

WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



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WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES of proceedings for the monthly meeting of Washington Parish Council held on Monday 13th May 2024 in the Washington Village Hall (Doré Room) School Lane, Washington RH20 4AP

PRESENT: Cllr S. Buddell (Chairman), Cllr B. Hanvey, Cllr P. Heeley, Cllr T. Keech, Cllr A. Lisher (Vice-Chairman), Cllr G. Lockerbie, Cllr J. Luckin, Cllr A. Perkins and Cllr J. Thomas

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr Joan Grech (HDC), Cllr E. Beard (HDC) and Cllr C. Fisher (HDC). Apologies were noted from Cllr Paul Marshall (WSCC) due to an urgent engagement.

ALSO: Clerk to the Council, Ms Z Savill

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 2

ABSENT: 0

The Chairman opened the meeting at 19:34 hours

FC/24/5/1 To Accept Apologies for absence
All present.

FC/24/5/2 To Record Declarations of Interest from members in any item to be discussed and Agree Dispensations
There were no declaration so of interests from members as defined under the Localism Act 2011 a and the Council's Code of Conduct, or requests for dispensations.

FC/24/5/3 To Approve the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
The Council **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the draft minutes of the Full Council Meeting on 8th April 2024 which were duly signed by the Chairman.

FC/24/5/4 Public Speaking
Two members of the public spoke on the following:

- speeding traffic on the 50mph section of Rock. Would the Council consider a TRO application to reduce this to 40mph? The Chairman advised that this could be a matter for discussion at the next Planning & Transport Committee meeting.
- The hedge and a tree bordering the old orchard in Rock Road was overshadowing their garden. Did the Council know the owner so that they could seek an amicable solution? The Vice-Chairman agreed to pass on their contact details to the owner to progress this.

The two members of the public thanked the Council and left the meeting

S.J.B

FC/24/5/5

To Approve the Minutes of the Committee meetings held on 22nd April 2024

The Council **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the minutes of the Planning & Transport Committee meeting and the Open Spaces, Recreation Ground and Allotment Committee meeting held on 22nd April 2024 as a true record of the meeting

FC/24/5/6 **Reports from County and District Councillors**

WSCC Reports

Apologies were noted from Cllr Marshall (WSCC)

Meeting with Sussex Safer Roads Partnership on 25th April 2024

The Chairman read out an email from Cllr Marshall on the meeting which he attended with Cllr Luckin, Cllr Thomas and the Clerk to discuss issues of traffic using the A24 bus lane at peak times to cut through the village via the Bostal.

Cllr Marshall had referred to several recommended actions including a 40mph or 30mph speed reduction on the Bostal section. He had felt the focus should be mainly on the Bostal section, "due to limited resources".

Cllr Luckin and Cllr Thomas reported further on the Partnership meeting, that there was no easy solution, and that the Council needs a speed reduction before the entrances to the village and yellow-backed speed signage which it had originally requested.

Cllr Beard commented on the vulnerability of non-vehicular users of the Bostal, particularly children and horses/riders, and the proximity to the South Downs Way, and asked for these to be included in the Council's forthcoming discussions.

The Chairman proposed and it was **AGREED** that the issues are discussed fully at the next Planning & Transport Committee meeting. Cllr Luckin proposed that the SDNPA access link to the countryside should be included as the project appeared to have been dropped.

HDC Reports

Cllr Fisher gave a report including the following which she explained had a lot of parallels with the traffic issues in Washington described earlier in the meeting:

– **TRO applications for speed reductions**

Cllr Fisher encouraged the Council to apply for the TRO to address the issues in Washington village, and gave examples of recently successful applications elsewhere in the ward. Cllr Fisher pointed out Cllr Marshall's support in his email read out at the meeting and that changes in the Highways Code had shifted the balance in favour of pedestrian safety.

Updates from the Storrington Traffic Group

The group is meeting at the Storrington Village Hall on Wednesday 15th May and the Council was welcome to attend and hear about the work being done. Cllr Fisher confirmed that the newly elected Police & Crime Commissioner for Sussex, Katy Bourne, would be addressing the question about the cut through traffic in Washington village at the meeting; and Horsham Neighbourhood Policing Inspector Neil Durkan had agreed to include Washington during his forthcoming focus on Storrington traffic issues.

Cllr Fisher reported on some of the group's planned activities in June to address Storrington's traffic issues which may be of interest to the Council. The Chairman proposed that these could be discussed at the next Planning & Transport Committee meeting.

- **Retaining garden wall and landscaping scheme at the village pub:** Cllr Grech reported that HDC's Conservation Officer had not raised any concerns and that the enforcement investigation was closed. A number of members expressed disappointment at HDC's response and that the materials for the wall had not been agreed. Cllr Fisher suggested and Cllr Grech agreed to go back

to HDC to address the issues raised at the meeting, and find out why the case had been closed. Later in the meeting, Cllr Thomas referred to a copy of an email from the pub's architect to HDC Case Officer on 9th December 2021 seeking consent for changing the retaining wall from 'barefaced brick to smooth render to reflect the south elevation of the property.' The information was noted by the District Councillors.

– **HDC Draft Green Spaces Strategy**

The deadline for parishes to respond to the consultation had been extended to 8th June. Cllr Fisher would share details after the meeting.

– **Meeting with Kia garage 1st May 2024 on parking issues of their vehicles around the village and the A283 Notable Verge**

Cllr Beard reported an update on her meeting with the manager of the garage attended by Cllr Luckin and Cllr Thomas. Cllr Beard had not seen notices in the windows of cars to show they are related to the Kia garage. She was waiting to see deeds on the garage land from Kia and the planning change of use details for the proposed Billingshurst site for the Triumph bikes business before they could discuss matters further. Cllr Fisher advised that the parking issues would be raised with Inspector Durkan.

The Chairman thanked the District Councillors for their reports before they left the meeting.

FC/24/5/7 To Report on actions and matters arising from the last meeting

The Chairman read out the actions and matters arising from the last meeting (Appendix A). The list was noted. It was agreed to press further for a meeting date with the SSWNP Steering Group and HDC's Senior Neighbourhood Planning Officer. Clerk to action.

Cllr Luckin proposed and it was agreed to add an agenda item on the next PT meeting agenda regarding a requirement for glazing bars on UPVC windows of the St Mary's Gate property which is in the village conservation area.

FC/24/5/8 Planning: To Consider making comments on significant applications affecting the parish; to report on decisions and appeals on significant applications; to report HDC updates on any compliance matters

None received in time for the agenda of this meeting. Cllr Harvey proposed and the Council agreed to add an agenda item at the next PT meeting agenda regarding its concerns about planning compliance at the pub.

FC/24/5/9 To Agree action on any urgent maintenance of council property

The Clerk reported that the football club had removed their recently vandalised line marker and goal posts from the recreation ground. Following a discussion, the Council **RESOLVED** to add an agenda item at the next OSRA Committee meeting to review the matter and on-site storage provision.

FC/24/5/10 Statement of Accounts 2023/24

The Council **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the [2023/24 Statement of Accounts](#) and to consider the Council's 2024/25 budget position at the next Finance Committee meeting. Cllr Keech agreed to carry out a full review beforehand with Cllr Heeley and the Clerk.

FC/24/5/11 Internal Audit Report

The Council reviewed and **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** a clean audit from Mulberry & Co and the [AGAR](#). A recommendation on opening a further account to protect reserves above £85,000 was noted and that all accounts were below the FSCS threshold since the transfer of interest from the Nationwide account. The Council discussed the latest ICO publication guidelines. It was agreed to stop using Drop Box due to negative user experiences reported by members and revert to One Drive.

FC/24/5/12 Annual Governance Statement – Section 1 of the AGAR

The Council reviewed and **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the [Annual Governance Statement 2023/24](#)

with affirmative responses to each of the 9 points. Section 1 of the AGAR was duly signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

FC/24/5/13 Annual Accounting Statement - Section 2 of the AGAR

The Council reviewed the [Annual Accounting Statement 2023/24](#) signed by the Clerk on 29th April 2024 as required. It was RESOLVED to APPROVE Section 2 of the AGAR and was duly signed by the Chairman.

FC/24/5/14 Notice of Public Rights and Explanation of Variances

The Council RESOLVED to note the dates of Monday 3rd June to Friday 12th July 2024 for the [Notice of Public Rights](#). The Council further RESOLVED to note the [Explanation-of-Variances](#).

FC/24/5/15 Asset Registers

The Council RESOLVED to ADOPT the Asset registers for the Council totalling £127,181.15 which represents £34,503.72 for the Council's assets and £92,677.43 for the Recreation Ground Charity assets which it manages as Trustee.

FC/24/5/16 Council's Insurance

The Council RESOLVED to AGREE the Aviva insurance policy renewal of £1,010.37 from 1st June 2024 to 31st May 2025 through the broker Clear Councils. It was noted that this would be the final year of the Council's three year agreement. The Council AGREED to delegate authority to approve any premium adjustments to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

FC/24/5/17 Co-option Policy and Application form for casual vacancies

The Council's co-option policy and WSALC's advice on the procedure was reviewed. The Council RESOLVED with one abstention to adopt the policy as amended to allow candidates the opportunity to speak in support of their application during the public session; and to vote on appointment/s by written ballot.

The Council further reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the amended application form for casual vacancies.

FC/24/5/18 Rampion 2: To Report updates and Consider any recommendations

The examination timetable with details on upcoming hearings for the Rampion 2 examination was previously circulated. A member requested clarification on the forthcoming Issue Specific Hearings. The Clerk referred them to the published agenda on the PINS website and that she was not aware of any matters which were to be addressed for Washington at the hearing on Wednesday 15th May.

The Council discussed and RESOLVED to RATIFY APPROVAL of the amended representation to be made on its behalf by appointed Planning Consultant Mr Steve Tilbury at the Open Floor Hearing 2 for the Rampion 2 examination of the DCO application, being held at the same time of this meeting on Monday 13th May.

FC/24/5/19 Village Day

The Council RESOLVED to APPROVE a hire request from St Mary's School PTA to hold the Village Day on the Recreation Ground on Saturday 22nd June 2024, subject to the usual hire conditions. The Council further AGREED to waive the £350 hire fee but due to increasing financial pressures on the Council's budget, it would be seeking discussions with the school ahead of next year's event in order to reconsider the Council's position on the charge. Clerk to notify the PTA.

FC/24/5/20 Finance

To Approve Schedule of Payments and any plus any additional invoices presented at the meeting

The Council RESOLVED unanimously to APPROVE the payments totalling £ 6,459.32 for this meeting and to request more timely invoices from the Litter Warden.

To Approve Amended Schedule of Payments from the last FC meeting on 8th April 2024

The Council RESOLVED unanimously to APPROVE the amended payments list for the FC April meeting totalling £ 22,974. 96. Details of the corrected figure of an invoice for the playground safety surfacing was previously

circulated and explained at the meeting. The error was raised by the Clerk with the Council's accounting package customer advisor on 9th April and had been passed onto their development team. The Council agreed the Clerk should investigate this further and report back.

To Receive bank reconciliations for April 2024

The Council **NOTED** the bank reconciliation of **£52,449.70** on the Lloyds account and the **£85,000** balance on the Nationwide Business Savings account, following a transfer of £1,634.72 interest, to be reconciled at the next meeting.

To Report current budget position:

The Council **NOTED** that this item will be deferred to the forthcoming Finance Committee meeting for review.

To Consider quotations for audit services

The Council considered engagement for an auditor for the 2024/25 financial year. It **RESOLVED** to appoint Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd for a three-year period and terms of engagement.

To Consider quotations for payroll services

The Council **RESOLVED** to defer this item to the next Finance Committee meeting for consideration.

FC/24/5/21 Pension – matters arising

The Clerk updated the Council on the pension issue as an emergency item. The Finance Committee Chairman advised that he had shared information with the Clerk to resolve this. Following a discussion it was **AGREED** that the Clerk would review this and report back to the Council if the matter could not be resolved.

FC/24/5/22 Correspondence

None reported.

**FC/24/5/23 Clerk's Report
Training**

To Approve an online councillor induction training course and Consider other training opportunities for the Council

The Council discussed this and it was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** that Cllr Perkins attends one of the online induction training sessions being offered by Mulberry & Co. Cllr Perkins agreed to check his diary and confirm with the Clerk which of the dates are suitable.

FC/24/5/24 Other Reports

To receive verbal reports from Cllr Luckin and Cllr Thomas on the Safer Sussex Roads Partnership meeting on 25th April 2024 and agree any recommendation for consideration by the Planning & Transport Committee.

The Council agreed that a report had been given earlier in the meeting under WSSC Reports and that it will be discussed fully at the next PT meeting.

FC/24/5/25 Speed Indicator Device in Rock Road

To Consider the relocation of the Speed Indicator Device and amend the management schedule.

The Council considered a written motion from the Chairman of the Planning & Transport Committee to move the SID in Rock Road and to seek reimbursement of cost from the Highways Authority retrospectively.

Quotations for the various options including solar panels were previously circulated and the PT Chairman explained how costs could be recovered through a reduction in management requirements for the solar powered option.

It was noted that at the last PT meeting, it was agreed the Council should not be expected to pay out more public money on correcting the location of the device which had been, in their opinion,

wrongly advised by the Highways Authority. On the instruction of the Committee, the Clerk had written to the HA to cover the costs but there had been no response in time for this meeting.

Following a discussion, the Council **RESOLVED** that a proper response was required from the HA first and to push for costs to be met by them. Clerk to write to the HA and copy in Cllr Marshall.

FC/24/5/26 To Receive and Approve items for the next Agenda and Chairman's Announcements

To Receive at this meeting and Approve by resolution any items for consideration at the next meeting; and to Receive any Chairman's brief announcements for business not on this agenda.

It was noted that a number of matters had been requested and agreed earlier in the meeting as agenda items for the next PT, OSRA and Finance Committee meetings.

The Chairman read out the main points of a letter from Andrew Griffith MP on matters which may be of interest to the parish and agreed this would be circulated after the meeting.

FC/24/5/27 Date and time of the next meeting

The Council NOTED that the next Full Council Meeting is on Monday 3rd June 2024, 7:30pm

FC/24/5/28 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Council **RESOLVED** to exclude the Public and Press in pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Council's Standing Orders from the next item because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interests due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

FC/24/5/29 Rampion 2: To Consider and Agree representation at the next Compulsory Acquisition Hearing

To Consider attendance at one of the next Compulsory Acquisition Hearings for the Rampion 2 DCO examination either on Friday 17th May or Tuesday 21st May 2024; Agree representations to be made and for a working party to take this forward.

The Chairman reported on the recent 'Teams' meeting with Carter Jonas on 9th May attended by the Council's appointed Planning Consultant Steve Tilbury, himself, the Vice-Chairman and the Clerk, to discuss the Council's concerns about the fees cap.

The Council noted the report and **RESOLVED** that there was insufficient time to set up a working party to consider making representations at the forthcoming Compulsory Acquisition Hearings. The Clerk would notify the Planning Inspectorate.

There being no further business to transact, the meeting was closed at 10:00pm.

Signed.....
Chairman

Dated.....3rd June 2024.....