

FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Gabriella Paterson-Griggs

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MINUTES of the Ordinary Meeting of **FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL** held on Monday 5th December 2022 in the Village Hall, High Street, Fletching (7 – 8.30pm).

PRESENT: Councillors C Rothery (Chairman), R Borton, N Collum, R Hannay, A Shaw and W Constantinou.

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

Members of the Public in Attendance: 4

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Greenish, D Kerwood and K Minch,

22/225. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Minute 22/238 i – Councillor Hannay as he knows the applicant.

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

22/226. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 7th November 2022 were a correct record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

22/227. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

22/228. PLANNING APPLICATIONS – RECEIVED

The following Planning Applications were discussed. See Minute 22/238 below for details.

WD/2022/2692/F – The Wattles, Goldbridge Road, Piltdown

(Note: Councillor R Borton arrived at the meeting at 7.05pm prior to the following item.)

WD/2022/2623/F – Piltdown Poultry, Fairhazel, Piltdown

22/229. REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Councillor Galley reported that at the ESCC Full Council meeting the following day there would be a motion put forward to ban fracking in East Sussex. It was noted that this had been tabled prior to the Government changing the policy again to no longer allowing fracking.

He also stated that the Fire Authority was considering a 2% increase in its council tax precept for 2023/24. It was noted that there may have to be risk-based cuts made if the final pay increase was over the 5% that had been offered. In respect of ESCC it was likely to be increasing its precept by 3% plus 2% for adult social care (5% in total) and Wealden increasing its precept by 3%. It was noted that was the maximum increase allowed without holding a referendum.

In response to a query Councillor Galley confirmed that the new East Sussex Highways contract was currently in the hand-over stage.

22/230. PILTDOWN SPEED REDUCTION PETITION – ESCC LEAD MEMBER MEETING

The Clerk reported that the Lead Member for Transport and the Environment would be considering the petition at a meeting on 16 January 2023. It was noted that the ESCC report was due to be published on 6 January 2023 in time for consideration at the next Parish Council meeting. The Parish Council **AGREED** that it would like to submit a written statement to the Lead Member meeting and would agree the submission points at its next meeting.

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22/231. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Clerk reported that she had met with David Philips as requested at the previous meeting. Although, he had now retired he was willing to attend a future Parish Council meeting to give a short presentation on what is involved in putting together a Neighbourhood Plan. Councillors **AGREED** that he be asked to the January meeting to present to the parish council as a whole. Following which a smaller working group of councillors could be set up to look at the options in more detail.

22/232. WORKING GROUPS / EXTERNAL GROUPS

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

- i. *ESALC AGM*: The Clerk reported that she had attended the ESALC AGM and that there had been useful presentations in respect of:

District/Parish Election 2023 – nominations would open on 20 March and close on 4 April 2023 and new councillors would take office on 9 May 2023. The Elections Act 2022 had introduced a new requirement for voters to produce photo ID when voting at a polling station.

Sussex Heritage Trust – a new campaign was being launched to ‘protect the public realm’ which included post boxes, lamp posts and original brick pavements. Parishes would be asked to sign up to a pledge to support the campaign.

Resilience Planning – Parish Councils should have in place a resilience plan that could be put into action quickly as and when required.

- ii. *SLR Meeting*: it was reported that the meeting was now due to be held in the new year. Items to be added to the agenda for the SLR to be sent to the Clerk. It was noted that there had recently been patching works on Shortbridge Road. It was also discussed whether a weight limit should be requested for Daleham Lane as aggregate lorries had been using it as a cut through, but it was noted that any limit would hinder the existing businesses in the area.

(Note: Councillor A Shaw arrived at the meeting at 7.45pm prior to the following item.)

22/233. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- i. *ESCC Local Transport Plan Consultation*: Councillor Rothery reported that he considered that the issues to be raised were: trains in Uckfield not fit for purpose given the expansion of the town; the road infrastructure in and out of Uckfield no longer being fit for purpose; and public transport being practically non-existent in Fletching. It was **AGREED** that Councillor Rothery in conjunction with the Clerk respond to the consultation.
- ii. *AiRS Community Led and Planning Resilience Services*: the letter sent to Parishes by AiRS offering services for parishes was noted. It was **AGREED** that the various community led planning tools be looked at by the working group being set up for the Neighbourhood Plan.

22/234. FINANCE AND HR

- i. The invoices and payments for December 2022 were **AUTHORISED** and the Council’s current financial position and bank reconciliation were noted.
- ii. *Draft Budget and Precept 2023/24*: the Clerk had circulated a draft budget for 2023/24 with precept options prior to the meeting. It was noted that the main addition to the budget was the election 2023 costs. These had been issued to the Clerk as the worst-case scenario by the Elections Manager at Wealden DC. It was also noted that the budget for fingerposts could be reduced as confirmation had been received that the work should be completed in this financial year.

With regards to the precept, councillors agreed that this should not exceed 5%. It was also agreed that the election costs be partially met from reserves if required.

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Councillors **RESOLVED** that the Clerk, in conjunction with Councillor A Shaw, produce a revised budget and precept proposal to be approved at the January 2023 meeting.

- iii. *Proposed Projects for 2023/24:* the Clerk reported that, currently, the proposed projects were - the tree survey, King's Coronation, burial ground path(s), parish election and neighbourhood plan.

22/235. WAR MEMORIAL

It was noted that works were required to the war memorial with cleaning as a minimum. The Clerk reported that a quote had been received and that a grant would also be applied for from the War Memorial Trust. Councillors **AGREED** that the Clerk and Councillor R Hannay undertake applying for the grant.

22/236. BURIAL GROUND

- i. There had been no requests or permit applications made since the last meeting.
- ii. *Laurel Hedge:* It was noted that the laurel hedge in the burial ground needed to be trimmed.

22/237. ENFORCEMENT – PLANNING AND DRAINAGE

- i. *Flitteridge Farm:* It was noted that a planning contravention notice had been served on the registered owners by Wealden DC and that the owners had indicated that they would be submitting a retrospective planning application to use the land as a caravan site.
- ii. *Bell Lane and Splaynes Green drainage/flooding:* Councillor Constantinou stated that the issue was being dealt with by ESCC.

22/238. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - RECEIVED

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

i. **WD/2022/2692/F The Wattles, Goldbridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XL**

Construction of one detached three-bedroom dwelling and altered access with associated works.

*This is an application for a new 3-bedroom house in the garden of an existing house. It is not in the AONB or the Conservation area or within the Development Boundary of Fletching, but it backs onto a green field site. The exit will be allowing extra cars to emerge onto the busy A272 but the exit will be widened for safety. The new house will be on the same line of the current houses so will not encroach on the green field site beyond. The Parish Council **SUPPORTS** the application subject to no adverse comments from Highways.*

(Note: this application was dealt with at the start of the meeting)

ii. **WD/2022/2754/F 1 & 2 Vigos Cottages, Sheffield Green, Sheffield Park TN22 3RB**

Proposed new combined access.

*This is an application to widen the exit of the Vigos Cottages onto the A275. This would entail the removal of a small section of Leylandii hedge to give wider visibility onto the busy road. As this will be an exit for 4 houses it is felt appropriate, but it is important that Highways is consulted. The Parish Council **SUPPORTS** the application subject to no adverse comments from Highways.*

iii. **WD/2022/2623/F Piltdown Poultry, Fairhazel, Piltdown TN22 3YE**

Conversion of existing barn into a single dwelling.

*This is an application for the conversion of an existing barn to form a house. The house will be within the frame of the existing barn although it will be smaller. The applicant owns the adjacent barn for which planning permission has lapsed but a foul water drainage system has already been installed. The site does include the 2 fields leading to the barn so there is space for a garden and parking. The Parish Council **SUPPORTS** the application.*

(Note: this application was dealt with at the start of the meeting)

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22/239. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - DECISIONS

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

Applications Approved

i. **WD/2022/2272/F Horse and Barge Farm, Shortbridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XA**

Proposed single-storey hydrotherapy swimming pool enclosure. (APPROVED – 23 November 2022)

ii. **WD/2022/2501/FR North Hall Shooting Club, North Hall Lane, Fletching TN22 3SA**

Retrospective application for an office/storage outbuilding. (APPROVED – 16 November 2022)

iii. **WD/2022/2569/F Parsonage Farmhouse, Church Street, Fletching TN22 3SJ**

Single storey side extension. (APPROVED – 24 November 2022)

Response to Parish Council – revisions to the design of the windows have been sought and these now reflect those in the existing dwelling.

Applications Refused – None since the last meeting

Applications Withdrawn

i. **WD/2022/2498/F Splaynes Green Farm, North Hall Lane, Fletching TN22 3SA**

Construction of single storey one bedroom annex in rear garden. (WITHDRAWN – 21 Nov 2022)

22/240. KINGS CORONATION

It was noted that the fireworks had been provisionally booked for Sunday 7th May 2023 and that the road closure signs had been reserved. The Clerk was waiting to hear whether there would be a national beacon lighting event.

22/241. FLAGPOLE

The Clerk reported that the licences had been applied for from ESCC but a decision was still awaited. (Note: Councillor Galley left the meeting at 8.25pm prior to the following item.)

22/242. SPLAYNES GREEN PHONE BOX

Councillor Constantinou reported that he was in discussion with Councillor Kerwood and would contact the Clerk with the address for the replacement door etc to be delivered to.

22/243. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

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

22/244. TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is due to be held on:

Monday 9th January 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall.