

Fairlight Parish Council Meeting 27th August 2024

Present: Ms L Cooke, Mr T Grohne, Mr S Baxter, Mrs P Collins (RFO), Mr A Mier, Mr C Maynard.

Item 1 In the Chair Cllr S Baker

Started the meeting introducing attendees.

Proposed Cllr L Cooke, seconded Cllr A Mier that Cllr C Maynard takes the chair of the interim council.

Carried.

Item 2 Cllr Carl Maynard

Asked for a proposer for deputy vice chair. Cllr T Grohne proposed Cllr L Cooke, seconded by Cllr C Maynard.

Carried.

Item 3 Apologies for Absence

None

Item 4 Code of Conduct and Disclosure of Interests

Cllr Grohne trustee of new Pavillion (item 15)

Cllr Cooke trustee of new Pavillion (item 15)

Item 5 Chairman's Report

Cllr Maynard lamented the loss of members of the council and thanked them for their work. He mentioned that the RFO/Proper Officer would also be leaving shortly and thanked her for her work. Cllr Maynard went on to remind everyone that it was an interim PC and that they would be holding the fort until an election on the 3rd October 2024. He reminded the residents of Fairlight that the council were responsible for looking after the residents money, making sure the money was spent effectively and doing what is right for the residents.

Item 6 Questions from the Floor

Geoff Smith item 16 standing down as co-opted candidate also item 11b why cheque signatures cannot be dealt with by the current two council members. Mr Smith then asked could the open forum be moved forward before any confidential matters.

Dominic Pichard item 16 standing down as co-opted candidate.

Ms Carol Sharpe said that as the two gentleman have said they would not stand for co-opted members she didn't want to make further comment.

Cllr Maynard stated that if a member of the public wanted to make a comment standing orders would be stopped. He stated that he wanted to be as open as possible with members of the public.

Item 7 Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 23rd July 2024

Cllr Maynard asked if there were any amendments to be made. There were:

Cllr S Baker and Cllr L Cooke asked for changes. He wrote on the minutes the necessary changes and signed them off.

Item 8 Matters arising from the Minutes (23rd July 2024) that were on the Agenda

None

Item 9 County and District Council Reports

Cllr A Mier gave his report and Cllr T Grohne gave his report (please see you tube video)

Cllr Maynard gave his report. (please see you tube video)

Cllr Maynard suspended the meeting for questions from the audience.

Question from the audience regarding spending CIL money. Cllr Maynard explained how the CIL money must be used.

Question from audience : re Market Garden Site.

Cllr Maynard stated that it was right for the PC to ask the developer to come to a PC meeting.

He went on to explain how the planning process worked, he suggested that when it was time for the budgeting process to start it would be wise to put money in reserves for possible legal action.

A member of the audience spoke about the terrible state of the pavements, Cllr Maynard asked the audience member to send an e-mail to him with the facts.

A member of the audience asked about white lines, Cllr Maynard responded and said he would chase.

Item 10 Appointment of Councillors to committees and subgroups of the PC

Cllr Baker is willing to take on the role of liaising with the War Memorial Group.

Item 11 Financial Matters -

11a to consider and approve the items for payment

Cllr L Cooke asked about the amount of stationery supplies purchased. The RFO explained that a new cabinet had been purchased with other stationery items and was going in the village hall to store paperwork.

Cllr L Cooke also asked about DISH supplies and costs. The RFO stated that donations of food were now not coming in so money had to be spent on supplies.

Proposed Cllr A Mier and seconded Cllr T Grohne to approve payments.

11b to approve current cheque signatures

RFO explained about the bank account and cheque signatures.

Proposed Cllr T Grohne and seconded by Cllr A Mier that the two remaining councillors; Cllr Stephen Baker and Cllr Lyn Cooke can sign the cheques. Carried.

Item 12 Land Management Group

12a to receive quotations regarding the French drain on Wood Field.

RFO reported only a single quote had been returned and Cllr Mier explained why this should be carried out straight away. A brief discussion followed, Cllr T Grohne asked about the time line of getting the work done and the volume of work needed.

Work to be carried out by the contractor who quoted: Proposed Cllr Baker and seconded by Cllr Mier

Carried.

12b – Installation of benches at the Circle and St Peters Church

RFO received one quote, RFO also stated that the PC had decided on the style and type of bench but they had yet to be ordered.

Cllr Grohne moved that the decision be left to the new PC as other possible infrastructure issues may arise. Interim council agreed to deferring.

12c – Update on CCTV

Cllr Maynard declared an interest as part of ESCC

RFO sent a letter to Balfour Beatty offering £600 as an annual payment for the electricity. Still awaiting response. Cllr Maynard said he would chase. A brief discussion followed regarding the electricity amount.

Item 13 War Memorial Update

Hayden Luke gave an update on the memorial stating that he hoped everything would be ready for Remembrance Day in November this year. The RFO explained that the money was sitting in reserve but this was money handed to the PC for safe keeping as the war memorial group was only a sub-

committee and could not sign any documents. Cllr Cooke asked about a short fall but Hayden Luke explained that there had been a generous personal donation at the last moment.

Item 14 Hastings Country Park

Various matters about the Bale House were pointed out by Hayden Luke with the assistance of Cllr Baker. Mr Hayden Luke said he had made a FOI request to Hastings Borough Council. HBC decided to decline. Mr Hayden Luke said they were not giving up and would request again supplying more information. Cllr Maynard suggested writing to the leader of the council (HBC) and then explained the process of applying for FOI to the council. Cllr Grohne asked about the information request. Mr Hayden Luke replied that it was a complicated issue.

Item 15

15a Fairlight Pavillion Project

Declaration of interest from Cllr Grohne and Cllr Cooke

Report from Mr G Smith: Not a lot to report at the present.

Question from the audience : Miss C Sharpe asked why the offer of an experience project manager was not taken up by the group. Mr G Smith replied that there was now a charity with trustees it was felt it could be done in house. Cllr Maynard suggested that the Fairlight Pavillion should be an agenda item for open discussion at the next meeting.

Item 16 – Withdrawn

Item 17 – Training

No training taken up.

Item 18 – Correspondence

No correspondence

Item 19 – Future Agenda Items

Has already been discussed during the meeting.

Item 20 - Date of next meeting Tuesday 24th September 2024 7pm.

Item 21 – Staffing Matters

Cllr Maynard asked the council if they were prepared to discuss openly taking into consideration GDPR rules.

RFO was asked if she could confirm her terms of contract, the reply was one months notice. Cllr Maynard asked council if they were happy to accept the RFO's resignation. Carried.

Cllr Maynard then discussed with council various options on using a clerk and RFO combined or separate and using a locum.

Standing orders were suspended

Member of the public stated that NALC says a clerk can be an officer of the council as can an RFO.

Standing orders reinstated.

Cllr Mier reiterated the reason why sometimes confidential items could not be discussed in public.

Cllr Maynard stated that because they were an interim council he did not want to make any decisions and commit to expenditure that the new PC would be left with.

Cllr Maynard continued to discuss with council the importance of getting the right fully trained person for the role.

Cllr Grohne did mention that several councillors had asked for an EGM to resolve the issue of interim clerk/RFO.

Cllr Maynard said he would rather have an informal meeting to discuss the roles and bring a formal proposition to the full council, so that members of the public were involved and would know what is happening.

Council had further discussion on workload, final handover from RFO/clerk.

RFO said handover date would be by the 14th September 2024.

Item 21c Discussion regarding the re-instatement of e-mail accounts.

Proposed by Cllr Grohne and seconded by Cllr Baker that the e-mail address should be re-instated.
Carried.

Cllr Grohne asked that the e-mail should not be instated but it should be an agenda item on the next meeting for open discussion.

Cllr Maynard said that we agreed to re-instate and a line needs to be drawn.

He continued to say that an individual councillor can make a statement if they wish at any time, we are moving forward not looking back.

Cllr Maynard reiterated that we had proposed that we would re-instate the e-mail address.

Carried.

Cllr Maynard then moved on to discuss and resolve re-instatement correspondence for specific individuals.

Cllr Cooke explained that the previous Chair of the PC refused to accept correspondence from certain individuals in the parish. Cllr Maynard said his view would be that as an interim council they should move forward in terms of any correspondence received is considered on its merits.

In his view everyone has a right to contact the PC and the correspondence should be re-instated for whoever. We should be open and transparent, he accepts there have been issues in the past and he is not here to apportion blame, I am here to move forward and take you into the next PC.

Cllr Mier said there should be a caveat that correspondence should be polite and courteous, the PC has a responsibility to its clerk whoever that may be.

Close of Meeting

Open Forum

Mr G Smith said he would like to thank the interim council for stepping up to deal with this evenings work load.

A question regarding the ability to hear what was going at PC meetings as people had given up there time to attend the least they could do was make sure they could be heard.

Items to consider for the new council are with regards to hearing what's going on.