

**Minutes of the Meeting of Maresfield Parish Council
held on Tuesday 18th July 2017 at 7.30pm in Fairwarp Village Hall**

Present: Cllr M Craddock (Chairman), Cllr D Barlow, Cllr D Watson, Cllr A Strevens, Cllr Mrs L Reeves, Cllr Ms G Hallin, Cllr K Ogden, Cllr Mrs P Handley, Cllr Mrs Stevens-Smith, DCllr M Lunn, CCllr R Galley, Clerk T Allen, Asst. Clerk C Arnold.

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

3050. To approve apologies for absence and to note other non-attendance – Cllr R Taylor, DCllr P Roundell, DCllr C Hardy, DCllr T Illingworth.

3051. Declarations of interest - Cllr Barlow as Director and Trustee of NWCTP Ltd. Cllr Ogden and Cllr Ms Hallin as members of the Maresfield Conservation Group.

3052. To receive written requests for new DPI dispensations – None received.

3053. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th June 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 – None.

3054. Reports by and questions to: -

1. County Councillors – CCllr Galley's monthly report had been circulated. CCllr Galley reported that the ESCC Cabinet has agreed a paper which plans to put social care and community health under one commissioning organisation with devolved powers which could be in place by 2020 or thereabouts.

2. District Councillors – DCllr Galley reported on the following items:-

- A good performance report for WDC for the last year with particular emphasis on its economic strategy.
- Increased WDC borrowing for infrastructure schemes.
- Costs of meeting social care needs have resulted in reduced budgets in other areas over recent years. More Government cuts are expected in the coming years.
- Control on public borrowing to 'live within means'.
- Reduced budgets/resources can sometimes produce positive results.
- The new Highways Contractor's work is of good quality but there is still room for improved response to required works.
- The importance of protecting the Forest; main issue relates to the amount of traffic.

(DCllr Lunn joined the meeting).

DCllr Lunn reported on the following items:-

- He will recommend that the planning application for 25 new homes on the Straight Half Mile is refused by WDC as there is only one dwelling remaining to be allocated to Maresfield under the adopted Local Plan/Core Strategy and the impact on the Forest from the increased vehicle movements that would result.
- Installation of new telecommunication masts can sometimes take place under Permitted Development Rights. Local campaigns (e.g. recently in High Hurstwood) can have an influence on the design and location of these masts.

3055. Parish Wards – issues, needs and Councillors’ reports: -

1. Fairwarp Ward – Cllr Mrs Reeves reported that the Village Hall is to be painted this August; she thanks from the new Priest-in-charge for the Council’s grant towards Churchyard maintenance; and that the Church is talking to the Forest Conservators about a small extension to the graveyard.

2. Maresfield Ward – Cllr Ogden and Cllr Strevens reported that the vehicles parked on WDC land outside No.1 Parklands, along with scrap and other items, have now been removed; Cllr Strevens to ask WDC to replace the posts that were removed to access to this land. It was noted that planning rules and restrictive covenants should be in place to control such activity, including the stationing of a caravan in the private drive of this house.

Cllr Strevens reported that a second letter has been placed on the windscreens of vehicles parked opposite The Parade, which seems to have had some effect, with vehicles being parked further down the Straight Half Mile.

Cllr Mrs Stevens-Smith reported that the phone kiosk outside No’s 4 & 5 Parklands, awaiting removal by BT, is unkempt; Clerk to urge BT to remove this kiosk a.s.a.p.

Cllr Mrs Stevens-Smith reported that a Mr Allbright from Wicksteed Leisure Ltd will be at the Parklands Play area on the 8th August 2017 to give advice on the refurbishment of this site.

3. Nutley Ward – Cllr Ogden reported on a complaint that he had received regarding the illegal felling of six mature trees on the east side of the A22 approximately 100m south of the shop; the landowner and the Police are seeking information on this matter.

3056. Council bodies - To receive minutes and decisions, followed by reports from Chairmen and any questions: -

1. Finance & Administration Committee: -

i. Month 3 2017/18 – Financial Reports – The Bank Reconciliation, Cash Book and management reports were received. The Chairman stated that the accounts appeared to be in order and that he had no issues to raise.

ii. Developing a Council policy for conflict resolution – **It was resolved** to adopt the policy, as drafted by Cllr Mrs Handley, as a worthwhile approach to trying to resolve such issues without the need for invoking the more formal Grievance and Disciplinary policies.

iii. Request for financial support for the provision of two defibrillators in Nutley village – **It was resolved** that this application be supported in principle; however, clarity is needed as follows:-

- Confirmation of the siting of the defibrillator in the south of the village and the reasoning behind the choice of site.
- How much has already been pledged in contributions.

2. Planning Committee: -

i. Minutes of the meeting held on 19th June 2017 – Received.

ii. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2017 – Noted.

iii. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2017 (tabled) – Noted.

Cllr Watson reported on planning applications recently seen by the Committee at Hole & Alchorne Farm in Nutley, and at The White Cottage in Duddleswell.

Cllr Watson noted that, at the Committee’s meeting held on the 13th July 2017, the representatives of the applicant for the planning application for 25 new homes on the Straight Half Mile were given unimpressive presentations.

3. Environment Committee:-

i. To receive and action the Asst. Clerk's report and recommendations for the refurbishment of the red telephone kiosk at the Nutley stores – The Asst. Clerk related the background to this item, as set out in his circulated paper, and outlined the details and costs for the three options for renovating this kiosk.

- 1) to remove, renovate and reinstall (estimated cost c. £5K);
- 2) to renovate in situ using a professional company (quoted at £951.11);
- 3) to try to renovate using volunteers (estimated cost £320 for materials).

It was agreed that due to health & safety requirements (including dealing with lead based paint) using volunteers was not an option and that an expenditure of c. £5K to remove, renovate and reinstall the kiosk could not be justified.

It was noted that once renovated, the kiosk can be used as a book exchange and/or information point and possibly also house a defibrillator. **It was resolved** that, with such defined uses in mind, the kiosk should be renovated professionally by ADS Home Maintenance at the quoted cost of £951.11 taken from Council's reserves.

ii. Items for the ESCC SLR meeting to be held on the 15th August 2017 – The circulated draft agenda for this meeting was noted; all to let the Clerk know of any additional items for inclusion a.s.a.p.

iii. To discuss and agree any action re. Ashdown Forest Conservators funding issues – The chairman related the background to this item and the points covered in a meeting with the Conservators, held in April 2017, that he had attended with Cllr Mrs Reeves. It was noted that the conservators are forecasting a budget shortfall for the two financial years 2018/19 & 2019/20 and are seeking contributions from local Town & Parish Councils of c. £1.50 per household.

It was noted that the Town Councils may not want/be able to pay this amount, whereas some Parish Councils may be prepared to pay more.

The Chairman stated that the financial case has yet to be properly made by the Conservators, representatives of whom will attend Council's meeting in September 2017.

iv. To review the need for the retention of 'Civil Emergency Boxes' in Fairwarp and Maresfield Village Halls – The Clerk related the background to this item and the request from the Maresfield Village Hall Committee for the box sited there to be removed. **It was resolved** that the 'Civil Emergency' boxes should be removed from Maresfield & Fairwarp Village Halls.

The clerk reported that the updated Community Resilience Plan is progressing well and that the 'Survey Monkey' consultation seeking details of available parishioners' skills and resources will take place this autumn.

4. Neighbourhood & Community Development Plan Steering Group:-

i. Minutes of the meeting held on 4th May 2017 – Received.

ii. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2017 – Noted.

The chairman reported that the NDP 'drafting day' held on the 7th July 2017 was very productive and that another half-day exercise to continue this work will take place on the 27th July

5. Road Safety Committee:-

i. Minutes of the meeting held on 25th October 2016 – Received.

ii. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2017 – Noted.

iii. Residential area along Crowborough Road – CMF traffic calming feasibility study – The circulated ESCC Feasibility Study was noted and discussed. Cllr Strevens outlined the background to this item and highlighted the contents and recommendations of this Study. It was noted that this is not a priority road for ESCC and therefore it is unlikely to attract any joint CMF funding for the estimated minimum cost of c. £120K and that the Parish Council could not defend spending such levels of money.

It was resolved that the matter, as set out in this ESCC Highways Feasibility Appraisal, is not pursued unless an alternative source of funding becomes available; Council to pursue lower cost solutions should they become available.

The Chairman asked that the Committee follows-up on the matter of average speed cameras with the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, now that the trial in Hastings has been running for some time. CCllr Galley reported that ESCC now has access to project funds of £1M to address the 20 worst roads for KSI's in the County, noting that, whilst this list did not include the Crowborough Road, it did include the B2026 through Fairwarp.

iv. Update on other projects – The Chairman noted that, following the publication by ESCC of the Traffic Order for the speed reduction in Nether Lane, some objections had been lodged which will be addressed by the appropriate ESCC Committee in due course.

The Clerk noted that the circulated Projects Summary paper outlined the current position of all of the Committee's projects.

(CCllr Galley & DCllr Lunn left the meeting).

6. Maresfield Recreation Ground Committee – The Clerk noted that the rear fence at the children's play area is about to be replaced, as planned.

7. Communications Working Party – Cllr Ms Hallin reported that she will shortly be meeting with the Clerk to agree and commence the next stage of updating the Council's web site.

3057. Outside bodies matters – No items.

3058. NWCTP – extension of the 262 Saturday bus service – latest position – Cllr Barlow reported that all Parishes concerned were now on-board and had accepted the financial commitment for running this service until March 2018.

It was noted that passenger numbers have started to increase slightly.

3059. Improving the effectiveness of the Council's presence at village fetes – The following points were noted in discussion:-

- There had been little interest in the Council's marquee at all of this year's fetes; the marquee presentation looked bland.
- A Council presence at such events may be expected.
- With the many means of communication now available, is there a requirement to have a presence at such events?
- Need attention grabbing displays and to find ways to engage with and involve Parishioners.
- The hard work of the Clerk and Asst. Clerk, particularly in setting up/taking down the marquee and displays should be recognised.
- Any additional plans for the marquee will require a significant increase in Councillors' commitment and attendance at events.
- Possibly not have a presence at these events in 2018 and use the time to look at how other councils approach this matter.

It was resolved to bring this matter back to Council at its January 2018 meeting.

3060. Grant application from Maresfield Village Meadows Trust – The Chairman noted that, from the latest set of MVMT accounts, it was clear that its finances were in a poor state and that it is struggling to raise funds, thus making it difficult currently for the Council to make any grant. **It was resolved** to defer this item to the September 2017 meeting of Council in order to seek clarification on the long-term prospects of the MVMT, its proposed use of grant monies for overheads expenditure and the exact amount of grant funding being sought from the Council.

3061. To receive a report from, and put questions to the Chairman – No report/questions raised.

3062. To receive a report from, and put questions to the Clerk – No report/questions raised.

3063. Payments to be made - for approval – It was resolved to authorise payments amounting to £4,060.18; as shown on the circulated schedule.

3064. Matters arising from the meeting for public communication – The next Chairman's article for the Parish Magazines to include a report on the Council's position with regard to the ESCC Crowborough Road feasibility study.

3065. Matters relating to Council as Trustee of Maresfield Recreation Ground (MRG) – No items.

3066. Date of next meeting – 19th September 2017 (Maresfield).

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21:12.