



Minutes of the meeting of
Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council
**Finance & General Purposes
Executive Committee**

Venue Old Manor House, High Street, Mayfield, TN20 6AL
Date Monday 27 November 2023
Time 19:30

F27NOV23
2023/24 Meeting 04
Chairman Approved

Minutes

Chairman: Councillor: Chris Lilly

Councillors present and voting:

Paul Amans, Chris Dines, Chris Lilly, Ian Parker and Andrew Ratcliffe

Also present: Janna Todd, Parish Clerk.

Public Questions

- There were no public questions.

1. Apologies for absence

1.1. There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declaration of Substitute Members

2.1. There were no Substitute Members.

3. Declarations of interests by members on agenda items

3.1. There were no declarations of interests.

4. Minutes of the meeting 23 October 2023 (previously circulated)

4.1. The actions in progress were reviewed and updated.

Matters arising from the minutes

4.2. Details of the current Pre-school trustees will be chased again to update their lease.

4.3. The cleaning of the war memorials has required use of WDC's Listed Building Enquiry Service at a cost of £57.60 to determine whether planning permission is needed. They have requested additional information on the cleaning method and a patch test. The RBL has asked the contractor to liaise with them.

5. Financial compliance (information previously circulated)

5.1. It was **resolved** to approve the F&GP GO Finance Report to 31 October 2023

5.2. It was **resolved** to approve Parish Council expenditure to 31 October 2023.

5.3. It was **resolved** to approve the bank account reconciliations and sign the cross-referenced bank statements up to and including 31 October 2023.

5.4. It was **resolved** to approve costs of £4,750 exc VAT for MCC elevations and plans.

6. Mayfield Community Centre (MCC) financial matters

6.1. It was **resolved** to ratify opening a NatWest Liquidity Manager 95-day Notice Account for MCC reserves with an opening balance of £1,000 from the MCC Current account and to transfer additional MCC reserves of £450k into the account when possible. **Action JT**

6.2. The PWLB interest rate has increased to 5.8%. An enquiry has been made into the possibility of a loan approval extension as the initial drawdown may not be required before it expires.

- 6.3. The Chairman provided a summary on the current position of the project. As there is no agreed timescale the 2024/25 budget will remain fluid and has been overestimated to minimise any likelihood of overspends.
- 6.4. A capital grant of £50k has been applied for towards initial funding for the MCC CIO to manage the running of the hall once it opens. The outcome of the application for a grant of £250k from the Community Ownership Fund should be known by the end of December 2023.
- 6.5. The anticipated date for WDC to consider approval of the Heads of terms and Development Agreement is at their Cabinet meeting on 08 February 2023.
- 6.6. The date plans can be shared to the public depends on the outcome of the pre-application meeting.

7. Consideration of the 2024/25 budget (information previously circulated)

- 7.1. The GO 2024/25 Budget v1.4.1 and MCC Budget 2024/25 v1.2 were previously circulated.
- 7.2. There was a discussion on the reserves required towards election costs. This had been previously based on the cost of the last contested Parish Council elections in 2007 with £1,250 transferred to reserves each year.
- 7.3. The cost of the contested election in May 2023, split between WDC and the PC, was in excess of £9,000. The by-election for Five Ashes in December 2023 has been estimated as £2,600 for the 554 residents. No costs for this are shared with WDC.
- 7.4. It was noted that, as and when casual vacancies arise in the future, if ten or more residents request a formal election, and if the election is contested (ie there is more than one applicant), then a by-election would be triggered. An election for Mayfield Ward (with 2,140 residents) will cost in excess of £10k; for the time being annual reserves would be used to fund the costs for such an eventuality but, if it transpired that there were numerous such events, then additional funding would be required – inevitably resulting in an increase in the precept.
- 7.5. It was **resolved** to recommend to Council no increase in precept for the MCC 2024/25 budget.
- 7.6. It was **resolved** to recommend to Council an inflationary rise for the General Operations 2024/25 precept from £107,089 to £112,444, an increase of £5,355. It was noted that this is the first rise in precept towards day-to-day expenditure since the 2017/18 financial year. The overall level of the 2024/25 precept budget requirement for General Operations and the MCC project will be recommended to increase to £243,327, an overall increase of 2.25%.

8. Clerk's remuneration (information previously circulated)

- 8.1. The Local Government Association and National Joint Council for Local Government Services has reached agreement on rates of pay applicable from 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and these have been agreed with the SLCC, ALCC and NALC.
- 8.2. It was **resolved** to approve the recommended pay increase of £1,925 for SCP26, the level agreed in the Clerk's contract of employment, backdated to 01 April 2023.
- 8.3. It was **resolved** to approve the Clerk's annual bonus of £750.

9. Items from the Clerk (information previously circulated)

- 9.1. It was **resolved** to approve £498.40 to refurbish the Newick Lane fingerpost. **Action JT**
- 9.2. It was agreed to reschedule the next Committee meeting to 19 February 2024. **Action JT**
- 9.3. It was agreed to purchase a Christmas gift for the litter picker and South Street WC Caretaker. Refreshments will be purchased for Christmas drinks after the Parish Council December 2023 meeting. **Action JT**

10. Items of information and next agenda items

- 10.1. An enquiry will be made into the possible gradual replacement of less intense streetlight bulbs as they fail. **Action JT**

The meeting closed at 20:48 hours

The next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee will be:

Venue: Old Manor House, High Street, Mayfield, TN20 6AL
Date: 19 February 2024
Time: 19:30

.....Chairman's Signature

.....Date

Annex 1 - Actions progress:

Actions from meeting 28 September 2020			
4.7	New lease for Pre-School Awaiting pre-school trustee information	JT	In hand
Actions from meeting 03 October 2022			
4.2	Engage electrician for PAT testing and tidy wiring Awaiting date/ quote	JT	On hold
Actions from meeting 28 November 2022			
4.3	Purchase ROW map for Mayfield High St Awaiting revised quotation	JT	On hold
Actions from meeting 27 February 2023			
10.2	Acquire costs for installation of metal fencing and a warning sign	JT	In hand
11.2	Investigate costs to install and fill a grit bin on Court Meadow	JT	Open
Actions from meeting 26 June 2023			
6.4	Update signatories on the Natwest and Barclays accounts	JT	In hand
11.3	Anchor bench by all weather court in its current location quote awaited	JT	In hand
Actions from meeting 25 September 2023			
7.4	Investigate hire charges for the fair with other councils	JT	Closed
Actions from meeting 23 October 2023			
7.1	Arrange the increase in fidelity insurance to £1m	JT	Closed
8.1	Inform grant applicants of their approval (awaiting PC budget approval)	JT	On hold
9.4	Transfer £500 to reserves for the rights of ways maps	JT	Closed
10.1	Request permission for war memorial cleaning and engage contractor	JT	Closed
11.1	Accept ESH contract for verge cutting	JT	Closed
Actions from meeting 27 November 2023			
6.1	Complete administration to open MCC Reserves A/c & transfer £450k	JT	In hand
9.1	Engage contractor to refurbish Newick Lane fingerpost	JT	Open
9.2	Update 2024 meeting schedule and distribute	JT	Closed
9.3	Purchase gifts and refreshments as required	JT	Open
10.1	Enquire as to possible replacement of less intense streetlight bulbs	JT	Open