of the applicant.

In accordance with the FPC Code of Conduct, the councillors did not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter.

22/166. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 4th July 2022 were a correct record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

22/167. MATTERS ARISING

- i. *Request to Plant a Tree*: Cllr Hannay reported that he and the Chairman had met with the resident who had made the request and that she had accepted the offer from the Parish Council to plant a tree in the unconsecrated part of the burial ground which had previously been identified as a possible space for a jubilee tree.

22/168. REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Councillor Galley reported that ESCC was working hard on the Ukrainian Refugee process and dealing with some issues that had arisen due to the 6 months initial commitment from hosts coming to an end. Work was ongoing to improve the speed of payments etc.

In respect of the Wealden Local Plan he reported that there was increasing optimism that there would be a reduced housing figure and that the Draft Plan would be coming out early in the new year.

In response to a question about the Downland Farm application that adjoins Fletching Parish he stated that there was a lot of opposition to the proposal locally and the planning officers were very aware of that.

Councillor Galley also updated on his continued pressure on ESCC Highways to improve the state of the roads in the parishes that he represents. He would be driving round with the Assistant Director in the near future to show them in person the road conditions. In response to a comment about the work carried out in Church Street that still left two large holes he explained that he was very frustrated with the process that was followed for identifying what could and couldn't be repaired.

22/169. PILTDOWN VILLAGE PROJECT

The Clerk circulated a briefing note to Councillors with the agenda that set out the actions that had been taken since the last meeting.

It was noted that Wealden DC had confirmed that, as it stands, there would be no difference to the current Local Plan making if Piltdown was classed as a village. Councillor Galley reported that he

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was still waiting for a response from the legal department as to whether village status made a difference in terms of highways legislation.

Councillor Galley also confirmed that he had driven the stretch of road with Katy Bourne, the Police and Crime Commissioner, but was still waiting for a response from her Road Safety Officer which he would chase up. He stated that, in his opinion, it may be possible to get agreement to extend the current 40mph limit towards Maresfield (where it was currently 50mph) but that it was unlikely that a 30mph limit would be approved.

Councillors were disappointed at the responses being received from ESCC Highways especially as that part of the A272 did have development on both sides of the road, even if they were not visible, and there was a particularly dangerous junction where Down Street and Golf Club Lane met the main road which was within the current 50mph zone.

The Chairman invited Amanda Abrahams to address the meeting, as the spokesperson for the Piltdown group. She explained that the Group was looking at a wider project for the area that would look to create new cycle paths and footways and a quiet road zone as well as a new cricket pavilion/community hub as well as a reduction in the speed limit.

She advised the Council of a new fund that had been announced by the Government entitled Rural England Prosperity Fund that she was hoping the Group would be able to apply for. However, the Clerk explained that the government funding was being given to District Councils – it was not a fund that applications could be made to.

Councillors supported the ongoing work in relation to the reduction in the speed limit but suggested that in respect of the larger project the Piltdown Group put together a business case that the Parish Council could consider as it had far more implications for the parish.

Note: Councillor Collum arrived at the meeting at 7.30pm at the end of this item.

22/170. WORKING GROUPS / EXTERNAL GROUPS

Updates were given by Councillors who attended the following external groups:

- i. *Community Safety Action Group:* Cllr Minch reported that the meeting had been postponed until later in September and she would report back at the next Parish Council meeting.
- ii. *Ashdown Forest Parish Liaison Group:* Cllr Minch reported that the main topic on the agenda had been the introduction of car parking charges on the forest. It was noted that the CEO, James Adler, was keen to attend community meetings to explain about the new charges. It was agreed that he be invited to the next Annual Meeting.
- iii. *Fletching Historical Project:* The Clerk circulated a note with the agenda setting out the background to the project. Councillors endorsed the purchase of the photographic collection and agreed that it should be wholly owned by the Parish Council. It was noted that the funds required to digitise and enhance the collection would be raised by the Church and that Rev. David Knight was in discussion with a parishioner with a view to furthering the project.

It was **AGREED** that the project/appeal be launched at an exhibition of the photographic boards to take place in the Village Hall in November 2022. Further updates would be given at future meetings.

22/171. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Road and Drainage Maintenance – Burwash Common and Weald Residents' Association (BCWRA): the letter and report received by from the residents' association were circulated with the agenda. The Clerk reported that an email had been received, in response to the BCWRA report, on the day of the meeting from the ESCC Lead Member for Transport and Environment, Councillor Claire Dowling which had been sent round to all Councillors.

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The Councillors considered the report and the email and agreed that the response from ESCC had not answered the questions posed by the BCWRA report and that the Parish Council was unhappy with the condition of the roads in the parish. It was agreed that a letter be written to the ESCC Lead Member for Transport and the Environment expressing its frustration and supporting the concerns raised in the BCWRA report.

It was **AGREED** that a letter be sent to the ESCC Lead Member for Transport and Environment expressing the Council's concern at the condition of the roads in the parish and the terms of the current contract.

22/172. NALC/SLCC CIVILITY AND RESPECT PROJECT

- i. *Signing up to the Civility and Respect Pledge:* The Clerk had circulated details of the project to Councillors prior to the meeting and explained the purpose of the project. Councillors agreed that the Parish Council sign up to the civility and respect pledge.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge

- ii. *Dignity at Work Policy:* It was agreed that having signed up to the Pledge, the new Dignity at Work Policy, circulated with the agenda, be approved.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Dignity at Work Policy

22/173. FINANCE AND HR

- i. The invoices and payments for August and September 2022 were **AUTHORISED** and the Council's current financial position and bank reconciliation were noted.

22/174. GRANT APPLICATIONS

- i. *Wealden Citizens Advice Bureau:* The Council considered the application received from the Wealden CAB. It was agreed that, whilst very supportive of the work of the CAB, as the application was for on-going running costs it did not meet the criteria so an award could not be given. However, it was agreed that the Clerk respond to the applicant explaining that the application did not meet the criteria but that a further application would be considered if it were for a specific project or capital item.

It was **AGREED** that the grant be REFUSED but that the applicant be given another opportunity to apply.

22/175. BURIAL GROUND

- i. There had been no requests made in respect of the Burial Ground since the last meeting.
- ii. Provision of a hard surfaced path from Cherry Cottages into the burial ground – Councillors discussed the request made by Rev. David Knight to accommodate those with mobility issues accessing the open part of the burial ground and agreed that the Clerk seek quotes to install a hard-surface path from the Cherry Cottages access into the burial ground.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk seek quotes for a hard-surface path into the Burial Ground from Cherry Gardens.

- iii. *Scattering area for ashes:* Councillor Hannay reported that there had been a request made as to whether a scattering area could be created in the unconsecrated part of the burial ground. Councillors **AGREED** in principle for the unconsecrated ground to be used for the scattering of ashes. Councillor Hannay would discuss the request in more detail with the parishioner.

22/176. ENFORCEMENT – PLANNING AND DRAINAGE

- i. *Flitteridge Farm:* No update had been received as the officer was on leave.
- ii. *Moses Farm, Goldbridge Road, Piltdown:* No update had been received as the officer was on leave.

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- iii. *Splaynes Green flooding*: Councillor Constantinou explained that there was a flooding issue in Splaynes Green that was still to be resolved despite both Wealden and ESCC officers being involved. Councillor Galley agreed to contact the relevant officers at ESCC to try and progress the issue as a matter of urgency.
- iv. *Bell Lane – discharge of effluent*: Councillor Constantinou reported that he had been in touch with Environmental Health in respect of effluent being discharged from a man-hole cover in Bell Lane. ESCC officers had stated that the issue was not their responsibility. It was agreed that Councillor Constantinou would discuss the issue with Councillor Galley outside of the meeting.

22/177. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - RECEIVED

It was RESOLVED to make the comments as set out after each application in respect of the following:

i. **WD/2022/1637/MAE Land at Downlands Farm, Uckfield**

Outline application for the erection of up to 424 no. residential dwellings. Provision of vehicular access from the A22, pedestrian and cycle access from Snatts Road. Full application for creation of a SANGS.

The Parish Council agreed that it would object to the application but wished to hear the views of Uckfield Town Council, as the application was wholly within the Uckfield parish, prior to submitting any comments to Wealden.

ii. **WD/2022/1776/OH Northall Farm, Fletching TN22 3SA**

Alterations to low voltage overhead lines with addition of a LV underground cable.

The Parish Council has no comments to make on this application

iii. **WD/2022/1857/LBA 1 Corner Cottages, High Street, Fletching TN22 3SS**

Variation of conditions 3 and 4 of WD/2021/2815/LB

The Parish Council has no comments to make on this application

iv. **WD/2022/1917/F Parkwood House, Golf Club Lane, Piltdown TN22 3XB**

Alterations to existing dwelling to provide replacement two-storey chalet extension and other cosmetic changes.

The Parish Council SUPPORTS this application and the alterations to Parkwood House. It was noted that a pre-application advice had already been sought from WDC.

v. **WD/2022/2034/F 4 Brewers Row, Church Street, Fletching TN22 3SJ**

Demolition of existing 3 outbuildings and a metal storage tank with erection of two replacement outbuildings.

The Parish Council SUPPORTS this application which will tidy up and improve a pretty messy and derelict set of barns and garden area. The one concern is the new garden room which is a significant distance from the house and when all the bushes and overgrown area are removed could be visible from a distance. The Parish Council would like to see the garden room moved closer to the house on the footprint of the existing barn at least, so it is less pronounced.

The comments submitted to Wealden District Council under delegated authority for the following applications were noted:

vi. **WD/2022/1491/F Byerly, Large Barn, Bell Lane, Fletching TN22 3YB**

Proposed conversion of a redundant barn to a single residential dwelling together with associated landscaping.

Despite the preference when looking at new applications to favour smaller dwellings the unique nature of this development led the Parish Council to support the application for a 6-bedroom

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dwelling. The barn is of great historical significance and the development of the large barn into one new dwelling is best served by being a single property. After careful consideration the Parish Council feels the development is sympathetic to the original unique Dutch barn design and FULLY SUPPORTS the application.

vii. **WD/2018/2200/LB St Anne's, High Street, Fletching TN22 3SS**

Re-roofing of all roof slopes

The application is to remove and replace like for like the tiles on the roof at St Anne's with insulation and breathable felt put in between the rafters and the tiles. As this is a like for like replacement the Parish Council SUPPORTS this application. However, although this is a listed property and the repair must be executed according to listed building regulations, there is concern that the insulation is positioned directly against the timbers as the insulation should be positioned leaving a gap otherwise the timbers will rot as has already happened.

22/178. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - DECISIONS

Planning decisions RECEIVED from Wealden District Council since the last meeting:

Applications Approved

i. **WD/2017/0120/F Land at Golf Club Lane, Piltdown TN22 3XB**

Proposed stable and storage buildings with associated yard and access track. (APPROVED – 30 August 2022)

ii. **WD/2018/2200/LB St Anne's, High Street, Fletching TN22 3SS**

Re-roofing of all roof slopes (APPROVED – 19 August 2022)

iii. **WD/2021/1611/F Beeches Farm, Beeches Farm Road, Buckham Hill, Isfield TN22 5QD**

Restoration, conversion and extension of existing barn to create 1 no. residential dwelling. Conversion of existing western outbuilding for ancillary use with associated access and landscaping. (APPROVED – 15 August 2022)

iv. **WD/2021/3089/F Mays House, High Street, Fletching TN22 3ST**

Proposed single storey rear extension. (APPROVED – 7 July 2022)

v. **WD/2022/0369/F Stroods, Mill Lane, Fletching TN22 3SR**

Internal and external works including two-storey extension, single storey extension and pool. (APPROVED – 8 August 2022)

Applications Refused: None since the last meeting

Applications withdrawn:

i. **WD/2022/0347/F + 0348/LB The Old Lodge, Mill Lane, Fletching TN22 3SR**

Conservation and upgrading of outbuilding, demolition of piggery with construction of swimming pool, garage with new access and associated works. (WITHDRAWN – 14 July 2022)

22/179. LAND REGISTRATION

Councillor Greenish reported that the application for the Burial Ground was still with the land registry.

22/180. FLAGPOLE

The Clerk reported back that there had been a delay in applying for the ESCC licence for the installation of the flagpole as the contractor was required to be NRSWA certified. This had now been resolved by approaching a different contractor. However, it meant that the cost had increased.

It was **AGREED** that the purchase of the flagpole go ahead with the new contractor.

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22/181. SPLAYNES GREEN / FINGERPOSTS

Bollards at Splaynes Green and Fingerpost replacement: Councillor Constantinou reported that he would visit JAKS to enquire about the progress on both the bollards and the outstanding fingerposts.

22/182. ITEMS FOR THE PARISH MAGAZINE

It was AGREED that the following articles be submitted by the Clerk for the next edition of the Parish Magazine:

- Fletching Historical Project
- Downlands Farm – Parish Council objection

22/183. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

It was agreed that Councillors contact the Clerk with any items they wish to be considered at the next meeting.

22/184. TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is due to be held on:

Monday 3rd October 2022 at 7pm in the Village Hall.