

Mountfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Mountfield Parish Council Annual Meeting
held on 13th July 2021

Present

Councillors S. Rickman-Smith (Chairman), C. Hollamby (Vice-Chairman),
M. Hardy, P. Miles, J. Ray, S. Taylor, N. Whines
Mrs. I. Marchant (Parish Clerk/RFO)
County Councillor K. Field
Members of the public

1. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

None declared.

2. **DISPENSATIONS**

None requested.

3. **COUNCIL VACANCY**

Two candidates stood for co-option, and it was agreed that voting would be by a signed ballot. Peter Miles was co-opted to be a Member of the Council by a conclusive, first-round signed ballot vote. Councillor Miles signed the Declaration of Office and the Chairman welcomed him to the Council.

4. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None required.

5. **ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

RESOLVED – that the draft minutes of the annual meeting on 25.05.21 and the planning meeting on 08.05.21 be confirmed as being accurate records of the proceedings. Councillor Whines proposed and Councillor Ray seconded, the voting was unanimous. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

6. **OPEN FORUM**

6.1 County Council report (ESCC) – Councillor K. Field

- ESCC's next main meeting is on 23.07.21.
- They have received £25M from Central Government for the COVID emergency.

6.2 District Council report (RDC) – Councillor Kirby-Green sent apologies

6.3 Public Question Time

Craig Ribbons from the Outcomes First Group gave some interesting information on Mountfield Heath School. There are 26 children in the school at present and they are registered for a maximum of 32 and 2 additional classrooms are to be built.

Car Park issues – the parking bays belong to the school and the road to Highways. There are still issues with overnight parking by commercial vehicles. Mr. Ribbons is to investigate the possibilities of gates/barriers and keep MPC informed.

7. **RELEASE OF RESERVED FUNDS FOR THE TIM TIDMARSH MEMORIAL**

RESOLVED – to release the reserved funds of £1K to the decking contractor. The Chairman proposed and Councillor Hardy seconded, the voting was unanimous.

Mountfield Parish Council

8. RDC DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI) CONSULTATION

MPC will not respond.

9. CLEANING UP AFTER YOUR DOG

There is a by-law, posted on the noticeboard, applicable to Mountfield. The Clerk is to investigate appropriate signs to be sited around the Parish.

10. PLANNING

10.1 Planning applications for consideration

RR/2021/698/P Baldwins Farm, Mountfield Lane

Section 73A retrospective planning consent to vary the details for refurbishment of the existing dwelling.

AGREED – to object to this application on the following grounds:

- MPC first raised the need to protect Baldwins Farmhouse in September 2011 then again in February 2012. Then, in response to RR/2012/2343/P, we wrote in our Objection:
- *“We note the continued, and continuing, wilful neglect over several years (windows open/missing in all seasons, gutters/downpipes missing or damaged, etc) while other major developments (stables, barn, sand school, moat) have been carried out. This does not signify to us genuine commitment by the applicant.”*
- Finally in May 2013, MPC wrote directly to Mr Tim Hickling, Head of Planning.
- We should also say that the obvious neglect of the Farmhouse was a continual source of distress to local people for whom it had always been part of the landscape, and also to visitors on the well-used public footpath past the building.
- Now, from the present planning applications we finally learn the true cost of those years of “wilful neglect” in crumbling sandstone, weakened brickwork and rotten timbers.
- Since at least 2011, little attempt has been made to preserve the original masonry, brick and timbers. It is no surprise to us therefore to find that modern materials have been used to make good the damage, which is not how Conservation is supposed to work. This careless attitude also shows in the fact that the Applicant did not refer the changes from the planning permission to Rother.

We ask Rother District Council to REFUSE these applications and enforce the highest standards of Conservation as this listed building deserves.

RR/2021/699/L Baldwins Farm, Mountfield Lane

Listed building consent for above application.

AGREED – to object to this application, on the grounds listed above.

RR/2021/1018/PN3 Millham, Mountfield Lane

Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed Change of Use from Offices (Class B1(a)) to a dwelling house (Class C3).

AGREED – to support this application. Councillors Hollamby and Miles abstained.

RR/853/CM British Gypsum, Mountfield (ESCC application)

Installation and operation of a sustainable leachate treatment system and integral solar PV.

AGREED – to support this application.

RR/2021/1482/CM British Gypsum, Mountfield (RDC application)

Installation and operation of a sustainable leachate treatment system and integral solar PV.

AGREED – to support this application.

10.2 Other planning matters for discussion

None.

Mountfield Parish Council

11. ENFORCEMENT

11.1 RDC's weekly enforcement list
No Mountfield items.

11.2 Other enforcement matters for discussion
The RDC weekly enforcement list now contains more information. The lack of information and status of enforcement complaints was a major concern raised by all Members and Clerks at the recent planning focus groups.

12. HIGHWAYS/RoW

12.1 HGVs using Mountfield Lanes and British Gypsum signage
MPC have received from British Gypsum details of how they intend to deal with the issue of foreign drivers "getting lost." They are also updating all their signage throughout the Village.

12.2 Flooding on the A2100
The Clerk has heard from ESCC Highways that they are actively dealing with this issue and there are legal issues. They will keep her updated as to progress.

12.3 Other highways/RoW matters for discussion
Disintegration of the road verges in Eatenden Lane and a very large pothole in Solomons Lane at the access to the A2100. The Clerk will contact ESCC Highways.
Nearly all our RoW are overgrown, the Clerk will contact Battle Ramblers for their advice.

13. FINANCE

13.1 Bank balances at 30.06.21

- MPC deposit account - £20,274.61
- MPC current account - £1,208.50
- KGF current account - £4,360.07

13.2 Payments for approval
RESOLVED – to approve the following payments, Councillor Whines proposed, and Councillor Ray seconded, the voting was unanimous.

MPC Account

- Clerk, salary/home office (Jun/Jul 2021), expenses - £947.28
- Release of reserve for Tim Tidmarsh memorial - £1,000.00
- MVHC room hire 2020-21 - £48.00
- *ION Safety, pavilion fire extinguisher check - £65.00
- *WelMedical, defibrillator battery - £211.20

*Already paid.

KGF Account

- To MPC account as unable to access KGF account online - £100.00

13.3 Approval of first quarter accounts at 30.06.21
RESOLVED – to approve the first quarter accounts at 30.06.21 as presented by the Clerk, Councillor Whines proposed and Councillor Hardy seconded, the voting was unanimous.

14. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

10.08.21 – Planning meeting

14.09.21 – Full council meeting

Both to start at 7.30pm in Mountfield Village Hall