

FAIRLIGHT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON Thursday 3rd October 2024 AT 7.00 PM IN FAIRLIGHT VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs S. Baker, M. Clarke, Ms. L. Cooke, L. Miller, D. Pichard, G. Smith (Vice-Chair), S. Stewart (Chair) and Ms. Sarah Whiteman

District Councillors present: Cllrs. T. Grohne and A. Meir

Clerk for the meeting: Cllr Mrs. Stanford Icklesham Parish Council

Election of Chair Cllr Steve Stewart unanimously elected.

Election of Vice-Chair Cllr Geoff Smith unanimously elected.

Update on the recruitment of locum parish clerk Chair reported they were in ongoing talks with suitable candidate and that they had decided not to take locum route because of the expense. Icklesham PC would continue their support meanwhile. He thanked Cllr Mrs. Stanford for clerking the meeting and for the help Icklesham Parish Council were giving to Fairlight.

Election of Committee members & Working Groups

To appoint and resolve the membership of the following committees, and working group and roles:

Planning Committee	All councillors
Finance & Administration Committee	All councillors
Land Management - 3 councillors	Geoff Smith, Dom Pichard & Michael Clarke
Rights of Way - 1 councillor	Michael Clarke
Tree Warden - 1 councillor	Dominic Pichard
Highways Officer - 2 councillors	Stephen Baker & Geoff Smith
Water & Drainage Officer [including Pathfinder] - 2 councillors	Lyn Cooke & Sarah Whiteman
Emergency Plan Co-ordinator - 2 councillors	Steve Stewart & Lyn Cooke
Grants Officer and panel - 4 councillors	Geoff Smith, Lee Miller, Sarah Whiteman & Lyn Cooke
Awards Panel - 3 councillors	Lee Miller, Geoff Smith & Lyn Cooke
Speed and Neighbourhood Watch, Police etc - 1 councillor	Michael Clarke
War Memorial Steering Group - 1 councillor	Stephen Baker
Website & Facebook co-ordinator - 1 councillor	Steve Stewart (+ Graham Gillett Volunteer)
Fairlight Drop-in Group - 2 councillors	Dominic Pichard & Michael Clarke
Staff Appraisal Fairlight – Chair & 2 councillors	Sarah Whiteman & Lee Miller
Preservation Trust Liaison Link - 1 councillor	Dominic Pichard
Village Hall Liaison link - 1 councillor	Geoff Smith & Lee Miller
Market Garden Liaison link 2 councillors	Lee Miller & Stephen Baker

Appointment of members to official roles within the council and Association of Local Council Associations RALC ESALC SLCC NALC Whoever available to attend at the time

24/214 Item 1 Apologies for absence: None

24/215 item 2 Code of Conduct and Disclosure of Interests: Cllr Smith declared an interest in 12(a).

24/216 Item 3 Chairman's Report: Chairman reminded the residents that the Parish Council were the custodians of the resident's money in the village and if they tell us to do something it is our job to get it done. If it means involving Highways, Southern Water etc. it is our job to do that. It is not for us to say how to spend the money.

The Chair reminded the residents that if they wanted to say something he would suspend standing orders so that they could. He reminded them there was an Open Forum at the end of the meeting where they could speak. The Chair also added that whilst he understood and did not mind the cameras being there the operators may decide later that it was not necessary going forward.

He said that they were in discussion with a potential new clerk and discussions were on-going, but they were hoping to hear shortly whether they have been successful. There were a couple of issues they were sure they could resolve. They did look at Locums but felt the expense was excessive when they could do things themselves and that Icklesham PC were happy to guide and help over this period.

The Chair reminded residents that Councillors were approachable and had phone numbers and emails and to contact them, and if they had got something wrong, they would put it right.

24/217 Item 4 Public Questions in respect of items on the agenda: None

24/218 Item 5 To approve the Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 27th August 2024

Cllr Baker Item 5 with regard to disruption said that he had asked for the following to be added "the police were called but no action was taken". Cllr Baker felt it was significant because if no action was taken the police must have felt there was nothing wrong. He felt that if it was deemed the public were not disruptive then that should be recorded. That amendment to those Minutes was accepted and the Minutes APPROVED AND SIGNED.

24/219 Item 6 To approve the Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 12th September 2024
APPROVED AND SIGNED

24/220 Item 7 Matters Arising from the Minutes not otherwise on the agenda

Cllr Baker raised the issue of the recent ESALC Newsletter, and the statement made by the CEO regarding what was obviously the July meeting of Fairlight PC. Cllr Baker said he found it biased and factually incorrect and was concerned regarding the comment "legislation needing to respond to this type of societal change". Cllr Baker said that the fact that there were no screens at this meeting showed a marked change and he felt the council should write in response to the newsletter. Cllr Grohne asked if they would ask for a retraction. It was AGREED that Cllr Baker would draft the letter dealing with corrections and asking for retraction.

24/221 Item 8 County and District Councillors Reports

Cllr Grohne congratulated the Chair on his appointment and thanked Cllr Mrs Stanford for her help. He said that there were several things to park until the next full meeting but that they had receive notification that the Market Garden Survey was carried out over the week commencing 16th September however they were not told exactly when, so they did not witness it themselves. They were told there would be a Report in two weeks which in council terms means that from next week onwards he should receive that. The survey was conducted by two people from the RDC one of which works for the private housing company owned by the Council called Lloyd Exley and the other is the head of Enforcement, Dan Bevan. Cllr Grohne said they would wait with anticipation to see what the Report said. There was then a general discussion regarding statutory recommendation and whether it was legally binding Cllr

Grohne said there may be small things or major breaches, but they would not know until the Report was received.

Cllr Mier then reported that the Chief Executive was calling a meeting at which the Report will be presented, and they will then find out what it says but at the moment they know no more than the Parish Council does. Cllr Mier then reported that there was a Cabinet agenda item for next Monday dealing with the Community Grant which may be farmed out to Sussex Charity Foundation to administer and the consequences appear to be that the Parish Council will cease to be eligible for the Community Grant which he felt was unacceptable and also to any of the Parish Councils he has spoken to so far. Cllr Mier has contacted Cabinet member Teresa Killeen and has asked for the matter to be deferred. Cllr Mier said that she is making further enquiries about why this is happening because it appears to be outside their terms of reference and may be fatally flawed - so that is being actively pursued by RDC.

24/222 Item 9 Financial Matters

(a) To consider and approve the attached Schedule of Payments for September 2024.

Chair reported that they did not have access to the account as yet and the bank statements had not been received from the ex-clerk he said as far as he knew nothing has been spent except what is on the Schedule sent out to Councillors. He said that matters were in hand to change this he asked for approval of the attach Schedule. APPROVED

(b) To complete the transfer paperwork to change the Signatories to all bank accounts

Cllr Ms. Cooke reported the problems dealing with Nat West Bank. She said that they had not been given log-in details and access to the banking and that this was creating big problems. Cllr Mrs Stanford suggested formally approving the new signatories and then giving the bank a copy of these Minutes which might help. Confirmed the new signatories are Cllrs Stephen Baker, Ms. Lyn Cooke, Steve Stewart and Geoff Smith. APPROVED

(c) To resolve to appoint auditors for the financial year 2024/25

Cllr Ms Cooke reported she had contacted the auditors Mulberry, and no auditor has been appointed for the current year. She has confirmed it will be in an in-person audit and asked that the current auditors be reappointed. APPROVED

(d) To discuss and resolve to apply for CiL money before the 8th November deadline

Cllr Ms Cooke confirmed that the money does need to be applied for by 8th November, but a decision has to be made regarding what they were going to apply for. She said an expression of interest regarding the Market Garden needs to be made. It was decided to have an agenda item in October to discuss further. AGREED

(e) To discuss and resolve a contribution to the War Memorial fund

Cllr Baker reminded the meeting that the War Memorial is a Parish Council steering group that operates on the basis of independent funding, so donations are made to the War Memorial Fund for the erection of the memorial. He said this is going ahead on 30th November and is on track for the ceremony on that day and that payments were being made by individual donations. The stage that the Group is at is that they need to produce invitations to dignitaries such the Lord Lieutenant, church representatives etc. and these will be sent by post and also on the day they will provide refreshments. None of these costs are covered by the donations and Cllr Baker proposed that the Parish Council provide a donation of up to £1,000 to cover these costs. Cllr Smith said he had done a calculation of what was in the EMR funds of the project as of last month which may be verified by someone in audience the total cost of the project with VAT was approximately £24,000 but the VAT will be reclaimed so the real cost will be less so the group has enough to pay for the stone and siting. He thought there would be approximately £1,500 left in the pot but there would be ongoing costs of maintenance and possibly building inspection costs. He felt Cllr Baker's proposal should be supported. Standing Orders were suspended to hear from Mr. Draper who reported that the stone was engraved and project was substantially there after approximately 5 years and they may have it completed by Remembrance Day but the church Architect has to sign off on the final siting and until he does so it is not final but they were almost there. He

agreed with Cllr, Smith's calculation of £1,500 balance in fund for on-going maintenance. RESOLVED that up to £1,000 should be donated to fund to cover ancillary costs. APPROVED

(f) To discuss and resolve to implement and pay for repairs to small slide in the children's playground.

Cllr Smith reported a problem to the slides where a child's foot could get trapped, and the bark underneath needed replenishing to cover the concrete, and it would need three bulk bags to cover. He suggested using phenolic plywood for the repairs and calculated the cost of that and the bark to be £680. APPROVED

24/223 Item 10 Market Garden Site

Cllr Miller reported he had had an email from Anna of VP and there was nothing happening as they were waiting for the site survey. There are on-going questions regarding fencing which they believe to be too high but nothing concrete to report. The breaches have been recorded and we are just waiting. It was felt a meeting should be set up with due notice to all official stakeholders and then if people ignore or decline it will speak volumes. Chair asked if Cllrs Miller and Baker would get together with Anna of VP and arrange the stakeholder meeting. It was suggested to do this after the survey was received and that Cllr Baker should do so to avoid any conflict of interest. APPROVED

24/224 Item 11 Review of Policies and Parish Council logo

(a) Consider and resolve to accept a Volunteer Policy

Cllr Smith reported that he had drafted a Policy but while looking at the policies found they seemed to be out of date by three or four years. He has compared with other Parish Councils and it appears that most have a Volunteer Policy because they use them to get little jobs done. Cllr Smith also spoke to the Insurers who confirmed you had to have people named on a Policy before they will cover liability Cllr Baker commented on Item 8 of the Volunteer Policy that it should mention "DBS Certificate for Fairlight Parish Council and paid for by the Council". Also, Item 4 should read "and to whom to report it". APPROVED

(b) Consider and resolve to accept a new Parish logo and a new letterhead

Two logos have been produced. Design 2 in Brandon Grotesque font was preferred. APPROVED

Cllr Baker raised that when the invitations go out regarding War Memorial, they were keen to use the logo It was agreed that the invitations should use that letterhead/logo but up to steering group to make the decision. APPROVED

The logo design 2 was also preferred. APPROVED

24/225 Item 12 Future Agenda Items

To Consider correspondence received

Chair reported correspondence received about dog fouling the previous clerk has responded saying the parish council was not responsible. Chair asked if the dog warden could be asked to pay a visit to the village. Chair to speak to Sandy Vivien and Bob Scattergood.

A letter had been received regarding DISH (drop-in centre) regarding how cash is handled Cllr Smith said DISH is a Parish Council project they have donations collected just before end of month and included in our monthly income. He arranged a meeting to collect the money and was told it could not be handed over because the Parish Council do not have a Responsible Financial Officer at present. Cllr Smith did check the money was accounted for by a minimum of two people and it is safe. He said the collection last month was £330 but he did not know what the expenses were Cllrs Pichard and Clarke were asked to find out was going on and report back to the next council meeting. Currently the Parish Council pay for the hire of the village hall so whilst the residents pay for this they are refusing to pay over the money. This money goes into ear marked reserves for use of the DISH project.

A letter from a resident. The Chair reported on the final part of this letter and stated that he could find no evidence that a Solicitor had been instructed to represent the Council in anyway against any resident.

(a) To discuss amending the arrangement with Hastings Athletics Club to change the agreement for use of the field from Tuesdays and Thursdays to Monday and Thursdays, as well as Saturdays for matches

APPROVED

12. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 22nd October 2024 – 7.00 pm

13. Close of meeting 8.45 pm