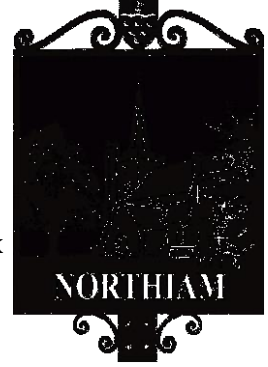


# Northiam Parish Council

Parish Office, Village Club, Main Street,  
Northiam, East Sussex TN31 6LP

01797 253990

clerk@northiamparishcouncil.gov.uk  
www.northiamparishcouncil.gov.uk



Northiam Parish Council response to PKF Littlejohn LLP email of 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024 agreed at the full council meeting of the 27 June 2024.

Northiam Parish Council has not been able to hold regular parish council meetings for the 23-24 financial year with the change of Clerk. The deeply held opinions of councillors and members of the public about how to best deal with running council assets has taken the focus of councillors, the public and any staff. What would usually have been part of the normal process has not happened. It is hoped that the council has begun to turn in the right direction though it has a way to go yet.

Here is the information you requested:

1. Council minutes approving the creation of the Football Pavilion Working Group (FPWG) if this is a Council working group

Please see Minutes of the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023 FC23/183

2. Terms of reference of the FPWG and the minute of their approval by the Council if this is a Council working group

No terms of Reference were agreed for this working group whilst the HR and Finance Committees Terms of Reference were agreed. In the current year the council is agreeing terms of reference of its working parties. There are no committees so that everything has to be agreed by the full council in order to increase transparency. It will need a further year to ascertain if the change from committee to working parties is the right one for the many assets that each refer to. It will have to consider if the length of the project may mean that the working party will have to become a committee of the council.

3. All agendas, supporting papers and minutes/notes of FPWG meetings

Documents attached

Email 23 May 2023 From P Sargent reviewing the position at the time.  
S106 June 2023 Update 7

4. Minutes of all Committee and Council meetings where this project has been considered and any resolutions made in respect of it

Please see minutes:

21<sup>st</sup> September 2023 FC23/183

19<sup>th</sup> October 2023 FC23/242

9<sup>th</sup> November 2023 FC23/277

14<sup>th</sup> December 2023 FC23/310

11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 FC24/333

8<sup>th</sup> February 2024 FC24/343

June minutes are being prepared.

5. Declarations of interest in the proposed football pavilion (both in the member's register of interests and in meeting minutes)

Any declarations of interest are stated at the start of the minutes for that meeting.

Register of Interest for all councillors can be found at

<https://northiamparishcouncil.gov.uk/council-members/>

6. Declarations of interest in the suppliers involved in the planning stage of the proposed football pavilion (both in the member's register of interests and in meeting minutes)

Any declarations of interest are stated at the start of the minutes for that meeting.

7. Minutes referring to the previous resolution on 8/6/2023 - **FC23/96. To discuss the football pavilion and agree actions.**

The Clerk explained to the council that they do not have the capacity to take on any new projects at the moment. It was RESOLVED not to proceed with this at the current time but once the council was in a better position to reconsider.

However, I have noted minute ref FC23/310, which appears to indicate previous consideration by Council and within 6 months of the resolution at FC23/96.

Please see minutes - signed

8. Copies of the contract standing orders and financial regulations for 2023/24

Please see the attachments – Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

9. Copy of the detailed budgets relating to the proposed football pavilion for 2023/24 and 2024/25

The proposed football pavilion has not been budgeted for in 2023/2024 nor 2024/2025.

It should have allocated funding to cover initial costs of getting the project to a stage at which an application to Rother District Council for the whole project could be submitted.

These should either have been precepted for or ring fenced from general reserves as there is no other appropriate source of funds.

Going forward the parish council will note the current budget to acknowledge that the funds are available to Northiam Parish Council which are being held by Rother District Council.

Furthermore, the council agrees to ring fence £5,000 from General Reserves to cover this expenditure and will include an estimate of further costs for this project in the 2025-2026 budget.

10. Minutes of Finance Committee and Council meetings where these detailed budgets were considered

No budget Allocation for Pavilion. Please note point 9 comment.

Attached for information

Full Council Minutes 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and Finance Committee Minutes 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

11. Details of any due diligence carried out into the companies who have supplied services in relation to this project

None can be found.

## No Response to Assertions of Section 1

### Assertion 2

The assistance available from scribe is improving the level of detail of financial transactions each month and at the June meeting cash book to bank statement reconciliations were provided for March, April and May.

Enough information has now been input into Scribe software to allow for monthly budget monitoring and the system has been altered to reflect that any costs for formulating a request to release the S106 funds held by Rother District Council is allocated to general reserves.

It is now feasible for a quarterly full financial report to be made by the Responsible Financial Officer.

### Assertion 4

The council is making great efforts to stabilise staff and to hold regular meetings in order to function correctly and facilitate compliance with publication legislation.

### Assertion 5

The council has been set the objective of completing a risk assessment of its management and procedures within the next 6 months by the internal auditor. This will take some time and a few issues have already come to light and the council will be addressing each one as it comes up.

### Assertion 7

The council is making great efforts to stabilise staff and to hold regular meetings in order to function correctly and facilitate publication of internal and external reports and resulting actions taken to deal with issues.

### Assertion 8

Friction between staff and councillors has prevented the Challenge being dealt with earlier. Councillors will be reminded to treat staff, the public and each other with respect and civility.