

HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of Harting Parish Council held in the **Community Hall, South Harting** on **Thursday 20 February 2020 at 7.30 p.m.**

Present: Mr Shaxson (Chair), Mr Bonner, Mrs Bull, Mrs Bramley, Mrs Curran, Mrs Dawson, Mrs Gaterell, Mr Johnson -Hill, Mrs Martin, Mr Miller and Mr Palmer.
In attendance: Mrs Walker (Parish Clerk).

There were 3 members of the public in attendance.

234. Apologies for absence: None.

235. Declarations of Interest: None.

236. Minutes from Meeting held on 16 January 2020.

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 16 January 2020 were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

237. Questions from the Public: the following points were raised by two of the members of public:

- an interest in the data downloaded from the Speed Indicator Device whilst positioned on the Petersfield road.
The Chair confirmed this was to be discussed under agenda item 9 'Traffic Update'.
- a request to speak, as a member of the Tree and Woodland sub committee, with regard to agenda item 12 'Tree Update'.

238. Matters of Urgent Public Importance: None

239. Reports from the County and District Councillor

Dr O'Kelly, the County and District Councillor, was not able to attend the meeting but had sent a report which had been circulated to the councillors ahead of the meeting.

The report confirmed the school closure for Stedham Primary school had been cancelled and the school governors were being given the opportunity to develop a federation with another local school.

WSSC (West Sussex County Council) had agreed the budget for the forthcoming financial year with an increase of 3.99% in Council tax for the WSSC activities. The budget includes an allocation of an extra £1million for roads.

WSSC – Household waste recycling sites

Dr O'Kelly confirmed she had raised the issue of cross boundary use of the utility tip at Petersfield with the full council, further discussions will be held with the cabinet minister for the environment.

The District Council (CDC) section of the report confirmed the proposed changes to the community forums, with a possibility of combining the County Local Committees with the Community Forums.

CDC are launching a 'pop up shop' scheme to make use of vacant properties whilst allowing new and small businesses to trial business concepts and customer bases.

Dr O'Kelly will be holding a Drop In session at the White Hart pub n 5 March from 10.30 – 12.30.

240. Grass Cutting for 2020

The members considered the grass cutting quote for South Gardens for the year 2020. The quoted cost for each fortnightly cut was £141.00 + vat, an increase of £2.50 per cut on the previous year's price.

MH Kennedy & Son Ltd have cut the grass in South Gardens for some years. They have always provided a reliable and satisfactory service and have been particularly accommodating this year during the period of disruption caused by the tree works.

The Financial Regulations state that three quotes do not need to be provided for "work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council" (Fin Regs 11.1 (a) iv).

The members agreed the grass cutting is a continuation of a current contract and as the work has been satisfactory the following recommendation was agreed:

That the Council accept the quote of £141.00 per cut for South Gardens from MH Kennedy & Son Ltd for the year 2020.

241. Purchase of East Harting BT Phone box

At a previous meeting on 21 November 2019 the councillors had considered the results of a questionnaire circulated among the residents of East Harting regarding the future of the BT phone box. This had followed the notice from BT confirming a consultation was underway to removal the facility.

The residents had been asked to consider three possible options:

- i. to justify a reason for the telephony to be retained
- ii. to take the option to purchase the kiosk for the sum of £1
- iii. to allow BT to remove both the kiosk and the telephony.

The results of the questionnaire were strongly in favour of option ii, and the Council had agreed to proceed on this basis.

The formal consultations between CDC and BT have now been completed and the proposed adoption can take place.

The members agreed to proceed with the adoption of the BT Phone Box for the sum of £1 and confirmed the contract should be signed by the clerk.

The following recommendations were agreed:

- i. *that the Council agree the contract conditions for the purchase of the BT Phone Box at East Harting*
- ii. *that the Council agree to purchase the BT Phone Box at East Harting for the sum of £1.*

242. Traffic Update

Mrs Bramley gave an update on the traffic related issues and progress made in the last month.

The Speed Indicator Device (SID) had been installed on the Petersfield road on 26 January, the first set of sample data had been downloaded and has highlighted some initial problems with the accuracy of speeds recorded as the SID is capturing information from outside of the 30mph zone. It is hoped that a slight alteration to the angle of the device will solve the problem. The SID was moved to the second site at the southern entrance to the village on 16 February.

There are currently only two identified sites for SID, however Mrs Bramley was meeting with Mrs Curran and Mike Dare (WSCC) to locate some further positions in Nyewood.

The initial feedback from parishioners with regard to SID has been extremely positive, and there is a feeling that the speed of vehicles entering the village has reduced.

Mrs Bramley thanked Mr Mackay who has been helping to replace the batteries and move SID to the various locations.

Mrs Bramley confirmed that an application for Community Infrastructure Levy funding had been submitted to SDNPA requesting a grant of £25,000 for a crossing to South Gardens.

A further application will also be prepared for a Community Highways Scheme grant as an alternative source of funding if the above application is not successful.

The Chair thanked Mrs Bramley for all her work in relation to the traffic issues.

The following recommendation was agreed:

To note the report

243. VE75 (Victory in Europe 75 years)

Friday 8 May 2020 will mark the 75th anniversary of the end of war in Europe. The day has been designated by Government as a Bank Holiday to enable communities to come together to join in the "VE75" celebrations.

CDC are making grants available, of up to £250 per Parish, to assist with preparations. The grants are available on a first come first serve basis to a maximum of £10,000 across the district. the grant can covers the following areas:

- tree planting
- public benches
- community events/street parties
-

There is no plan to light a chain of beacons.

The councillors had previously been asked for suggestions for the VE75 celebrations and these included tree planting, commemorative bench, new gate and a link with the Festivities day.

During the discussions the Nyewood councillors spoke of a celebration and tree planting being held in Nyewood on Saturday 9 May, and it was suggested that the rest of the parish might join in. This invitation was readily accepted by the rest of the councillors and it was decided that the clerk would liaise with the Nyewood councillors to progress the arrangements and the grant application.

The following recommendations were agreed:

- i. *that a commemoration for VE75 would be a good idea*
- ii. *that an event notification and grant request up to a value of £250 should be submitted to CDC in respect of VE75*
- iii. *that the parish would join the Nyewood village celebration to be held on Saturday 9 May 2020.*

244. Petersfield Utility Tip and cross county boundary issues

With effect from 1 April 2020 the Petersfield tip, used by the majority of residents in the Harting parish, is requiring users to register in order to use the services for free. Currently, registration can only be completed if you are resident in a property registered for Hampshire council tax. It will be possible to use the tip without registration, however a charge of £5 will be levied.

There is a smaller WSCC facility in Midhurst which is open to all parish residents, but this is a further distance to travel and is closed for two days of the week. The variety of recycling facilities are also more limited at this site. The alternative is to travel to Chichester to use the Westhampnett site.

Local residents have raised concerns about the proposed changes due to the additional travelling and impact on the environment.

Dr O’Kelly the County and District councillor has confirmed she is discussing the issues with WSCC and CDC and hopes that a cross boundary arrangement can be agreed to enable residents to continue use of the Petersfield facility.

WSCC have previously made a cross boundary agreement with Surrey County Council so it hoped a similar arrangement will be made for this area.

Further information will be provided as it is available, as Cllr O’Kelly was not able to be at the meeting.

The members agreed the Petersfield facility was very important and convenient to use.

*The following recommendation was agreed:
to note the report*

245. Tree Update

The councillors received a report from the Tree and Woodland sub committee giving details of the Tree Planting Day hosted by the Tree Council on 6 February 2020. An area of the Warren was planted with about 440 saplings and shrubs of native species by staff members from the Tree Council, DEFRA, South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA), Forestry Commission and Network Rail.

The saplings and tree shelters were donated by the Tree Council, the shelters have been developed by Ezee Tree and are made of recycled materials, they are bio-degradable with an anticipated life of 3-4 years.

The primary aim for the day was to show DEFRA policy advisors the real impact of ash dieback and the issues surrounding recovery and regeneration in badly affected areas, the Warren being such an example.

The planting had been supervised by Dr Petra Billings, the chartered ecologist contracted by the Council to create the replanting scheme and apply for relevant grants.

All of the organisations represented on the day are keen to help the Council with the recovery process giving offers of practical and advisory help, and recognised the problems caused by the unfortunate weather conditions during the tree works.

The clerk had thanked all the volunteers that had taken part with special thanks to the Tree Council for organising and funding the day. Matthew Woodcock, a Forestry Commission officer provided the initial link with the Tree Council and has been very helpful throughout the whole process.

Petra Billings is creating the replanting scheme which will involve planting in the region of 4000 saplings in the area of the Warren. The scheme will ensure a more diverse and resilient woodland is created for the future. There will also be natural regeneration in the spring and these trees will need to be protected from deer and rabbits.

The major planting will be planned for November 2020, including the National Tree Week from 23 November to 1 December. It is hoped that volunteers will be found within the parish to carry out some community planting and help with the ongoing maintenance of replanted areas. The SDNPA Ranger is happy to work with the local volunteers, the school and scout group, to train and supervise planting. There is also further interest from the DEFRA and Tree Council staff who may wish to carry out a further planting day.

Despite the anticipated voluntary planting there will need to be some professional planting due to the large number of trees and the difficult terrain and slopes.

Petra Billings is calculating a budget for the replanting which will form the basis for the Council’s application for a Tree Health grant from the Forestry Commission. The grant is likely to cover about 75% of the total costs, the rest may be covered by the income generated through timber sales.

The clerk had recently met with the two Tree Wardens and they confirmed they are happy to keep an eye on the newly planted trees and shrubs and ensure the shelters are standing up to the weather. They are also willing to help the Council promote the replanting work, encourage volunteers and take part in future planting days.

The Tree and Woodland sub committee will continue to work with the various organisations, in particular the Tree Council which sponsors the Tree Warden scheme. They are keen to have further Tree Wardens and Dr Bowman and the clerk have volunteered.

The members agreed that the replanting plans were a very positive move towards the regeneration and recovery of the Warren. They were very grateful for the help offered from all the organisations. both on the planting day and in the future.

The members were happy to appoint Dr Bowman and the clerk as additional tree wardens.

The following recommendations were agreed:

- i. *To note the report*
- ii. *that two members of the Council's Woodland and Tree Sub-Committee, Trish Walker and Sheridan Bowman, become additional tree wardens for the Parish.*

246. Parish Online subscription

Parish Online is an extremely useful mapping tool used by Parish Council to produce local maps and can be layered using information from many different agencies.

In previous years WSCC has provided a free group licence to all West Sussex Local Councils but this is due to expire in February 2020.

SSALC (Sussex, Surrey Association of Local Councils) has negotiated with WSCC and Geosphere (the owners of Parish Online) to agree a three year arrangement to provide councils with a 70% discount if sufficient councils sign up for Parish Online. It appears there is a sufficient level of interest and the cost for Harting Parish council will be in the region of £30 per year.

The members agreed the Parish Online system is an extremely important tool for the Council and agreed the following recommendation:

that the Council agrees to the 3 year subscription to Parish Online arranged by SSALC (Sussex, Surrey Association of Local Councils)

247. Annual Parish Meeting

Further to discussions at the January Council meeting the clerk reported that positive feedback had been received from a number of the local organisations in relation to the proposed new format for the Annual Parish Meeting. The intention is to try to increase community awareness of the Council work and that of local organisations and the variety of opportunities they have on offer. It is hoped that the organisations will be present and provide information to attendees.

The Village Hall is not available on the suggested date of Wednesday 13 May 2020, so the British Legion Hall has been booked instead.

The PCSO Keen has made contact with the Parish Council and may be attending the Annual Meeting.

The members discussed and agreed the format and timings for the meeting.

7pm Doors open and attendees invited to read reports, and circulate around the different organisation displays

7.30pm PCSO Keen, if available, to give a brief overview of his work and answer any questions.

7.45pm Parish Council provides its statutory report

8.00pm Open questions to the Council
8.20pm Further opportunity to talk to organisations.

Mrs Gaterell and Mrs Bull offered to provide tea and coffee on the evening.

The following recommendations were agreed:

- i. *to confirm the Annual Meeting will take place on Wednesday 13 May at 7pm at the British Legion hall*
- ii. *that the format of the meeting will be as follows:*
 - 7pm Doors open and attendees invited to read reports, circulate around the different organisation displays*
 - 7.30pm PCSO Keen invited to give a brief overview of his work and answer any questions, if he is able to attend.*
 - 7.45pm Parish Council provides statutory reports*
 - 8.00pm Open questions to the Council*
 - 8.20pm Further opportunity to talk to organisations.*

248. West Harting Phone Box

At a previous meeting on 19 December the members considered the future of the disused telephone box in West Harting. The box had been adopted by the Parish Council some years ago but sadly had fallen into disrepair.

Local residents had been asked for their opinions about the future of the box and the end result was a general support for the renovation of the box. The Council had agreed that quotes should be sourced for the refurbishment of the telephone box, and these would be considered provided local residents were willing to carry out future maintenance.

Mr Miller presented two quotes as detailed below:

Contractor A – a specialist in phone box renovation
Repaint by hand and replace two broken window panes
Price: £950 (no vat as not registered)

Contractor B – a local tradesman with a good reputation
removal of two broken panes of glass and replacement with toughen glass, plane off side of door for it to shut, prepare phone box for painting inside and out, paint box with weathershield undercoat and gloss.
Price: £743 (no vat as not registered)

The members agreed that although Contractor A had specialist experience, the Contractor B had the advantage of being a local business and was 20% cheaper. Contractor B had also visited the phone box, contractor A had supplied a quote from photographs.

A third quote had not been received, however the clerk had confirmation that a neighbouring parish council had incurred costs in the region of £2,000 for a phone box restoration.

The following recommendations were agreed:

- i. *to note the report.*
- ii. *that Contractor B should be appointed to carry out the refurbishment of the West Harting Phone Box*
- iii. *the offer from local residents to maintain the state of the Phone Box, once refurbished, is finalised, accepted and confirmed*

Mr Palmer left the meeting.

249. Finance

249.1 It was agreed that the following payments should be made:

Undisclosed	Clerk and RFO salary	857.50
BT Payphones	Adoption of East Harting Phone Box	1.00
Elancity	Speed Indicator Device	2,240.42
SSALC Limited	Annual Parish Online subscription	36.00
Mulberry &Co	Clerks year end account training	84.00
Mrs H Wilson	Lady Traill allotment/parish mag subs	18.03
Glasdon UK Ltd	Lifebuoy Buoy unit, rope and fittings	395.25

249.2 The income for February 2020 was noted.

Donation – replanting	150.00
Donation – Signage	1062.00
Sale of Timber	4639.36

250. Bank Reconciliation for January 2020

It was noted that the bank reconciliation had been scrutinised and signed by the Chairman of the Finance Committee. The Chairman of the Council then signed the reconciliation in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

251. Bank balance as of 31 January 2020 – £45,947.85

Noted

252. Budget statement for January 2020

Noted

253. Planning Committee

The minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 16 January 2020 were noted.

254. POSAC (Play and Open Spaces Advisory Committee)

The unconfirmed minutes of the POSAC Meeting held on 11 February 2020 were noted.

255. Correspondence

A letter had been received from a parishioner regarding the condition of the soil in the area of the Warren and associated matters following the removal of the ash trees.

256. Clerks report

The report was noted, and the following areas were updated:

- There were 3 enquiries at the February Drop In session regarding issues with planning, traffic and signage issues. An anonymised version of the queries has been passed to the councillors and to the appropriate committees for further action if required.
- The next Drop In Session was planned for Saturday 7 March 2020 between 10am and 12 noon. Mrs Gatterell and Mr Palmer will attend.

257. Items for future meetings

Tree replanting scheme update
Emergency Plan
Annual Parish Meeting

258. Date of next meeting - Council Meeting 19 March 2020 at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 9.02 pm.