



**Minutes of the Meeting of Billingshurst Parish Council
held at the Billingshurst Centre
Wednesday 1 March 2023
7.30pm**

Present

Cllrs Paul Berry (Chairman), Barry Barnes, Philip Day, Sandy Duck, Craig Gale, Dave Homer, Ken Peters, Steve Thomas, Doug Waller and Sarah Wilson.

In attendance

G C Burt, Clerk to the Council
District Cllr N Jupp
District Cllr Mrs K Rowbottom
County Cllr Mrs A Jupp

14/23 Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman advised that

1. The meeting was being streamed to the internet.
2. Cllrs wishing to speak should raise their hand and speak loudly and clearly.
3. *This is the last scheduled full meeting of the current term of Billingshurst Parish Council. I would urge anyone considering standing as a parish councillor to do so, the more people who apply, the more likely an election will be forthcoming and the better democracy would have been served. If you are thinking of standing, please get your skates on as although a possible election will be on 4th May, the deadline for applications is rapidly approaching. For anyone interested in standing as a parish councilor in May, we are holding two informal drop-in sessions, on Saturday 11 March 10am-12pm and Wednesday 15 March 5-7pm.*
4. *I understand that there are some current members not planning to restand. I would like to thank them for their service to our community which in some cases spans many years indeed.*
5. *This will be the last meeting of Billingshurst Parish Council which I am planning to chair. Over 10 years is a very long time for one person to fill the position of Chair, some may say too long. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all, councilors, council officers and staff for the support you have given me as chair over the years. I hope that during the past decade or so the council's reputation and standing in the community has improved compared to previous periods. The council has certainly been a nicer, more friendly and productive place to be in more recent years and I think has served its community well and I thank you all for that. Whoever sits on the new council, and indeed chairs it, I wish them well.*

6. The Billingshurst Showcase is being held on Saturday 18th March 11.30am-2.30pm. Your one stop shop to learn more about the many voluntary organisations in the parish.

15/23 Apologies.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Edna Benger, Garry Commins, James Marchant, Roy Margetts and Caroline Beresford Pratt due to prior engagements. On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** that the apologies and reasons given be accepted.

16/23 To Receive Declarations of Interest and consider any requests for a dispensation.

None.

Adjournment for...

17/23 Public Session(Members of the Public may speak for up to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman).

None.

18/23 Reports from

a. County & District Councillors

County Cllr Mrs Amanda Jupp reported on forthcoming resurfacing works at Five Oaks roundabout which would be quite comprehensive – 29&30 March overnight. West Sussex County Council (WSCC) would be increasing its precept by 2.99% and that of the separate social care budget by 2%. She was chasing officers pursuant to the meeting held on traffic calming in the centre of the village, to ascertain if S106 funds could be used to employ consultants to help the parish undertake further work. More children in West Sussex are today being offered their first preference secondary school than last year, with the total number of applicants slightly higher. This year 8,161 of the 9,444 total number of applicants will be given their first preference school for September. Public meetings had been held in Pulborough to discuss the closure of the A29 due to a land slide, which was having a huge effect on all N<>S traffic. WSCC was awaiting agreement from adjoining landowners; once in place they hoped to be able to open a single carriageway through, pending a permanent solution. It was having a big impact upon businesses also and some smaller side roads which were being pounded by diverted through traffic would receive major attention once the A29 was reopened.

District Cllr Nigel Jupp reported on some local contentious planning applications. Horsham District Council (HDC) was increasing its Council Tax by 2.99% It had made provision in its budget of £1 million to alleviate hardship through its support to various voluntary groups. It elected Cllr Claire Vickers as its new Leader. HDC had paused making a decision on its Local Plan until after the elections in May; it

felt that new Cllrs might have different views. He suggested that the parish council might wish to consider keeping HDC Cllrs and Officers *in the loop* on any decisions it made ref. supporting any strategic housing site etc. He added that he was planning to stand in May for HDC. He congratulated and thanked the Chairman of the parish council on his successful tenure.

District Cllr Kate Rowbottom also reported on some local contentious planning applications. She was not re-standing in May for HDC

Parish Councillors thanked WSC and HD Cllrs for their efforts on behalf of the parish, including coming to parish council meetings and supporting other community events.

b. Council Representatives on Outside Bodies.

None.

Resume Meeting

19/23 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 January 2023.

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2023, previously circulated, were taken as read. On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and signed as a correct record accordingly.

20/23 Matters Arising – that are not separate agenda items.

None.

21/23 To consider RECOMMENDATION from the F&GP Committee of 25 January 2023 that the Council's Corporate Risk Assessment be approved. (Minute 10/23 refers).

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry seconded by Cllr Ken Peters, **RESOLVED** that the Council's Corporate Risk Assessment be approved accordingly.

22/23 To consider RECOMMENDATION from the Working Practices Committee of 15 January 2023 that *The Civility & Respect Pledge* not be supported as the Council already had sufficient policies in place covering these issues. (Min 07/23 refers)

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry seconded by Cllr Philip Day, **RESOLVED** that *The Civility & Respect Pledge* not be supported.

23/23 To receive an update on meeting with WSCC ref traffic calming in central area and agree way forward.

Members received a report on a meeting held between officers and councilors from WSCC and the parish council, where it was proposed that the parish should prioritize those parts of the original scheme that could be supported by an appropriate S106 contribution held by

WSCC. It was hoped that WSCCC would release further S106 funds to employ Wilbar to help the parish in this work. On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED** to support the suggested way forward and that should a working party need to meet before the May elections, then Cllrs Berry, Day, Peters, Thomas and Waller be invited accordingly.

24/23 To consider proposed Council-led activities for the Coronation in the parish.

Councillors received a report setting out a suggested program of deliverable activities for the Coronation weekend in May that it was hoped might be funded by the National Lottery. Members commented positively on the ideas. On the proposal of Cllr Doug Waller seconded by Cllr Philip Day, **RESOLVED** that the program be supported and that in addition, the beacon at Adversane be lit. Whilst there was no coordinated national beacon lighting for the Coronation, members felt that the beacon should be lit on this occasion, date tbc.

25/23 To receive Minutes as approved by the following Committees:

- a) On the proposal of Cllr Doug Waller, seconded by Cllr Dave Homer, **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee of 1 & 20 December 2022 and 12 January 2023 be received.
- b) On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Sarah Wilson, **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the F&GP Committee of 14 December 2022 and 25 January 2023 be received.
- c) On the proposal of Cllr Craig Gale, seconded by Cllr Paul Berry, **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Property Committee of 16 November 2022 be received.
- d) On the proposal of Cllr Doug Waller, seconded by Cllr Sarah Wilson, **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Working Practices Committee of 12 October 2022 be received.

26/23 To receive an update on meeting with Billigreen about Climate Change from Cllr Phillip Day.

Cllr Phillip Day had tabled a report on a meeting that he and Cllr James Marchant had attended with Billigreen. This had been held to explore how Billigreen might help the parish council be more proactive on climate change, and how the parish council might help Billigreen its objectives. Several suggestions were made and being actively explored; in the meantime, it was felt that it would helpful to have two parish councillors attend Billigreen meeting /act as liaison. Cllrs Phillip Day and James Marchant were appointed accordingly.

27/23 Neighbourhood Wardens - to receive Wardens' Reports for December 2022 and January 2023.

NOTED.

28/23 To note date of Annual Parish Meeting of Electors – Wed 12th April 2023 7pm

NOTED. Cllr Dave Homer reiterated the need for a microphone for the speaker.

29/23 Any other matters for information only.

None.

30/23 Date of Next Meeting – 10 May 2023.

31/23 Exclusion of Press & Public (Contractual – land)

Motion to exclude press and public not proposed.

32/23 Land West of Billingshurst development: To consider

- a. proposed contract with Highwood Group ref. use of council-owned land at Jubilee Fields.** The Chairman gave an overview of the matter which was due to be considered. However, he was of the view that the contract as circulated needed further work before being presented to Members. On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **DEFER** consideration of the proposed contract with Highwood Group.
- b. suggested public position statement.** Members considered a draft of a statement defining the parish council's position on strategic land allocations for housing in the parish and the way the council might work with such developers, whilst still being opposed to such developments. On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Dog Waller, **DEFER** consideration until after the May elections.

Meeting finished at 8.38pm.

Chairman

Date