



**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting  
Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024, 7pm  
Northiam Village Hall**

Present: Cllr Schlesinger (Chair), Cllr C Biggs, Cllr Fenton, Cllr Harding, Cllr Russell, Cllr Sargent, and Cllr Wadie.

Also Present: Mary Philo and Ian Philo Locum Clerks - Cllr T Biggs (RDC), Cllr Ganly (RDC), Cllr Redstone (ESCC) and approximately eight members of the Public

**FC24/433 Apologies**

Councillors Fairbrass and Lockett were absent due to ill health. It was unanimously agreed to approve their absence.

**FC24/434 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**Meeting was adjourned for Public Session at 7.01pm**

A resident raised their concern that the council would not be able to fund the loan for the acquisition of St Francis Field while there was no rental income from the stables and costs for running the field increase. The council can still meet the loan payments from the additional precept agreed since the acquisition and income from the bungalow rentals. Additionally, the council holds a reserve to cover a shortfall.

A resident commented that the management agreement between St Francis Field CIC and the parish council was not being adhered to in their opinion.

A member of the public commented that bank signatories changes should have been completed sooner.

**Meeting was reconvened at 7.15pm**

*Governance*

**FC24/435 Minutes**

It was unanimously resolved to agree the minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> June and 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**FC24/436 Recreation Ground and Sports Pavilion Working Party**

Following a minor amendment, it was unanimously resolved to agree the terms. It further unanimously resolved to agree the members of the group to be Councillors Harding, Lockett and Sargent.

**FC24/437 Local Nature Recovery Working Party**

Following a minor amendment, it was unanimously resolved to agree the terms. It further unanimously resolved to agree the members of the group to be Councillors Harding, Russell and Wadie.

*Planning***FC24/438 Planning Applications Considered**

RR/2024/875/P Sunnymead, Beckley Road: Proposed detached double garage with office over.

Councillors were supportive but planning officers had given approval the day of the meeting.

**FC24/439 Planning Delegation During Recess**

It was unanimously agreed to delegate to the Clerk, commenting on planning applications during the recess for application that must be responded to before the September meeting. The Clerk will canvass councillors for their opinions to formulate a response. An extraordinary meeting may be called to deal with any sensitive or complicates applications.

**FC24/440 Response to the Local Plan 2020-2040 Consultation**

It was unanimously resolve to delegate to the Clerk in consultation with councillors a response.

*Finances***FC24/441 Nationwide Bank Signatories**

It was unanimously resolved to agree to remove Penny Farmer and Anthony Biggs and to authorise Councillors Biggs and Sargent as signatories for the account.

**FC24/442 PAYE**

It was noted that PAYE is paid monthly which reduces the risk of build up of payments due with the regular changing Clerks.

**FC24/443 Bank Reconciliation as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

The council agreed 7-0 the bank reconciliation as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 £315,298.81 and the budget monitoring for June 2024.

Balance carried forward £318,823.03  
 June Receipts £2,015.98  
 June Payments £5,540.20  
 Balance as at 30 June £315,298.81

Bank Statements  
 Co-op £110,133.81  
 Hodge £82,165.65  
 Unity £27,146.52  
 Nationwide £54,318.49  
 Barclays £41,534.64

June Receipts  
 Bungalows £1,301.08  
 EDF £439.55  
 Sheep grazing £90.50  
 Bank Interest 184.85

June Payments

| Payee                            | Amount Gross | Amount Net | VAT     | Description              |
|----------------------------------|--------------|------------|---------|--------------------------|
| John O'Conner                    | £1125.79     | £938.16    | £187.63 | Grounds Maintenance-May  |
| NVHT                             | £30.00       |            |         | Room Hire - May          |
| RDC                              | £384.00      |            |         | Rates June 24            |
| Safeplay                         | £120.00      | £100.00    | £20.00  | Playground op inspection |
| Scribe                           | £673.92      | 561.60     | 112.32  | Annual Fee               |
| Staff                            | £2093.20     |            |         | Outstanding May and JUNE |
| Wealden Traditional Construction | £900.00      | £750.00    | £150.00 | Sports Pavilion Plans    |
| Online playgrounds               | £24.44       | £20.37     | £4.07   | Play equip repairs       |
| Kompan                           | £62.68       | £52.24     | £10.44  | Play equip repairs       |
| EDF                              | £103.00      | £98.10     | £4.90   | SFF Utilities            |
| Castle Water                     | £410.44      | £390.90    | £19.54  | SFF Utilities            |
| GCI/Global4                      | £23.17       | £19.31     | £3.86   | Broadband                |

| Payee           | Amount Gross | Amount Net | VAT     | Description              |
|-----------------|--------------|------------|---------|--------------------------|
| John O'Conner   | £1125.79     | £938.16    | £187.63 | Grounds Maintenance-June |
| NVHT            | £52.00       |            |         | Room Hire - June         |
| NVHT            | £100.00      |            |         | Library Rent             |
| RDC             | £384.00      |            |         | Rates July 24            |
| Staff           | £1,734.08    |            |         | July                     |
| Business Stream | £64.94       |            |         | Wastewater               |

|                       |      |  |  |                    |
|-----------------------|------|--|--|--------------------|
| Northiam Village Club | £780 |  |  | Parish Office Rent |
|-----------------------|------|--|--|--------------------|

**FC24/444 Payments Authorised****FC24/445 Financial Report**

It was noted that the First Quarter Financial Report will be circulated to councillors at the end of July to be agreed in September.

**FC24/446 Online Backup for the Council Laptop**

It was unanimously agreed to acquire Microsoft 365 Business Standard for the council laptop at £10.30 a month plus vat. This will provide online storage of 1TB whilst the current free storage has been exceeded as well as up to date office software. The current portable hard drive was last updated in June 2023. Clerk to ask if the Responsible Financial Officer needs a portable hard drive to cover information not held on Scribe accounting software.

*Parish Matters***FC24/447 Playground Working Party Report**

Some minor repairs had been delayed by spares having to come from abroad.

Specifications for tendering for new playground equipment was being constructed and would be put to council to be sent to providers in September.

The playground had been busy during the Midsummer Fair.

**FC24/448 Commemorative Bench for Derek J Tedham**

It was unanimously resolved to confirm the commemorative bench exact location opposite the DIY Store. Councillor Fenton or Harding would attend installation. It was further resolved that the bench would sit on concrete strip and be secured to these and that the top rail of the back of the seat be arched to allow for a plaque. It was unanimously resolved to delegate to the clerk clarification of the appearance of the plaque and material.

**FC24/449 Local Nature Recovery Working Party Report**

At the last meeting discussions covered amongst others hedgehog tunnels and the issues with cutting and planting of verges and amenity grass areas. A report is being produced to present to the council.

The group is keen to produce an informative quarterly newsletter and an action plan for Beacon's Field plus a tree management plan to include historic hedges.

The village hall committee has been contacted and as they wish to be

involved will be invited to meetings.

A visit to Work House pond found the water and area around to be healthy with clear water, freshwater fish, water lilies and nesting moorhens. It would benefit from minor reed clearance and tree coppicing.

Applying for funding from the High Weald Nature & Community was being considered.

**FC24/450 Cemetery and Extension Working Party Report**

There was nothing to report regarding the extension and they continue to speak to contractor about the poor re-tarmaced path through the cemetery.

**FC24/451 Work House Pond**

Follow discussion, it was unanimously resolved to install 'Caution Deep Water' sign.

**St Francis Field**

**FC24/452 Polytunnel**

It was unanimously resolved to agree the polytunnel application for St Francis Field and for the St Francis Field CIC would submit it on behalf of the parish council. Estimated cost £250 from SFF earmarked reserves.

**FC24/453 Beales Lane Hedges**

It was unanimously resolved to contract J Etches & Sons, after 1<sup>st</sup> August, to flail the top and road side hedges on both sides of the Lane. Cost £200 plus vat from SFF earmarked funds.

**FC24/454 Village Picnic**

At the June NPC meeting Councillors supported the proposal for a Village Picnic on the SFF estate on one day over the August Bank Holiday weekend, to be jointly promoted by NPC and the CIC. Councillors Harding, Fenton and Schlesinger.

**FC24/455 Skip**

It was unanimously agreed to hire a skip from Green Box, estimated £390 plus vat, to remove rubbish left from previous tenant and other clearance works. Cost covered by SFF earmarked funds.

**FC24/456 Beacon's Field**

It was unanimously agreed to remove old gate post, concrete, hinges etc and replace with new 8"x8" treated hardwood post, fix a new latch and striker and remove any waste. Cost of £560 covered by budget for Other Areas £1,000.

**FC24/457 School Crossing Patrol**

Councillor Harding advised that East Sussex County Council is responsible for employing and therefore recruiting the Crossing Supervisor, although they would not be funding the position. Advertising could be in the magazine, noticeboards and Rother Alerts.

**FC24/458 Playing Field and Pavilion Working Party Report**

The planning application paperwork would shortly be ready for submission

**FC24/459 Football Goal Post**

It was unanimously resolved to agree the Football Club request to replace the current goal posts with removable ones at their own expense.

**FC24/460 Goal Mouth Condition**

This was deferred to March next year as contractors did not recommend remedial works so close to the start of the new season.

**FC24/461 PCSO Liason**

There were no reported incidents in Northiam for the last month.

**FC24/462 Information for Councillors**

RALC Meeting notices were not coming through on the email. Clerk to look into.

Parish Online were holding a session about carbon reduction information.

The next meeting of the SFF working party is the 6<sup>th</sup> August.

**FC24/463 Items for the agenda**

Response to proposed management agreement with SFF CIC as the papers had not been circulated with the agenda.

**FC24/464 St Francis Field Land and Stables AND Freedom of Information**

Pursuant to section 102 of the Public Bodies (Admission of meetings) Act 1960, it was resolved to agree, because of the confidential nature of business transacted, The Public and Press leave the meeting during the following items 1972 LGA Sch.12 part 1, 1, 2

- a. Request to buy a small parcel of land  
Following discussion of a formal request to acquire SFF land, it was unanimously agreed to turn down the offer.
- b. Gates on to the SFF and platforms constructed on SFF Land  
The clerk to write appropriately to remove the platform and ask owners for details of legal permission to have access gates.
- c. Freedom of Information Request  
All the requests being dealt with, focus on financial issues.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm