Fittleworth Parish Council

**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on

15th November 2021 at 7.00pm in Sports Pavilion.

**Present:** Parish Councillors: Jane Claxton (JC) (Chair), Mike Allin (MA), David Brittain (DB), Tony Broughton (TB), Lee Scott (LS), Sally Tanner (ST) & Chris Welfare (CW)

**In attendance:** County Councillor: Janet Duncton (JD), District Councillor: Alan Sutton (AS)

Also Present: Celia Price (Locum Clerk), PSCO Billingham.

**Members of public**: 2

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| **21-191** | **Apologies for absence**  Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Dunstan |
| **21-192** | **Minutes of the last meeting**  The minutes of the meeting held on 18th October 2021 were agreed as a true record and were signed by the Chair.  Proposed: Cllr Broughton seconded Cllr Scott and agreed. |
| **21-193** | **Crime** (Appendix 21-193)  The Chair welcomed PCSO Billingham who gave an overview of his report. He also advised that there have been no further incidents on Hesworth Common. Finally, he reported that car thefts in rural car parks continues to be a problem and reminded everyone to be vigilant.  Questions and comments were invited.  Cllr Brittain advised that members of the public are avoiding Hesworth Common and asked whether FPC could publicise the fact there have been no recent incidents. He also asked if there was a generic reference number that could be quoted when reporting noisy bikes. PSCO Billingham advised that each report needs to have its own reference and reporting number. He advised that each call is passed to the PSCO for the area who will collate, and cross reference information received.  A discussion regarding the Rural Crime unit took place and included the confusing issue of boundaries, highlighting that in some cases adjacent roads can be in different PCSO’s areas.  Cllr Allin asked if PCSO Billingham was aware of the issues at Lords Piece carpark where cars are regularly broken into. PCSO Billingham advised he was not aware, and it could be that it doesn’t fall within his area. He urged everyone to report all incidents to the police. |
| **21-194** | **County Councillor reports** (Appendix 21-194)  County Councillor, Janet Duncton’s report was circulated prior to the meeting.  Questions and comments were invited.  Cllr Allin raised the issue that additional houses would create further stress on Southern Waters already problematic sewage infrastructure. Cllr Duncton responded advising that Chichester District Council is the planning authority not WSCC and therefore cannot comment.  The Chair noted the good news that the A285 is opening in December. Residents have been concerned about the increased pressure on smaller rural roads and are looking forward to being able to use the A285 again. |
| **21-195** | **District Councillor reports** (Appendix 21-195)  District Councillor, Alan Sutton’s report was circulated prior to the meeting. He also advised that MPs are dealing with sewage issues and all planning applications that are not water neutral are on hold because no further water can be extracted from Hardham.  Cllr Sutton also advised that the Local Plan is under review which includes housing allocation and numbers, infrastructure including the A27 and water issues.    He concluded advising last Sunday’s market held in Petworth was very successful.  Questions and comments were invited  Cllr Brittain asked why Coultershaw Mill near Petworth or the Roman Villa at Bignor are not included in the heritage section of the Local Plan. Cllr Sutton suggested speaking to the planning team at CDC as they can only include sites they are aware of. |
| **21-196** | **Public questions**  There were none. |
| **21-197** | **Declaration by Council Members of personal or prejudicial interest**  The Chairman reminded councillors that previous declarations still stand (as defined under the Localism Act 2011). |
| **21-198** | **Clerk Recruitment**  Cllr Welfare reported that 3 candidates were interviewed. The job has been offered and accepted with an anticipated start date of 10th January. |
| **21-199** | **Parish Councillor Vacancy**  An interested candidate has been in discussion with the Chair and has been invited to attend the January meeting. |
| **21-200** | **Queens Platinum Jubilee** **Projects** (Appendix 21-200)  The chair welcomed Jason Burkinshaw who gave an overview of the presentation circulated prior to the meeting. He asked whether FPC would like him to apply for additional trees and discussed locations including Sandy Lane. Hesworth Common (Although Cllr Allin already has plans for this area), Fittleworth Common, Lower Street (B2138) between The Swan and the Station Masters’ House and other possible landowners. In addition he suggested a campaign to include providing trees for residents and potentially involving the school. He also suggested producing a digital map to plot all the trees planted for the Queens jubilee.  Cllr Sutton advised that CDC had been working with Defra and suggested there may be grants available from them.  All welcomed the ideas presented and Jason agreed to lead the project. |
| **21-201** | **Finance**   1. Expenditure v budget (Appendix 21-201a)   The accounts for month ending 31st October 2021 were received and noted. Proposed Cllr Scott, seconded Cllr Welfare.   1. Bank Reconciliation   The bank reconciliation for the period ending 29th October 2021 was deferred until the next meeting following an observation by Cllr Brittain that requires clarification.   1. Payment of invoices (Appendix 21-201c)   It was resolved to authorise payments totalling £1638.76 as presented. Proposed Cllr Brittain, seconded Cllr Claxton and agreed.   1. Bank mandate   It was resolved to defer this item until appointment of the new Clerk.   1. 2022/23 Budget Proposal (Appendix 21-201e)   The Chair presented an overview of the year-to-date accounts and explained a projected deficit of £5k, which related to Operation Watershed monies going into 2020/21. The budget for 2022/23 was then presented by the Chair and a discussion took place. The budget was agreed. Proposed Cllr Claxton, seconded Cllr Brittain. All agreed except for Cllr Allin who voted against.   1. Precept   Following agreement of the budget for 2022/23 it was resolved that the precept demand of £31,7419 (£58.92 per band D household) be submitted to CDC. The Clerk is delegated to issue the demand as required. Proposed Cllr Claxton, seconded Cllr Brittain. All agreed except for Cllr Allin who voted against.   1. Any other financial issues   There were none |
| **21-202** | **Sports Pavilion**  Nothing to report. |
| **21-203** | **Planning**  a) Planning committee Report.  Cllr Scott gave an overview of the report already circulated advising that there has been fewer application lately. Cllr Sutton reported some delays at CDC partly due to an issue over the recruitment of planning officers. A conservation officer is now in post.  b) The minutes of the planning committee dated 11th November 2021, were received and noted.  c) New Bonus Homes Scheme  Cllr Scott advised there is nothing to report.  d)CIL Applications  Cllr Scott reported that although a number of CiL applications have been rejected, two have been successful being £9000 for Hesworth Common and £1500 for Birch walks.  e) Flood Survey  Cllr Allin is working with Cllr Broughton and a number of residents to set up a flood/drainage working group. Cllr Allin is also working on a plan showing all the surface water drains that lead into Fleet stream. It was suggested the school is included in the project and Cllr Allin was asked to facilitate this.  f) Limbourne Lane Development  Cllr Scott advised that other than preliminary testing taking place on site there is nothing to report, although the Developers have been given details of English Rural Housing, who are the FPC preferred partner for the delivery of Affordable Housing on the site. |
| **21-204** | **Working Groups**  Verbal reports were received and noted from the following:   * 1. Finance & Resilience Committee   The next meeting is scheduled for 13th December 2021   * 1. Community Hub Working Group   Nothing to report   * 1. Communications Working Group   Nothing to report   * 1. Save The Swan Working Group * Green Space   It was noted that FPC are supportive of traffic calming, enhancement to the green, and improvements to the footpath without reducing the parking spaces. Long term plans include showcasing a local artist. The green space is common land; therefore work can be started to enhance the space without delay. It was agreed that the priority is to save the tree by clearing the detritus from the base and planting wildflowers. All present agreed in principle and reiterated the need for public consultation. All present agreed in principle and further information, including details of a working party will be included in the Parish Magazine.   * 1. Maintenance Working Group * Asset Register update   Cllr Allin advised that he wanted to spend approximately £400 on resurfacing the parking area along Sandy Lane opposite St Richard’s Cottages. He was advised that this sum was not in the budget and there is no health and safety issue.   * 1. Highways & Traffic Working Group * Traffic Calming Pilot Response   Cllr Tanner is investigating village gates and advised that the Speedwatch scheme is going well. She also reported involvement in a pilot scheme which is currently in consultation but is a long process. Cllr Tanner also tabled a draft letter to haulage companies advising them of WSCC preferred routes and asking them not to drive through the village. The Chair and Cllr Brittain will work with the Clerk to review the wording and will advise the Clerk to distribute the letters as appropriate.  Cllr Tanner is proceeding with the purchase and installation of the Speed Indicator Device (SID) and rubber speed indicator strips in accordance with the agreed budget for yer ending 31st March 2022.   * 1. HR/ Staffing Committee   As above   * 1. Hesworth Common Management Committee   Cllr Allin reported that there had been a South Downs working day in October, the focus of the day was to carry out maintenance, removing trees that were blocking fire tracks. Worthing Volunteers will be on site on 7th December, which will be a tree planting day. It is also hoped that the Scouts will be involved with some tree planting.   * 1. Birchwalks Wood   Nothing to report.   * 1. Footpaths   Nothing to report   * 1. Village Hall & Outside Bodies   Cllr Welfare advised that the new booking system software had encountered a few problems which are being resolved. He also reported that the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee has resigned, with no replacement found to date. |
| **21-205** | **Correspondence**  Correspondence as circulated since the meeting held on 18th October was noted.  Cllr Brittain will be attending the WSALC, North Chichester, Police and Crime Commissioner virtual meeting and invited comments prior to the meeting.  The next County Local Forum is schooled for 24th November and councillors were invited to attend.  The Clerk was asked to forward information regarding Community Engagement grants to Julie Hawkins for the Sports and Social Club.  Cllr Scott advised that the SDNPA have issued a call for nature sites. There is nothing suitable for submission from FPC. However, the Chair will include some information in the Parish Magazine for local private landowner’s consideration. |
| **21-206** | **Health & Safety**  Items previously included will be added to the action list. |
| **21-207** | **Action Points** (Appendix 21-207)  The action list will be simplified with health and safety items added. Councillors are invited to advise the Clerk once an action has been completed to enable the report to be updated in advance of the next meeting. |
| **21-208** | Date of next meetings:  **Monday 13th December 2021** (Finance and Resilience Committee – 6pm at Sports and Social Club)  **Monday 17th January 2022 at 7:00pm** |

There being no other business the meeting concluded at 9:58pm

Signed: Date: