

Mountfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Mountfield Parish Council Meeting
held on 14th January 2021 (via Zoom)

Present

Councillors S. Rickman-Smith (Chairman), C. Hollamby (Vice-Chairman),
J. Ray, J. Snuggs, S. Taylor, N. Whines
Mrs. I. Marchant (Parish Clerk/RFO)
County Councillor K. Field
District Councillor E. Kirby-Green
One member of the public

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor Ray declared a personal interest in item 7.1 on the agenda, as he is the Treasurer of Battle Area Community Transport (BACT) and will not take part in the voting.

2. DISPENSATIONS

None requested.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Hardy.

4. ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

RESOLVED – that the draft minutes of the meetings held on 06.10.20 and 24.11.20 (Planning) be confirmed as being accurate records of the proceedings. Councillor Hollamby proposed, and Councillor Taylor seconded, the voting was unanimous. These minutes will be signed by the Chairman when MPC are able to meet in person.

5. OPEN FORUM

5.1 County Council report (ESCC) - Councillor K. Field

- COVID cases in East Sussex are stabilising.
- There is an issue about the cost of data using mobile devices for home education. Mobile providers are beginning to address this issue with free data for HE.
- Early Years – 70% of Early Years provision is run by the private sector in East Sussex. Most parents use their free hours, and many parents are keeping their children at home.
- Central Government have changed their mind and Early Years settings will be funded for shielding children etc.

District Council report (RDC) – Councillor K. Field

- COVID vaccinations – residents with the Battle GPs will have their vaccinations at Etchingam Village Hall. These will start week commencing 18.01.21. Residents with Heathfield GPs will have their vaccinations at the Meads Medical Centre in Uckfield (work is being done to find a more local centre). These vaccinations have started. Appointments for vaccinations are being telephoned from the GP Practice and home visits for vaccinations will be available for the housebound.

6. APPROVAL OF DRAFT BUDGET 2021-22 AND SETTING OF PRECEPT FOR 2021-22

6.1 **RESOLVED** – to approve the draft budget for 2021-22 as presented by the Clerk. Councillor Whines proposed and Councillor Hollamby seconded, the voting was unanimous.

6.1 **RESOLVED** – to set the MPC precept for 2021-22 at £13,100.00, as the previous year. Councillor Snuggs proposed, and the Chairman seconded, the voting was unanimous.

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7. GRANTS AND DONATIONS

- 7.1 **RESOLVED** – to donate the sum of £1,000.00 to Battle Area Community Transport in memory of Colin Harmer and the lasting legacy he made to the Mountfield community. Councillor Snuggs proposed, and the Chairman seconded, the voting was unanimous.
- 7.2 **RESOLVED** – to grant the sum of £1,000.00 to Mountfield Cricket Club in memory of Tim Tidmarsh and the lasting legacy he made to the Mountfield community. This grant will be held in reserve until MCC decide the exact memorial. Councillor Hollamby proposed, and Councillor Snuggs seconded, the voting was unanimous.

8. MOUNTFIELD VILLAGE HALL

Mountfield Village Hall is in urgent need of volunteers and committee members. They will also need financial support on some projects coming out of lockdown. They hope to open again in May and further discussions about financial support will be held.

9. MOUNTFIELD TREE WARDEN

We are very pleased that Nick Betts is now Mountfield's Tree Warden. Whilst not a member of the Parish Council and works independently, he has MPC's full support. Mountfield has a number of rare and precious trees and we are sure Nick will make a great contribution. Nick's contact details will be published on our website.

10. PLANNING

Planning applications for consideration

RR/2020/2251/P – Baldwins Farm, Mountfield Lane

Retention of groom's accommodation as residential (retrospective).

AGREED – to support this application for a temporary extension of the temporary occupation (maximum three years) – simply to enable completion of the main farmhouse, which should satisfy all accommodation needs and bring this planning saga finally to an end.

RR/2020/2191/P – Baldwins Farm, Mountfield Lane

Section 73A retrospective planning application for the temporary use of the stables tack room for residential accommodation.

AGREED – to object to this application (see last page of these minutes for details).

RR/2020/2192/P – Baldwins Farm, Mountfield Lane

Section 73A retrospective planning application for temporary residential occupation of existing barn/office building.

AGREED – to object to this application (see last page of these minutes for details).

RR/2020/2206/P – Baldwins Farm, Mountfield Lane

Section 73A retrospective planning application for the erection of garaging to serve Baldwins Farmhouse.

AGREED – to object to this application (see last page of these minutes for details).

RR/2020/2245/P – Serenity, London Road

Proposed replacement dwelling, garage and associated landscaping.

AGREED – to support this application, raising concerns that if the driveway to A2100 is permanently lit, it will have a detrimental effect on wildlife.

RR/2020/1922/P – 6 Mountfield Villas, Hoath Hill

AGREED – to object to this application. The works are even bigger than the previous application and the breaches should have been enforced by RDC. Our concerns were raised by the original application and we are very concerned about the impact on his neighbour.

- 10.2 No other planning matters for discussion.

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11. ENFORCEMENT

11.1 No Mountfield items on RDC's weekly enforcement list.

11.2 Other enforcement items for discussion

- There have been complaints about the overpowering lighting at Mountfield School, the Clerk will write to the School asking them to "tone it down."
- RDC Enforcement state that the selling of fresh food at the Tack Room does not need planning permission and the occupants are legally able to do this.
- John's Cross Caravans, complaints about lights and lighted signs and an additional building at the rear (no planning permission).

12. HIGHWAYS/RIGHTS OF WAY

12.1 ESCC Highway are to investigate, yet again, the drain/culvert causing the flooding on the A2100.

12.2 No other Highways/Rights of Way matters for discussion.

13. FINANCE

13.1 Bank balances at 31.12.20

MPC deposit account - £17,724.61

MPC current account - £3,795.80

KGF current account - £4,439.54

13.2 **RESOLVED** – to approve the following payments. Councillor Ray proposed and Councillor Taylor seconded, the voting was unanimous.

* Clerk – salary/HO/expenses (Oct/Nov20) - £984.16

* Godaddy – domain/email renewals (2-year term) - £661.85

* Donation to Surviving Christmas - £522.50

Clerk- salary/HO (Dec20/Jan21) - £910.80

* already paid.

13.3 **RESOLVED** – to approve the second (30.09.20) and third (31.12.20) quarter accounts as presented by the Clerk. Councillor Whines proposed and Councillor Snuggs seconded, the voting was unanimous.

14. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

09.02.21 – Planning meeting (provisional, will only be held if required)

09.03.21 – King Georges Field meeting (start 7.00pm)

09.03.21 – Full Council Meeting (to carry on from the KGF meeting)

Due to lockdown, these meeting will most likely be held via Zoom.

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MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Mountfield Parish Council has represented the interests and views of the community in the matter of Baldwins Farm ever since we hosted a packed Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting in January 2013 and has been involved virtually every year since through all the twist and turns of applications, objections, enforcement actions, etc.

We do not understand why we are even being asked to scrutinise three of these as 'planning applications' given that:

RR/2020/2191/P is already subject to an enforcement order (2013) and should be a matter for prosecution.

RR/2020/2192/P has already been refused once (2013), is already subject to an Enforcement Order (2014) and should be a matter for prosecution.

RR/2020/2206/P has only been occasioned by the illegal occupation of the 'Groom's Accommodation' (see RR/2020/2251/P), is physically obstructing the required reversion of the 'Groom's Accommodation' to its legal status as garaging and is surely ripe for further illegal occupation (or other non-permitted uses) as has happened to every single one of the three of the new buildings already built by the applicant.

Only in the case of RR/2020/2251/P would we make an exception as we would support a temporary extension of the temporary occupation (maximum three years) simply to enable completion of the main farmhouse which should satisfy all accommodation needs bring this planning saga finally to an end.

These decisions were agreed at the Mountfield Parish Council Meeting (virtual) 14.01.21.