

HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the **Harting Community Hall, Pease Croft, South Harting on Thursday 21st December 2017 at 7.30pm.**

Present: Mr Shaxson (Chairman and District Councillor), Mrs Bramley, Mr Healey, Dr Bowman, Mrs Gammon, Mrs Dawson, Mr Bonner, Mr Stuttaford and Mr Powys Maurice.

In attendance: Mrs Walker (Parish Clerk). Dr O'Kelly (County Councillor).

There were 4 members of the public in attendance

Mrs Bramley chaired the meeting until the arrival of Mr Shaxson at 7.40pm

169 Apologies for absence: Mr Johnson-Hill.

170. Declarations of interest: None.

171. Minutes from Meeting held on 16th November 2017

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

172. Questions from the Public

- To comment the council website layout had been improved and the layout of the agenda was easier to follow.
- Has the Council considered the appeal and hearing to take place in respect of Three Cornered Piece in Nyewood.

The Chair of the Planning Committee confirmed that the appeal was to be heard in February and the Council would be represented and would be speaking against the application.

- Was the Housing Needs Assessment sent to every household, as it seems some houses did not receive them. What is the purpose of the Housing Needs Assessment.

The Chair confirmed that all households should have received a questionnaire and that spare copies were available from the clerk if needed. The Assessment is an information gathering exercise to formulate the housing needs within the area, the information will be collated by the District Council.

- Harting Primary School is going to be affected by the national funding formula, and will have a reduction in budget of about £40k. This is concerning as the only way to reduce costs will be against the staffing budget. On top of this WSCC are consulting on a joint catchment area for Midhurst with the expansion of Easebourne Primary School. It is feared that this is the prelude to a closure programme for rural schools in the area, particularly as WSCC

have stated a 45 minute journey to school would be acceptable and they would consider transporting children to school.

- The Council was urged to respond to the consultation in a bid to protect the children and community in Harting.

This item was debated later in the agenda

173. Matters of Urgent Public Importance

None

174. Reports from County and District Councillors

Dr O Kelly, as County Councillor, reported that there are great concerns about the level of funding for Adult Social Care. WSCC are calling on government to consider the effects of this on other elements of the health sector funding.

WSCC is also looking at reducing the subsidised bus services, this is a concern as it is a lifeline for people that live in rural areas as some services would be deemed unviable without this.

WSCC are currently consulting on the change of the school catchment area for Midhurst which would combine catchments for Midhurst and Easebourne Primary School.

The Full Council meeting had agreed a motion to call on the government to review the National Funding Formula, in particular with regard to the impact on rural schools.

Dr O Kelly is due to meet with Liz Leggo from SALC regarding the survey of parish councils on health and well-being.

Her next drop in session at Harting will be on 8th February from 1-3pm.

Mr Shaxson, as District Councillor, reported he had been invited to the board meeting of WSALC on 18th January to make the case for improved communications between parish councils and SDNPA.

175. WSCC Schools consultation

The members debated the proposed change to School Admissions for 2019/20 which locally related to the proposed change to the catchment areas for Midhurst and Easebourne School. There is a fear that the knock on effect of the changes to the local rural schools may result in smaller pupil numbers and, along with the national funding formula reducing many rural school budgets by £40k, less viable schools. However, the greater concern was about the wider agenda and whether local schools will be under the threat of amalgamation and closure in future years. The impact of such a change would be enormous within a small community.

The following recommendation was agreed:

that the Parish Council submits comments to WSCC against the proposed changes to school admissions for 2019/20

Clerk, Chair and Vice Chair to respond.

Mr Stuttaford left the meeting.

176. Traffic Working Group update

Mrs Bramley updated the meeting with the current progress of the Traffic Working Group following its first two meetings. The group have concluded the main issues to address are the traffic volume, speed and noise in the village. Some useful advice had been received from both Wisborough Green and Buriton parish councils.

Mrs Bramley noted that a traffic consultant may need to be used at some point, and it was suggested that the budget to be debated later in the agenda should be adjusted to take account of this.

Traffic survey information from May 2008 is available and the working group would like the parish council to commission 5 further surveys this year on the 4 main roads leading into South Harting, and Tipper Lane. The surveys should take place in May to provide comparative data. The updated surveys would provide clear evidence of the traffic problems and how they may have increased over the last decade. Each survey costs in the region of £150.

The following proposal was agreed:

To approve the commissioning of five proposed traffic surveys.

TWG to progress

177. Risk Assessments

The clerk reported that the initial set of risk assessments, as outlined in the Health & Safety Policy and the Risk Management Strategy adopted on 21st September 2017, had been assessed by the Finance Committee at its meeting on 14th December 2017. Assessments had been received for the following areas:

Finance

Safeguarding Information and Data

Reputation and expertise

Public safety

POSAC

Litter picking

Clerks homeworking

The Digger School and Harting Community Hall had also provided risk assessments.

The risk assessment from WMPF is due to be received in January 2018. The Scout Group will be asked to provide a copy of its risk assessment.

The finance committee had agreed to report to the Council that they had assessed the Council risk assessments and propose they should be reviewed in 6 months.

The following recommendation was agreed:

To note the report

178. Furze Meadow Play Area

Mrs Bramley reported the progress on the possible purchase of the Furze Meadow play area. The October meeting was notified that Hyde Housing had agreed to transfer the land at Furze Meadow to the Parish Council for the nominal amount of £1 subject to restrictive covenants. The list of covenants Hyde wish to impose has now been received:

- i) A covenant not to use the land other than for use as open space and play area for the benefit of local residents
- ii) A covenant not to construct or erect any building or structure or undertake any works other than landscaping or installation and/maintaining play equipment.
- iii) A covenant not to dig up the land, and to maintain the grass landscaping on the land
- iv) A covenant to maintain and repair the land and the play area
- v) A covenant not to block off the land and allow access and be available for use for local residents without hindrance or interruption
- vi) A covenant not to dispose of the property without Hyde's consent which will be protected by a restriction on the title. Any incoming purchaser would have to enter into a deed of covenant covenancing directly with Hyde
- vii) A pre-emption right that they have to offer the land back to Hyde first for £1.00 should they wish to dispose of the land in the future

There was some discussion with regard to the very restrictive implications of the covenants and furthermore the ongoing costs for mowing, insurance, equipment replacement and maintenance, which would be incurred by the Council if this were to progress. The members felt, prior to any further decision, that it was important to establish whether the public money can be spent to replace and maintain the current equipment on the land owned by Hyde Housing without recourse to purchasing the land.

The following recommendation was agreed:

Prior to considering the future purchase from Hyde Housing, the Council needs to consider, with regard to any prescriptive rights over the land, whether the Council has a right to spend money on the land and play equipment at Furze Meadow.

Mrs Bramley and clerk to seek advice

Dr Bowman left the meeting.

179. Winter Emergency Plan

Mr Powys Maurice reported on the progress of the Winter Emergency Plan which is being updated It was agreed that councillors are needed to co-ordinate action for areas of the parish during times of bad weather.

The following recommendation was agreed:

The emergency coordination members will be:

<i>Mr Powys Maurice</i>	<i>West Harting</i>
<i>Mr Healey</i>	<i>Nyewood</i>
<i>Mr Stuttaford</i>	<i>East Harting</i>
<i>Mrs Walker</i>	<i>South Harting</i>

180. Ash Copse on the Downs

Mr Powys Maurice reported that there were local concerns regarding the small copse of ash trees at the top of the Millers Path on the skyline of the Downs, that are suffering from the impact of Ash Die back.

The meeting heard that these trees were owned by National Trust and Simon Craig, the NT warden, had previously been contacted about the issue and confirmed the Council would be consulted prior to any decisions being made regarding potential new planting. It was believed that this contact had taken place about 3 years ago, and it would be sensible to ask for an update on the situation.

The following recommendation was agreed:

that the Parish Council contact Simon Craig, National Trust warden, for an update of the situation regarding the copse of ash trees on the skyline of the Downs.

Chair to contact Simon Craig

181. Grants

Mr Bonner, the Chair of Finance outlined the proposed grants for the year 2018/19

The following recommendations were agreed:

i) To agree that the Council allocates grants as shown in the draft budget (item 14) for 2018/19 to the following:

- a) Harting Community Hall and the War Memorial Playing Field*
- b) Parish hospital car scheme*
- c) Petersfield Citizens Advice Bureau*
- d) Allotment rent*
- e) The Parish Church and Congregational Church burial grounds*

ii) To agree, as part of their overall grants, that the Council also covers the cost of the insurance premiums for Harting Community Hall and the War Memorial Playing Field and the cost of a bookkeeper for the former.

182. Budget and precept 2018/19

Mr Bonner, the Chair of Finance outlined the proposed budget and precept requirements for 2018/19. He noted that the woodland management budget had

been increased to cover the work taking place in South Gardens and The Warren, and also the contingency fund had been increased to cover any potential cost for Furze Meadow play area.

Following from item 8 of the agenda, the Maintenance budget was increased by £1000 in respect of Highways.

Mr Bonner noted the budget to be £50,680, and felt that the precept drawn from CDC should remain at the same level as the previous year £43,100 with the balance between the budget and the precept being drawn down from the reserves.

The following recommendation was agreed:

- i) that the Council agree to request £43,100 as the precept from WSCC for the year 2018/19*
- ii) that the Council agree the Budget for 2018/19*
- iii) that the Council agree to draw down from the reserves to cover the shortfall in the budget requirements*

Clerk to advise CDC of the 2018/19 precept.

183. Finance

183.1. It was agreed that the following payments should be made:

Trish Walker	Clerk & RFO Salary	Undisclosed
HMRC	NI Contributions	354.26
Trish Walker	Hard copy of SDNPA Local Plan	33.27
Trish Walker	Clerks expenses Oct- Dec	97.65
PJC Consultancy	Tree Survey	624.00
Harting Community Hall	Footpath electricity cost	59.23
WMPF	Lengthsman	220.00
Mr A Shaxson	Chairman's Allowance	200.00

183.2. There were no receipts to note for November

184. Bank reconciliation for December 2017

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.

185. To note the bank balance as of 30th November 2017 - £75,492.86

Noted

186. To note the budget statement for November 2017

Noted

187. Health and Safety Quarterly Report

No incidents to report

188. Planning

The minutes of the Planning committee held on 16th November 2017 were noted.

189. Finance

The unconfirmed minutes of the Finance Committee held on 14th December 2017 were noted.

190. Correspondence

None

191. Clerk's report

The clerks report was noted, and the Chair updated the members regarding some enquiries he had made regarding the removal of pond spoil.

192. Items for future meetings

- Fingerposts
- Play equipment
- Footpath lights
- South Gardens sign
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193. Date of next meeting – 18th January 2018

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm