



FULKING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Fulking Parish Council and Annual Parish Meeting Meeting held in the Fulking Village Hall on 11 May 2017 At 7.30 pm

Present:- Councillor Miles Firth (Chairman), Councillors Kate Watson and Linda Dyos, Clerk to the Council Derek Blackhall, MSD Councillor Anthony Watts Williams, WSC Councillor Joy Dennis, and 6 members of the Public.

Apologies: Councillor Michael Trist (Vice Chairman), Councillor Mark Hind; MSD Councillors John Wilkinson and Colin Trumble.

Annual Meeting of Council

Meeting opened at 7.30pm

1. Nominations for Chairman and Vice Chairman were received.

Miles Firth was nominated for re-election; proposed by Kate Watson and seconded by Linda Dyos.

The Vice Chairman nomination was for Mark Hind, who had previously indicated he would accept if elected; and was proposed by Linda Dyos and seconded by Kate Watson.

The Chairman signed the acceptance declaration and Vice Chairman will sign the declaration form at a later date. Action: **Clerk**

2. Meeting Closed at 7.33pm

Annual Parish Meeting

Meeting opened at 7.34pm by Miles Firth.

Apologies:- Councillor Michael Trist (Vice Chairman), Councillor Mark Hind; MSD Councillors John Wilkinson and Colin Trumble.

1. Minutes of Annual Meeting of Fulking Parish Council on 12 May 2016 having been previously circulated were **AGREED** and **SIGNED**.

2. Chairman's report (verbatim)

Thank you all for attending and I'd like to extend a special welcome to Joy Dennis, our newly elected West Sussex County Councillor and again thank Peter Griffiths (in his absence) for all his support of the village over the years. We look forward to working with Joy.

We've had a very busy year, so I will gallop through the report as fast as possible...

Derek has kept **admin** and us councillors under control:

Technically your Parish can now enable the valuable Parish Council General Power of Competence, should it so wish (powers to behave like an individual – lending money, commercial activity, etc.). Also under the ongoing Transparency obligations, we were awarded a further grant by NALC to enable us to buy a projector-a real unexpected bonus.

On the **planning** front:

Last year we have received 24 applications, including 3 for tree work, 2 are still work in progress, 1 was pre-application advice. Interestingly, the other 18 were all approved regardless of local Parish input.

Mid Sussex have stopped processing planning applications on behalf of South Downs National Park, this with their lack of involvement in the Conifers and Market Gardens applications led to a difficult meeting with the senior members of the authority, however recent contacts with Rob Ainslie's more pragmatic team have allayed our concerns. More from Rob later.

Your council has decided against participating in a Neighbourhood Plan as the cost outweighed the benefit, but has updated the Village Action Plan as part of our annual review of procedures.

Regarding **finances**

Our precept for 2017/18 has increased by 2% to £8,526 which largely reflects the need to support maintenance for North Town Field.

Our internal audit of the annual accounts has just been completed – a big thank you to Nick Hughes for continuing to do this audit for us without charge – and we will be approving the accounts later in the meeting.

On to **highways**:

Flooding and Parking are our main issues:

We have received £17k from 'Operation Watershed' to work on a host of issues in Clappers Lane – work starts shortly on these. We aiming to get further funding next year to resolve flooding / poor drainage by the "Lower Kents" corner.

Having made some good progress with parking / traffic management around the Shepherd & Dog it was disappointing to miss out on funding for grasscrete (we hope our new councillor can help us there) – Thanks to Mark Hind and the S&D team.

Now parking in Clappers lane is emerging as a pressing problem. We are setting up a community meeting to examine options here and throughout the village.

We're ready with our winter management plan (full grit bins/arrangement with local farmer to snow plough etc etc). Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on your like or dislike of snow, it's not been tested yet and remains under review.

I've already mentioned that your council is responsible for supporting the **North Town Field** Trust and directly for inspecting and maintaining the **playground**. (note that NTF election of new trustees will not happen at this meeting). We've arranged for two lots tree surgery to happen during last year, and some of you may have noticed the sparkling new coat of paint on the playground and other repairs.

Then there's the much-discussed dog bins – the council facilitated these being installed in the NTF and Clappers lane – a well-used dog walking path.

Just before we finish – the Village Hall Action Group was awarded a grant of £6,600 from WSCC for repairs to the roof. This was supplemented by the notorious village calendar... so, I think we can now look forward to continuing to meet here without being exposed to the elements!!

Finally, a few thank you's – to Derek and the other councillors who continue to devote their time working on behalf of the community. Also thanks to our regional councillors, Peter Griffiths / Joy Dennis (WSCC), Colin Trumble, Anthony Watts Williams and John Wilkinson (MSDC) for their support and interest in our village. Thank you as well to John Hazard, Gerald Gazdar and Miles for their contribution to the ever improving and excellent website, as well as a new mailing list, for us as well as Pigeon Post.

Looking ahead our key priorities for next year will be to find a way to ease the parking issues, fix the flooding in Clappers Lane and express the community's views on the integrity of the beautiful village through the planning process.

Thank you to all of you for attending this evening and being interested in our community.

3. Report by WSC Councillor Joy Dennis

Joy referred to a very good handover from Peter Griffiths which enabled a fast understanding of Parish issues, and looked forward to working with the Parish Council.

4. Report from MSDC Councillor Anthony Watts Williams

The planning process transfer to the SDNPA is working well, the MSDC councillors are still available to help with any issues, and there is a MSDC Councillor who sits on the SDNPA planning committee.

The forthcoming general election has necessitated no current work on the District Plan.

There are no budget cuts in Mid Sussex.

5. **The Clerk presented** the 2016/17 Governance Statement, which was approved and signed by the Chairman; followed by the Annual Accounts which were then approved and also signed by the Chairman.
6. There were two excellent and **interactive presentations** from Rob Ainslie, Development Manager of the SDNPA; and Paul Boichat, Senior Project Manager at BT Group.
7. **Date of next meeting 13th July.**
8. **Meeting closed at 9.11pm.**

Everybody was invited to join the PC for refreshments.

SignedDate.....

Minute 9/2017