



Medstead Parish Council

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting – 9th April 2025, 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs. Mike Smith (Chair), Mark Brayford, Ken Kercher, Frank Maloney, Phil Quinlan, Gordon Mitchell, Patricia Hughes, Jez Hood

Also in attendance: Julie Russell (Parish Clerk), 4 members of the public

	ACTION
<p>24.303 OPEN SESSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A resident asked about the order of the agenda b. Cllr Maloney noted the letter from HCC regarding Five Ash flooding. c. Cllr Brayford asked the clerk when information on the precept would be on the website 	
<p>24.304 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>No apologies</p>	
<p>24.305 DECLARATION OF INTEREST</p> <p>Cllr Kercher declared an interest in agenda item 9.</p>	
<p>Cllr Smith asked to bring agenda item 9 forward. Cllr kercher left the room for the agenda item</p> <p>24.306 LAND WEST OF BEECHLANDS PLANNING APPLICATION</p> <p>Cllr Smith noted that the council has limited funds which is a key factor when considering a potential judicial review for the Land West of Beechlands planning application. But as a first step to decide if there is a case, he noted that the clerk had spoken to the HALC planning advisor and been quoted £500 to produce a planning report that will investigate whether there is a legal case for a judicial review.</p> <p>Cllr Hughes noted that she has a friend who is a Planning Barrister, who has offered to look at the documentation for free. He requires a hard copy of three documents: the planning permission, the officer’s report and the basis on which we want a judicial review (for which she suggests we could use the Beechlands resident’s documents). The Barrister noted that we have six weeks from the date of the planning permission, and need to notify EHDC two weeks beforehand, so really we have four weeks to prepare our case. He had suggested we get the documents in the post that evening and he would look at it as soon as possible. Cllr Hughes offered to send the documents the morning after the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Quinlan suggested that the barrister should have the meeting minutes also, but Cllr Hughes said he could always find those online and he had requested only three documents. She said he would look at the documents as soon as possible and he had asked that they be sent right away.</p> <p>Cllr Brayford noted that he understood the clock started ticking only once the decision notice had been issued, not from the date of the decision at the planning meeting. Cllr Hughes said that was a nicety that the barrister will know the exact detail of, and if she gives him the documents, he will let us know. He had offered to look at it over the weekend.</p> <p>Cllr Hughes questioned whether we have the ability without the General Power of Competence to pay for a judicial review, and the clerk informed council that we have the power under the Town and Country Planning Act.</p> <p>Cllr Brayford proposed that it would be beneficial to get two views from both the planning advisor and the barrister. Cllr Quinlan proposed that we contact EHDC leader of the</p>	

<p>Council Cllr Millard about the matter first in case he can offer other solutions, but councillors decided that they should work out the grounds of a case first before contacting him.</p> <p>Following this discussion, councillors resolved to go ahead with the offer from the Barrister, and also to pay £500 to the planning advisor for a report on the possible grounds for judicial review. They agreed to an extraordinary meeting as follow-up.</p>	
<p>24.308 MEDSTEAD PONDS</p> <p>Cllr Smith proposed to bring agenda item 17 forward as the Pond Maintenance representative Tom Page was present, and he was given permission to speak.</p> <p>b. Village Pond</p> <p>Tom Page reported that the pond is holding water well, the pond water plants are now in, there should hopefully be sufficient dampness for them in drier times, we just need some rain to top the pond back up again. The next step is to dress off the edges and he has an order for marginal plants to go round the edge, gratefully paid for by Four Marks and Medstead News. Two Acre Nursery in Four Marks has offered to help with perennial plants. The final step is then to clear up the site with remaining waste items to be removed, and someone is due to come and take it away shortly. The clerk offered to provide some perennial plants for the pond.</p> <p>Tom also addressed the performance of the soakaway. The ground water was very high in the winter, but he thinks the main problem is the HCC drains that get clogged up with dirt surprisingly quickly. He observed that they have been done recently though.</p> <p>Cllr Hood noted the problems with mud on the pavement in the winter and questioned what could be done. The height of the pavement in relation to the road appears to be one of the factors. He offered in future to take pictures and report matters as they arise.</p> <p>a. Five Ash Pond</p> <p>Cllr Maloney noted the response from HCC regarding Five Ash Pond flooding, in particular the statement that flooding has only been reported there four times in ten years. The council needs to encourage people to report the flooding each time it occurs and to also ensure itself that every instance is reported.</p> <p>Cllr Brayford said he had been told that when the pavement was put in by Five Ash Pond, it had reduced some of the drainage ditches, which if true may be a factor to be considered.</p> <p>Cllr Maloney agreed to draft a response letter to HCC</p>	<p>Cllr Maloney</p>
<p>24.309 MEDSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES</p> <p>Councillors resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 12th March 2025.</p>	
<p>24.310 COMMITTEE MINUTES AND REPORTS</p> <p>a. PLANNING</p> <p>i. Chairman’s report</p> <p>The chairman’s report was circulated in advance and is appended to the minutes.</p> <p>ii. Planning applications</p> <p>a. EHDC-25-0252-PIP, Southview, Medstead, GU34 5BP</p> <p>Permission in Principle for 9 dwellings, following demolition of existing dwellings, stables and barns and removal of caravan</p> <p>Councillors strongly objected to this and agreed to work on the detailed response by planning workshop/email, with submission planned for 11th April. The submitted document is attached with the minutes.</p> <p>b. EHDC-25-0044-TPO, Land Rear Of The Development At Watercress Way, Medstead, Alton, Hampshire</p> <p>T1 - Lawsons Cypress Fell to ground level, a large part of the tree failed in recent storms leaving a significant wound on the main stem. The part that</p>	

<p>failed struck plot 3. The wound is of significant size and will not occlude over time. To replace with an Oak. The council agreed to defer this to the planning officer.</p> <p>c. EHDC-25-0102-FUL, Medstead United Reform Church, Medstead, GU34 5PR Change of Use from existing D1 use to C3 dwelling use with associated parking and new entrance off Highway Cllr Quinlan questioned whether the planning application is valid for a change of use application as he has not met previous planning conditions, but after discussion, this is still unclear. Councillors agreed to object to the planning application on previous grounds.</p> <p>iii. Planning decisions Councillors reviewed and noted the planning decisions in the last month.</p> <p>iv. EHDC Consultation on Draft Affordable Housing SPD The committee will respond to this at a planning workshop.</p> <p>v. Any other planning matters arising</p> <p>a. Appeal APP/M1710/W/25/3362736 The council did not object to the original planning application and agreed no further action on this appeal.</p> <p>b. Appeal APP/M1710/W/25/3361919 We are waiting for further information from EHDC on this.</p> <p>b. MAINTENANCE</p> <p>i. Chairman’s Report There was no chairman’s report</p> <p>c. FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES</p> <p>i. Chairman’s report This was circulated in advance and is appended to the minutes</p>	
<p>24.311 CHAIRMAN’S REPORT This was circulated in advance and is appended to the minutes.</p>	
<p>24.312 CLERK’S REPORT The clerk’s report was circulated in advance and is appended to the minutes. The clerk raised the issue of BBQ’s on the village green and what we do about people bringing their own BBQ’s following an incident on the green, as it is a fire hazard and danger if people leave hot material. Councillors agreed that it is not allowed by our rules and village green byelaws, but suggest we wait to see if it was a one-off before determining whether notices are required or anything else needs to be done.</p>	
<p>24.313 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS’ REPORT The monthly report was circulated to councillors in advance and is appended to the minutes. All District Councillors sent their apologies this month.</p>	
<p>24.314 2024/25 AUDIT</p> <p>a. Councillors noted that the council is being audited as an intermediate council this year as revenue has exceeded £200k for the second time. The clerk briefed councillors on the implications on this and agreed to provide a written brief.</p> <p>b. The council agreed to defer reviewing and signing the Annual Governance Statement until the extraordinary meeting as the blank Annual Governance Statement was not included with the agenda papers for them to consider in advance.</p>	Clerk
<p>24.315 FINANCIAL MATTERS</p> <p>a. Councillors agreed to defer the Income and Expenditure report for April 2025 until the extraordinary meeting as it was sent out after the agenda and other papers went out.</p> <p>b. Councillors resolved to approve the Bank Reconciliations for April 2025, which had been checked and signed by off Cllr Mitchell.</p>	

<p>c. Councillors agreed to defer approving the council’s payments for March / April until the extraordinary meeting as it was sent out after the agenda and other papers went out.</p> <p>d. Councillors agreed to defer noting the end of year summary of spend against the budget until the extraordinary meeting as it was sent out after the agenda and other papers went out</p> <p>e. Councillors resolved to approve the fixed asset register as at end of March 2025.</p> <p>f. Councillors resolved to approve a £100 grant to Citizens Advice Hampshire. The Clerk confirmed that we have powers in the LGA 1972 to do this.</p>	
<p>24.316 COUNCILLOR VACANCY</p> <p>Councillors noted the new vacancy following Cllr Bennell’s resignation. EHDC Electoral Services has been informed and the required notice is posted on the website and noticeboards.</p>	
<p>24.317 COMMITTEE ROLES</p> <p>Cllr Quinlan informed Council that he was stepping down as Chair of the Planning Committee, but will remain on the committee.</p> <p>Following Cllr Bennell’s resignation it was agreed that Cllr Hood will join the committee along with Cllr Hughes, allowing Cllr Brayford to step down again, as he re-joined as a temporary measure when Cllr Darch resigned.</p> <p>The Chair of Maintenance will be appointed at the next Maintenance Committee, returning F&GP also to full complement.</p>	
<p><u>Councillors voted to close the meeting for the next agenda item</u></p> <p>24.318 CLERK’S CONTRACT</p> <p>Following previous discussions on drafting of a Pay Policy for the Council, it was agreed to review the Clerk’s contract, which was completed by a working party of Cllrs Smith, Brayford and Kercher. The revised contract was circulated to councillors for approval. They resolved to accept this with two amendments to the circulated document: F&GP had agreed the clerk’s revised hours to be 25 hours per week, not 24 hours. Also the line manager reference should be changed to the Chairman of the Council.</p>	
<p>24.319 OPEN SPACES</p> <p>a. Village Green</p> <p>Councillors resolved to agree to replace loose dragon’s teeth in the layby, and to give the clerk authority to go ahead if the quote were less than £500. The few slightly loose teeth on other parts of the green are to be left at this stage as they constitute minimal risk to public safety or risk of unauthorised access onto the green due to the embankment. The clerk will do another survey to check the dragon’s teeth and finalise the number needing replacement as the last one was done in very wet weather. She will seek quotes and check for underground power cables.</p> <p>b. The clerk reported encroachment into The Knapp with felled tree material and barbed wire and it was agreed she would draft a letter to the owner.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>24.320 POLICIES</p> <p>Councillors resolved to re-adopt the following policies, already agreed in committees:</p> <p>a. Communications and Social Media Policy</p> <p>b. Death of Monarch</p> <p>c. Disciplinary Policy</p> <p>d. Grievance Policy</p> <p>e. Investment Strategy</p> <p>f. Cemetery Grave Digger’s Regulations</p> <p>g. Cemetery Regulations</p> <p>h. Grave Diggers Regulations</p>	

<p>24.321 ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY Councillors agreed the date of the Annual Parish Assembly to be 14th or 21st May. Cllr Maloney proposed that the NPSG will do something for this event. We will showcase the parish office. The date will be finalised at the extraordinary meeting, when the council will decide whether to move council meetings to the third Wednesday in the month to make it easier to get bank reconciliations done on time.</p>	
<p>24.322 SPORTS PAVILION / PARISH OFFICE <p>a. The carpet is being fitted on 17th April in the Sports Club area. After that the container will be finally emptied and will be ready for removal. There is still an issue over the showers / sinks to be resolved. The landscaping work is commencing on 14th April.</p> <p>b. There was no time in the meeting to consider furniture, layout and purchase of ad hoc items but the clerk continues to search for suitable second-hand items.</p> </p>	
<p>24.323 CORRESPONDENCE Councillors noted the correspondence regarding the Government Consultation of Devolution.</p>	
<p>24.324 VE DAY CELEBRATIONS A Union flag has been sourced. The Scouts have been contacted to check their interest in supporting the event as it would be good to get the younger generation involved. 6pm is proposed as the time of the Last Post rather than sunset. Rev. Wright has been approached but he has a family event but Frank suggested an alternative possibility. Cllr Hughes will promote the event on posters.</p>	
<p>24.325 COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES <p>a. Speedwatch Councillors agreed with Cllr Smith not to renew the licence for the cameras until a time when the cameras can have better resolution, there is a better, less onerous way to verify the data to send to the police, and when the police are prepared to take action on the data sent.</p> <p>b. Village Hall Cllr Hughes reported that the Village Hall got S106/CIL funding for the LED lighting and partial funding for the sound insulation.</p> <p>c. East Hampshire Association of Parish and Town Councils (EHAPTC) Nothing to report.</p> <p>d. Medstead Sports Club Graham Bennell is the new Medstead Sports Club Chairman.</p> <p>e. Medstead & Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group The NPSG had to return some unspent grant money to Locality on 31st March. It has applied to the District Councillors for 3 x £500 councillor grants and is awaiting a response. It is expecting reports in June / July on housing numbers.</p> </p>	<p>Cllr Smith</p>
<p>24.326 NEXT MEETING The next meeting will be held on 14th or 21st May, to be confirmed.</p>	

There were no further matters to discuss and the meeting was closed at 9.35pm.

Signed Chairman

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