

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held at Kirdford Village Hall on Monday 17th March 2025 at 7.30pm

Present:

Cllr Mrs A Gillett
Cllr Mr T Brooks
Cllr Mr P Flint
Cllr Mrs N Goddard
Cllr Mr A Persson
Cllr Mr T Piedade
Cllr Mr A Renmant
Cllr Mr A Vernon

In attendance: Cllr Mr C Todhunter, Cllr Mrs J Duncton

273. Apologies for Absence: Cllr Mr G Evans

274. Disclosures of Interest:

Cllr Mr T Brooks as a neighbouring property of Land West Of Cornwood Townfield. Cllr Mr T Piedade as a friend of applicants 2 Packhouse Cottages. Cllr Mr A Persson neighbouring property of 2 Packhouse Cottages.

275. Public Participation:

There were no members of the public in attendance.

276. Approval of Meeting Minutes

To resolve that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17th February 2025 be signed as a correct record.

277. Reports from District and County Councillors

Cllr Janet Duncton

Last month I told you that there were plans afoot for Devolution and County had been accepted into the Governments priority group. Some have questioned why we would want to be in a priority group and the answer is simple.

When the white paper came out just before Christmas it made it clear that the Government wanted 6 priority Councils with a Mayor and when this was set up more finance would be with the Mayor of a new Strategic Authority for the infrastructure in the County plus when this was done local Government areas not applying to be Strategic Authorities would have them made for them so County thought and I supported this that it was better to make our own decisions on the size and structure of a Strategic Authority than have it done to us hence the Leaders and Chief Executives made the Plans and sent them in to Government which were then accepted by the Government.

I have nothing to add about Unitaries at the moment except to say that all the local Government authorities in Sussex are working together to try and find a solution as to how the Unitary Authorities will be set up. This is ongoing so maybe I will have more information next month.

✓ AG.

It is good to see that all the West Sussex School that have gone through recent OFSTED have been judged Good. This is an excellent result and I know with my 6 Primary Schools that despite a desperate need for cash and trying to make on going improvements to their properties they are still able to impress OFSTED. One of my Primary Schools Petworth has the most amazing small Farm with Goats, Sheep Chicken and other things that the children get involved with. All 6 Schools are Forrester Schools so all pupils get to know something about nature. Proud to have such fine Schools in the division that I represent.

Fire and Rescue continues to improve and at the recent Scrutiny committee that I sit on the 30 measures that we are judged on 26 were Green, 2 were Amber and 2 Red. the Amber ones were very close to being Green one at 99.7% and the other at 97.7% of what is expected. There is one Red which I am at a loss to see how we can improve and that one is for retained Firefighters. Each month I ask that anyone who is interested in becoming a retained Firefighter makes contact with the Service on line. If you get through all the training you not only have the right to be proud of yourselves but you will be joining an organisations that cares, trains and looks after those involved in the Service. It is quite tough at times but there's lots of help for all.

The other County Service that does well is Trading Standards and recently apart from illegal cigarettes etc they have successfully taken to Court and won the case of a rogue builder and they have had to pay a considerable fine of I think some £53,000 plus. They do some excellent work with Scamming and illegal trading and are well worth a mention.

Highways are always the top of my postbag. It seems when people see a pothole that nothing is improving. I can assure you that it is and with Spring and hopefully better weather our wonderful Patching machines can get back to full working capacity. They do a great job and don't just fill a pothole but a whole patch in the highway. Nothing will ever be perfect but things have improved with many reported potholes etc being sorted within 3 to 5 days.

I would be happy to know and attend if possible any VE day celebrations that Parish's are putting on.

Janet Duncton
County Councillor Petworth division
West Sussex County Council

Cllr Gareth Evans / Cllr Charles Todhunter

Local Updates

Land at Loxwood House, Loxwood – We were contacted by residents with concerns that the landowner was clearing vegetation from this site. Gareth contacted the CDC Enforcement Team to report this as a possible breach, but they unfortunately advised that no breach of planning control had taken place as no planning application has been submitted yet and the landowner can manage the land as they wish. Rest assured that the new Biodiversity Net Gain regulations mean that if a planning application is submitted, the condition of the site in 2020 will be taken into account (using aerial mapping etc.) to determine the gain required.

Lagoon 3, Crouchlands Farm – We have been in touch with officers following to refusal of the planning applications at Crouchlands Farm to request an update on the plan to clear the lagoon. Officers are continuing to work on the plan and we will communicate the next steps as soon as we can.

✓ AG

CDC Wide Updates

Budget Meeting – At the Full Council Budget meeting on Tuesday 25th February the budget was agreed for the forthcoming year. A 2.99% Council Tax rise was agreed for 2025 to 2026 to protect vital services across the District, but we continue to be one of the lowest charging authorities in the area. We are pleased to continue funding our vital Supporting You service to assist those who are experiencing cost of living related issues. We're also continuing to support discretionary housing payments for those who need our help the most.

We'll also be receiving just over £327,000 from the government as part of an extension to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. We have committed to using £263,000 of this to continue projects that have already started, including Choose Work, the Culture Spark initiative, and supporting events and the night-time economy, which are all important in supporting our communities.

Cllr Adrian Moss, leader of the council ended his budget speech by saying "This council remains financially stable, we are debt-free, and our financial resources are strong. Our aim is to improve our district and the lives of the people that live here."

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation – The government has announced that the bid submitted by West Sussex County Council, East Sussex County Council and Brighton and Hove Council, to create a new strategic authority covering Sussex, has been approved. The area has now been placed on the government's fast-track devolution programme. This means that shadow elections for the new unitary authorities will take place in May 2027 and all existing councils will transfer to the new unitary authorities on 1 April 2028, whilst the mayoral elections will take place in 2026.

The Government has also launched a devolution consultation to create a new Strategic Combined Authority and a mayor for the wider region of West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton. This runs for eight weeks, until 11:59pm on 13 April 2025 and can be found here:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/sussex-and-brighton-devolution.

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 08th of March, date and time to be confirmed (reschedule of 1st March)

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

278. Correspondence

None

279. Chairperson's Announcements

A resident had offered to organise the toddler group and it was hoped to be running from September.

Enquiries were ongoing regarding adopting the telephone box in Glasshouse Lane. BT said the land had to be owned by the adopter. It was sited on land owned by the National Trust, who had been contacted by the Clerk to see if there was a way for KPC to adopt it.

✓ AG

It was suggested that the most appropriate commemorative tree would be a Gala apple.

The village spring clean to be arranged for a date in May.

280. Finance

- a) Bank Reconciliation – this was approved
- b) Summary of receipts and payments – this was approved
- c) Payments for approval – these were approved
- d) Budget 2025-26

The following budget was approved:

	Last Year 2023 - 2024	Current Year 2024-2025	Next Year
Allocated Funds			
NEW - VE Day			£2,000.00
Neighbourhood Plan review	£40,000.00	£40,000.00	£40,000.00
Planning Support Services	£39,000.00	£28,988.67	£14,551.17
Play Equipment Maintenance	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	Moved to precept section
Environmental Concerns/equipment	£12,000.00	£12,000.00	£12,000.00
Village Improvement Fund	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,100.00
Great Common Pavilion rebuild	£150,000.00	£149,255.00	£170,000.00
NEW - Butts common barrier replacement			£20,000.00
Recreation Ground Pavilion Refurbishment	£66,000.00	£61,000.00	£0.00
Village Hall Extension	£40,000.00	£11,652.12	£9,191.30
Village Hall roof replacement	£65,000.00	£86,000.00	£0.00
NEW - Unallocated Funds			£19,800.00
Bonfire Night	£1,000.00	£1,500.00	£1,530.00
Total	£421,000.00	£398,395.79	£294,172.47
Precept - Income	£80,000.00	£84,000.00	£99,000.00
Consultancy			
Professional Fees	£13,000.00	£17,600.00	£17,952.00
Auditor Fees	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
SUB TOTAL	£14,500.00	£19,100.00	£19,452.00
Grants			
Grants	£8,400.00	£8,400.00	£8,600.00
SUB TOTAL	£8,400.00	£8,400.00	£8,600.00
Insurance			
Insurance	£5,000.00	£4,000.00	£4,000.00
SUB TOTAL	£5,000.00	£4,000.00	£4,000.00
Maintenance			
Maintenance	£11,000.00	£11,000.00	£11,500.00
Play Equipment Maintenance	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	£3,060.00
SUB TOTAL	£14,000.00	£14,000.00	£14,560.00
Office Costs			
General Administration	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,100.00
Office Supplies	£4,500.00	£4,500.00	£4,590.00
Subscriptions		£1,000.00	£1,020.00
SUB TOTAL	£9,500.00	£10,500.00	£10,710.00
Staff Costs			
Salary	£20,105.00	£20,105.00	£25,000.00
PAYE	£5,971.00	£5,971.00	£9,000.00
Pension	£1,286.00	£1,286.00	£1,800.00
SUB TOTAL	£27,362.00	£27,362.00	£35,800.00
Training and subscriptions			
Training	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,020.00
Subscriptions	£600.00	£600.00	£612.00
SUB TOTAL	£1,600.00	£1,600.00	£1,632.00
Precept Total	£80,362.00	£84,962.00	£94,754.00

✓ AG

e) Interim Audit

The Interim Audit report and recommendations was noted.

f) Ratification of Village Hall Roof Grant

The Village Hall had undergone roof works which were approved by the Parish Council in 2024 for the sum of £86,000. This sum was transferred to a grant as the Village Hall was a charitable trust no longer under the Parish Council's remit.

281. Planning

CDC Local Plan Update – it was hoped to go to full Council in April, followed by a consultation period, adopted late Summer/Autumn.

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

It was noted that this application would be considered by CDC Planning Committee and full Council in April.

Counsel's Opinion would be sought on the water offsetting proposals.

24/00073/FUL | Proposed sports pavilion. | Sports Field Plaistow Road Kirdford West Sussex RH14 0JR

No update.

SDNP/24/03021/FUL | Installation of 1 no. new padel court. | Stroods A272 Croucham Lane to Linfold Road Strood Green Kirdford West Sussex RH14 0HL – This application had been withdrawn.

25/00424/PA3Q | Conversion of agricultural barn to two dwellings (Class C3) | Churchlands Farm Village Road Kirdford Billingshurst West Sussex RH14 0LU – The Parish Council objected to this application as there was no water neutrality report and the application was incomplete.

25/00531/PLD | First floor side extension, loft conversion and associated works. | 2 Packhouse Cottages Village Road Kirdford Billingshurst West Sussex RH14 0NU. The Parish Council had no objection to this application.

Decisions The following decisions were noted:

KD/25/00242/PA11B Slifehurst Wood Farm Scratching Lane Kirdford Billingshurst West Sussex RH14 0JN. Demolition of redundant lambing shed. **PRIOR APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED**

282. Recreation Ground and Pavilion Upkeep – Update

The Parish Council were delighted that this project was completed.

283. Great Common Pavilion Update

No update.

284. Village Hall Refurbishment

No update.

285. Drains, Grips, Ditches & Gullies

No update.

✓ AG

286. Footpaths

Cllr Vernon reported that a team of volunteers had made repairs to the footpath around Herons Farm.

287. Speed Limits Plaistow Road

Cllr Campbell had finalised his report and would submit an application to Highways.

288. CAGNE – Gatwick Update

Cllr Persson reported that he had attended the CAGNE AGM.

289. VE Day Celebrations

It was hoped to source some vintage vehicles or tractors for the event. Cllr Renmant to investigate.

290. Health & Safety

Cllr Persson report that a large log was blocking the River Kird by the bridge in Glasshouse Lane.

291. Public Participation

No participation.

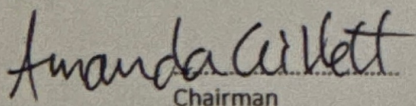
292. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 22 April 2025 at 7.30pm

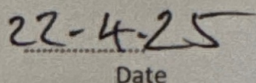
293. Matters for Consideration at the Next Meeting

None raised.

294. Confidential Matters

None.


Chairman


Date