



Fittleworth Parish Council

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on
19th February 2024 at 7.00pm in Sports Pavilion.

Present: Parish Councillors: Jane Claxton (Chair), Mike Allin, Tony Broughton, Kevin MacKenzie, Clive Murray, Sally Tanner, and Lee Scott.

In attendance: County Councillor: Janet Duncton, District Councillor: John Cross (Both present until 19:13)

Also Present: Rachel Gorvin (Clerk).

Members of public: 0

23-171	Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Wade Houlden and Robin Dunstan.
23-172	Minutes of the last meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 15 th January 2024 were agreed as a true record and were signed by the Chair. Proposed: Cllr MacKenzie, Seconded Cllr Scott and agreed by the meeting.
23-173	Crime - no recent meetings attended.
23-174	County Councillor reports – a report was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Duncton has submitted the highways enquiries on Lower Street sent to her by the Clerk but not had a response yet. Cllr Allin restated his concerns about the flooding at the entrance to Limbourne Lane on The Fleet, the road is flooded across the carriageway again. Cllr Duncton responded that a lot of roads are currently flooded unfortunately.
23-175	District Councillor reports – a report was circulated prior to the meeting. The Barlavington Estate seem to have started work on the permissive bridleway on the B2138 by Waltham Park Road, they have cleared the hedges. Sandy Meadow Farm application – Bignor, Bury and Barlavington and Sutton Parish councils have all objected.
23-176	Public questions – no members of the public were present.
23-177	Declarations by Council Members of personal or prejudicial interest The Chairman reminded councillors that previous declarations still stand (as defined under the Localism Act 2011). Cllr Murray is a near neighbour of Lords Piece.
23-178	Parish Clerk Report – a report was circulated prior to the meeting. The old Fittleworth Village signs - Option 3, a silent auction at the garden trail was the preferred option, however Cllr Claxton will mention it in the March Parish magazine article and ask for alternative suggestions for proceeds before the garden trail. The signs to be stored at Cllr Tanners house in the interim. The Tree Survey covers 4 areas, and it was agreed to survey. Area 1 and 2 in 2024/25 Area 3 and 4 in 2025/26 However, if possible, Cllrs would like another quote.

Routine Tree Inspections. Cllr Allin is the tree warden and is Lantra trained on this, there is some Cllr training budget (£150) if other Cllrs wanted to pursue this.
 Defrib – Cllr Tanner will confirm whether the VHT are applying for a Grant before we purchase the new device.
 The Clerk to email CDCT to see if they can suggest funding sources.
 Cllr Allin offered to speak to the residents of 1 and 2 Littlepin Croft Cottages about a new bench being located on the Highway verge in front of their properties.
 The Tree priority inspection presented by Cllr MacKenzie to become a policy.

23-179

Finance

- a) **Financial Reports** – A report was circulated prior to the meeting.
- b) **Payments**

The list of payments totalling £4149.89 was agreed in accordance with Financial Regulations. It was agreed to hold the payment to London Hearts until the VHT had confirmed the status of their Grant application and it was agreed to discontinue the subscription to Parish Online as it wasn't being used.

Payee	Description	Amount	
London Hearts	Defibrillator and cabinet	750.00	Online
FVH	Room Hire	12.60	Online
KBO Fire & Security	Fire Alarm Contract for Sports Pavilion	348.00	Online
Parish Online	Digital mapping fee	54.00	Online
Cloudy Group Ltd	Office 365 and support fee Feb 2024	96.96	Online
WSCC	Payroll Jan 24	1,432.29	Online
Ben Tavener	Birchwalks Wood	90.00	Online
Parish Clerk	Expenses, printing and training	84.00	Online
4sightvision	FPC Grant Awarded	100.00	Online
St Marys Church	FPC Grant Awarded	250.00	Online
Fitt and Stopham Magazine	FPC Grant Awarded	50.00	Online
Samaritans Bognor Chi and District	FPC Grant Awarded	200.00	Online
Mike Allin Expenses	Bus Shelter Repairs	274.04	Online
CJH Agri-Environmental	Stewardship agreement advice	462.00	Online
	Total Approved for payment 19/02/2024	4,149.89	

23-180

Planning

Cllr Scott gave a verbal report. There have been various applications for the Swan Inn – not all have been approved. The application for the Chimneys was not as original and the FPC Planning Committee had submitted comments and photographs to this effect.

	<p>The use of new tiles on the roof has been agreed by historic building officers, however The Clerk will email the Planning authority with the opinion of the PC. Lords Piece Car Park – comments have been submitted.</p> <p><u>a) Planning Committee Minutes</u> The minutes for the planning committee held on 2nd Feb 2024 were received and noted.</p> <p><u>c) Planning Committee Recommendations</u> Sandy Meadow Farm – Cllr Scott advised that whilst there is a general need for traveller sites, the SDNP seem to focus less on the demand and more on-site specifics of the location. He recommended that any comments from FPC should be on the impact of the development rather than the question of need. The piece of land was run as a market garden and consent granted for one caravan for named resident to live in, this should have been removed when they deceased. Cllr Scott will circulate a proposed submission for the Clerk to submit.</p>
<p>23-181</p>	<p>Hesworth Common – A report was received from Cllr MacKenzie regarding the Hesworth Common Management Working Group (HCWMG). It was agreed to amend the wording of the proposed resolution 1 to.</p> <p>Resolution 1 – disband Hesworth Common Management Working Group</p> <p><i>FPC are in receipt of a Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Agreement (CSA) offer to manage and restore the rare lowland heath on Hesworth Common. Given the size of the grant and the need for transparency and public accountability, it is proposed that the existing management structure (Hesworth Common Management Working Group) should be disbanded and replaced with a formal sub-committee with agreed terms of reference and delegated powers, to be known as the Hesworth Common Management Committee.</i></p> <p>Cllr Scott offered thanks and formal recognition of the work carried out by the previous committee and working group which has left Hesworth Common in a good place, this will enable the new management committee to manage going forward with the new stewardship agreement. It is very much appreciated by the Parish Council and the village and was agreed by those present.</p> <p>a) It was resolved to disband the Hesworth Common Management Working Group, (HCWMG). Proposed Cllr MacKenzie and seconded Cllr Murray and agreed by the meeting.</p> <p>b) It was resolved to form a Hesworth Common Management Committee (HCMC) Proposed by Cllr Mackenzie, seconded by Cllr Scott and agreed by the meeting.</p> <p>c)It was resolved to accept the proposed amended Terms of Reference for HCMC. The ToRs were amended as follows;</p> <p><i>Add to the role of HCMC To liaise with the Birchwalks Wood Management Working Group to ensure the management of Hesworth Common complements that of Birchwalks Wood.</i></p> <p><i>Make up of HCMC to be;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>3 Parish Councillors</i> • <i>1 South Downs National Park Ranger</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1 Commoner (if available and keen to participate)</i> • <i>1 Fittleworth Parish residents (with relevant knowledge, expertise and interest)</i> • <i>The chairman shall be an ex-officio member of the committee except in those circumstances where they are appointed a member of the committee.</i> <p>Proposed by Cllr Mackenzie and seconded by Cllr Scott and agreed by the meeting. It was agreed to appoint a Chair and FPC Committee Members. Cllr Murray was proposed as Chair by Cllr MacKenzie, seconded by Cllr Scott and agreed by the meeting. Cllrs Holden and MacKenzie to be appointed as committee members. Proposed by Cllr Claxton and seconded by Cllr Tanner and agreed by the meeting. The rest of the committee to be appointed by the HCMC (with the proviso that the resident at Woodside Cottage be approached in the first instance to continue as Commoner on the committee).</p> <p>d) It was resolved to form a Birchwalks Woods Management Working Group (BMMWG). Proposed by Cllr MacKenzie and seconded by Cllr Allin and agreed by the meeting.</p> <p>e) It was resolved to accept the proposed Terms of Reference for BMMWG, proposed by Cllr MacKenzie and seconded by Cllr Broughton and agreed by the meeting. Cllr Allin was proposed as Chair by Cllr Broughton and seconded by Cllr Claxton and agreed by the meeting. Cllr Broughton to be the FPC Councillor member and 3 residents to be recruited by the BMMWG.</p> <p>f) An amendment to the proposal was made; <i>It is proposed that FPC resolve to agree to enter into the CSA prior to the 27th February 2024 acceptance deadline, based on works being agreed by the full council on an iterative or annual basis and on claims being submitted as the work is completed for both revenue and capital costs.</i> It was resolved to enter into the Countryside Stewardship Agreement offer (2024-2033), as per the amended proposal and in addition, Annual plans for any proposed work should be submitted by HCMC to the full FPC for approval in advance of the commencement of any works. Any works to be agreed by Full Council on the recommendation of the HCMC, as per their terms of reference. The HCMC will need to manage the cost of any agreed works and submission of invoices, being mindful that capital costs can only be claimed retrospectively after invoicing, to ensure that the FPC remains financially sound and in line with FPC Financial Regulations. Proposed by Cllr Claxton, seconded by Cllr Scott and agreed by the meeting.</p>
<p>23-182</p>	<p>Annual Parish Meeting – will be held on Friday 8th March at the Village Hall. There will be a display of information about the Stewardship Grant for Hesworth Common and an opportunity for residents to ask questions and express their views via questionnaire from 5pm, with the meeting starting at 6.30pm. 2 SDNP rangers will be present to assist the HCMC with the information session. It was resolved to fund information boards up to £720, to come from HC EMR or the SDNP CIL allocation, for the consultation. Proposed by Cllr MacKenzie and seconded by Cllr Murray and agreed by the meeting. Cllr Tanner will ask the shop to supply some snacks. Drinks to be sourced.</p>
<p>23-183</p>	<p>Policy document reviews – it was resolved to accept the review of the following documents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Financial Regulations – Proposed Cllr MacKenzie, seconded Cllr Broughton and agreed by the meeting. b) Standing Orders c) Grievance Policy d) Data protection Policy e) Complaints procedure

	<p> f) Disciplinary Policy g) Equality Policy h) Financial Pensions Discretion Policy i) Footpath Charter J) Freedom of Information Procedure k) Media and Communications Policy l) Members Allowance Policy m) Model Councillor Code of Conduct n) Risk Management Policy and Risk Assessment o) Sickness and absence policy </p> <p>Documents b-o were proposed by Cllr MacKenzie, seconded by Cllr Scott and agreed by the meeting.</p>
<p>23-184</p>	<p>Working Groups – to receive updates (if applicable) from the following.</p> <p>a) Community Hub Working Group – the group are carrying out ongoing research. The next meeting is Tuesday 26th March, 7pm in the BWR.</p> <p>b) Communications Working Group – we have a volunteer to help review information on the website.</p> <p>c) Save the Swan Working Group – scheduled opening summer 2024. It was noted that the sign from the top of the millennium arch has gone, Cllr Houlden to ask the Swan management about this and about finishing the renovation of the arch as they had agreed to finish this when they were nearing opening.</p> <p>d) Maintenance Working Group – Bus shelter cladding completed etc. Cllr Dunstan was instrumental in this, and thanks given. Replaced broken notices around the play area. Bottom lock on noticeboard fixed. New fencing erected at the Triangle. Aggregate from Alley Dick removed to Birchwalks Wood. Cllr MacKenzie to pass on details of FPC grant policy to the scout group, as they need to remove the moss from the roof.</p> <p>e) Highways and Traffic Working Group – Cllr Tanner has the fabric cover and the spanner. The Clerk to ask Wilbar if they need the spanner. Cllr Claxton will be liaising with Mike Dare from WSCC about the CHS for The Fleet.</p> <p>f) Hesworth Common Management Working Group – Cllr Allin circulated a report prior to the meeting. The next working day with the Worthing Volunteers has been organised for 10th March and Cllr Allin will liaise with the new HCMC around arrangements for this. The outgoing HCMWG would like to plant some trees in the wild area, (outside of the Heathland restoration area), as a farewell gesture, they have been managing the Common for the past 32 years. As they have been replacing trees lost in 1987, they would like to see 40 oak trees planted. This suggestion to go to the HCMC. HCMC to check if the money for this could come from £9000 CIL allocation (approx. £1000). Cllr MacKenzie reported that there was a working group on Sunday 18th February.</p> <p>It was noted that the most recent village working group on the common organised by SDNPA had been brought forward from 20th February to 18th February and because this was notified via WhatsApp, which not everyone has access to, not all were aware – going forward events such as this would be more widely publicised through a variety of media.</p> <p>g) Birchwalks Wood – included in Cllr Allin’s report. Cllr Allin will look at the brambles suffocating the bluebell areas.</p> <p>h) Tree Warden – Cllr Allin has seen the quote from Gale Consultancy and will investigate a getting a second quote.</p> <p>i) Footpaths – Cllr MacKenzie reported that the fence at The Hazels in Lower Street has fallen and is hanging over the pavement. The Clerk will write to the residents to confirm they are planning to repair the fence.</p> <p>j) Village Hall and other Outside Bodies – nothing reported.</p> <p>k) Flood Resilience Working Group – nothing reported.</p>

23-185	Sports Pavilion – nothing reported.
23-186	Correspondence – Cllr Tanner will raise the issue of delivery vehicles blocking resident’s driveway with the shop management. The Clerk to contact the correspondent to see if more details around days and times can be reported.
23-187	Chair’s Announcements None
23-188	Matters Raised by Councillors - none
23-189	Date of next meetings: 18 th March.

There being no other business the meeting concluded at 21:31

Signed:

Date: