

Minutes of Funtington Parish Council Meeting

held at St Mary's Church Hall, Funtington on Wednesday 7th February 2024 at 6:30pm

Present:

Cllr J Mottershead (Chair), Cllr D Ash, Cllr V Cathie, Cllr R Littler, Cllr B Mousley, Cllr E Paris

In Attendance: Cllr J Brookes-Harmer and Cllr J Joy

Members of the Public: There were 10 members of the public present

The meeting commenced at 6:30pm

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Jack Mousley, Cllr Nick Laurence. It was noted that Carol Donnelly had stepped down as Cllr on the 10th January 2024. Cllr Mousley informed those present that Cllr J Mousley would also like to step down as he is finding it hard to attend meetings due to work constraints.

2. Declarations of Interest

None received

3. To Receive and Confirm the Accuracy of the Draft Minutes of the Council meeting held on the 3rd January 2024. Cllrs noted that the date given at point 3 should read the 6th December 2023.

4. Open Forum - no comments at this time

5. Planning and Licensing Applications

a) Cllr Mousley went through a list of all current active planning applications across the parish.

Specifically, he noted the following new applications:

SDNP/23/04958/LIS - the parish council will submit a comment

SDNP/23/04706/HOUS - no objections recorded

b) Cllrs Mottershead and Paris attended the CDC planning meeting earlier the same day to discuss the following 6 applications – FU/23/01845/FUL, FU/23/02464/FUL, FU/23/02463/FUL, FU/23/02460/FUL, FU/23/02575/FUL and FU/23/02640/FUL. Cllr Mottershead reported uncertainty at CDC on the precise number of Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Parish. Cllr Brookes-Harmer confirmed that he would obtain clear figures for this, noting that a site visit is planned in 2 to 3 weeks' time regarding the above planning applications. Cllrs expressed concern over the numbers of non-local Gypsies and Travellers coming into the area and the lack of integration with the local population which could generate a 'them and us' mentality. There are currently 192 houses in West Ashling. Numbers of authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites could be as many as 75, plus unauthorised sites and new permissions, may mean that we are approaching a situation where dominance and a lack of suitable infrastructure becomes an issue.

c) Planning Group Policy and Aide Memorie – this will be covered at the next meeting

6. To Receive Reports from County and District Cllrs.

Reports received from District and County Councillors are routinely added to the Parish Council

website.

Cllr Brookes-Harmer highlighted items of relevance from his report, including the availability of trees for community orchards until the end of March. Cllrs enquired if these would be suitable for use as hedge screening on the Heather Close side of the playground in West Ashling, but were informed these were individual fruit trees only. Cllr Brookes Harmer will continue to hold his bimonthly surgeries where residents could meet with him to ask questions. The next one will be at 11am on the 16th March at the Fox and Hounds Pub in Funtington.

Cllr Joy introduced himself and apologised for recent non-attendance at meetings due to personal reasons. He expressed his view that Parish councils had not received enough assistance from Highways in putting together speed reduction schemes. Highways officers should have provided more professional expertise to assist parish volunteers in producing such detailed and complex documents as the recent Community Highways Scheme (CHS) submissions. Cllr Ash requested whether we could count on Cllr Joy's continued support for the CHS scheme in Funtington Parish which Cllr Joy confirmed. Cllr Joy will circulate details for the two contacts at Highways who will liaise with Parish Councils on these projects. Cllrs agreed that more practical assistance from Highways would be desirable.

Cllr Joy requested of the Clerk that invitations to forthcoming Parish Council meetings be sent to him as Outlook calendar events

7. There were no general matters for decision

8. Financial Matters for Decision

a) Report on Council's Bank Accounts as at 31st January 2024, for acceptance

Cllrs agreed unanimously to accept the schedule of payments for January invoices. The clerk presented the bank reconciliation for February 2024. The reconciled current account balance is £24,217.80, and savings account balance is £67.25

JANUARY 2024 - INVOICES and PAYMENTS

Method	Amount	Pavee	Reason
IBT	£44.93	Glasdon	Replacement bollard for West Ashling
IBT	£130.00	Countrywide	Missed payment August 2023
IBT	£76.16	SLCC	Annual Subscription
IBT	£133.50	Westcotec	Replacement batteries for SID
IBT	£280.00	Tim Ralph	Repair to B&W sign
IBT	£270.00	Longmeadows	1 x playground visit and 1 x extra clearing work
IBT	redacted	Parish Clerk	Clerk's pay
IBT	redacted	HMRC	Clerk's PAYE an NI contri.
IBT	redacted	Nest	Clerk's pension contr.
Cheque	£40.00	Land Registry	for an application to land Registry to register additional boundary

			information with regards to the pony paddock.
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IBT = Interbank transfer

b) To agree a replacement member of the Finance Committee and a new signatory for the Parish Council bank account to replace Cllr Donnelly.

Cllrs agreed to the addition of Cllrs Paris and Cathie to a Finance Working Group. It was also agreed that both Cllrs would be added as signatories to the Parish Council bank account although the clerk warned that this may take some time.

9. Matters for Discussion

a) Speed reduction projects and initiatives

Cllrs noted that a new operator for the Speed Indicator Device (SID) in Funtington had agreed to take on the role and expressed their thanks.

It was noted that the Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) heading West at the entrance to East Ashling was not working properly and that the support pole was leaning over. The clerk will arrange for an engineer to come out.

b) Security and Privacy issues for Cllrs and Clerk

The clerk expressed concern following recent civility and respect issues between members of the public and Cllrs in a neighbouring parish when dealing with contentious planning issues of a similar nature to those encountered in Funtington Parish. She requested that her home address be removed as the Parish Council business address and that a PO Box be used instead at an annual cost of £396 (incl. VAT). Cllrs agreed unanimously to this proposal. She also noted that there was an increasing need for a Parish Council mobile phone number and proposed the use of a dual SIM on her mobile phone which would enable the Parish Council to abide by the government working time directive requirements and to maintain her privacy. This would cost approximately £120 pa. Cllrs agreed unanimously to this proposal.

c) Funtington Neighbourhood Plan (NHP)

Cllr Mottershead confirmed that she would be stepping down as Chair of the NHP committee although would continue as a member of the committee in an advisory role.

The clerk noted that £900 of NHP funding has been approved by Groundworks and must be spent by the NHP group by the end of March 2024. These monies are earmarked for the residents’ survey.

d) To receive an update on flood issues.

Cllr Mottershead reported that Southern Water (SW) has now responded to her enquiries and a meeting with affected householders, Parish councillors and SW representatives is scheduled. She is keen to develop a mitigation plan that can be put in place quickly such that the recent disruptions and destruction of the road and verges do not happen again. Cllr Joy agreed to assist with representations to Southern Water. Cllr Mottershead also reported that a meeting with Highways is scheduled to look at longer-term solutions to flooding issues in four areas of the Parish:

- West Stoke on the Road with No Name
- Watery Lane
- the entrance to the road to Waterloo Farm
- the Southern end of Mouthey’s Lane

Cllrs confirmed that they will continue to keep Cllr Joy updated.

e) Parish Maintenance

Cllr Mousley will check the new noticeboard at Funtington for leaks

The clerk reported that responsibility for the upkeep of the black and white signpost at West Stoke has been confirmed and the loss adjusters will be informed shortly.

Cllr Mottershead reported that Longmeadows are preparing a quote for stump removal and turf repair at West Ashling playground.

d) Funding applications

The clerk reported that applications had been submitted to the Rural England Prosperity Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Funds for a Parish Community website and for replacement low fencing at The Dell. She requested Cllrs consider options for CDC CIL funding, application window closing on the 12th April.

10. Matters for Information

a) Summary of Parish Correspondence of relevance not covered elsewhere in the meeting:

- (i) Response from MP to a parishioner's complaint about Highways signs left at roadside
- (ii) Chichester District Association of Local Councils meeting – 27th Feb 2024
- (iii) The 96 Flex bus service has commenced in the Parish Area above the B2146 and the B2178 .

Further details on the [WSCC Book A Bus website pages](#).

- (iv) Off road quad bike reported on farmland and The Dell

From the floor

(i) Missing and fallen road signs were noted. Members of the public are encouraged to report issues with Highways signage online at the [WSCC Website - Report a Problem](#).

(ii) Residents continue to observe irresponsible driving, particularly high speeds on narrow roads such as Lye Lane and Mouthey's Lane.

b) Repairs and Maintenance across the parish – covered in 9.e)

c) Memorial Plaque for Peter Hall – Cllrs approved the design previously circulated by the clerk but recommended that approval also be sought by those involved in its commission.

11. Defibrillators - Cllr Cathie has now taken over care and maintenance of the Parish defibrillators – all have been checked and are in good working order. She recommended that paediatric pads be included in each. Cllrs agreed unanimously to their purchase.

Bournes Forum - Cllr Mottershead summarised the points covered at a recent meeting of The Bournes Forum, noting that she found these meetings very helpful in meeting and coordinating with other local parishes. Items covered included the Chichester Local Plan – the emerging plan will be adopted at the end of February – it is hoped adoption of the final plan will be in February 2025.

Parish Council business plan – Cllrs briefly discussed creation of an annual business plan. The clerk to circulate the previously agreed plan.

Police liaison officer – the clerk to enquire if the Neighbourhood Policing Team intend to restart their program of monthly parish meetings.

12. Date of Next Meeting – The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 6th March 2024 in The Church Room, St Mary's Church, Funtington at 6:30pm

The meeting closed at 19:45