

**Minutes of the Meeting of Maresfield Parish Council
held on Tuesday 17th October 2017 at 7.30pm in Nutley War Memorial Hall**

Present: Cllr M Craddock (Chairman), Cllr D Barlow, Cllr D Watson, Cllr A Strevens, Cllr K Ogden, Cllr Ms G Hallin, Cllr Mrs Stevens-Smith, DCllr T Illingworth, CCllr R Galley, Clerk T Allen.

3085. Public session – Around twenty members of the public were present to raise the issue of the need for traffic calming measures in Crowborough Road; the following points were noted:-

- Measures are needed for the stretch of road between the cattle grids; animals are being injured and killed.
- Money has been spent on new large directional signs.
- Why the current 30T weight limit is not being reduced to 7.5T.
- Dangers to pedestrians, dog walkers, horse riders and cyclists.
- Efforts since 2013, including a petition made to the Lead member ESCC (did not receive a high enough priority for any funding), meetings with Sussex Police and the Police & Crime Commissioner and the use of average speed cameras.
- With no financial support from ESCC, it looks like only the Parish Council can raise the required funds.
- Costs associated with a road death are around £2M, which makes the £120K cost of traffic calming measures seem affordable.
- A number of options have been suggested in correspondence, which the Parish Council should look at.
- The Crowborough Road is the only road in the Parish which the Parish Council has responsibility for.
- Control of development/traffic movements by WDC to protect the Ashdown Forest from pollution.

The Chairman made the following comments: -

- The Parish Council must have the full support of ESCC; it is continually pressing ESCC and other agencies for the improvement of road safety across the whole Parish.
- The Crowborough Road IS NOT the responsibility of the Parish Council; this sits firmly with ESCC Highways.
- Crowborough Road is not a priority for ESCC, so no funding will be forthcoming.
- The recent feasibility study gave a minimum cost of c. £120K; a more affordable scheme may be needed. Expenditure on this scale would require a referendum of the whole Parish.
- The use of Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS) is being looked into by the Parish Council.
- Lorry movements and the speed limit are not enforced. ESCC will not reduce the weight limit for lorries to 7.5T as this would interfere with freight movements.
- Traffic calming measures are only being considered for the residential stretch of Crowborough Road.
- The Road Safety Committee will be asked to look again at the likely costs of a suitable traffic calming scheme and how the required funding can be raised.

Mr & Mrs Douch spoke about the issues surrounding the lack of planning enforcement at the property Beech Hill, Crowborough Road, noting that Environmental Health services had visited the site to inspect the disposal of foul and other waste; further investigations are planned.

Mr & Mrs Douch noted that 'Caravan 7' is positioned outside the domestic curtilage of the property, but that, as requested by WDC, four other caravans have now been moved from the agricultural field.

The Chairman stated that this matter had been discussed at the last meeting of the Planning Committee and subsequently letters expressing concerns had been sent to the Environment Agency (EA) and the Head of Planning at WDC. No response had yet been received from the EA, but a response had been received from Kelvin Williams, WDC which will be discussed later in the meeting.

(All members of the public left the meeting except for Mr & Mrs Douch. The Chairman closed the public session and opened the meeting).

3086. To approve apologies for absence and to note other non-attendance – Cllr Mrs P Handley, Cllr Mrs L Reeves, Cllr R Taylor, DCllr C Hardy, DCllr P Roundell, DCllr M Lunn, Asst. Clerk C Arnold.

3087. Declarations of interest – Cllr Barlow as Director and Trustee of NWCTP Ltd. Cllr Ms Hallin & Cllr Ogden as members of the Maresfield Conservation Group.

3088. To receive written requests for new DPI dispensations – None received.

3089. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th September 2017: -

1. For adoption - **It was resolved** to adopt the Council minutes as a true record.

2. Matters arising from these minutes not elsewhere on the agenda – Cllr Watson asked whether a response or acknowledgement had been received from DCllr Newton to the correspondence copied to her regarding Beech Hill and was advised that nothing had been received.

3090. Reports by and questions to: -

1. County Councillors – CCllr Galley reported that ESCC is contending with ‘stretched’ finances and it is dealing with a developing national funding formula for Schools.

In reference to local schools, CCllr Galley stated that it is not possible to state the funding on a per pupil basis; but these details are expected to be available in due course. Cllr Watson asked that a funding comparison between 2010 and the latest position be provided for Nutley Primary School.

CCllr Galley to look into the reason for Queens Drive being missed from the ESCC grass cutting round.

2. District Councillors – DCllr Galley referred to his circulated report, covering issues of waste disposal and parking enforcement/on-street parking charges.

DCllr Galley confirmed that contractors are told to separate glass waste where there is a collection ‘pod’ available, but in recognition of the fact that this is not always happening, the new waste contract will use the ‘co-mingling’ approach.

It was noted that under the new contract the collection of garden waste would have to be charged for or included in (increased) Council Tax bills, but as not all properties use this service views would be welcomed.

Cllr Ogden to brief DCllr Galley on a recent case involving the WDC Housing Department and Environmental Services.

DCllr Illingworth reported on the emerging WDC Local Plan, noting that the evidence base information is expected to be ready by December 2017. WDC is expected to approve the draft Plan in March 2018 with a period of consultation following.

DCllr Illingworth reported on further proposals for parliamentary constituency boundary changes affecting Maresfield Parish. A formal consultation is expected in due course.

3091. Parish Wards – issues, needs and Councillors’ reports: -

1. Fairwarp Ward – No reports.

2. Maresfield Ward – Cllr Ms Hallin raised the issue of the volume and speed of traffic using Underhill and the other lanes. The Chairman stated that the Road Safety Committee should be asked to look into this matter.

The Clerk noted that Mr B Patience had cleaned a number of road signs in the village; all expressed their thanks to Mr Patience.

3. Nutley Ward – No reports.

3092. Council bodies - To receive minutes and decisions, followed by reports from Chairmen and any questions: -

1. Finance & Administration Committee: -

i. Month 6 2017/18 – Financial Reports – The Bank Reconciliation, Cash Book and management reports for Month 6 were received; the Chairman stated that he was not aware of any issues that needed to be raised.

ii. Proposal from the Ashdown Forest Conservators for a financial contribution from the Parish Council in 2018/19 and 2019/20 – The Chairman related the background to this matter, as discussed in recent Council meetings and at a presentation by the Conservators and at the Council's last meeting. **It was resolved** that Council pledges the £1,500.00 p.a. as requested by the Conservators, in its budgets for 2018/19 & 2019/20.

Concerns regarding productivity, commercial and people management/control, plus the fact that it is not yet known what other councils will be contributing, prevented a higher amount being pledged by Council at this stage. When advising the Conservators of the Council's decision their attention should be drawn to the Council's concerns.

iii. Review of LGPS Employer Discretions Policy – The Chairman stated that having such a Policy was a requirement of membership of the LGPS, noting that for each Discretion the Council's policy was that each case would be decided on its merits. **It was resolved** to adopt the Policy.

iv. Consideration of the 2018/19 Budget and Precept requirement – The Chairman stated that the circulated report was to seek early input from Councillors for the 2018/19 budget discussions; for further discussion at the next meeting of Council. **It was resolved** that the Committee's approach was acceptable.

It was noted that the figures for the Weald Link and 262 services are still being looked at in detail for the current year and the new financial year; Cllr Barlow will provide the required figures.

v. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 10th October 2017 – Noted.

vi. Fords Green Management Committee – plans to upgrade the Pavilion – It was noted that representatives from FGMC had attended the Committee's last meeting to outline plans for the further development of the Pavilion. More work (including detailed plans and costings) is needed before the Parish Council can be formally approached for a grant.

2. Planning Committee: -

i. Minutes of the meeting held on 11th September 2017 – Received.

Cllr Watson reported on points arising from an application for Woodlands Farm, which was considered at this meeting.

ii. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2017 – Noted.

iii. Siting and use of caravans at Beech Hill, Crowborough Road – Cllr Watson noted that the response from Kelvin Williams, WDC supported the Enforcement Officers' position, but gave no explanation regarding how such a cumulative development was allowed in the AONB and no assurance that this could not happen in the future.

The Chairman stated that the Parish Council is not happy with the response from Kelvin Williams, noting that DCllr Roundell had raised this matter at the last WDC Planning Committee North meeting.

DCllr Galley stated that if it can be proved that people are living in some of these caravans and/or that a business is being conducted from this site, then action in regard to business rates and Council Tax payments will have to be taken.

Clerk to write to DCllr Mrs A Newton, Planning Portfolio Holder, stating that WDC Planning Enforcement is not as effective as it could be and seeking an assurance that this situation will improve.

(Mr & Mrs Douch left the meeting)

iv. Planning Application No. WD/2017/1735/FA

Expiry date for comments: 18 October 2017

Location: OAKLEA AND GORSEDENE, NURSERY LANE, NUTLEY, TN22 3NS

Description: MINOR MATERIAL AMENDMENT TO WD/2016/2304/F (TO REPLACE TWO DWELLINGS WITH TWO NEW DWELLINGS).

Applicant: Mr Raz Levy

The Chairman related the history of the two sites and referred to the architect's planning statement, as circulated with the meeting papers, noting that only minor alterations were proposed to the previously approved application.

A neighbour's comments on the proposed changes were noted and discussed, but were not considered to be of material significance.

It was resolved to recommend approval.

3. Environment Committee:-

i. Replacement of picnic bench at MRG children's play area – The Clerk reported that the Maresfield Conservation Group (MCG) had purchased a replacement picnic bench, for the one vandalised around six-months ago, as detailed in the email from the MCG Chairman.

It was noted that an insurance claim was not made at the time as the Council's excess of £250 was about the same as the replacement cost.

It was resolved that a grant of £250 be made from reserves to MCG, towards the cost of purchasing and installing the replacement picnic bench and that MCG be given authority to proceed in this matter.

(Cllr Ogden & Cllr Ms Hallin abstained from voting).

4. **Neighbourhood & Community Development Plan Steering Group** – The Chairman reported that the Steering Group is finalising the Draft NDP for submission to the Council's Planning Consultant for its 'fit-for-purpose' check. It was noted that the WDC Draft Local Plan is expected to be out for consultation in March 2018; this delay is having a direct effect on the progression of the Draft NDP. Cllr Ms Hallin noted that she and Cllr Mrs Reeves are currently formatting the Draft NDP.

5. Road Safety Committee:-

i. Residential area along Crowborough Road – See Item 3085 above.

The Road Safety Committee will be asked to look again at the likely costs of a suitable traffic calming scheme and how the required funding can be raised.

ii. Acquisition of Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS) – The Asst. Clerk's paper and supporting documentation was noted and discussed.

The Clerk stated that the use of MVAS devices can only take place in collaboration with ESCC Highways and that prior to using these devices, the following areas need to be covered: -

- Siting – permitted sites with adequate mounting kit and structures.
- Training – use and maintenance.
- ESCC Highways approval.
- Data download and interpretation.
- Insurance costs

It was resolved to purchase two SWARCO MVAS3 devices, from the Road Safety project funds, at a cost of £2730.91 each. This is the device used by Rotherfield PC and it is well known to ESCC Highways.

iii. Update on other projects – The circulated report from the Clerk was noted.

(CCllr Galley & DCllr Illingworth left the meeting)

6. Maresfield Recreation Ground Committee:-

i. Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2017 – Received.

ii. Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd August 2017 – Received.

iii. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2017 – Noted.

The Chairman noted that the Committee is functioning very effectively.

Cllr Strevens stated that parking issues are increasing, mainly as a result of the growth of the Dynamos Junior FC.

7. Communications Working Party – Cllr Ms Hallin reported that the development of the web site is ongoing and that she is now actively posting on the Council's social media outlets.

3093. Outside bodies matters – No items.

3094. Update to Standing Orders - new section 'Protocol for Communications Within and Outside the Parish Council' – The Chairman related the background to this item. **It was resolved** to adopt the update/addition to Standing Orders as drafted.

3095. Implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation – 25th May 2018 – The Clerk referred to the large amount of information circulated with the meeting papers, noting that it is a requirement that Councillors are fully briefed on this new legislation. It was noted that a detailed action plan is being constructed, to ensure Council's compliance and that the Council can appoint its own Data Protection Officer, or possibly use the one at WDC.

3096. WDC re. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) meaningful proportion payments – The Chairman reported that the Council's first CIL payment had been received from WDC, in the amount of £633.46.

It was noted that this money has to be spent within five years and that care must be taken in choosing suitable areas of expenditure relating to local infrastructure.

3097. To receive a report from, and put questions to the Chairman – No report or questions.

3098. To receive a report from, and put questions to the Clerk – The Clerk stated that the issuing of Council email addresses to Councillors was being progressed.

3099. Payments to be made - for approval – **It was resolved** to authorise payments amounting to £6,020.22 as shown on the circulated schedule.

3100. Matters arising from the meeting for public communication – WDC garden waste proposals; financial contributions to the Ashdown Forest Conservators; encouraging people to become ‘Friends of Ashdown Forest’.

Any items for posting on social media to be sent to the Clerk and Cllr Ms Hallin.

3101. Matters relating to Council as Trustee of Maresfield Recreation Ground (MRG):-

1. To adopt the 2016/17 audited accounts and authorise the Clerk to make the Annual Return to the Charity Commission – The Clerk noted a correction required to page 1 – ‘R Street’ to be replaced by ‘M Craddock’.

The Chairman noted that the reduced nett balance was due mainly to the settling of the loan with Shepherd Neame and additional groundworks in 2016/17.

3102. Date of next meeting – 21st November 2017 (Maresfield).

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21:28.