

MARESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

REPRESENTING THE VILLAGES OF MARESFIELD, NUTLEY AND FAIRWARP

Minutes of the Maresfield Parish Council Meeting held at Maresfield Village Hall on Tuesday 17th October 2023 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr M Craddock (Chair), Cllr Mrs S Cumming, Cllr Dr P Handley, Cllr R Hunter, Cllr T Lewin, Cllr Mrs P Penfold, Cllr Mrs L Reeves, Cllr Dr B Smith, CCllr R Galley, DCllr I Tysh and Mrs N O'Hanlon (Clerk)

A. **Public session.** None.

4039. To approve apologies for absence and to note other non-attendance.

Cllr Mrs G Balchin, Cllr R Brickle, Cllr G Shaw, Cllr Mrs Stevens Smith, Cllr A Strevens and Cllr P Taylor.

4040. Declarations of Interest. None.

4041. To receive written requests for new DPI dispensations. None.

4042. Minutes of the previous meetings held on 19th September 2023: -

1. For adoption. Cllr M Craddock proposed
Adoption, subject to additional wording being inserted at the end of the 4th paragraph, summing up the public session as follows: 'which Mr Taylor stated was just not true.' this was **Agreed** unanimously.
2. Matters arising from these minutes not elsewhere on the agenda. None.

4043. Reports by and questions to: -

1. County Councillor. CCllr Roy Galley reported the following: The County Council has considered the issue of the proposed Northern runway for Gatwick Airport. ESCC is a consultee and have raised a number of issues they need answers to. The Secretary of State will make the final decision with the Planning Inspectorate handling the application.

As reported previously, CCllr Galley is not happy with the road repairs that have taken place on Maresfield High Street (School Hill) however the Asst. Directory of Highways says the road is of an acceptable standard. CCllr Galley will continue to campaign for a complete resurface from the Church down the hill to beyond the School.

CCllr Galley was recently interviewed by Ashdown Radio about the Fire Service.

2. District Councillor. DCllr Ian Tysh reported that he had persuaded the DC to get legal advice regarding the service level issues from Southern Water. The advice received advises that although they can't refuse planning applications on the basis that Southern Water may be unable to cope with extra homes within their infrastructure they are able to dictate that all or part of a development must remain unoccupied until WDC is satisfied that Southern Water's infrastructure can cope.

The Downland Farm appeal starts in a week and this was potentially given a boost as this week the Bird in Eye appeal was turned down by the Inspectorate and there are similar issues on the two sites.

The WDC Cabinet approved the Council Strategy for the next 5 year plan and this will be put before Council for consideration next month.

DCllr Tysh was interviewed by Ashdown Radio this morning and this is available as a podcast.

4044. Parish Wards – issues, needs and Councillors' reports: -

1. Fairwarp Ward. Cllr Mrs L Reeves reported that the mobile phone mast that it was hoped would be able to be installed in the church tower will not be able to go ahead at that site as a survey has found it is not suitable. **Action:** The Clerk will contact the original surveying company to stress that we are still strongly opposed to the original site even though this alternative has been found unsuitable.
2. Maresfield Ward. Cllr Mrs S Cumming advised that more work had been carried out to the drains in the vicinity of the Village Hall and it will be monitored to see if the flooding issues have been resolved.
3. Nutley Ward. Cllr Dr B Smith reported that complaints had been received by the FGMC about the chemicals they had used on the playing field at Fords Green. The FGMC have said that in future they will endeavour to use more environmental solutions. There had also been reports that children had been climbing on the roof of the Fords Green pavilion.

4045. Council bodies - To receive minutes and decisions, followed by reports from Chairmen and any questions: -

1. Finance & Administration Committee

- i. Review Months 5 and 6 2023/24 accounts. The accounts were noted and Cllr Craddock explained that although the variance on the accounts synopsis looked large in actual fact the overspend year to date is only in the region of £2k, the remainder being CIL monies spent from reserves and receipt of an insurance claim.
- ii. Draft Minutes from meeting held on 10th October. These were noted and Councillors confirmed they had no questions regarding the grant awards agreed at that meeting, details of which were circulated with the meeting papers.
- iii. Update from Chairman. Cllr Craddock advised that the next F&A meeting will be on the 7th November when the budget and forecast figures will be firmed up for presenting to Council in December.

2. Planning Committee.

- i. Draft Minutes of meeting held on 9th October. Cllr Craddock reported that at this meeting there was only one application of note which was for 4 houses on Crowborough Road with a new proposed access being onto the A22 as the existing access, on to Crowborough Road, would be within the Ashdown Forest exclusion zone. There has been no formal response from ES Highways regarding the proposed access onto the A22 which is deemed very dangerous and there have been many letters opposing the application because of this.
- ii. Update from Chairman. In the absence of the Chairman Cllr Craddock advised that a planning application had been submitted for metal railings and gates on Park Farm Lane in Maresfield, which provides access to the MRG. This will be considered at the next planning meeting.

3. Environment Committee.

- i. Update from Chairman. None.

4. Road Safety Committee.

- i. Update from Chairman. None.

5. Neighbourhood & Community Development Plan Steering Group.

- i. Draft minutes of meeting on 12th October. Not completed so will be submitted at the next Council meeting.
- ii. Update from Chairman. Cllr Mrs P Penfold, who chaired the meeting on 12th October, reported the following:
It was agreed at the meeting that the NDP will continue to cover all 3 villages but that the current format of the report will be changed.
The site allocation document will be prepared in the background but will not be submitted.
The NDP Consultancy exercise will be carried out when the current draft report has been updated.
Mr Aidan Farrell, a local Maresfield resident and property professional, will be joining the committee and will be co-opted at the next meeting.
The next meeting will be on December 6th.

6. Maresfield Recreation Ground Committee.

- i. Draft minutes from 26th September. Noted.
- ii. Update from Chairman. In the absence of the Chairman Cllr Mrs S Cumming reported that the parking protocol is helping prevent the football club traffic being a nuisance to residents of PFL although it hasn't completely resolved it. Cllr P Taylor is looking at an overall strategy for parking at MRG.
Someone qualified to offer 1st aid training, to include instruction on using the defibrillator, has been found by Cllr Mrs L Stevens-Smith and this will be arranged for early 2024.

4046. Outside bodies matters. Cllr Dr B Smith reported on the recent Ashdown Forest Parish Liaison meeting. The paid parking scheme which was anticipated to raise between £70k – 250k over time has been very successful and they expect to reach £200k in this, their first year, having sold 2000 annual passes. 25% of the income goes to the parking company running the scheme.

There is a 'no fence' grazing scheme in place which is working very well.

A Defra grant of £750k has been applied for towards a landscape recovery scheme.

There has been concern about the chemicals used to control bracken but currently this is the only practical solution and they only use government licenced chemicals. They are looking to train volunteers in the manual cutting of the bracken in future.

4047. To receive a report from, and put questions to, the Chairman. None.

4048. To receive a report from, and put questions to, the Clerk. None.

4049. Matters arising from the meeting for public communication. None.

4050. Date of next meeting – 21st November 2023 (Nutley)

The Parish Council Meeting will close and reconvene as Trustee of Maresfield Recreation Ground

4051. Matters relating to Council as Trustee of Maresfield Recreation Ground (MRG). None.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30pm.