

FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Gabriella Paterson-Griggs

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Website: www.fletching-pc.org



MINUTES of the Annual Meeting of **FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL** held on Wednesday 17th May 2023 in the West End, St Andrew and St Mary's Church, Church Street, Fletching (7.30 – 9pm).

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

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

Members of the Public in Attendance: 0

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Chris Rothery (the outgoing Chairman)

23/78. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Greenish proposed and Councillor Minch seconded that Councillor Hannay be elected as Chairman of the Parish Council for the forthcoming year.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Richard Hannay be elected Chairman of the Parish Council for the forthcoming year.

Councillor Richard Hannay signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed by the Clerk as the Proper Officer.

23/79. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Hannay proposed and Councillor Minch seconded that Councillor Greenish be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council for the forthcoming year.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Damian Greenish be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council for the forthcoming year.

23/80. CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLORS

Two applications were received for the four casual vacancies for parish councillors. The Councillors asked questions of the two applicants who were present at the meeting. The applicants then left the meeting whilst the Council voted on their appointments.

It was **RESOLVED** that Amanda Abraham and Leighton Snelgrove be co-opted to the role of Parish Councillor.

Amanda Abraham and Leighton Snelgrove signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed by the Clerk as the Proper Officer.

23/81. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Minute 23/95(iv) Councillor Hannay as the applicant for application WD/2023/0868/F.

In accordance with the FPC Code of Conduct, the councillor did not participate in either the discussion or subsequent approval of delegate comments on this application.

23/82. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

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

23/83. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

23/84. COUNCILLOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND APPOINTMENTS TO WORKING GROUPS AND EXTERNAL BODIES

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The proposed appointments of members to individual areas of responsibility, working groups and representatives on external bodies were **APPROVED** as set out below:

Area of Responsibility	Areas Covered	Councillor/Appointee
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All assets owned by the Parish Council eg. Pump House, Splaynes Green Phone Box, Benches, War Memorial 	Cllr Damian Greenish
Burial Ground and Green Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burial Ground / Commons Grass Cutting Street Cleaning 	Cllr Richard Hannay Cllr Kate Minch Cllr Noel Collum
Community Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road Safety/Speed Watch Emergency Services FPC Emergency Plan 	Cllr Kate Minch Cllr Amanda Abraham
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget / Precept / Grants Grants / Insurance 	Cllr Richard Hannay
Health and Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NHS / Adult Social Care / Activities for the elderly Transport 	Cllr Kate Minch
Highways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads / Potholes / Verges / Pavements / Flooding / Drainage / Signs / Footpaths / Fingerposts 	Cllr Wes Constantinou Cllr Amanda Abrahams Cllr Leighton Snelgrove
Planning Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning applications received from Wealden District Council for comment 	Cllr Noel Collum Cllr Damian Greenish Cllr Wes Constantinou
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay / Performance Review Recruitment 	Cllr Richard Hannay Cllr Damian Greenish
Fletching School Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with the school 	Cllr Richard Hannay
Neighbourhood Plan Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting up the Neighbourhood Plan process for the parish 	All Councillors
Fletching Historical Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership between the Church, Parish Council and School 	Cllr Noel Collum Gabriella Paterson-Griggs
Parking Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement to parking issues in the village of Fletching 	Cllr Wes Constantinou Cllr Amanda Abraham
Ashdown Forest Conservators Parish Liaison Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership meeting between Conservators and parish councils 	Cllr Kate Minch Cllr Leighton Snelgrove
Community Safety Action Group (Uckfield Cluster)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership meeting between Police and Parish/Town Councils 	Cllr Kate Minch
East Sussex Association of Local Councils (ESALC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Association of Town and Parish Councils in East Sussex 	Cllr Richard Hannay Gabriella Paterson-Griggs

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Area of Responsibility	Areas Covered	Councillor/Appointee
Fletching Recreation Ground Committee (FPC is Sole Trustee of the FRC Charity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The running of the Fletching recreation ground and children's play area	Cllr Richard Hannay Chris Rothery
Fletching Village Hall Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The running of the Village Hall through the Fletching Village Hall Charity	Cllr Kate Minch (one representative only)
Leches and Smith Charity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Charity for the benefit of those in need in Fletching and Danehill	Andrew Shaw (one representative only)
Parish in Bloom	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Annual competition run by South-East in Bloom	Cllr Kate Minch
Wealden District Association of Local Councils (WDALC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Partnership meeting between District / County and Parish Councils	Cllr Richard Hannay (one representative only)
Wealden Parish Cluster Group (Central West)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Information sharing meeting between Wealden District Council Planning and parish councils	Cllr Richard Hannay (one representative only)

23/85. STANDING ORDERS and REGULATIONS

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the following:

- i. Standing Orders 2023
- ii. Financial Regulations 2023
- iii. Code of Conduct 2023

23/86. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

23/87. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR COLEMAN

Councillor Hannay thanked Councillor Galley for the hard work and service that he had given to Fletching parish during his time as the District Councillor and welcomed Councillor Coleman as the new District Councillor for Danehill and Fletching. Councillor Coleman also thanked Councillor Galley and stated that she had respect and admiration for all his hard work and everything that he had achieved for the parish.

Councillor Coleman reported that following the recent District Council election where Wealden no one party had overall control, the Green Party Councillors and the Liberal Democrat Party Councillors had made an alliance in order to be the majority group on the Council. The new Leader of the Council would be Councillor James Partridge with Councillor Rachel Millward as Deputy-Leader and these roles would be rotated each year. Councillor Coleman also informed Members that she was being nominated as Chairman of Wealden District Council and would hold the post for a year. These appointments would be confirmed at the Annual Meeting of the District Council on 24th May 2023. It was noted that there had been a lot of training that Councillor Coleman had been attending since the election.

In response to a question about the timescale of the publication of the Local Plan for consultation, Councillor Coleman explained that the various options were being discussed by the new alliance.

23/88. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR GALLEY

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Councillor Galley informed the meeting that he had been re-elected Vice-Chairman of East Sussex County Council. Councillors congratulated him on the appointment. He reported that there had been a petition received by ESCC signed by over 5000, which had triggered a debate at the Full Council, requesting that the Pension Fund stop investing in fossil fuels. It was explained that ESCC does not own the Pension Fund, it administers it on behalf of a lot of local authorities, and that the Pension Fund had been awarded LGPS Fund of the year in 2021 and highly commended for its approach to climate. Councillor Galley confirmed that the Motion was lost.

Councillor Galley reported that there had been little progress on the roads and that he was taking the Leader of ESCC around the area the following week and was hoping to unlock funds in order to get the situation moving. It was noted that the new contractor, Balfour Beatty, had promised to examine the ways of working. Members were reminded that a new contractor had been appointed through a tendering process following the natural end of term for the previous contract not because of any fault found with the previous contractor. It was agreed that a holistic solution was required as the issues were with the drainage not just the roads. Councillor Galley confirmed that it was important to ensure drainage experts attended the sites not just the highway engineers. He stated that he was optimistic that there would be significant improvement coming.

23/89. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – Tuesday 30th May 2023

The agenda for the annual parish meeting was discussed and it was agreed that the past Chairman, Chris Rothery, would present the highlights of the previous year and Councillor Hannay, as the new Chairman, would present on future projects including the neighbourhood plan. The Clerk would report on the finances and Councillors Galley and Coleman would give updates from the County and District perspectives. It was agreed that Councillor Galley would be near the beginning of the agenda due to having to attend another annual parish meeting the same night.

Note: Councillor Galley left the meeting at 8.10pm to go to another Parish Council meeting.

23/90. FLETCHING RECREATION GROUND UPDATE

The Clerk gave an update on the current situation with the insurance claim following the water leak at the pavilion. It was noted works were still ongoing to ensure the building had been dried out but that the insurance company had accepted the quote for the refurbishment. It was explained that the pavilion was useable but had no lights or carpets as these had both had to be removed. The sports clubs were being kept informed of progress on a regular basis.

23/91. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

No correspondence had been received since the last meeting.

23/92. FINANCE AND ASSETS

- i. The Asset Register for Fletching Parish Council was **AGREED**.
- ii. The Risk Assessment and Management Document for Fletching Parish Council was **AGREED**.
- iii. The subscriptions and direct debits made to other bodies were **AGREED**.
- iv. The banking arrangements were confirmed for the forthcoming year. It was **AGREED** that Councillor Hannay would replace Chris Rothery as an authorised signatory for the bank accounts. Councillor Collum would continue as an authorised signatory.
- v. The budget and precept for 2023/24 were noted.
- vi. The invoices and payments for May 2023 were **AUTHORISED** and the Council's current financial position and bank reconciliation were noted.

23/93. BURIAL GROUND

- i. The application to purchase a burial plot was **APPROVED** and it was agreed that the applicants be classed as parishioners given the length of time they had resided in the parish.
- ii. The request for an additional inscription to an existing memorial was **APPROVED**.

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23/94. ENFORCEMENT – PLANNING AND DRAINAGE

- i. *Flitteridge Farm*: The Clerk gave an update received from WDC Enforcement. It was noted that there were still two caravans to be removed from the site.

23/95. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - RECEIVED

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

i. **WD/2023/1002/F Denniker Farmhouse, Ruston Bridge Road, Fletching TN22 3SH**

Upwards extension to existing dwelling to create additional storey, together with external alterations.

This application, if approved, would raise the roof additional 0.5m over the extant permissions that have not been implemented. There is also to be an addition of a balcony and boarding that would be plastic rather than timber. The Parish Council considers that the application is contrary to Policy DC19(2) which states that the proposal should not be intrusive in the landscape or detrimental to the rural setting. The proposed building is on the brow of the hill and although there is a small bank of trees protecting it from the road in the summer, these are deciduous and contain many ash trees which may well suffer from ash die back, so the building would be very intrusive in the countryside. The Parish Council OBJECTS to this application.

ii. **WD/2023/1141/F Ruttingham Barn, Down Street, Piltdown TN22 3XX**

New 3m wide oak framed carport to side of existing garage.

Down Street has had many fairly recently built houses and many garages. The height is no taller than the existing garage and the materials are sympathetic. The Parish Council SUPPORTS this application.

The comments submitted to Wealden District Council under delegated authority were **NOTED** in respect of the following application:

iii. **WD/2023/0473/FR The Oaks, Batts Bridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XR**

Part retrospective application for demolition of existing garage and side extension. Proposed two-storey extension to side with rear-facing balcony, two-storey extension and porch to the front, new chimney stack, internal alterations, new oak framed garage and secure store with home office above and improvements to on-site parking. (Comments submitted 25 April 2023)

The Parish Council supported the original application. This application is for an extension to the original plans for the house and there is a significant increase in the size of the house as a result of these works. The house is not visible from the surrounding area. The Parish Council SUPPORTS the application.

iv. **WD/2023/0868/F 4 Corner Cottages, High Street, Fletching TN22 3SS**

Demolition of existing outbuilding and erection of replacement outbuilding. (Comments submitted 25 April 2023)

No. 4 Corner Cottages is a listed building within a conservation area. The application is to remove the small outbuilding and replace with a more sympathetic building. The replacement building is slightly wider but in essence the same size and height. The outbuilding is overlooked by a neighbour but the new building's roof will be an improvement on the existing roof. The Parish Council SUPPORTS the application.

v. **WD/2023/0925/F North Park Lodge, Sheffield Park TN22 3RA**

Erection of gazebo. (Comments submitted 4 May 2023)

The property lies within the AONB and the curtilage of a Grade 1 listed asset (Sheffield Park) and the building is Grade II listed. The Parish Council noted the comments of ESCC Archaeology on the application and OBJECTS to the application on the same grounds.

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23/96. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - DECISIONS

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

- i. **WD/2023/0279/FR East Bridge, North Hall Lane, Fletching TN22 3SA**
Retrospective application for the replacement of an agricultural barn on the same site as existing barn. (APPROVED 4 April 2023)
- ii. **WD/2023/0763/OH North Hall Farm, Fletching TN22 3SA**
Alterations to the low voltage overhead lines with the addition of a low voltage underground cable. (NO OBJECTIONS 14 April 2023)
- iii. **WD/2020/2184/F Argus Farm, Goldbridge Road, Pitdown TN22 3XN**
Conversion of existing detached domestic garage and store building to 2 bed residential dwelling and erection of new ancillary garage. Provision of new access arrangements within the site. (APPROVED 9 May 2023)

Applications Refused

- i. **WD/2022/1637/MEA Land at Downlands Farm, Uckfield**
Outline application for erection of up to 424 dwellings and associated works etc. Full application for creation of a SANG and associated landscaping etc. (REFUSED 21 April 2023)

Applications Withdrawn – None since the last meeting

Note: Councillor Coleman left the meeting at 8.35pm at the end of this item to go to another Parish Council meeting.

23/97. KINGS CORONATION

It was reported that the fireworks display and street party events had been very well received with high attendance at both. It was agreed that, at present, there was no intention to hold another event, but it was noted that there was due to be a beacon lighting event to commemorate D Day in 2024. It was also reported that the Fletching Bonfire Society was looking to re-form which could result in an annual event taking place.

23/98. FLAGPOLE

The Clerk updated on the current position with regards to erecting a flagpole in the village centre. It was noted that the request to locate it to the side of the village hall had been rejected by the Village Hall Committee and the cost associated with the work required to obtain the licences to place it on the land owned by ESCC Highways outside Cherry Cottages was proving to be prohibitive. It was **AGREED** that no further action be taken at this stage.

23/99. PARISH IN BLOOM

The Clerk reported that the judging would be taking place on Thursday 15th June 2023 and that it was a new judge this year. It was noted that the Clerk and Councillor Minch would meet the judge and accompany them on their visit.

23/100. ITEMS FOR THE PARISH MAGAZINE

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

- Thank you to Councillor Galley and welcome to Councillor Coleman
- Introduction to the new co-opted members
- Parish in Bloom
- Reminder about parking charges on the Ashdown Forest and enforcement action being taken

23/101. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The following items to be included on the agenda for the next meeting(s):

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- Neighbourhood Plan

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

23/102. TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meetings are due to be held on:

Annual Meeting of the Parish - Tuesday 30th May 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall.

Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council – Monday 5th June 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall

It was further agreed that the meetings continue on the first Monday of the month (except August when there is no meeting held) but that from January 2024 these be changed to the second Monday of each month to avoid bank holidays.