

**Minutes of the Meeting of Maresfield Parish Council  
held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 7.30pm in the Fairwarp Village Hall**

**Councillors present:** Cllr M Craddock (Chairman), Cllr Mrs L Reeves, Cllr D Barlow, Cllr Miss G Hallin, Cllr K Ogden, Cllr Mrs L Stevens-Smith, Cllr Mrs P Handley, Cllr D Watson, CCllr F Whetstone, DCllr M Lunn, DCllr T Illingworth, Clerk T Allen, Asst. Clerk C Arnold.

**A. Public session.** No members of the public were present.

**2933. To approve apologies for absence and to note other non-attendance.** – Cllr A Strevens, Cllr R Taylor, CCllr R Galley, DCllr C Hardy. D Cllr P Roundell.

**2934. Declarations of interest** - Cllr Miss Hallin and Cllr Ogden as members of the Maresfield Conservation Group. Cllr Barlow as Director and Trustee of NWCTP Ltd.

**2935. To receive written requests for new DPI dispensations** – None received.

**2936. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2016: -**

1. For adoption – Re Item 2923.1 Cllr Mrs Reeves noted that Fairwarp Village Hall Committee wanted to thank Maresfield Parish Council for its continued support with grants.

Re Item 2923.2 Cllr Ogden wanted it noted that he had asked CCllr Galley about the cost of monitoring nitrogen levels.

Re. Item 2923.3, the Chairman noted that the minutes should read that the reason cited by Cllr Wilcox in resigning should read “breakdown in working relations with the Clerk” and not “communication issues”. **It was resolved** to adopt these minutes, as amended, as a true record of the meeting.

2. Matters arising from these minutes not elsewhere on the agenda –

Re. Item A, Cllr Watson mentioned the poor state of the footpath and overgrowth at the junction of Nether Lane and High Street Nutley as, in particular, this is an issue for wheelchair users and those with children’s buggies. It was noted that the Asst. Clerk has these matters in-hand and is obtaining estimates for works where required.

**2937. Reports by and questions to: -**

1. County Councillors.

CCllr Galley’s circulated report was noted.

CCllr Whetstone reported on the following items:-

- That savings of £17 million must be found, due to ongoing cuts in Government funding.
- ESCC council tax is set to rise by 1.99% with an additional 3% levy for Adult Social care.
- The current piecemeal approach to road works in a County with a poor road safety record. There is £800k set aside in the proposed new budget for potholes but there are no plans for any significant road building, improvements or repairs.
- [In answer to a question from Cllr Ogden] he did not know about a large snowplough (it may be standard equipment), used as an example by Cllr Ogden to suggest that some monies are wasted by ESCC.
- [In answer to a question from Cllr Watson] ESCC strongly protests to Central Government about the damage caused by the lack of central funding.

*(DCllr Lunn joined the meeting).*

**2. District Councillors.**

DCllr Lunn reported on the following items:-

- That it has been proposed that the new Local Plan be further delayed to allow WDC to take account of the provisions of the new Neighbourhood Planning legislation arising from the Housing & Planning Act.
- A recent appeal against an application, concerning a Gypsy and Traveller site located in the High Weald AONB, refused by WDC and other authorities, was upheld by the Planning Inspector. In conversation with Councillors, DCllr Lunn related the background to this matter and the possible ramifications from the Inspector's decision.
- [In answer to a question from Cllr Craddock] the Steel Cross appeal has yet to be heard and DCllr Lunn advised that WDC has challenged the Lewes DC Local Plan regarding its policies for Ashdown Forest protection.

*(DCllr Illingworth joined the meeting).*

**2938. Parish Wards – issues, needs and Councillors' reports: -**

**1. Fairwarp Ward** - No issues reported.

**2. Maresfield Ward** - Cllr Ogden noted that there is still a problem with cars parked opposite the shop and other issues affecting the shop owners. Apart from placing notes on the offending car windscreens there was nothing more the Parish Council could do.

**3. Nutley Ward** - Cllr Watson reported that people are parking on the pavement along the High Street/ A22 which causes issues for all pedestrians particularly the disabled and those with prams. The Clerk stated that in a past exercise with ESCC called "Pavements are for People" flyers were put on the windscreens of offending vehicles. **Action** Clerk to see if this process can be resurrected. Cllr Watson stated the 'Great British Spring Clean' will take place between the 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> March 2017; WDC can supply us with suitable equipment.

**2939. Council bodies - To receive minutes and decisions, followed by reports from Chairmen and any questions: -**

**1. Finance & Administration Committee: -**

**i. Month 9 2016/17 – Financial Reports** – The Month 9 Cash Book, Bank reconciliation and management reports were received. The Chairman stated that there were no issues to raise.

**2. Planning Committee: -**

**i. Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016** – Received.

**ii. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2017** – Noted.

Cllr Watson reported on recent correspondence with the Ashdown Forest Conservators relating to the proposal that responsibility for highlighting planning applications that have an effect on the Ashdown Forest would rest with the Parish Council. The Parish Council's stated position in response is that there is no reason to change the current arrangements. DCllr Whetstone stated this proposed change resulted from a change in WDC procedures, resulting in the Conservators being sent all application papers, even those for minor developments, and all those for the Towns.

Cllr Craddock noted the 7km zone no longer exists and that the Parish Council is now additionally being asked to look at applications from a Conservators viewpoint; the Conservators should have a volunteer planning committee instead. DCllr Whetstone stated he would discuss this matter further with the Conservators.

Cllr Watson mentioned a letter from Asprey Homes about the development of 9 homes on School Hill and potential allotment space in Maresfield. He questioned whether the allotments were needed.

Cllr Craddock noted that there did not appear to be a demand for them, but has asked the question in his article to appear in the February 2017 editions of the Parish magazines.

DCllr Lunn noted that this application may be called in by WDC Planning Committee and consideration could be given to reserving the area in question as 'green space'.

**3. Environment Committee:-**

i. New Constitution for the Fords Green Management Committee – It was resolved that Councillor Watson should vote in favour of this new Constitution at the forthcoming FGMC AGM.

The Clerk noted that the next SLR meeting with ESCC will be on 7 February 2017 at 2.00pm in the Parish Council Offices and asked that he is advised of any environment related items to add to the Agenda, by the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at the very latest.

**4. Neighbourhood & Community Development Plan Steering Group:-**

i. Minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2016 – Received.

ii. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2016 – Noted.

Cllr Craddock noted that the additional delays in the delivery of the new WDC Local Plan will impinge on the delivery of the Maresfield Parish NDP; however, the Steering Group will carry on without the promised assistance of WDC.

**5. Road Safety Committee.**

Cllr Craddock stated that, following the meeting with ESCC Highways, held on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016, regarding potential traffic calming measures for Crowborough Road, ESCC had agreed to provide a costing for a feasibility study in time for the December 2016 Parish Council meeting; however, this information has still not been received.

It was noted that there is a new District/regional based communications structure for County Highways. The Clerk noted that these issues will be on the Agenda for the ESCC SLR meeting to be held on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

**6. Maresfield Recreation Ground Committee - No issues to note.**

**7. Communications Working Party:-**

i. Development of the Council's web site – presentation by Cllr Miss G Hallin – Cllr Miss Hallin gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the ongoing development of the Parish Council's web site. She was thanked by the Chairman for her valued contribution.

**2940. Outside bodies matters – None.**

*(DCllr Illingworth & DCllr Lunn left the meeting).*

**2941. Review of the number of Council/Committee meetings.**

Cllr Craddock discussed the proposals contained in the report from the Clerk noting that if more routine matters are delegated to the Clerks, a regular report on these matters can be provided at Council meetings. Cllr Ogden stated that he is in favour of retaining the Environment Committee. Cllr Craddock asked for the matter to be put on the Agenda for the March 2017 meeting of Council and that, in the interim, Councillors let the Clerk have their observations/preferences.

**2942. Letter from the Chairman of the Maresfield Conservation Group requesting a financial contribution for the replacement of the white railings on the High Street.**

Cllr Ogden briefed Councillors on the background and current status of this matter. The following points were noted and discussed:-

- County Council responsibilities.
- MCG must apply for a permit/license to carry out this work.
- A cheaper traffic management quote has been obtained from a contractor giving a significant financial saving over the ESCC quote.
- No urgency for this work, as it is seasonal with regard to the painting.

After further discussion, **it was resolved** that the Parish Council's initial response is as follows:-

- Fully supports the replacement of these railings.
- Shocked by the ESCC quote for these works, especially the costs for traffic management.
- Other ways of getting this work done need to be explored:-
  - Get quotes from local contractors.
  - Could the Parish Council's insurance be used if needed?
  - Project management by the Parish Council, MCG or the appointed contractor?
- A permit/license must be obtained from ESCC to carry out this work.

**2943. To discuss the Council's 'theme' and start planning for this year's Annual Assembly and village fetes** - The Clerk noted that it would help to consider this matter early in the year and perhaps form a subcommittee. Cllr Craddock suggested that the theme for this year could be 'communications with parishioners'. Cllr Ogden proposed that an additional theme could be 'sustainability of our villages'.

Cllr Craddock noted that care should be taken with using terms like sustainability as they are very subjective. The Communications Working Party to develop these ideas further.

**2944. To receive a report from, and put questions to the Chairman.**

There were no questions put to the Chairman; Cllr Craddock tendered his apologies for his absence from the next Council Meeting.

**2945. To receive a report from, and put questions to the Clerk** –No reports or questions raised.

**2946. Payments to be made - for approval – It was resolved** to authorise payments amounting to £4009.41; as shown on the circulated schedule.

**2947. Matters arising from the meeting for public communication** - Cllr Craddock stated that any items for inclusion in the Chairman's article for the March 2017 Parish magazines are required by the 10<sup>th</sup> March and should be forwarded to the Clerk.

**2948. Matters relating to Council as Trustee of Maresfield Recreation Ground (MRG)** - No items.

**2949. Date of next meeting – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017 (Nutley).**

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:48.*