

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Full Council Meeting
Held on Wednesday 20th March 2024 commencing at 7.00pm
At Four Marks Village Hall, Lyminster Bottom, Four Marks

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Cllrs Briggs, Pullen (R), Pullen (M), McAllister, Medhurst, Black, Coulson and Speed.
STAFF:	Jo Tsigarides, Clerk
PUBLIC:	Six members of the public
OTHER:	District Councillor Richardson.
APOLOGIES:	Cllrs Gebbett, Smith.

24.38 APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

Apologies were received by Cllr Gebbett (health issues) and Cllr Smith (holiday) and were duly accepted by the Council.

24.39 OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Residents of Fairfield Green discussed continued breaches of conditions relating to Longcroft Cattery. Resident one discussed the breaches in greater detail and resident two disclosed that they had been contacted by the Police regarding alleged harassment. They would forward details onto the Council.

Resident three reported that an individual is disposing of glass bottles along some lanes, verges and more worryingly placing glass bottles in potholes. It was noted that this is occurring in Gradwell Lane, Alton Lane and Brislands Lane and seems to be prevalent in the afternoons. The Clerk was asked to post on Social Media about this and contact the PCSO to see what they could do.

There being no further items to raise, the Open Session ended at 7.18pm, Standing Orders were applied.

24.40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS

24.41 FULL COUNCIL MINUTES

On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was:

RESOLVED To approve the Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Wednesday 21st February 2024 as a true reflection of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

24.42 CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

Cllr Briggs reported that there were issues with the delivery of the newsletter which the Clerk was working to resolve.

24.43 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

A written report was received by Councillor Day and circulated ahead of the meeting.

24.44 COMMUNITY BUILDING PROJECT COMMITTEE

24.44.1 To note any matters arising/updates.

The Clerk advised that a separate email; communitybuilding@fourmarks-pc.org.uk had been set up for Smart Marketing to assist them with engagement. Councillors were urged to send the email out that the Clerk had drafted to any contacts that operate groups or clubs within the area, even if the survey is duplicated.

The Sports Consultant had begun work and had meetings planned with governing bodies, starting with Sport England scheduled for Friday 22nd March 2024. The Clerk had asked them to attend the Annual Parish meeting.

24.44.2 To ratify expenditure for Sports consultant report.

The proposal from the Sports Consultant had been circulated to the Councillors. Due to the urgent nature, the proposal had been agreed by email.

On the proposal of Cllr Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr McAllister, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was:

RESOLVED to proceed with the proposal and approve the related expenditure; £1850 for initial engagement and £2400 for needs assessment.

24.45 OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

24.45.1 To note the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on Wednesday 6th March 2024 and receive a report from the Committee Chairman.

Minutes were noted.

24.46 PLANNING COMMITTEE

24.46.1 To note the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 6th March

The Minutes were noted. Cllr McAllister had been following up on a decision for the Gladman appeal but had not had any information to share.

24.47 STAFFING COMMITTEE

24.47.1 Update from Committee Chairman regarding staffing matters and vacancy.

Cllr R Pullen informed the Council that the RFO applicants to date had not been suitable and that the post had been readvertised. The Locum RFO had confirmed that she would continue in the role until a replacement is found.

24.48 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

24.48.1 To receive any appropriate updates

There were no updates. On the advice of the RFO, it was suggested that the 10th April 2024 would be an appropriate date for the next FGP meeting.

24.49 OFFICER REPORT

24.49.1 To note Clerks report and any listed correspondence.

In addition to the circulated correspondence, the Clerk provided a brief update on the HALC conference. The Council were also informed that Friends of Four Marks School had been in touch to enquire as to whether the Council might be able to assist with a fireworks display. The Clerk had arranged to meet them after Easter and Cllr M Pullen had offered to attend.

24.50 FINANCIAL ITEMS.

24.50.1 To receive and approve the February 2024 payments.

On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Briggs, with all Councillors in agreement, it was: **RESOLVED to approve the February 2024 payments totalling £52757.72.**

24.50.2 To receive and authorise the March 2024 payments to date.

On the proposal of Cllr Speed, which was seconded by Cllr R Pullen, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was

RESOLVED to approve the March 2024 payments to date totalling 52757.82.

24.50.3 To approve energy switch for Gas supplier and associated Direct Debit.

British Gas had sent a direct renewal quotation and due to the timescales, this had been approved in principle by the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The annual estimated cost was quoted as £1590.29 and there would be a monthly direct debit.

On the proposal of Cllr McAllister, which was seconded by Cllr R Pullen, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was:

RESOLVED to approve the Gas supply contract for the Benians Pavilion along with the associated Direct Debit.

24.50.4 To review and approve amendment to Financial Regulation 5.10

The Clerk explained that due to related Councillors being authorised signatories, a provision needed to be made in the Financial Regulations. Cllr R Pullen assured the Council that he would only sign payments with a family member if there was a danger to the delivery of Council services or another emergency. Reg 5.10 had been amended and on the proposal of Cllr Briggs, which was seconded by Cllr McAllister, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was:

RESOLVED to approve the amendment to Financial Regulation 5.10

24.51 ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

24.51.1 To ratify decision to purchase and install speed cameras under the EHDC Speed camera initiative.

Due to the timescales involved in the grant award process, the Council had agreed in principle to apply for a S178 license to operate three speed watch devices along the A31. The grant application had been successful, and the Council is currently awaiting the payment of £1767 to purchase the cameras.

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with the majority of Councillors in agreement (six in favour, two objected – Cllrs Coulson and Speed), it was:

RESOLVED to approve the application for a S178 license, grant application and installation of three speed watch devices along the A31.

24.52 TO NOTE EXTERNAL COMMITTEE AND AREA REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

24.52.1 Allotments – Cllr Speed

Cllr Speed reported on the allotment AGM which was held on 5th March 2024 and advised the Council that all plots were now taken. A new padlock had been fitted and the Parish Clerk has a spare key.

24.52.2 Benians Committee – Cllr Smith

Following a meeting with the Benians Committee Chairman on behalf of the F&GP Committee, Cllrs Pullen and Gebbett had agreed an annual fee of £6000 under the License to Occupy agreement for the group. This increase was due to increased utility charged.

24.52.3 Oak Green – Cllr Briggs

Companies had been contacted to quote to replace the supports on the clock tower and access the clock. One company had declined to quote due to the amount of work involved and the other quotation was discussed. They will be presented to the next meeting of the Open Spaces Committee.

24.52.4 Village Hall – Cllr Gebbett

Cllr Pullen advised that the S106 grant applied for by the Committee had been approved and that works could now be booked in to install LED lighting.

24.52.5 Highways

Cllrs Medhurst and R Pullen updated the Council following a recent meeting with Hampshire Highways and confirmed that the Safer Routes to Schools project is going ahead.

There was a brief discussion about the school crossing patrol assistant.

24.52.6 EHAPTC

The next meeting is scheduled for the 8th May 2024 at 7.30pm via Teams. There will the hopefully be an in person meeting on the 10th July 2024.

24.53 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

24.53.1 Village picnic preparations and funding

Preparations were underway and a meeting was planned for Monday 26th March 2024 to update the planning group.

24.53.2 To receive update on Cllr Surgeries

A Councillor surgery had taken place on Saturday 16th March with Cllrs Briggs and Medhurst in attendance. An issue with day room use on Alton Lane was discussed and also a suggestion from a resident that Lymington Bottom Green becomes 'dog free'. This will be discussed at the next meeting of the Open Spaces Committee.

24.53.3 To discuss Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 24th April 2024, at 7pm at Four Marks Village Hall. Donna Jones, PCC had agreed to present, along with Alton Energy. Community recognition awards will also take place and nominations would be informally discussed following the meeting. The Clerk was asked to invite the PCSO.

24.54 Meeting closed at 8.10pm

24.55 Next meeting: 17th April 2024