

RINGMER PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the Parish Council Virtual Meeting Held on Thursday 10th December 2020 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr Richard Turner - Chairman, Cllr Margaret Crompton, Cllr Johnny Denis, Cllr Clare Herbert, Cllr John Kay, Cllr Gavin May, Cllr Sarah Phillips, Cllr Gordon Sims, Cllr David Terry, Cllr John Whitlock

Also, in attendance: Karen Crowhurst – Clerk/RFO
Carol Hodgson – Finance Administrator
Gail Metcalfe – Administrator

Members of the Public: Approximately 9

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Booth and Cllr Stephen Wilkins.

2. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATION REQUESTS

2.1 Cllr May declared an interest as a Cricket Club Member/Sponsor. As it was a pecuniary interest, Cllr May advised that he not participate in discussion nor in any of the decision making process, regarding item 12.7 on the agenda.

3. TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 12TH NOVEMBER 2020

3.1 It was **resolved** to accept the minutes as a true and accurate record of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th November 2020.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

This item shall last not more than 15 minutes or at Chairman's discretion and no contribution shall last more than 3 minutes.

4.1 At 7.02pm the Chair invited the Meeting to suspend Standing Orders and asked for questions or comments from members of the public present.

4.2 A co-opted member of the Working Group stated that she felt that the decision to consult on the Green with no specific location had taken the project full circle. The lack of clarity is something the residents have rallied against and is an issue which the co-opted members of the Working Group had tried to rectify in identifying specific locations on the green and elsewhere - some of these thwarted by Lewes District Council.

4.3 She noted that the minutes of the last meeting of the Green & Amenities Committee (G&A) record that the various versions of the WG report contained inconsistencies, yet the committee decided to press on with decisions to consult on Fingerpost Field and the Green again with no specific location. The minutes of last week's meeting did not record that she spoke in favour of the Green being discounted from all consultations.

She went on to say that the group keeps being asked when it will talk to the potential users. She said they have spoken to the young people who have lost their skate park and the Parish Council already has an excellent wish list as a result.

4.4 It was reported that a letter from a resident dated 28th November 2020 addressed to the Chair of the G&A re. the proposed skate park on the Village Green had not been reported to the G&A meeting on 3rd December 2020. It was recognised that this had now been circulated to the Councillors. As this letter provided new information and was not reported, it was requested that the recommendation to the Council be revisited and that the recommendation to commence consultation on the three sites named is referred back to the G&A Committee for review. A request to address the Committee when it undertakes this review was made.

4.4 Standing Orders were reinstated at 7.05pm.

5. **CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR**

5.1 The Clerk advised Members that no one has come forward for consideration.

6. **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS – Maximum 15 minutes**

a) To note any written reports previously received

6.1 The CIL awarded in the paper which was agreed at LDC Cabinet on Thursday afternoon are as follows:

- 6.2 1. Ringmer Football Club - Seating stands, goals and standing area £61,800
2. Ringmer Village Hall - Improvements to the building including extensions and new kitchen areas £95,296
3. Ringmer Bowls Club - New Pavilion £35,000
4. Ringmer Cricket Club - electronic scoreboard up to £4,291.00

6.3 While it has been formally agreed by Cabinet, the recipients may not have received formal notification.

6.4 Members noted the content of the report received from County Councillor Phillip Daniel

7. **ACTION POINTS AND REPORT FROM THE CLERK**

a) Strategic Plan

7.1 The Clerk advised that this item is still ongoing.

8. **CORRESPONDENCE – FOR NOTING OR ACTION**

a) To consider any correspondence for noting or action received after this agenda has been published

8.1 Tim Bartlett of East Sussex County Council had emailed a request on 3rd December 2020 to explore the possibility of developing a Ringmer Water/Flood Action Group with the residents from the Caburn Group. The dates being looked at were 14th, 16th and 21st December 2020. Cllrs were asked if anyone wished to be involved. Cllrs May and Terry expressed an interest. As the Clerk is on holiday on Monday and the meeting dates are quite soon, under the scheme of delegation Cllr May is to respond. **Action: Cllr May to respond to Tim Bartlett directly.**

9. **TO CONSIDER DISBANDING THE OFFICE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

9.1 A proposal for the Finance Committee to meet bi-monthly to allow more time for full recommendation to come to Council was made and seconded. After much discussion this proposal was withdrawn, and this was seconded. A proposal to keep the Committee was made with the frequency, timings and how to run it to be decided at a later date. This was seconded. This went to a vote with a show of hands and was voted for unanimously from those present. (Cllr Kay had just joined the meeting and so did not vote).

11. **APPOINTMENTS OF COUNCILLORS**

11.1 a) Office and Finance Committee 1 Member

11.2 No-one came forward.

11.3 b) Personnel Sub Committee 1 Member

11.4 Cllr Sims expressed an interest and so became the new member. It was queried whether this meant Cllr Sims would also be a member of the O&F Committee, but this was not stipulated under the terms of reference, so he is not a member of the O&F Committee.

12. **OFFICE & FINANCE:**

12.1 1. Payments and Receipts (Previously circulated)
2. Bank Reconciliation(s)
3. Bank Summary
4. Cost Centre Report

12.2 Points 1) to 4) were taken together and approval was obtained and seconded.

12.3 5. Quotation(s)

12.4 There were no quotations for consideration.

12.3 6. Grant application(s)/Donations

12.4 As below.

12.5 **7. East Sussex Wild-Life Rescue - Donation**

12.6 A proposal was made to pay them £50.00 i.e., the same as last year. This was seconded and voted for unanimously.

12.7 **8. Ringmer Cricket Club £2,000.00 – Special Projects Application**

12.8 After some discussion, a proposal was made to pay the £2,000.00 requested on the understanding that LDC would make up the difference of the full amount required. This was seconded and voted on by a show of hands. This was voted for unanimously. Cllr May did not vote due to his previously declared interest.

12.9 **9. Ringmer Primary & Nursery School PTA Amount TBC – Special Projects Application**

- 12.10 A proposal was made to exercise the general power of competence due to the Covid pandemic and other financial difficulties for RPC to award £2,000.00 to the PTA. This was seconded and voted for unanimously by a show of hands.
- 12.11 10. Bank account signatories – Progress
- 12.12 Progress had been made and those Cllrs who are signatories should be hearing from the bank next week.
- 12.13 11. External Auditor’s report
- 12.14 Members noted the report.
13. **OFFICE AND STAFFING BUDGET** – Please note the office Budget includes, grants, subscriptions, professional services, and IT provision
- 13.1 A proposal was made to accept the budget which was seconded. This was voted for with 4 voting to accept, 0 against and 4 abstaining. **Budget was accepted.**
- 13.2 A proposal was made that RPC should allocate up to £5k as a grant for the RVH to help them through the 20/21 winter period, that is up to 1st April 2021. And that the RPC should allocate a risk contingency fund or Reserve of £20k to support the RVH in case there are unexpected costs that are compounded by the current crisis. These funds to be requested by the trustees of the RVH from the council if they are required and for the council to agree at the time as to whether they are needed. The contingency to be in place until April 2022. The RPC to decide whether the allocation should stay in place beyond that time at next year’s budget review/approval. In order to have funding available for this Reserve we will need to put this into our budget for next year and this may increase the precept. If the reserved funds remain unused at the end of next financial year and the risk contingency is no longer required, then the council will allocate the reserve at next year’s budget as they see fit at that time. This was seconded and voted on. 4 were for, 3 were against and 1 abstained. Proposal was granted.
- 13.3 During this item, prior to the vote being held, the Clerk advised raising the precept to place in an earmarked reserve on behalf of a community group or organisation. would not be appropriate as the precept is for the purpose to cover the running costs, any projects that will need to be expended again in that administration year.
- 13.5 The Clerk advised also that Council should look at an **alternative** method to release this type of expenditure other than raising the precept if Council is minded agreeing with the full proposal. For example, using reserves or applying for grants. The Clerk also advised as part of due process and to be clear of this decision when audited that a grant application form should be completed in order for there to be an audit trail for the £5k grant. As this grant is outside of policy, Council may have to exercise the General Power of Competence.
- 13.6 The Finance Administrator was asked for advice to which she recommended careful consideration be given to any precedents being set and the amount which may be taken from reserves may remove the Special Projects pot of money. The Finance Officer advised that grants would not usually be granted for running costs but for capital costs.

With all of this in mind. It was **resolved** to accept and vote on the proposal.

14. **STAFF RECRUITMENT – REPLACEMENT OF ASSISTANT CLERK**

14.1 There had been 6 expressions of interest and 2 applications who would be shortlisted and interviewing to take place w/c 21st December 2020 for a February 2021 start. The Personnel Sub-Committee would be doing the interviewing i.e., Cllrs Sims and Turner and the Clerk.

14.2 A proposal was made to allocate £6k to the budget this year for the HR Consultant to undertake a review in January 2021. This was seconded. All members in attendance voted and were in favour. Proposal was granted. This was previously mentioned by the Clerk when Council were considering the budget as it affects the reserves going forward.

15. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

15.1 **LW/20/0749 17 Delves Way**
Proposed garage conversion

15.2 A proposal was made to reject this planning application as it goes against 8.3 of the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan which states 2 parking spaces for a 3 bedroom house, in this case there is one parking space in the garage and one on the drive. This was seconded and voted on. 8 were for rejecting this application and 1 was against rejecting it.

15.3 **Comments and observations.**
Ringmer Parish Council recommends refusal of this application.

15.3 **LW/20/0746 The Elms Ringmer** Demolition of rear conservatory, erection of a single storey rear extension, erection of a covered open porch, internal alterations

15.4 There was an issue with 5 Cllrs not having seen this on the revised agenda so the 5 Cllrs who had seen it were happy for it to go through as it was a resubmission with the height of the eaves being reduced to be in line with the existing building.

15.5 **Comments and observations**
Ringmer Parish Council has no objections regarding this application.

16. **REPORTS BY LEAVE – NOT FOR DISCUSSION OR DECISION**

- 16.1 Reports were received regarding:
- A new Facebook group Ringmer Safer Roads has been created which Cllrs were encouraged to join.
 - Damaged concrete pathway from Delves Way onto the Green. Clerk assured that quotes were being obtained.
 - Unpleasant, accusatory emails being received stating that Cllrs are causing residents distress re. the Skate Park. It was pointed out that Cllrs give up their time voluntarily to help the village and that receiving such emails could cause Cllrs themselves some distress.
 - A response to the Local Cycling & Infrastructure Plan should be available by end of play tomorrow.
 - An extension of time to builders has been given at Caburn Field from 8am – 4pm on Saturdays. Recycling bins have been removed providing a net gain of 1 parking space.
 - An informal Cllr Surgery by Zoom before Christmas. Please provide your thoughts and indicate times and dates available directly to Chairman.

17. **ITEMS FOR REFERRAL TO NEXT AGENDA OR APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE**

17.1 There were no items for referral.

18. **URGENT ITEMS AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION REQUIRING DECISIONS WHICH CANNOT BE HELD OVER UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING**

18.1 There were no urgent items.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.59pm.

VN	Date	Bank	Description	Supplier	Total
278	28/10/2020	Barclays Current	Gift Card	Staverton Nursery	50.00
279	28/10/2020	Barclays Current	Redirection of post	Royal Mail	216.00
280	28/10/2020	Barclays Current	Flowers	Serenata Flowers	29.99
281	28/10/2020	Barclays Current	5 x Flash Drives	Amazon	17.99
283	29/10/2020	Barclays Current	Electrical Work Parish Office	ADH Electrical Services Ltd	504.00
282	30/10/2020	Barclays Current	IT Package	Ian Edwards	425.00
310	03/11/2020	Barclays Current	Stationary/sundries	Staples	162.82
315	06/11/2020	Barclays Current	Office equipment	Amazon	10.99
316	09/11/2020	Barclays Current	Office equipment	Amazon	24.89
312	09/11/2020	Barclays Current	Mobile Phone	Tesco Mobile	8.50
317	10/11/2020	Cash	Office equipment	Tesco	15.15
285	16/11/2020	Barclays Current	Jubilee Garden Maintenance	Ringmer Property Maintenance	116.67
287	16/11/2020	Barclays Current	Grass Cutting Potatoe, Neaves, Norlington, Green Lane, Plapsey, Mistle	Ringmer Property Maintenance	140.00
284	16/11/2020	Barclays Current	Pump	The Royal British Legion	300.00
288	16/11/2020	Barclays Current	RBL Annual Grant	Ringmer Property Maintenance	75.83
289	16/11/2020	Barclays Current	Vicarage Way & Grounds Maint	Ian Edwards	40.00
286	16/11/2020	Barclays Current	IT Maintenance	Lewes District Council	29.23
290	16/11/2020	Barclays Current	Litter Bin Emptying	Viking	49.48
291	16/11/2020	Barclays Current	Office furniture	Richoh	170.82
313	19/11/2020	Barclays Current	Photocopier usage	Zen internet	80.20
300	20/11/2020	Barclays Current	Phone Services		
301	20/11/2020	Barclays Current			
302	20/11/2020	Barclays Current			
293	24/11/2020	Barclays Current	CIL funds	Ringmer Football Club	1,320.00
294	24/11/2020	Barclays Current	CIL funds	Ringmer Football Club	7,000.00
292	24/11/2020	Barclays Current	IT Maintenance	Ian Edwards	155.00
303	24/11/2020	Barclays Current			
304	24/11/2020	Barclays Current			
305	24/11/2020	Barclays Current			
306	24/11/2020	Barclays Current			
307	24/11/2020	Barclays Current			
308	24/11/2020	Barclays Current			
309	24/11/2020	Barclays Current			
311	24/11/2020	Barclays Current	Office equipment	Amazon	71.85
314	24/11/2020	Barclays Current	Land Registry	HM Land Registry	3.00
295	24/11/2020	Barclays Current	IT Maintenance	123 Connect	62.40
296	24/11/2020	Barclays Current	Bus Shelter Repair	Bikedock Solutions Shelterstore	4,608.00
297	24/11/2020	Barclays Current	Shredding	Archive UK Ltd	108.00
298	24/11/2020	Barclays Current		Surrey Hills Solicitors LLP	330.00

299		Barclays Current	Skate Park Project Audit Fees	PKF Littlejohn LLP	720.00
					24,207.11