

Draft Minutes of Lyminge Parish Council Meeting.
Held on Monday 13th January 2025 in Lyminge Village Hall.

01.01 Present: Cllrs Trayner, Heywood, Wake-Smith, Fagg, Harrison, Burren, Mills, Arnold, Hall and King.

In attendance: Chani Sanger (Clerk), Cllr Susan Carey (KCC) and 11 members of the public.

Welcome and apologies: Cllrs McWhinnie and Sage.

Declarations of interest: None

01.02 Minutes:

[Motion - To approve the minutes of 9 December.](#)

Proposed: Cllr Hall | Seconded: Cllr Mills | Motion passed - 8 for | 2 abstentions

01.03 Public open session:

01.03.1 A resident of Rhodes Minnis raised concerns about the mole hills covering the recreation ground. The mole hills make it difficult to walk in the field. The resident also noted that the pathway into the field is very muddy.

01.03.2 A member of the public noted that LPC were due to meet with FHDC regarding the Neighbourhood Plan and asked to be updated.

01.03.3 A member of the public raised concerns that councillors are not allowed to have their own views. Councillor Trayner supported the member of the public raising their concern. The member of the public also raised concern regarding the Clerk adopting the RFO role however it was noted that this is very common practice in small and medium sized parish councils.

01.04 Finance and Administration:

01.04.1 It was noted that the recommendation from the Finance and Administration committee was to approve the draft budget, including provisions for Mount Pleasant; small amendments had been made since the F+A committee had met. These amendments would keep the precept figure identical to the 24/25 financial year's figure. A question was raised regarding reserves and how the council justifies keeping the precept figure the same when there are ample reserves. It was noted that the recommended amount of reserves is 3 to 12 months' expenditure. In addition assets need maintaining, play parks need replacing and there needs to be money put aside for future expenditure and projects. The reserves are being kept in a high interest savings account that is accessible with 90 days' notice.

Councillors noted that the tax base impacts the council tax figure and that despite keeping the precept amount the same, due to a decreased tax base there will still be a 1.62% increase. It is hoped that once the Pentland houses are occupied the tax base will go up.

[Motion - To accept the draft budget v2.](#)

Proposed: Cllr Arnold | Seconded: Cllr Fagg | Motion passed - 9 for | 1 against

[Motion - To approve the precept figure of £152,349 and submit the request to FHDC.](#)

Proposed: Cllr Fagg | Seconded: Cllr Hall | Motion passed - 9 for | 1 against

01.05 Grounds Maintenance Tender:

[Motion: To retrospectively approve the grounds maintenance tender as published.](#)

Proposed: Cllr King | Seconded: Cllr Burren | Motion passed

01.05.1 It was noted that questions had been raised by some of the contractors.

- What is the reasoning for collecting the cut on Court Lodge Green? This is to remove nutrients from the field. Excess nutrients can lead to dominant grasses and by removing the nutrients we are able to reduce these vigorous and dominant grasses, encouraging plant diversity. This should also reduce long term cutting costs.
- Can Court Lodge Green be cut in one part? What is the reason for cutting in two parts? This should be cut in two parts as certain plant species should be cut after they have seeded. The bottom third should be cut in July and the top two thirds should be cut in September.

01.06 Neighbourhood Plan:

It was noted that a meeting with FHDC had been arranged to discuss progress on the Neighbourhood Plan and the changes that may come with the introduction of Unitary Councils. It was suggested that FHDC could be invited to the parish to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan.

It was noted that the farmers' market in Lyminge could be a good way to engage with members of the public.

[Motion: To trial using the farmers' market as a way of engaging members of the public in the Neighbourhood Plan.](#)

Proposed: Cllr Arnold | Seconded: Cllr Hall | Motion passed

01.07 Climate Action:

[Motion: To approve the terms of reference for the Climate Action committee.](#)

Proposed: Cllr King | Seconded: Cllr Mills | Motion passed

01.08 Rhodes Minnis Play Park:

It was noted that meetings with Rhodes Minnis residents had raised certain ideas which included:

- Potentially moving the play park closer to the Village Hall.
- Having swings, a big ticket item and maybe more if possible.
- Could the whole area of the park be surfaced?

Councillors noted that the existing park is a small area and it would make sense to move it. There was some discussion around what to do with the old park and the area once the park is removed. Councillors noted that the field is a Village Green and legalities will need to be checked.

[Motion: Subject to any legal restrictions/snagging issues to approve:](#)

- [1. Moving the play park to nearer the Village Hall](#)
- [2. Obtaining pre-application advice](#)
- [3. A budget of up to £70,000.](#)

Proposed: Cllr Fagg | Seconded: Cllr Mills | Motion passed

01.09 Grant requests:

Motion - To approve the grant request of £500 from the Air Ambulance towards the cost of providing the service.

Proposed: Cllr King | Seconded: Cllr Harrison | Motion passed - 8 for | 2 against

Motion - To offer £1500 instead of the full grant request of £2500 to Sibton Park Cricket Club towards the cost of replacing single glazed windows with double glazed.

Proposed: Cllr Heywood | Seconded: Cllr Hall | Motion failed - 2 for | 7 against | 1 abstention

Motion - To approve the grant request of £2500 from Sibton Park Cricket Club towards the cost of replacing single glazed windows with double glazed.

Proposed: Cllr Fagg | Seconded: Cllr Mills | Motion passed - 8 for | 1 against | 1 abstention

01.10 Information and correspondence:

- LPC received around £32,000 in CIL contributions.
- The Redwood savings account is open and £85,000 has been deposited.
- Meriden Park is now open and the associated invoices have been paid.
- The Clerk has asked FHDC if picnic benches can be situated in the area surrounding the park.
- There was an incident on Rhodes Minnis Recreation Ground, the issue is with the insurers to be dealt with.
- During recent high winds a tree came down in Ethelburga Grove and destroyed part of a resident's fence. The tree and fence issues were dealt with swiftly at a cost of £225 and £795.81 to Lyminge Parish Council.
- There is a meeting with Age UK on 10th December.
- Sojan Joseph MP held a well-attended surgery in Lyminge.
- The new LPC website is created, the information is currently in the process of being added.

Date of next meeting: 10th February

Meeting closed at 20:10

Signed: _____ Chair (Date __/__/25)

Appendix:

Cllr Susan Carey (KCC)

As more details emerge about the Government's budget it is now clear that the increase in funding announced for Social Care will not meet the increased costs that care providers face from increase to the National Living Wage and employers' National Insurance Contributions (NIC) and the lowering of the level at which NIC are paid. Local care providers and charities have already made contact with KCC as they will not be able to continue their work without support to meet these costs. (These three measures are also of course impacting the wider economy by raising costs and discouraging companies from taking on staff.)

The final settlement for Local Government will be confirmed in late December but we already know we will need to make substantial savings to balance the KCC budget for 2025/26. One of these savings is from ceasing the Wellbeing Service for Adults to save £3.45m annually. The Wellbeing Service includes an innovation fund to trial new approaches to care and Care Navigators who advise those over 55 on services. You can take part in this consultation and others at <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk> KCC has also just started a consultation with its staff to reduce staff numbers to make savings.

KentTogether on KCC's website pulls together all the various schemes on offer to people who may have financial problems. KCC has just launched a scheme to help pensioners who are no longer eligible for Winter Fuel Allowance and whose household income is less than £40,000 a year. It's open to people to apply themselves or refer others. Details of this and other schemes are on www.kent.gov.uk or you can ring 03000 41 92 92.

Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee (FHDC)

Age UK Hythe Lyminge & Ashford – I was as surprised as most people to learn of the closure of the Lyminge Centre. I have been in contact with Cleo Smith, the Chief Executive who advises that the Centre has not been able to cover its costs for some time and that with the reduction in KCC funding, the minimum wage and the proposed increased National Insurance Costs that running Lyminge is no longer sustainable. I understand that negotiations have also taken place with the District Council who own the building and that while the rent increase could possibly be postponed, this would not materially change the situation. Cleo tells me that the Dementia unit will go to Hythe and that transport will be available to take those in most need to Hythe. Many residents have told me that they will very much miss the café and shop and I hope further consideration will be given to this situation.

Gift card Scams - There has been a rise in scams involving people being requested by criminals to purchase gift cards from stores. Scammers will say anything to get you to purchase gift cards. If you believe you have been scammed phone your Bank immediately, by calling 159 and report it to www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040. Sign up to Home Page - My Community Voice Kent for further information.

Home Essential Fund - is a limited scheme to support low income households with energy efficient solutions to help reduce their costs and supply more efficient items to replace broken ones. This includes:

- Boiler servicing to ensure boilers are as efficient as possible.
- Boiler replacement for items that are no longer suitable for use.
- Oil heating servicing and support for residents that use oil for fuelling their home.
- White goods provision. To supply replacement or new energy efficient items to households including cookers, fridges/freezers, washing machines/dryers, microwaves and other items as appropriate.
- Beds and mattresses to homes that do not have suitable bed provision.

For further information Home Essential Fund | Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Otterpool Park – discussions are on-going with Homes England and a six months collaboration arrangement, along with other papers, will be considered by the Cabinet on 11 December 2024 and, will, as usual, be webcast. The wastewater treatment plant planning application is imminent and a public consultation was held at Sellindge recently.

Princes Parade Hythe – a short initial survey has just been published seeking views on the future use of this site. The land had been earmarked for a swimming pool, leisure facilities and 150 houses, but this was rejected after the May 2023 district council elections.

Finally, thank you to the Parish Council, the Village Halls, the School, the Lyminge Society, the Churches and for all other village organisations who work so hard for the benefit of the Village. Thank you also to Peter Barnes, the Editor of this excellent Lyminge News. May I wish you all a lovely Christmas and all Best Wishes for the New Year.

Contact - jenny.hollingsbee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk Mobile 07887918458

Cllr Elaine Martin (FHDC)

Lyminge Age UK

As you know, a decision has been taken by the Trustees of Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford to close their Lyminge hub. This is a great loss to Lyminge and the surrounding villages. The Trustees say the decision was taken because the cost of running the facility was unsustainable and they had been making a loss on running the services there. Dementia support will still be available in Hythe.

Trees Initiative

The Chair of F&HDC, Cllr Anita Jones, has recently obtained tree whips from The Woodland Trust and around 600 trees were planted in Hythe recently. Other locations are set to benefit from new young trees soon. There are approximately 200 left and community groups and schools are being encouraged to get in touch with suggestions, contact chair@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk.

Otterpool Park

An important step has been made to start the building of the Otterpool Park garden town and will be discussed by the FHDC Councillors next week. The Council has worked with Homes England, the government housing and regeneration agency, to reach a Collaboration Agreement between them. The agreement, if accepted, would be for six months and will allow F&HDC to access the additional skills and expertise needed to attract investment and take the development forward. Prior to any building being started the wastewater treatment plant has to be constructed. I attended the public consultation on the Waste-Water Treatment Plant planning application. Lots of people, including Councillors, attended and there were Officers on hand to answer any questions. The consultation is ahead of the formal planning application which is likely to be submitted in January. Details can be found on www.otterpoolpark.org and comments can be submitted up to the 24th December.

North Downs Forum

Our next meeting will be on the 9th January, 19.00, venue Elham Village Hall, and will focus on health and wellbeing in our rural communities. If you would like to see the new Elham Community Shed, come along at 18.30, and you will be shown around. If you know an individual, group, or organisation that might be interested in joining, let me know and I'll get them added to the mailing list.

F&HDC corporate plan

The consultation on the corporate plan has been completed, with 550 responses received, about a third of these were from younger members of the community. This is a really good response rate as these things go, so many thanks if you returned the online questionnaire.

Green Community Grants

In the New Year we're expecting to see the launch of a new programme of Green Community Grants, building on the success of the Rural England Prosperity Fund and the Green Business Grants. The grants will be available to community groups, town & parish councils, and local businesses, and intended to support a wide range of sustainability and carbon-reduction projects.

Contact: Elaine.Martin@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk