

**Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Thursday 8h January 2024 held at Northiam Village Hall**

**Present: Cllr Fairbrass (Chair), Cllr C Biggs, Cllr Harding, Cllr Luckett, Cllr Russell, Cllr Sargent, Cllr Fenton, Cllr Wadie & Cllr Schlesinger**

**Also Present: Nicola Ideson Clerk - Cllr T Biggs (RDC), Cllr Ganly (RDC), Cllr Redstone (ESCC) and approximately 40 +members of the Public**

**Date: 8th February 2024**

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|  | **To receive and accept Apologies for Absence**  No apologies were received |
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| 1. **m** | **Chairman’s Announcements**  There were no Chairman’s announcements |
|  | **To adjourn the meeting to enable members of the public and Councillors to address the meeting. This is a ‘for information’ session only and no action can be taken upon those items raised.**  *The meeting was closed at 19.01*  *Members of the public made a representations on items FC24/363, FC24/356 and FC24/348,*  *This was noted by Council* |
|  | *The meeting was re-opened at 19.08* |
|  | **To receive Declarations of Interest and Lobbying**  *To receive any declaration by members of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of the interest and whether the member regards the interest as personal, pecuniary or prejudicial under the Code of Members Conduct.*  *Cllr Luckett declared an interest in item* *FC 24/368 – This was noted by Council.* |
|  | **Minutes** – It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 11th January 2024 be approved as a true record of the meeting. The minutes were duly signed. |
|  | **To receive report from County Councillor**  Cllr Redstone’s report had been published and was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. |
|  | **To receive report from District Councillors**  The District Councillors’ report was received verbally at the meeting. |
|  | **Finance** |
|  | The payments for February 2024 were circulated at the meeting and **AGREED**. |
|  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Payee** | **Amount Gross** | | John O’Conner | £1,082.50 | | NVHT | £46.00 | | EDF | £86.33 | | HMRC | £6.95 | | N Ideson | £1890.09 | | N Ideson | £1.95 | | Business Stream | £50.85 | | P. Sargent | £13.40 | | RDC | £3330.70 | | BT | £245.97 | | S Pratt | £27 | | S Pratt | £32.70 | | P Sargent -Expenses (Safety Signs) | £55.20 | |
|  | **To note the bank reconciliation for December 2023–** The bank reconciliation was **AGREED** and signed in conjunction with the bank statements.  Co-op £111127.14  Unity £26778.08  Nationwide £52,476.98  Barclays £37068.32 |
|  | **To receive the Payments and Receipts report for 22-23**  Noted by Council. |
|  | **To receive the CIL report**  Noted by Council |
|  | **To agree the continuation of the grounds maintenance contract at a cost of £11258 per year. An increase of £433.**  It was RESOLVED to AGREE the grounds maintenance costs from John O’Conner for the ongoing maintenance service from the contract that lapsed in 2021, until further quotes for comparison can be obtained, |
|  | **To agree expenditure of £750 to Wealden Traditional Construction Ltd for the design plans of the new Football Pavilion to be claimed back from S106 held by Rother DC.**  A further quote had been obtained from RX Architects for £2812. It was RESOLVED to AGREE the expenditure of £750 to Wealden Traditional Construction Ltd. The quote will be sent to Rother with a request to release the funds. |
|  | **To agree expenditure of £6615 to Bourne Sport for football pitch improvements to be claimed back from S106 held by Rother DC.**  It was RESOLVED to AGREE the expenditure as Bournes are a previously approved RDC contractor. The quote will be sent to Rother with a request to release the funds. |
|  | **Expenditure in line with 4.1 of the Financial Regulations.** |
|  | No expenditure |
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|  | **To arrange the Annual Parish Meeting and set a budget.** It was AGREED to hold the APM on 18th April 7pm. The Council will ask NVHT to open the bar for people to buy drinks after the meeting. In addition, it was AGREED that the council would contribute 12 bottles of wine to offer to residents. |
|  | **To receive the Playground maintenance report following from the annual inspection and quotes for repair.**  No quotes have been received back from the suppliers. Safety signs have been organised and repair of a tarmac patch has been arranged. |
|  | **To discuss ideas of use for the de-commissioned phone box.**  Potential ideas include a Tourist Information, Swap Shop, use as community produce distribution point. It was AGREED to place an advert in parish magazine for ideas and ask for volunteers to paint the phone box. |
|  | **To discuss the future of the Lollipop person patrol.**  The expected new lollipop person hasn’t ended up starting. The primary school recruits for the position and ESCC provide training and background checks. Clerk to contact the school and ask if they are actively advertising and whether they would like any assistance from NPC. The Moloneys agreement for sponsoring the lollipop lady was raised and it was explained that any excess funds from Moloneys remaining after the lollipop persons salary has been paid will be used for other safety projects, such as cycling proficiency tests for the children. NPC need to check they are fulfilling their part of the sponsorship agreement in relation to the banners. |
|  | **Governance** |
|  | **To consider a Bio-Diversity Policy**  It was AGREED to APRROVE the Bio-Diversity Policy. Cllrs Russell and Wadie said that this would not impact on the Clerk’s workload. |
|  | **To consider a Social-Media Policy.**  It was AGREED to APPROVE the Social- Media Policy. |
|  | **To consider an application from a resident to install a bench**  It was AGREED to APPROVE the application for a bench in the Village Green. The applicant will be asked to provide a photo of the bench they wish to install and Councillors will specify the location. |
|  | **St Francis Field** |
|  | **To approve a sheep grazing license for fields 11 & 12**  The CIC have produced a draft grazing licence covering a larger designated area incorporating fields 10,11,12,13 &14. This is to allow the fields to be periodically rested and rotated. It was RESOLVED to AGREE the Grazing License. |
|  | **To begin the ‘Change of Use’ planning application for the Natural Burial Ground**  It was RESOLVED to AGREE instigation of the ‘Change of Use’ planning application. |
|  | **To form a working group to discuss the details for the Natural Burial Ground**  It was AGREED that the members of the Natural Burial Ground working party would consist of Council members Schlesinger, Biggs and Luckett. |
|  | **To consider appointing an independent land agent to advise the Council, before deciding future actions in relation to the planning application for the Stables**  2 quotes have been received it was AGREED to request that Batchelor Monkhouse, who has provided the most reasonable quote, to re-quote in the first instance for just the advice needed on the demand and nature of demand for stables in the area and for this property in particular. |
|  | **To consider the Lost England Project proposal**  A detailed discussion of the Lost England Project was deferred until the proposers had received pre-application advice from RDC Planning as to whether the project will meet the recognised planning and access issues. It was also agreed that should such discussions take place a wider forum for discussion should be considered. |
|  | **To agree to place a sign in Harlotts Wood asking people not to disturb the woodland.**  It was AGREED that the Council would speak to the resident informally first. |
|  | **To agree to form a working group to revise the CIC/NPC Management Agreement.**  It was AGREED that a separate working party was not necessary. |
|  | **Reports from Councillors** |
|  | Cllr Biggs reported that the council has been plagued with a high turnover of Councillors and Clerks and last May all residents had the opportunity to stand as a Councillor.  The residents duly voted and resulted in the current councillors, entrusting them to represent the village. Constant criticism and attempts to discredit the council verbally and on social media are hindering the council's progress. Cllr Biggs asked for the village's support from those present at the meeting and it was received.  Cllr Biggs offered to meet the contractor regarding the cemetery footpath to look into repairs. The Chairman will also attend. There were no objections.  Cllr Russell reported that he was no longer pursing installing the posts outside Jempsons and was now concentrating on increasing the income streams for the Council. The posts were delayed due to ESCC changing contractors.  Cllr Wadie reported that he had reported the fly-tipping near to the Scout Hut and RDC were in correspondence with the contractors that are working on the property.  Cllr Schlesinger offered to write the meeting report for the parish magazine. There were no objections. |
|  | **Planning** |
|  | **RR/2024/61/P - 15 Wilderness Gardens, Northiam TN31 6GB**  Conversion of garage to provide an annexe  It was AGREED to support the application and to comment that the garage should remain ancillary to the main property and to be for residential use only. |
|  | **RR/2023/2627/P - Windmill Cottage, Beacon Lane, Northiam TN31 6PJ**  The erection of 1No. New Dwelling house adjacent to the building known as Windmill Cottage, together with the associated new landscaping. (alternative to RR/2023/326/P).  It was AGREED to raise no objection. |
|  | **Second Session for Public Questions**  As resolved for inclusion at the July 2023 meeting, a second session for public questions or comments.  *The meeting was closed at 20.55*  *Residents made representations on items FC 24/355, FC 24/362, FC 24/362, FC 24/360 and FC 24/351.*  *This was noted by Council* |
|  | *The meeting was re-opened at 21.10* |
|  | It was **RESOLVED** in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 that, because of the confidential and/or sensitive nature of the business to be transacted, (may it be legal, contractual or employment issues), the press and public be instructed to withdraw.  The meeting moved into closed session at 21.20 |
|  | **Leases** |
|  | **To consider the legal process after the departure of the Stables tenant.**  it was RESOLVED to AGREE to send written correspondence to the former tenant. |
|  | The meeting closed at 21.35 pm  Signed………………………………………………………………………………………… |
|  | Date………………………………………………………………………………………… |