

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held at Kirdford Chapel on Monday 20th January 2025 at 7.30pm**

Present: Cllr Mrs A Gillett
Cllr Mr T Brooks
Cllr Mr A Campbell
Cllr N Goddard
Cllr Mr A Persson
Cllr T Piedade
Cllr Mr A Vernon

In attendance: Cllr Mrs J Duncton
Cllr Mr C Todhunter

225. Apologies for Absence: Cllr Mr P Flint (ill health)

226. Disclosures of Interest:

Cllr Mr A Vernon as a neighbour of Brownings Farm.

227. Public Participation:

There were two members of the public in attendance.

The Village Hall Committee had advised that they would in future be charging the Parish Council for hall hire with an invoice submitted on a yearly basis. This was agreed.

228. Approval of Meeting Minutes

To resolve that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 18th November 2024 be signed as a correct record.

229. Reports from District and County Councillors

Cllr Janet Duncton

First of all a Happy and good 2025 to you all.

This first report for 2025 is full of don't know and uncertainties as you will all know from the reports you have read on the Governments devolution plans.

Nothing I can tell you is as yet set in stone so I will just give you brief outlines on what I know so far and say the situation changes almost daily so it means keeping your eyes on Press reports etc and apologies in advance if things I say don't come to fruition or turn out to be different. It's hard to keep up at this point in time.

What I know so far in broad terms is that the Government is bringing in devolution and Councils need to put forward their plans for what type of Strategic or Unitary Governance they want. The County Cabinet is meeting on the 9th January because they have to make their submission by the 10th. As you can tell with the Christmas period etc it doesn't allow much time and I can only tell you that there have been quite a lot of on line chats over the previous few weeks.

✓ JAG

If you are interested the Cabinet meeting on the 9th is webcast so you can look in but the agenda will contain 3 items and in brief to ask the Government to join it's priority programme for devolution and consider a mayoral combined authority for Sussex. To discuss preparing to develop plans for Unitary councils across Sussex if invited to do so and to invite Government to postpone County Council elections in May 2025 so that proposals can be worked up. The Government can only delay elections by one year legally and if it happens they need to delay for 2 years I think they need new legislation.

However it's watch this spaces and please don't hold me to account if things change. I can only report what I know so far. It looks like all change though.

The West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service is now open for applications for full time applicants to this Service. If you know of any who are interested apply now.

Obviously as you are all aware it's difficult over the Christmas period but everything has to be kept going. You can imagine with all the wet weather how difficult a time it is for Highways in particular. Saturated land means more likelihood for trees to fall and drains to block cause flooding and I know several roads that have had to close if only for short periods because of the danger of flooded roads. Be careful if you're out and about.

When we get the ice etc the Gritters are ready and acting as necessary. They have been out several times already.

The new Chief Executive at South Downs National Park has hit the ground running and although he knows quite a lot of the area he has 100 miles to get to know a lot more and importantly getting to know all the departments and staff that work for us. I have every confidence that he will succeed with this heavy workload and soon come up with his ideas for us all to consider. Along with everyone else we are not expecting more Government money so thank goodness the South Downs National Park Trust which I sit on is able to obtain funds to carry on with environmental work in the South Downs.

One of the smaller items at the moment is a fund raised to help communities with litter picking. Individuals can apply for funds for equipment as can Parish and Town Councils. If a Council applies the amount is more than if an individual applies and I know there are some very good litter pickers around so if they are not Councils please let them know there is this help.

All the best, some interesting times ahead
Janet Duncton
County Councillor Petworth division
West Sussex County Council

Clr Gareth Evans / Clr Charles Todhunter

Gareth and I would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year and hope you had a lovely Christmas break.

Local Updates

Lagoon 3 – Just before Christmas the CDC legal team let us know that the owner of Lagoon 3 has withdrawn the appeal against his conviction for failing to comply with the Council's enforcement notice. We will be working closely with officers to understand what the next steps are that we can take as a Council to pursue the removal of the lagoon.

✓ AG

Loxwood Shop – Construction of the retail unit at Nursery Green continues and in November the shop owner submitted a licencing application to CDC.

Planning and Environmental Health – Gareth and I are currently in touch with several residents across the ward who have reported Planning Enforcement or Environmental Health issues to us.

CDC Wide Updates

Local Plan and revised NPPF – A full report on the December 2024 changes to the NPPF is due to be presented to the Development Planning and Infrastructure Panel on 21st January. Officers are hopeful that there will be no impact to the emerging Local Plan, although we await the Inspectors' definitive comments to be certain.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation – In December the government published a paper outlining plans for both devolution and the reorganisation of local government. This will introduce Strategic Authorities with an elected mayor across England, so that Government can hand more powers down from Whitehall. Separately The government wants all areas to have unitary councils across with each serving a minimum of 500,000 residents. West Sussex covers a total population of 900,000, so, the government could decide to create one or two unitary authorities within our area. This would mean all of the existing District/Borough and County councils merging into the new unitary council (or councils). Parish Councils would not be affected. It is very early days, but we will keep you informed of any progress.

Surgeries

Cllr. Gareth Evans is available to meet residents face to face via one of his regular surgeries. Gareth will be available at the advertised venues from 12pm-2pm:

Saturday 11th January, Kirdford Stores, Kirdford, 12 to 2pm
Saturday 25th January, Plaistow Stores, Plaistow, 12 to 2pm
Saturday 8th February, Stag Inn, Ebernoe, 12 to 2pm
Saturday 1st of March, Old Mill Café, Wisborough Green, 12 to 2pm
Saturday 15th of March, Northchapel Club, Northchapel, 12 to 2pm

Should the suggested dates not be suitable for you or there are any other reasons preventing you from attending then it is possible to arrange home visits, telephone calls or zoom meetings.

Cllr Gareth Evans
Cllr Charles Todhunter

230. Correspondence

None

231. Chairperson's Announcements

The Chair asked whether there should be a celebration arranged for VE Day 80th Anniversary on 10th May at the Village Hall. She thought that one of the parishioners may be able to help and would contact them.

The Chair, Cllr Persson and Cllr Brooks had met with a resident who had shown an interest in becoming a councillor and would invite them to the next meeting.

The Foresters Arms would be re-opening in February and the new landlord would be holding a meet and greet on 4th February.

A village briefing would be arranged for April/May.

✓ AG

The toddler group had not been meeting for a while and it was hoped that this could be reinstated.

232. Finance

- a) Bank Reconciliation – this was approved
- b) Summary of receipts and payments – this was approved
- c) Payments for approval – these were approved
- d) Review of Council Tax Base and Precept. It was agreed to increase precept to £99k

233. Review of Standing Orders

After consideration, it was agreed to amend the Standing Orders to include an appendix for a scheme of delegation relating to planning applications:

Council has approved the following scheme of delegation for dealing with planning applications received between the July and September meetings, between the November and January meetings, and for all occasions where a planning response is required before an ordinary meeting of Council is planned:-

- 1) Each planning application will be assigned to an individual councillor by the Clerk. The councillor then researches it and makes recommendations to the Clerk who circulates this to all other councillors inviting their proposals to either agree with or disagree with the councillor who reviewed the application.
- 2) Each councillor then submits their views either agreeing/disagreeing with the proposed recommendation to the Clerk who will collate the views of the councillors.
- 3) In a case where either no response is required ahead of the next full meeting of council, or if an extension can and has been agreed by Kirdford Parish Council (KPC), the recommendations would go to full Council in the usual way at its next ordinary meeting for debate and determination .
- 4) In a case where a response is required ahead of the next ordinary meeting of council, and an extension cannot be agreed by KPC:
 - a provided the application is straightforward and non-contentious, the majority recommendation from the email consultation prevails in line with normal democratic principles. In such a case the Clerk has delegated authority to submit the recommendation as KPC's recommendation, these delegated decisions will be recorded and reported publicly at the next full meeting of Council,
 - b or, where a planning application is deemed to be contentious or complex, Council would have the ability to convene an extra-ordinary meeting in the usual way for the purpose of debating and determining its recommendations for submission ahead of the deadline for comments.

234. Planning

CDC Local Plan Update – there was no update at this time.

Neighbourhood Plan Update / Scoping / CDC Local Plan – Quote from Troy Hayes

The following expenditure was approved:

Programme for the update of Kirdford Neighbourhood Plan £1,175

Scoping housing sites £2,425

VAG

Consultation response to CDC Local Plan £2,350

21/00466/OUT | Outline application (with all matter reserved except Access) for the development of up to 50 new homes, of which 30% would be affordable, new community sporting facility, new vehicular access and associated parking and landscaping. | Land West of Cornwood Townfield Kirdford West Sussex

No update

SDNP/24/03422/FUL | Extensions to east and west elevations of existing agricultural building - Brownings Farm Glasshouse Lane Kirdford West Sussex RH14 0LW

The Parish Council had no objection to this application.

24/02900/ELD | Use of former stables as a dwelling. | Cobfield Petworth Road Kirdford Billingshurst West Sussex RH14 0JJ

Kirdford Parish Council objected to this application. There was insufficient proof of continuous habitation for a period of 4 years. There was no Council tax bill. There was also an enforcement on the property. KPC does not believe the bar of 4 years of habitation can be proven.

Decisions The following decisions were noted:

KD/22/02047/FUL

Bridgefoot Meadows Glasshouse Lane Kirdford West Sussex RH14 0LW. Change of use of agricultural land to provide 1 no. Gypsy/Traveller pitch consisting of a static mobile home, parking for 1 no. tourer and 2 no. vehicles, with the laying of hardstanding and associated works.

WITHDRAWN

235. South Downs National Park

A landscape study report had been received from Terra Firma Consultancy. It was agreed to order printed and bound copies.

236. Recreation Ground and Pavilion Upkeep – Update

Finishing touches were due to be complete in the next couple of weeks.

237. Great Common Pavilion Update

Two quotations had been received to install bollards in the entrance to Great Common and Recreation Ground plus resurfacing the car park at Great Common.

After consideration, it was agreed that quote 2 would be contracted for these works at a cost of:

Recreation Ground and Great Common: Supply and fit 4 telescopic bollards £6,295 + VAT

Great Common: Scrape back, lay membrane, and 150mm MOT Type 1 - 200m² - £6,300 +VAT

238. Village Hall Refurbishment

No update.

239. Drains, Grips, Ditches & Gullies

A resident had reported flooding due to a neighbouring property's ditches being blocked. Highways had previously advised that they were looking to employ staff to tackle riparian owners not undertaking maintenance on ditches and waterways.

✓ A G

240. Footpaths

Cllr Vernon reported that a collapsed footbridge had been repaired by WSCC.

241. Speed Limits Plaistow Road

Cllr Campbell was preparing a submission to Highways regarding the speed limits on Plaistow Road and Village Road. He had obtained supporting notes from local businesses and residents and was still awaiting input from others. Once the paperwork is completed it will be passed to Councillor Duncton in order to obtain her support.

242. First Aid Refresher Course

Suggested dates had been obtained for this course for end Feb or March.

243. Health & Safety

Playground inspections to be shared between councillors.

244. Public Participation

No participation.

245. Date of next meeting: 17 February 2025 at 7.30pm

246. Matters for Consideration at the Next Meeting

None raised.

247. Confidential Matters

None.

Amanda Gillett
Chairman

17.02.25
Date