

# Northiam Parish Council

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

01797 253990

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



## **Minutes of the Full Council Extraordinary Meeting held on Thursday 27 June 2024, Northiam Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllr Fairbrass (Chair), Cllr C Biggs, Cllr Fenton, Cllr Harding, Cllr Lockett, Cllr Russell, Cllr Sargent, Cllr Schlesinger, and Cllr Wadie. Members of the public five.

**Also Present:** Mary Philo Locum Clerk

**FC24/422 Apologies**  
Councillors Sargent and Schlesinger

**FC24/423 Declarations of Interest**  
None.

**FC24/424 Public Time**  
The meeting adjourned at 7.31pm.  
In response to query the Clerk advised that the minutes listed in response to the AGAR challenge, were those that the Clerk was able to locate.

The meeting reconvened still at 7.31pm

**FC24/425 Year End Internal Audit Reports**  
The extensive internal report had highlighted various issues that had continued from the previous year and these were reflected in the internal audit report within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. Councillors were keen to make quicker progress to resolve these issues. It was noted that regular and thorough reporting of the financial position would allow for

clearer consideration when budgeting next year. Reserves level would have to be considered as part of the budget for the next financial year. Having seen details of the External Audit Challenge, the Internal Auditor had suggested that the council note the current years' budget and allocate £5,000 of the general reserve to cover expenditure bringing the pavilion refurbishment project to a point that the PC can make a claim on the S106 funds being held by RDC for improvement works to the pitch and changing rooms to Northiam Recreation Ground

**FC/426  
2024**

**Response to the External Auditors email of the 26<sup>th</sup> March**

The clerk following minor amendment, the following response was unanimously agreed.

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 Amendment A – being the first version of the document.

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

23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024 FC24/396

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.

**FC24/427**

In light of the internal auditor's report and external auditors email, it was unanimously resolved to agree to ring fence £5,000 of the general reserve to cover costs of the pavilion/pitch improvements preparation costs to be able to make a request for funding from the S106 funds held by Rother District Council. Furthermore, to agree to provide budget monitoring going forward to cover this.

**FC24/428**

**Annual Governance and Accountability Return Section 1**

Having considered the 9 assertions of Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accounting Return 2023-2024, it was unanimously resolved to agree the responses as per the internal auditor's report. Chair and Clerk signed.

**FC24/429**

It was unanimously resolved to agree the response on how the council will correct the response given as 'No' on the Section 1.

**FC24/430**

**Annual Governance and Accountability Return Section 2**

It was unanimously resolved to agree Section 2, Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023-2024. Chair signed. The dates for the Public to be able to inspect the accounts is 1<sup>st</sup> July to 9th August.

**FC24/431**

**Information for Councillors**

Items for the next meeting: CIC Management Agreement; Lolly pop lady; gate post at Beacon Field; Bench; delegated commenting on planning during recess.

**FC24/432**

**Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July 7.00pm Village Hall.** The meeting closed at 7.45pm.