

FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Gabriella Paterson-Griggs

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MINUTES of the Meeting of **FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL** held on Monday 4th September 2023 in the Village Hall, High Street, Fletching (7 – 8.20pm).

PRESENT: Councillors R Hannay (Chair), D Greenish (Vice-Chair), A Abraham, R Borton, N Collum, W Constantinou and K Minch.

Also in attendance: Gabriella Paterson-Griggs (Clerk and RFO), Councillor Christina Coleman (District Cllr) and Councillor Roy Galley (ESCC).

Members of the Public in Attendance: 5

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Kerwood and L Snelgrove

23/141. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Minute 23/154ii – Councillor Greenish as he knows the applicant

Minute 23/154v – Councillor Greenish as he is a member of the club

In accordance with the FPC code of conduct Councillor Greenish spoke but did not vote on the matters.

23/142. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on 3rd July 2023 were a correct record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

23/143. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

23/144. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR CHRISTINA COLEMAN

Councillor Coleman updated that in respect of the Local Plan Wealden was engaging with various groups to garner as much information as possible and explained that it was a delicate balance between what would be acceptable to the planning inspector and what was best for the District in terms of the environment and development. She also reported that the District Council 'Corporate Plan document' was being replaced by a 'Council Strategy' which would be led by the vision for the local plan. It was not known at this stage when Wealden would set out its response to the sustainability report consultation.

Councillor Coleman informed councillors that there had been a campaign group set up (CAGNE) in respect of the impact of the expansion of Gatwick Airport. As part of that group a Town and Parish Council forum had been formed which enabled councillors to have a say.

It was also reported that hydrogenated vegetable oil had replaced diesel in all the Wealden District Council waste collecting and street cleansing vehicles operated by Biffa. In respect of RACC building control had not identified any schools affected within the District. Wealden electoral services was carrying out its annual canvas and, as Chair of the District Council, Councillor Coleman was recommending Rotherfield St Martins for a Kings Award.

Councillor Coleman congratulated the Parish Council on achieving the designation of the neighbourhood area and reminded the meeting that she was holding a Community Forum for all parishioners on 6 September at 7pm in the village hall.

23/145. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR GALLEY

Councillor Galley reported that due to losing a couple of by elections the conservative group on the County Council no longer had a majority but if the one independent member worked with the group then there would still be a conservative majority. He also reminded councillors that the Parliamentary Constituency boundaries were changing before the next general election and that

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Fletching would be part of the newly formed East Grinstead and Uckfield constituency. There were due to be open meetings held in the autumn to explain the changes further.

In respect of the Gatwick Airport expansion he reminded the meeting that Wealden had not supported the proposal due to the impact on the infrastructure and the environment but that there were wider economic implications that needed to be taken in to consideration.

23/146. PLANNING APPLICATIONS – RECEIVED

The following Planning Applications were discussed. See Minute 23/154 below for details.

WD/2023/2060/F – Land at Northall CPC, North Hall Lane, Fletching

WD/2023/2074/F – North Hall Barn, North Hall Lane, Fletching

23/147. FLETCHING HISTORICAL ARCHIVE

A proposal put forward by Rev David Knight to digitise the Parish Council's historical photo archive was circulated prior to the meeting. The Councillors were fully in agreement that the collection should be digitised and **AGREED** that the project, as proposed, go ahead and that Liberty Schofield be appointed. It was noted that the School House Trust would cover the cost of the project alongside any grant funding that could be obtained. The resource to be freely available to all and the editors to include the Clerk, D Knight and P Wigan. The plan to add to the archive and capture the living memory with narrative was welcomed by the Parish Council.

23/148. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- i. The approval of the Neighbourhood Area application by Wealden District Council was noted.
Councillor Hannay updated on the work the Steering Group had undertaken to date. It was noted that there were four parishioners on the Group, Hugh Bullock, Mark Creamer, Sally de St Croix and Sarah Levien alongside the parish councillors. The topic areas for the plan were circulated prior to the meeting and were **AGREED**. It was noted that the proposed duration of the plan would be 15 years to synchronise with the Wealden District Council Local Plan.
- ii. It was reported that the Steering Group was drafting the questions for the consultation and that the consultation would be launched at the archive exhibition. Councillors **AGREED** that the exhibition and launch take place on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 October 2023. Councillor Hannay also informed the meeting that there would be an article in the next edition of the Parish Magazine setting out all the details.
- iii. It was **AGREED** that a preliminary budget be set for the Neighbourhood Plan of £500 to be taken from reserves.

23/149. WORKING GROUPS / EXTERNAL GROUPS

- i. *Fletching Recreation Ground Committee (FRGC)*: The Clerk updated that the insurance claim for the pavilion had now been settled and the monies received. In respect of the refurbishment project it was noted that the structural engineer had drawn up the plans and a building regulations application submitted. Quotes were now being sought from the builder on the proposed design.
- ii. *Parking Working Group*: The Clerk reported that she had contact with ESCC Highways and sent them a copy of the feasibility study. It was noted that, in the first instance, the officers had requested the concerns/comments about the study to be sent via email. Councillor Constantinou to collate and send through to the Clerk and Councillor Galley as the ESCC councillor.

23/150. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- i. *WDC – Preliminary Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2023*: The email received from Susie Funnell, Elections Special Projects Manager for WDC, in respect of the review of polling district and places was noted. Councillors confirmed that they were not aware of any issues around access to the one polling station in the parish which was the village hall.

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- ii. *Wealden District Council – Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)*: The email received from Tess Fox, Senior Street Scene Officer at WDC, in respect of the proposed extension to the PSPO was noted. The Parish Council welcomed the proposed extension of the order for three years which would continue to make it an offence for anyone in control of a dog not to clear up the animal's faeces on designated land.

23/151. FINANCE AND ASSETS

- i. The invoices and payments for August 2023, as authorised by the Chairman, were noted and those for September 2023 were **AUTHORISED** and the Council's current financial position and bank reconciliation were noted.
- ii. The budget monitoring report for Q1 was **NOTED**.
- iii. The External Auditor's Note and Certificate for 2022/23 was **NOTED**.
- iv. *War Memorial* - The response from the War Memorial Trust in respect of the application for a grant to clean the war memorial, as circulated with the agenda, was noted. It was **AGREED**, given that the grant would only be for 50% of the total cost, that the application be withdrawn. This was due to the fact that the work required by the Clerk, to respond to the various points, would not be cost effective and also that due to the Trust's timescales it would not be possible for the clean to be carried out this year. The work has been scheduled in for the end of October 2023 in time for Armistice Day on 11 November.
- v. *Website* - The Clerk reported that the Parish Council website provider had informed all its clients that there would be a charge introduced for the website service from October 2023. It was confirmed that the bronze package at £9.99 + VAT per month met the needs of the Parish Council and could be cancelled at any time with two weeks notice. The Clerk stated that she would also be investigating alternative providers as part of the website refresh project.

Councillors **APPROVED** the proposal to sign up to the bronze package at a cost of £9.99 + VAT pcm.

23/152. BURIAL GROUND

- i. There were no applications for permits since the last meeting.
- ii. *Burial Ground Regulations* – it was noted that a meeting had been held with church officials and a commonality had been agreed. The revised regulations would be presented to the next meeting.
- iii. *Benches* – it was reported that the benches were no longer available.

23/153. ENFORCEMENT – PLANNING AND DRAINAGE

- i. *Flitteridge Farm*: It was noted that the remaining caravan was still in situ. The Clerk would request and update for the next meeting.

23/154. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - RECEIVED

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

- i. **WD/2023/2000/LB Churchgate House, High Street, Fletching TN22 3SS**

Replacement timber windows.

The Parish Council has NO COMMENTS to make on this application.

- ii. **WD/2023/2060/F Land at Northall CPC, North Hall Lane, Fletching TN22 3SA**

Erection of single dwelling.

This is an application for the construction of a new 3-bedroom house (with garage and ancillary facilities) on an undeveloped site. The site does not lie within any settlement/development boundary and in consequence is in the countryside for the purpose of planning policy. The saved Policy of the Wealden Local Plan 1998 (Local Plan) seeks to resist all development beyond

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settlement boundaries. Saved Policy 17 DC17 of the Local Plan specifically resists residential development in the countryside.

Furthermore, the site lies within the High Weald AONB. The construction of a house with garage and ancillary facilities (i) is contrary to planning policy and (ii) will have a significant adverse impact to the landscape and setting of the AONB.

The Parish Council **OBJECTS** to this application and recommends that it should be **REFUSED**.

iii. **WD/2023/2074/F North Hall Barn, North Hall Lane, Fletching TN22 3SA**

Erection of single-storey, oak-framed orangery and alteration to fenestrations.

*This is an application for the construction of a modest extension (an Orangery) to the existing house. In 2013, WDC refused an application here (which had been supported by FPC) for (i) a new timber and glass extension to the existing kitchen and (ii) an associated raised terrace. However, FPC considers that this more modest addition is better in keeping with the character and appearance of this converted barn. The Orangery's modest size and its position (it would not be visible outside the boundaries of the property) together with the proposed materials are such that it would not have any adverse impact on the High Weald Area of Outstanding Beauty. The Parish Council, therefore, **SUPPORTS** the application.*

iv. **WD/2023/2033/LB 17 The Courtyard, South Pavilion, Sheffield Park TN22 3QW**

Proposed windows and doors replacement.

*The Parish Council has **NO COMMENTS** to make on this application.*

v. **WD/2023/1956/F Area of land at Piltdown Golf Club, Shortbridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XJ**

Construction of 2 bay storage facility for sand and other granular materials within existing car park. Existing surfacing in car park and access to be replaced by concrete and permeable block paving. Replacement, wider height restriction barrier set one lorry length back from highway. Enhanced screen planting and provision of linking track for greenkeepers' vehicles into existing track network.

*The proposal is to relocate the sand storage facility from the car park of the club house (Grade II listed) to the car park near the 9th tee. The Parish Council **SUPPORTS** the application.*

The comments submitted to Wealden District Council, since the last meeting, under delegated authority in respect of the following applications were **NOTED**:

vi. **WD/2023/1807/OH The Oaks, Batts Bridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XR**

Remove existing overhead lines and install new poles etc. (No Objections)

vii. **WD/2023/1865/F The Griffin, High Street, Fletching TN22 3SS**

Erection of a pergola and associated works over the existing BBQ area. (Comments submitted 15 August 2023)

This is a prominent building in the high street but the garden at the rear is secluded and well protected from adjoining properties. However, the building is Grade 2 listed and it lies within the village conservation area. The Parish Council does not object in principle to the improvement of the BBQ area. However, it is disappointed with the design and appearance of the pergola itself and with the prominence of the extractors on the roof. It is not felt that the design is sympathetic to the building and its curtilage, nor does it preserve or enhance the conservation area. The Parish Council would hope, therefore, that the applicant might be prepared to reconsider the design.

viii. **WD/2023/1886/LDE Meadowside, Shortbridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XD**

Use of land for siting a mobile unit for use ancillary to the main dwelling. (Comments submitted 15 August 2023)

The Parish Council has no knowledge of the history of the site.

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23/155. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - DECISIONS

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

- i. **WD/2023/1322/F 1 Trickland Cottages, Sheffield Park TN22 3QN**
Demolition of existing concrete garage and associated sheds and construction of timber frame garage and store (APPROVED 10 August 2023)
- ii. **WD/2023/1430/F 14 The Courtyard, Sheffield Park TN22 3QW**
Removal of current oil boiler and installation of air source heat pump. (APPROVED 4 August 2023)
- iii. **WD/2023/1455/LB Snug Cottage, Down Street, Nutley TN22 3EH**
Replacement on a like for like basis two severely degraded windows at the front of the property. (APPROVED 20 July 2023)
- iv. **WD/2023/1807/OH The Oaks, Batts Bridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XR**
Removal of overhead lines and installation of new poles. (NO OBJECTIONS 10 August 2023)
- v. **WD/2023/LDE Meadowside, Shortbridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XD**
Use of land for the siting a mobile unit for use ancillary to the main dwelling. (Planning Permission not required)

Applications Refused – None since the last meeting

Applications Withdrawn – None since the last meeting

23/156. PLANNING APPLICATIONS – APPEALS

The decision made by the Planning Inspectorate in respect of the following applications were **NOTED**:

- i. **WD/2021/1956/F Little Barkham Farm, Goldbridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XL**
Construction of four detached dwellings and access road with associated works (DISMISSED 23 August 2023)
- ii. **WD/2022/0019/F Upper Field, Little Barkham Farm, Goldbridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XL**
Construction of two detached four bedroom and two semi-detached three-bedroom dwellings with associated works. (DISMISSED 23 August 2023)

23/157. SPLAYNES GREEN

- i. *Phone box*: Councillor Kerwood had circulated information to all councillors in respect of the proposal to sandblast the phone box to bring it back to a condition to be able to paint. Concern was also raised as to whether the replacement door would be able to open given its weight and the fact that the box was leaning badly. Councillors discussed the options and considered, on balance, that it was not cost effective to repair the phone box. It was **AGREED** that an article be placed in the parish magazine stating that the Parish Council could not see a use that justified the spend of circa £3k but if anyone had any ideas to contact the Clerk and they would be considered.

Note: Councillor Coleman left the meeting at 8.05pm during the discussion of the above item.

23/158. ITEMS FOR THE PARISH MAGAZINE

It was agreed that the following items be included for the next edition of the Parish Magazine:

- Neighbourhood Plan – update and launch of consultation.
- Splaynes Green phone box.

23/159. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

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

23/160. TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Monday 2nd October 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall