



Laughton Parish Council



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20th November 2024 at 7.30pm at Laughton Parish Hall

Present:

Cllr Alison Wilson (Chair), Cllr Jane Alford, Cllr Sally Huggett, Cllr Kay Syrad and
Cllr Stephen Whiting
East Sussex County Councillor Nick Bennett
Wealden District Councillor Alison Wilson
The Clerk was also in attendance

1. Public Session

No members of the public were in attendance.

2. Apologies for absence

All members were in attendance.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 16th October were agreed and duly signed.

4. Declarations of interest and notification of any changes to the Register of Interests

There were no declarations of interest or changes to the Register of Interests

5. Confidential items on the agenda for the exclusion of the press and public

It was RESOLVED that agenda item 9f) was a confidential item

6. Report by East Sussex County Councillor Nick Bennett

Cllr Bennett's report was circulated prior to the meeting. There are widespread financial difficulties across many County and Borough Councils. The outlook will be clearer in mid-December. Communication with Government has proved difficult. The cost of social care is extraordinary.

Cllr Bennett recently attended the LGA conference.

Report by Wealden District Councillor Alison Wilson

The Rural Services Network have written a letter to Government, signed by 57 rural local authorities including Wealden District Council, regarding the underfunding of rural councils, which on average is 20% lower than urban councils.

WDC has made a press release warning regarding a scam in relation to parking fines.

Cllr Wilson will attend the Climate Change Strategy Conference, a resident recently got in touch regarding the installation of EV charging points in conservation areas and it is hoped the resident will be able to attend the conference.

There had been a Full Wealden District Council meeting earlier in the day, when the Debate not Hate campaign was discussed.

It was agreed to write to the Chancellor regarding the Winter Fuel Allowance, as many pensioners will not receive the payment. WDC is encouraging residents to apply for Pension Credit.

Cllr Wilson has been appointed Chair of the Audit, Finance and Governance Committee and Deputy Chair of Planning Committee South.

7. Working Groups Reports

a) Broadband provision in the Parish

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Whiting will join the working group.

b) Sewage issues in the Parish

The survey document is being formatted and will be circulated in the New Year.

c) Footpaths

Details were provided of the footpaths inspected to date. Details to be sent to the clerk.

8. Planning and licence applications

a) Planning applications received

No applications have been received.

b) Planning application received between the date of publication of the agenda for this meeting and the meeting date.

No applications have been received.

c) Planning applications approved, refused, referred withdrawn or appeals

WD/2024/1812/LBR Stone Cross Farm, Lewes Road, BN8 6BN

Alterations and reinstatement to first floor rear dormer (part retrospective) – APPROVED

WD/2024/2042/F Judges House, Lewes Road, Laughton, BN8 6BN

Infill of roller door with double access doors, and installation of gas storage locker – APPROVED

WD/2024/2020/FR Five Oaks, Lewes Road, Laughton BN8 6BJ

Retrospective consent for the retention of partially constructed swimming pool and surrounding raised patio, including the change of use of adjoining land to residential garden; together with the alteration of the rear of the garage roof from hipped (as approved under WD/2021/2753) to gable end – REFUSED

d) Other planning matters brought to the attention of the Parish Council

Serious concerns have been raised in a letter to Enforcement at Wealden District Council regarding the tree works at Kiln Cottage, Pound Lane, Laughton. A second letter has been sent regarding damage to tree roots during recent excavations. This is a very concerning situation.

e) Licence applications

None

9. Financial Matters

a) Bank reconciliation for October – Approved

b) November payment schedule – Approved

c) Direct Debits – Approved

d) Grant Applications – none received

e) Draft Budget 25-26

The first draft of the budget for 25-26 was reviewed, this will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

f) Changes to NALC pay scales and back pay – noted

10. Items for decision and allocation of resources

10.1 Village Maintenance

- 10.1.1 Flooding and drainage issues** – it was noted that ditches are being cleared, flooding in Common Lane has been reported. A resident has reported flooding of the culvert in Church Lane.
- 10.1.2 Bus Shelter** – contractors have been reluctant to provide a quotation for the works. A quotation received was reviewed by councillors and it was RESOLVED to approve the quotation, the clerk will contact East Sussex Highways for information regarding any restrictions when the work is carried out.
- 10.1.3 Village Gateways** – Councillors reviewed photographs of all the gateways which have deteriorated considerably in a short period of time. The clerk was asked to obtain quotations for repainting before the reflective signs are replaced.
- 10.1.4 Urban Grass Cutting 2025-26** – following discussion it was RESOLVED that Laughton Parish Council would request the “standard” option of two cuts per year.

10.2 Defibrillator for the Parish

Cllr Alford informed the meeting that the support post had arrived and would be installed on Tuesday or Wednesday.

10.3 Community Speedwatch

Cllr Whiting informed the meeting that volunteers had not come forward and the equipment would be returned.

10.4 Parish Emergency Plan

Cllr Alford will make a presentation at the January meeting.

10.5 Tennis/Sports Court

The clerk will organise printing of the consultation document, Cllr Wilson will provide delivery details. It was noted that a collection box can be placed in the shop.

10.6 Tree Warden Report

Nothing further to report, the issues at Kiln Cottage covered earlier in the meeting.

10.7 Pelham Field/The Green

- 10.7.1 Itemised costing for repairs** – costings were provided for the remedial works identified in the RoSPA report. The clerk was asked to obtain quotations for replacement for comparison.

- 10.7.2 Removeable Goals** – Cllr Wilson provided details of Wealden Sports Infrastructure Fund, Laughton has been identified in the report, however some of the information is incorrect. Cllr Wilson will contact WDC and report back.

It was noted that ESCC contractors have carried out a considerable amount of cutting back to the edges of Pelham Field which provided natural habitat for many species. The clerk was asked to contact the school regarding this issue.

10.8 Christmas Tree/Winter Lights

The clerk has contacted the supplier and the tree will be delivered to The Green as requested.

10.9 Parish Newsletter

It was RESOLVED that a newsletter would be produced in the New Year. The clerk will begin work on formatting/design. Councillors will provide articles for inclusion.

10.10 Parish Council Website

The web designers are currently working on the website, the domain name, laughton-pc.gov.uk has been approved.

10.11 Government Consultation enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings

It was RESOLVED that councillors will complete the consultation as individuals.

10.12 Parish Council name change

It was RESOLVED that a change of name could be considered in the future, any change would need consultation with parishioners.

10.13 ESALC AGM and Annual Conference

Cllr Syrad provided a report on the AGM and Conference attended with Cllr Whiting. Presentations were made by the Chief Constable of Sussex Jo Shiner, Keith Stevens Chairman of NALC, Mark Vellely of Transport for the South East and Steve Tilbury regarding the NPPF. Both councillors found the day very informative. Cllr Syrad was thanked for her report.

10.14 Councillor/Clerk Training

There will be an informal "workshop" following the next meeting.

11. REPORTS (by leave)

Laughton Summer Fete – the proposed date is Saturday 7th June 2025. A meeting of the Fete Working Group is to be arranged.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

The next Full Council Meeting will be held on 18th December 2024, items for the agenda need to be with the clerk by Friday 6th December 2024