



Sedlescombe Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council

held on Tuesday 12th December 2023 at 19:30 in Committee Room 2 of Sedlescombe Village Hall

Present:

Cllr. Pauline Glew (PG), Cllr Jonathan Vine-Hall (chair) (JVH), Cllr David Caney (DC), Cllr Nikki Moore (NM), Cllr. Jackie Saull-Hunt (JSH), Cllr. Lindy Latreille (LL) part time, Cllr Keith Saunders.

Mrs Jackie Scarff (Clerk/RFO)

District & County Cllr. Carl Maynard (part time)

Public participation session re matters on the Agenda at the Chairman's discretion.

There were two members of the public(MOP) who spoke at the relevant part of the meeting.

End of public participation.

Item	Item (C23.)	
47	To receive and accept Apologies (LGA 1972 s85 (1)) Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Coupar & Chapman for personal reasons.	
48	Interests in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Code of Conduct To receive councillors' declarations of interest regarding matters on the agenda and consider any written requests for dispensation as a result. There were no interests to declare. To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate. There were no requirements to grant any dispensations. Reminder any changes to register of interests should be notified to the clerk.	
49	To receive questions from members on reports from the District and County Councillors. There were no questions.	
50	To receive the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th October 2023, to approve these minutes and authorise the chairman to sign them as a correct record. Resolved that the chairman is authorised to sign the minutes held on 17 th October 2023 as a correct record.	
51	If the committee wishes to exclude the public for a particular agenda item, the following resolution must be passed: 'That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 S1(2), the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.' There was no requirement to pass this resolution.	
52	To discuss the damage to Red Barn Field (RBF) and agree any actions required. The clerk was asked to describe the situation. The damage happened while works were being undertaken to the garden of a neighbouring property. The council were aware that permission had been sought and given for access from RBF for some hedging works. The clerk explained that the council had been alerted by several residents that there was work going on in RBF, JVH and the clerk attended to see what was happening. The contractor had accessed the property through RBF and the bottom third of the field had been completely churned up. Cllr Moore arrived 1835.	

	<p>The clerk reported that there was a discussion on site and it was agreed that no more work could be done using access from RBF and repairing the damage would be discussed and agreed at the full council meeting. PG commented that she has photographic evidence. The clerk had also taken some photos. JVH clarified that at the time we said no more work could be done due to the extensive damage. JVH closed the meeting to allow the MOP to speak.</p> <p>MOP agreed that the summary was fair and stated that they thought they would wait for the natural recovery of the field, see what needs to be done and discuss it again. MOP had been in touch with the Wildlife Trust and reported that they had been told the field will recover/repair as there is emerging grass. They read the letter they had received.</p> <p>PG highlighted that there is a 3 page list detailing all the species of wild flower in RBF.</p> <p>JSH commented that there is a window of opportunity to put some more yellow rattle seed down to help to keep the grass down.</p> <p>JVH aired concern that the mud had been compacted.</p> <p>MOP commented that they had been told by the Wildlife Trust that this time of year is the best time to do the work as wildflower seeds are dormant.</p> <p>JVH expressed concern that by waiting it may be that the flowers don't come back and the seeding work will need to be done a year later.</p> <p>JSH suggested asking a local expert for some help and advice.</p> <p>MOP expressed a view from the Wildlife Trust that the ground would regenerate, JVH commented that there would be a lot of weed regenerated with the ground in the current condition.</p> <p>JSH reiterated her point about yellow rattle as the danger is that the stronger plants will come through under the current conditions eg wild grasses.</p> <p>MOP commented that they would like to see what varieties come back in the undamaged field, JVH reiterated that the council know what is growing as it is all documented.</p> <p>JVH proposed that if seed is required it will be made up to the specification that is documented, and the cost will be born by the residents involved.</p> <p>Meeting re opened.</p> <p>Resolved: The clerk was asked to get a quote for the cost of the seed mixed in accordance with the list of species documented with yellow rattle included. It was agreed that the quote would be shared with the residents to allow them to conduct their own research. The council will review the ground in January.</p>	
<p>53</p>	<p>To discuss the arrangements for the grass cutting for the financial year beginning April 2024 and agree any actions required.</p> <p>The clerk explained the options and quotes received.</p> <p>Quote 1 to continue with ESCC the areas on the map would be cut twice in the year 1m from the curb – the council would not be charged for this. 4 extra cuts would be available for £870.00</p> <p>Quote 2 the contractor will cut the verges shown on the map for £550 per cut.</p> <p>Quote 3 the contractor would cut the verges for £245 per cut.</p> <p>If the council were to choose quote 2 or 3 ESCC would pay SPC £435 providing we contract a minimum of 2 cuts.</p> <p>Resolved: The council will self deliver and use the contractor identified as quote 3.</p> <p>The clerk was asked to get two more planters for the Green.</p>	
<p>54</p>	<p>To consider a request from BACT for a donation towards their running costs.</p> <p>Resolved The council will donate £100 to be used for petrol.</p>	
<p>55</p>	<p>To hear an update from the Sports Executive meeting and agree any actions required.</p> <p>DC reported that the contractor has started to remove the weatherboarded cabin from the carpark. The committee considered a number of jobs/projects for the pavilion, over and above the decarbonisation project that had previously been agreed the committee agreed that replacing the decking would be the priority for next year. The clerk had had 2 quotes so far which ranged from £14,000 to £22,000. Both companies stressed that it would be better not to allow football boots to be worn on the decking as it will shorten its life. DC explained that these quotes would require the council to remove the current decking first. It was agreed that this would be possible through a working party.</p>	

	<p>The EMR's had been circulated before and the committee asked that the Sportsfield EMR be delegated to it to manage the project.</p> <p>Resolved: The clerk should apply to the Rural Prosperity Fund for the decking. The full council agreed that the EMR Sportsfield fund be delegated to the committee to manage the project to a maximum spend of £22,000.</p> <p>To receive a proposed budget for the forthcoming year and agree any actions required.</p> <p>The budget had been circulated in advance. DC explained that the cricket team had told the committee that they would not commit to hiring the facilities for the season. They are interested in hiring the facility once the cricket square has been renewed to the required standard. The clerk will contact the ECB who will come and do a free survey of the cricket square and advise on the state of the wicket and remedial actions required.</p> <p>Resolved that the budget be agreed and added to the full council budget in order to calculate the precept.</p>	
56	<p>To present the current outstanding resolutions and agree any actions required.</p> <p>There is no new news regarding the pole on The Green.</p> <p>The dealings with S E Water concerning Riverside Recreation Ground will now be passed to the solicitors.</p> <p>Further updates to the website have been done and it will continue.</p>	
57	<p>To hear an update on the traffic calming project and agree any actions required.</p> <p>DC reported that he would like to see a change to feature 4 in order to slow the traffic coming down the hill, which the designer has said they will do.</p> <p>DC reported that the topographical survey needs to be done to progress the project and draft a full design. The quote received is £2,999</p> <p>Resolved: The survey should be commissioned and paid for from CIL money.</p>	
58	<p>To receive NALC briefing on the Local Government Services Pay Agreement for 2023 and agree that the clerk can pass it on to the payroll company for calculation.</p> <p>The details had been circulated. The increased is backdated to 1st April 2023.</p> <p>Resolved that the clerk pass the details to the payroll company.</p> <p>To receive a proposal to increase the clerks' hours from 15 per week to 18 per week and agree any actions required.</p> <p>JVH explained that as a result of the annual appraisal the 15 hours per week has proved difficult to achieve with changes in legislative requirements, the management of the sports pavilion and the projects that the parish council do to improve the village for residents.</p> <p>The committee agreed that they would propose to the full council that the clerk's hours are increased from 15 to 18. KS commented that he had noted that the clerks salary is a large part of the annual budget. He agreed that there needed to be more clerking hours but that the council should be mindful of the increase to residents. The clerk explained that the increases to the precept to be discussed were due to taking over the toilets and carpark.</p> <p>Resolved: that the clerks hours increase to 18 from Jan 2024.</p>	
59	<p>Finance and Audit</p> <p>To receive the monthly statement of accounts to 30th November 2023 for noting.</p> <p>This was circulated ahead of the meeting and noted.</p> <p>To receive the bank reconciliation to 30th November 2023 for noting.</p> <p>The bank reconciliation for Unity Trust bank was circulated before the meeting and it was noted that it reconciles to zero with the balance as at 30th November 2023 showing £70,684.62 held at Unity Trust Bank.</p> <p>To receive a list of payments falling due and made in advance of the meeting to be approved.</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p> <p>To receive a list of payments to be approved.</p> <p>The payments were approved as presented.</p>	

	<p>12/12/2023 RALC Subscription and contribution for Parish online £89 12/12/2023 R Chapman expenses £14.80 LL left the meeting.</p> <p>To receive the spend v actual to date for the year ending March 2024 for questions and noting. The report was received in advance and noted. There were no questions.</p> <p>To review the council's ear marked reserves and agree any actions required. The clerk explained the reserve balances and how they are represented. The clerk explained the level of general that a council is advised to hold (between 3 and 6 months' worth the years precept. The councils' general reserves have fallen below the advised level but there is a forecast surplus at the year end which will bring the value back up. Reserves are regularly reviewed.</p> <p>To receive a first draft of the budget for the year ending March 2025 for discussion and amendment. The clerk had pre circulated the draft budget and explained the assumptions that she had used. There was a discussion about the costings for the toilets and whether it was enough for the year. The budget was discussed by cost centre and overall. The taxbase has not been sent through from Rother yet.</p> <p>Resolved that the clerk submit a precept requirement of £67,650 for the year 2024/25.</p> <p>To receive the mid year internal audit report and agree any actions required. The report had been circulated in advance and was noted.</p> <p>To receive the audit report from the external auditor for the year ending March 2023 and agree any actions required. The report had been circulated in advance and was noted.</p>	
60	<p>Reports, Correspondence, Questions and Future agenda items not requiring decisions. Red Barn Field – this was discussed during the meeting. Sedlescombe Jobs Network - Nothing to report</p>	
61	<p>Date of next meeting. To note the date of the next meeting is the Full Council meeting on Tuesday 16th January 2024 at 6.30pm CR2</p>	