

Minutes of a meeting of **WARBLETON PARISH COUNCIL** held on Thursday 12th January at 6.30pm at the Dunn village hall

PRESENT: Councillors A Long (Chairman), Graham, Saunders, Ansell, Wells, Iremonger and Williamson

Also present: Jackie Cottrell – Parish Clerk
ESCC & WDC Bob Bowdler
1 member of the public

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Thompson – work commitments
Cllr Simpson – family commitments
WDC Sue Stedman – medical reasons

00594 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Long – Prejudicial interest item 7 – Parish council mowing contract
Cllr Williamson – Personal interest item 10 – Bodle Street Green Village Hall grant
Cllr Wells – Personal interest item 7 – parish council mowing contract

MINUTES

To **resolve** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 29th September 2022 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

00595 RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Council meeting held on 29th September 2022

Matters arising from the minutes not covered on the agenda

The Clerk confirmed that Bodle Street Green Village Hall had been notified that the parish council would be purchasing up to 4 picnic benches and that she would be actioning this item in the near future.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

REPORTS

5.1. To receive reports from District and County Councillors

Noted.

ESCC & WDC Bob Bowdler added to his report by acknowledging the poor condition of the roads. He clarified that East Sussex Highways had 18 teams out in the area completing repair works on a full-time basis. They were experiencing problems with obtaining the materials needed to complete the repairs but were working hard to resolve the issues as quickly as possible.

One Councillor reported the road between Bodle Street and Windmill Hill was in an appalling condition with pot holes at the side and middle of the road. There had been a burst tyre incident on a daily basis.

ESCC & WDC Bob Bowdler responded by saying East Sussex Highways were considering a new approach by repairing patches of a road rather than just a pothole. He clarified work on the highway is policed by East Sussex Highway stewards, Costain stewards and two inspectors employed by ESCC who complete random checks. He asked the Council to note the current contractor was about to change. He also stated

utility companies completing their own work on the highway were leaving the roads in a poor condition and finally the funds were not available to be able to provide the services required.

5.2. To receive reports from PCSO Catherine Gilling

None

5.3. To receive reports from Parish Councillors

None

5.4. To receive reports from the Parish Clerk

Noted.

The Clerk added to her report stating the Osborne House Clock had now been serviced. The clock mechanism was reported to be in good condition and the weekly regulation had been explained to the gentlemen who was responsible for winding it. The company did state on their invoice they would recommend a yearly service. The invoice amount was the quoted figure as agreed by the Full Council.

The Bonfire Society had now donated two separate amounts: £118.00 to be put towards the maintenance of the Osborne House clock and £190.80 to be put towards future finger post repairs or the village sign in the parish. A thank you letter from the Parish Council would be sent to the Bonfire Society.

The Conservation Volunteers had given their permission for information regarding walking routes in the area to be added to the Parish Council website. One walk featured is in Warbleton and there were others close by. Walking maps could be printed from their website and a link to this was on our website. The Clerk was in contact with the administrator of 123walks.org and hopefully the parish council would be able to contribute new walk information in the future. The Clerk thanked Cllr Williamson for providing the details for 123 walks. The Clerk asked Members to note walking and cycling route maps were one of the top ideas for CIL spend from the parish council's community survey.

The Clerk had investigated with WDC the possibility of further grants that may have been available to both village halls in the parish. Unfortunately, they had confirmed neither hall was eligible for help at the moment.

Cllr Graham and Iremonger would be attending the next WDALC meeting on the 18th January and the Clerk would be attending the Clerks' Forum on the 31st January.

Preliminary election information would be circulated shortly.

The Clerk was instructed to contact Stavington Garden Centre to arrange the tree planting for the Queen's Green Canopy.

The Chairman confirmed any future donations would be received electronically.

COMMITTEE MINUTES

6.1. To receive the acts and proceedings of the following committee meetings:

- (a) Environment – 4th October 2022
- (b) Planning & Development – 18th October 2022
- (c) SLR – Strengthening Local Relationships – 25th October 2022
- (d) Planning & Development – 8th November 2022
- (e) Planning & Development – 29th November 2022
- (f) Finance & General Purposes – 1st December 2022
- (g) Planning & Development – 5th January 2023

Noted

The Clerk stated the F&GP minutes from the 1st December 2022 would be circulated shortly.

The Chairman of the Parish Council left the room at 18.43.
Cllr Saunders chaired item 7.

THE PARISH COUNCIL MOWING CONTRACT FOR 2023,2024 & 2025 – Resolution required 7.1.

7.1. To review and agree a quotation for the Parish Council's mowing contract for the years 2023, 2024 and 2025

The Clerk had contacted eight companies which had been recommended on the Clerks' Forum. All companies had received the same quote specification. Five companies had responded. The Council considered the quotes in great detail.

The Council felt that the current contractor had provided an excellent efficient service over the last three years. They had always acted in a professional manner and were very receptive to any changes the Council had put forward regarding the cutting of Rushlake Green Village Green. They also met all the requirements in the ESCC urban grass cutting self-delivery document. Although not the cheapest quote the Council were supportive of retaining their services for another three years for the above reasons.

00596 RESOLVED to approve Orchard Landscapes Ltd as the parish council's mowing contractor for 2023, 2024 & 2025.

The Chairman of the Parish Council re-entered the room at 18.53

OSBORNE HOUSE CAR PARK REPAIRS – Resolution required 8.1. & 8.2.

8.1. To review and agree a quotation for the Osborne House car park repairs

The Clerk clarified that as a result of the site visit the revised quote specification was circulated to members of the Environment Committee before it was re-circulated to seven contractors. Five quotes were received as a result.

The quotes were discussed in great detail. It was agreed that Nicolls Bros (Sussex) Ltd would be the chosen contractor. It was also agreed that it would be necessary to arrange for test holes to be dug in order for Nicolls Bros to submit a more accurate quotation for the two options for consideration. The amended quotes would be re-considered at a future Full Council meeting. All Members noted that parish council funds were limited and it would be important to have a fixed price for the work.

00597 RESOLVED Nicolls Bros (Sussex) Ltd would be the chosen contractor to complete the car park repairs. The Clerk would arrange test holes to be dug to confirm the existence of a sub-base. The Council would then re-consider the amended quote options at a future Full Council meeting.

8.2. To agree which funds would be used to finance the car park repairs

Members noted the General Reserves and the CIL Reserves. It was agreed that that were insufficient funds in the General Reserves and that CIL Reserves were limited. Value for money would be extremely important.

00598 RESOLVED to use CIL Reserves for the car park repairs

FINANCE

9.1. To note bills that have been paid under the delegated authority to the Clerk

Cheque No/BACS No	Payee	£	VAT	£ Total	Purpose
59	WDALC	22.00		22.00	Annual subscription for year ending 31.3.2023
60	James Todd & Co	20.00	4.00	24.00	September payroll fee
61	ESALC	40.00	8.00	48.00	Cllr planning training
62	Jackie Cottrell				Clerk salary – October 2022
63	Jackie Cottrell	9.99		9.99	Printing costs 18.8.2022- 17.9.2022
64	Jackie Cottrell	9.99		9.99	Printing costs 18.9.2022- 17.10.2022
65	Jackie Cottrell				Clerk salary – November 2022
66	HMRC	147.62		147.62	HMRC 6.11.2022- 5.12.2022
67	Jackie Cottrell	153.90		153.90	Mileage claim 24.3.2022- 19.7.2022
68	James Todd & Co	20.00	4.00	24.00	October 2022 payroll fee
69	Brian Bishop	150.00		150.00	Clock winding services 2021- 22
70	Jackie Cottrell				Clerk salary – December 2022
71	HMRC	41.98		41.98	HMRC 6.12.22-5.1.23
72	Jackie Cottrell	9.99		9.99	Printing costs 18.10.2022- 17.11.2022
73	James Todd & Co	50.00	10.00	60.00	November 2022 payroll fee
74	Wealden District Council	65.00	13.00	78.00	Dog bin emptying charges 1.10.22- 31.12.22
75	Orchard Landscape	1399.33	279.87	1679.20	50% of contact – quotation Q1178

Noted.

The Chairman of F&GP asked Members to note payment number 75 would normally have required approval by the Full Council but unfortunately the December Full Council had been cancelled due to Clerk illness. As a result, the invoice had been paid as it was a contractual payment.

9.2. To authorize the bills for payment

Cheque No/BACS No	Payee	£	VAT	£ Total	Purpose
77	Jackie Cottrell				Clerk salary – December 2022
78	Jackie Cottrell	9.99		9.99	Printing costs 18.10.2022-17.11.2022
79	James Todd & Co	20.00	4.00	24.00	December 2022 payroll fee
80	Heathfield & Waldron First Responders	400.00		400.00	Grant defibrillators
81	Dunn Village Hall	450.00		450.00	Final payment - annual grant
82	Bodle Street Green Village Hall	450.00		450.00	Final payment – annual grant

00599 It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the payments listed above

9.3. To note the Finance Reports, bank reconciliation and budget monitor for September, October, November and December 2022

Noted.

The bank reconciliation and budget monitor for December 2022 had not yet been circulated. The Chairman of F&GP confirmed the cash book was up-to-date.

9.4. To note the claim for a VAT refund 1.4.2021-31.3.2022

The VAT claim for £1,766.16 was noted. The Clerk to submit the claim promptly.

9.5. To receive and note the projected Council general reserves as at 31.3.2023

Noted. The Chairman of F&GP clarified to Members the Council were in the agreed parameters of the adopted Reserves Policy.

9.6. To receive and note the projected Council ear marked reserves as at 31.3.2023

Noted. The Chairman of F&GP clarified the unused Election budget and the remaining unspent Environment budget would be moved to the relevant ear marked reserves in March. He also confirmed any donations would create new ear marked reserves.

GRANTS – Resolution required 10.1.

10.1. To consider the F&GP Committee recommendations and the agree the grant awards for the 2023-24 financial year

Members noted the chosen mowing contractor would increase the proposed Council budget for 20/23/24 by £1,200. The Chairman of F&GP stated the importance of keeping an increase in the precept to a minimum in the current financial climate.

The Clerk suggested that a decision on the grant awards could be deferred until after the elections in May 2023 when the Council would have a realistic idea of what funds would be left in the Election Budget.

The Council were in agreement that all grant applicants should be supported if financially possible. The Clerk was instructed to agenda grant awards for a future Full Council meeting once the election costs had been clarified by WDC.

Name of applicant	Sum requested £	Grant to be used for	F&GP's recommended award £
Bodle Street Green Village Hall	949	Costs for the new boiler	474.50
Dunn Village Hall	705	General expenses towards the upkeep of the village hall	352.50
The Big Lunch	200	Expenses to be used for the 2023 Big Lunch	100.00
Villages Lunch Club	400	To meet the rising costs of running the Lunch Club	200.00
Total	2,254		1,127.00

00600 It was **RESOLVED** to defer a grant awards decision until the election costs for the Council had been confirmed

BUDGET FOR THE 2023/24 FINANCIAL YEAR – Resolution required 11.1.

11.1. To consider the F&GP Committee recommendations and agree the budget for the 2023-24 financial year

The chairman of F&GP clarified each budget line. He requested Members to note the revised mowing costs as a result of the Council resolution as well as their decision regarding grant awards for 2023/24.

A discussion took place. As a result, the Environment budget was further reduced.

00601 It was **RESOLVED** the Parish Council's budget for the 2023-24 would be £23,790.55

PRECEPT REQUIREMENT FOR THE 2023/24 FINANCIAL YEAR – Resolution required 12.1. To consider the F&GP Committee recommendations and agree the precept for the 2023/24 financial year

Members noted their concern with the 15% increase in the precept request to WDC. However, the majority of the budget increase of £2,176 had been due to the potential election costs which were a necessity to budget for. An additional £2,000 had been required in the budget. It was also noted that funding the budget from General Reserve was not sustainable and the decision for 2022/23 was for specific reasons.

00602 It was **RESOLVED** the Parish Council's precept for the 2023-24 financial year would be £23,791.00

RISK REGISTER – Resolution required 13.1.

13.1. To agree and adopt the F&GP Committees amendments to the Risk Register

All Members agreed the recommended amendments.

00603 RESOLVED to adopt the amended Risk Register

RUSHLAKE GREEN NOTICE BOARD REFURBISHMENT – Resolution required 14.1.
14.1. To agree the Environment Committee recommendation for the works to refurbish the Rushlake Green notice board

The Clerk confirmed she had received written confirmation that the price quoted **was** for metal legs too and the paint used would be long lasting.

00604 RESOLVED to accept the quote from Phil Signs for the Rushlake Green notice board refurbishment at a cost of £325.00. The repairs to be funded from the CIL Reserve.

BOOKING FOR RUSHLAKE GREEN VILLAGE GREEN – Resolution required 15.1.
15.1. To review and agree The Big Lunch request to the book The Green on Sunday 4th June 2023

All Members agreed the booking.

00605 RESOLVED to approve the booking of The Green for The Big Lunch on Sunday 4th June 2023

15.2. To note The Big Lunch risk assessment

Noted

URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING and/or INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

None

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 16th March, Dunn Village Hall at 7pm

The meeting closed at 8.01pm