



**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Billingshurst Parish Council
Wednesday 10 May 2023
7pm at the Billingshurst Centre.**

Present

Cllrs Ken Peters (Chairman), Faye Algar, Edna Bengier, Paul Berry, Phillip Day, Sandy Duck, Craig Gale (from Minute 36/23), Trevor Leonard, Deepak Mahal, James Marchant, Roy Margetts, Caroline Beresford Pratt, Steve Thomas, Doug Waller and Sarah Wilson.

In attendance

G Burt, Clerk to the Council
County Cllr Amanda Jupp
District Cllr John Trollope
District Cllr Sam Bateman
1 Member of the Public

Cllr Paul Berry opened the meeting.

33/23 Election of Chairman.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** that Cllr Ken Peters be elected Chairman of the Council for the forthcoming year. Cllr Ken Peters then signed the Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Cllr Ken Peters took the Chair.

34/23 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.

He welcomed the three new Councillors and emphasised that all Cllrs had the best interests of the parish at heart.

35/23 To consider any applications for cooption (1 vacancy).

The Council had widely publicised a casual vacancy. A written submission from one candidate (Craig Gale) had been circulated to all Councillors. On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr James Marchant, **RESOLVED** that Craig Gale be co-opted to the Council accordingly. Cllr Craig Gale then signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

36/23 Election of Vice Chairman.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Ken Peters, **RESOLVED** that Cllr Doug Waller be elected Vice Chairman of the Council for the forthcoming year. Cllr Doug Waller then signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

37/23 Apologies for Absence.

None .

38/23 To Receive Declarations of Interest and consider any requests for a dispensation.

None.

Adjournment for

39/23 Public Session (Members of the Public may speak for up to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman).

Nigel Jupp wished the new Council well and was pleased to see that the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party was still in existence and ready to be reformed to review the Plan at the appropriate time.

Resume Meeting

40/23 Council Structure 2023-24.

On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller,

- a. **To Review Committee Structure**
RESOLVED accordingly.
- b. **To Review Committee Terms of Reference**
RESOLVED accordingly, subject to the insertion of /*Conservation Area* to new policy vii of the Planning & Environment Committee relating to trees.
- c. **To Appoint *en bloc* Committees, Working Parties and representatives on outside organisations.**
RESOLVED accordingly, as set out in Appendix A.
- d. **To Appoint Chairs to Committees.**
RESOLVED accordingly, as set out in Appendix A.

41/23 To review and readopt Standing Orders (in Members' Manual / on website).

On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr James Marchant, **RESOLVED** that the Standing Orders be readopted accordingly.

42/23 To review and readopt Financial Regulations. (In Members' Manual / on website).

On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED** that the Financial Regulations be readopted accordingly.

43/23 To refer *en bloc* the following to the Finance & General Purposes Committee:

- a. Annual review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment.
- b. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks.
- c. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies.
- d. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.
- e. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED** that the above be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee accordingly.

44/23 To refer *en bloc* to the Working Practices Committee: Ongoing review of all of the Council's policies, including disciplinary, freedom of information and data protection, etc.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Edna Bengier, **RESOLVED** that the above be referred to the Working Practices Committee accordingly.

45/23 To consider writing to local MP in support of letter from Campaign to Protect Rural Henfield (CPRH) to Andrew Griffith MP.

CPRH had written to their MP setting out their comments on a Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Housing Policy Consultation. Parish Council Officers had suggested sending a similar letter to Jeremy Quin MP, as the subject matter was very relevant, and indeed cited Billingshurst. On the proposal of Cllr Doug Waller, seconded by Cllr Steve Thomas, **RESOLVED** that a similar letter be sent to Jeremy Quin MP accordingly. (Officers to see if CPRH had received a reply first and adjust letter accordingly.)

46/23 To consider making a proposal to Horsham Association of Local Councils (HALC) for onward forwarding to NALC (National Association of Local Councils), that Parish Councils who can demonstrate that they have a public question time at all meetings, be excused of their obligation to hold an Annual Parish Meeting of Electors each Spring.

Councillors thought that this was an excellent suggestion, especially in the light of the numerous other ways that residents can engage with the Council throughout the year, via a multitude of mediums. On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Phillip Day, **RESOLVED** that the suggestion be forwarded to HALC accordingly.

47/23 Reports from:

- a. County Councillor Mrs Amanda Jupp congratulated the new Chairman on his election. She had spoken to West Sussex County Council (WSCC) highways officers about moving forward the parish's wish list of traffic calming measures

and was also wondering if a 20mph speed limit plus gateway features should be promoted early, especially near The Alders. Contractors had returned to the Five Oaks roundabout since it had been resurfaced and resolved the flooding issue. There had been some work done to prune hard back the hedge alongside the already-narrow footway leading to Five Oaks, but landowners also had responsibility. She was continuing to press for action to address the permanent puddle opposite Rosier Business Park, on the A272. WSCC had leased 3 jet patchers to increase the number of potholes able to be filled; all repairs did require dry weather to be effective. She thanked Parish Council and Centre staff for their efforts in putting on some excellent Coronation events.

- b. District Cllrs Sam Bateman and John Trollope introduced themselves including a little background. They looked forward to working with the Parish Council and perhaps meeting to see how they could best represent the interests of the Parish at HDC.
- c. Council Representatives on Outside Bodies.
None.

48/23 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 March 2023.

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2023, previously circulated were taken as read. On the proposal of Cllr Doug Waller, seconded by Cllr James Marchant, **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and signed as a correct record accordingly.

49/23 Matters Arising – that are not separate agenda items.

None.

50/23 To receive Minutes as approved by the following Committees:

- a) On the proposal of Cllr Doug Waller seconded by Cllr Sarah Wilson, **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee of 2 & 15 Feb and 2 March 2023 be received.
- b) On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Edna Benger, **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the F&GP Committee of 21 Feb and 29 Mar 2023 be received.
- c) On the proposal of Cllr Craig Gale, seconded by Cllr Sarah Wilson, **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Property Committee of 11 January 2023 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. (Post meeting note - these had already been received at the March meeting.)

51/23 Neighbourhood Wardens - to receive Wardens' Reports for February and March - previously circulated.

NOTED. A Cllr advised that Cllrs were welcome to accompany wardens on patrols; it was very interesting.

52/23 To receive the minutes of the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting of Electors and to consider any matters requiring the attention of the Council - previously circulated.

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Electors were NOTED. There were no matters requiring the attention of the Council.

53/23 To consider suggested public position statement on relationship with strategic developers.

Councillors were mindful that on occasions, Council had to consider an issue whilst exercising different functions. The Council was a planning consultee, but also a landowner. Members were mindful that whilst they may be against, for example, more large-scale housing in the parish, they may wish to take a pragmatic view that to not engage with the same developer, could mean the parish not achieving the very best in terms of new infrastructure should the said developer acquire planning permission. It was felt the Council needed to clarify its general position in such instances.

On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Caroline Beresford Pratt, **RESOLVED** that

Billingshurst Parish Council (BPC) is opposed to large scale developments being constructed within the Parish. However, when developers are exploring options, the Council is ready and willing to work with developers for the benefit of the community as they make their application. Therefore, BPC will support West of Billingshurst in so far as we will work with the developer of West as a landowner for what BPC can gain on behalf of the community, but as a Council remain formally opposed to large scale development in the community. (Wording drafted by Cllr Craig Gale).

54/23 Any other matters for information only.

None.

55/23 Date of Next Meeting – 5 July 2023.

56/23 Exclusion of Press & Public (Contractual – land).

On the proposal of Cllr Sarah Wilson, seconded by Cllr Roy Margetts, **RESOLVED** that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted (contractual - land), the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw.

77/23 Land West of Billingshurst development: To consider proposed contract with Highwood Group ref. use of council-owned land at Jubilee Fields.

Councillors considered the latest draft contract setting out the possible use of land at Jubilee Fields to accommodate new and upgraded sporting facilities, if the Highwood Group were successful in acquiring planning consent for a strategic housing allocation called *West of Billingshurst*. Members noted that in agreeing this, the Council were not in turn bound to support this or any other housing allocation in the parish.

On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Steve Thomas, **RESOLVED** that the contract be agreed accordingly, in addition to points (b) – (e) as set out in the Clerk's report.

[Cllr Phillip Day would liaise with the Clerk on some minor queries and the final contract with *tracked* changes would be circulated again to all Councillors prior to being signed. This decision would be conveyed to the three new District Councillors accordingly via a meeting so that they were aware of the Parish Council's position.]

Meeting finished at 9.10pm

APPENDIX A

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL	
COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES	
2023-24	
(The Council has set the max. membership for Committees to 10 members.)	
COMMITTEES	
Planning & Environment	JM, DW , SW, DM, CBP , FA
Property	PB, SD, PD , RM, ST, EB, CG
Finance & General Purposes	PB, PD , RM, KP, EB, CG
Working Practices	DW , SW, RM, ST , CG, KP
Billingshurst Centre	PB, SD, PD, SW , KP, EB , CG
Complaints (5 members Max)	PB, SD, RM, TL, CG
Complaints Chairman	SD
WORKING PARTIES	
Neighbourhood Plan	In abeyance
Emergency Planning	In abeyance
Internal Audit	PD, KP, RM
Traffic Calming (Central Area)	PB, JM, TL, ST, KP
Traffic Calming (Other)	PB, TL

Bold indicates Chairman/Vice Chairman

REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES	
Billigreen & Climate Change liaison	PD, JM, TL
Parish and Neighbourhood Climate Action Network	PD
Allotments Society	EB
B'hurst Sports & Recn. Assn. (BSRA)	CG
Friends of Station Road Gardens x1	SD
HALC (H'ham Assn Local Ccls)	PD
N'hood Warden Steering Group x2	PB, SD, PD
Public Art Steering Group	
Special Planning Document W/Group	DM, CBP
Trustee of Adversane Hall x1	SD
Trustee of Dauxwood Pre-School x1	SD
Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner - Focus Groups x1	CBP (Reserves: RM, ST, TL)
West Sussex Association Local Councils (WSALC) AGM x2	PD
Youth Council	In abeyance
Youth liasion - all matters	SW, CG
B'hurst Flood Action Group	EB

Updated 11/05/2023