

MEETING OF HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

You are hereby summoned to a Meeting of Harting Parish Council to be held
by video link on
Thursday 15 October 2020 at 7.00pm

The Press and Public are welcome to attend.

This meeting is being held remotely in accordance with the Coronavirus Act 2020, any members of public wishing to join the meeting should contact the clerk, prior to the meeting at clerk@harting-pc.gov.uk
Trish Walker
Clerk to Harting Parish Council

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes** - to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 17 September 2020.
4. **Questions from the Public**
5. **Matters of Urgent Public Importance** – raised with consent of the Chairman.
6. **Reports from the County and District Councillor**
7. **Parish Meeting report** (see supporting document for briefing note)
The following recommendation is made:
To note the report
8. **Grant request- Harting Football Club new goal posts** (see supporting document for briefing note)
The following recommendation is made:
That the Council consider a grant application from Harting Football Club up to the value of £590 to help with the purchase of new goal posts
9. **Tree Survey – Leaf Off**
The following recommendation is made:
That the Council commission a ‘leaf off’ tree survey to be carried out, by Nigel Fagg, Arboricultural and Safety Consultant, as soon as possible.
10. **Office 365 Licences and IT support** (see supporting document for briefing note)
The following recommendations are made:
 - i. *That the Council agree to renew the 13 Office 365 licences for a further year at a cost of £976.80 plus vat*
 - ii. *That the Council consider the option to renew the IT support contract with InR computers for a further year at a cost of £1,000 + vat*
11. **Finance**
 - 11.1. **To approve expenditure for October 2020**

Undisclosed	Clerk & RFO Salary - October	887.00
J K Engineering	Nyewood fingerpost	2,442.00
Parish Council websites	New website set up and annual maintenance	739.00
SSALC Limited	Clerk Training	36.00
Harting War Memorial Playing Field	Lengthsman	155.00
David Chaffe	Data Protection Officer - ProcessMatters2	150.00
Debra Harknett-Godfree	Hall bookkeeping	73.13
Mr A Christie	Annual Allotment rent	25.00
Mrs H Tuke	Telephone - Hospital Car Service	180.00

Petersfield Citizens Advice Bureau	Donation - S137	300.00
Harting PCC	Burial Grant	200.00
Harting Congregational Church	Burial Grant	200.00
Mr A Shaxson	Chairman's Allowance	200.00
Patricia Walker	Monthly Zoom subscription	14.39
M H Kennedy & Son Ltd	Grass cutting	169.20
Came & Co	Hall insurance	1,393.46

11.2. To note income for October 2020 -

None

11.3. To note that the bank reconciliation for October 2020 has been scrutinised and signed by the Chairman of the Finance Committee and will be signed by the Chairman of the Council in accordance with the Financial Regulations

11.4. To note the bank balance as of 30 September 2020 - £83,888.80

11.5. To note the budget statement for September 2020

11. Planning - To note the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 17 September 2020.

12. Aims and Objectives Advisory Committee (AOAC) – To note the unconfirmed minutes (to follow) of the meeting held on 5 October 2020.

13. Correspondence – Letter from WMPF (War Memorial Playing Fields) giving thanks to the Council for the recent grant.

14. Clerks report – *(attached)*

15. Items for future meetings

Allotments

Budget 2021/22

16. Date of next meeting - Council Meeting 19 November 2020 time and venue to be agreed

Supporting document – Harting Parish Council Meeting 17 October 2020

Agenda Item 7 – Parish Meeting Report

A Parish Meeting to discuss the Harting Tree Project was held via Zoom was on Wednesday 7 October at 6.30pm, the minutes of this meeting will follow. There were 34 Zoom connections linked to the meeting, some with more than one person present, it is estimated about 40 people were in attendance.

The meeting was chaired by Mr Shaxson, the chair of the Parish Council and members of the Woodland and Tree Sub Committee (WTSC) took part along with Petra Billings, the chartered ecologist appointed by the Council to develop the planting scheme for the Warren.

The meeting had been called to promote the Harting Tree Project and to allow concerns and issues regarding the removal of the diseased ash trees to be discussed.

The meeting was opened with a welcome from the Chair who, after the housekeeping issues had been addressed by the clerk, gave a presentation on the background to the ash dieback works and the issues that arose from that. The chronology of the Harting Tree Project is shown below.

Mrs Bowman then outlined the plans for replanting a total of 4300 saplings over the next two planting seasons and the work that needed to be carried out to protect the significant levels of regeneration appearing in the Warren.

There were questions about the type of species to be planted and some requests to include some more varied species to add colour and interest. Mrs Billings was able to respond to explain the reason for the selected species and detailed those that might thrive on a chalky soil. It was agreed it may be possible to add some new species in the second season of planting, although this will be limited as there will only be 500 saplings to be planted at that time.

A group from one of the Zoom connections read a statement asking for clarification of the ownership of the Warren, the chair was able to confirm that the Warren is managed by the Parish Council, as a duly elected authority, on behalf of the Parish. The statement went on to question some of the actions of the Council and the accountability and transparency of decisions. It was agreed that, as the statement was quite long and complex, that a written response would be the best way forward, and this would be circulated to all those attending the meeting.

There were other statements in support of the project and the decisions that the Council had made. One contributor, who is an archaeologist, urged those present to take a longer term perspective and see that there have been cultural and environmental issues over the ages which have brought about dramatic changes to the land. It was also noted that the opening up of the canopy would be good for the birds and animals.

Since the meeting, there has been some very positive feedback from the public and the clerk has received several emails thanking the Council and saying how useful and informative the meeting had been. There have also been several offers to join the list of planting volunteers.

There are some areas that need to be reviewed and considered as a result of the Parish Meeting:

- Response to the statement and questions raised at the meeting
- Possible inclusion of new species in the second season of planting
- Monitoring of the main footpath over the winter
- Continue to increase the methods of communication with the public, initially by getting more people to sign up to the Council website.

The following recommendation is made:

To note the report

Summary Chronology of the Harting Tree Project

1937	Warren donated to the Parish Council
c. 1949	Area to NE of the Warren, now known as the Wace Plantation, clear felled and replanted with beech and some ash. As a result of severe squirrel damage to the beech, the faster growing ash and ash seedlings were deliberately allowed to out-compete the beech.
up to c. 1990	Various episodes of felling e.g. in 1955 and in 1982, when 55 mature beech & 8 mature ash trees were felled
up to late 1990s	Woodland maintenance undertaken by groups of volunteers; subsequent lack of volunteers lead to lack of maintenance for some 20 years. With no thinning and no removal of new seedlings, ash becomes by far the most dominant tree species in the Warren.
<i>Recent past</i>	
August 2017	Council commission first tree hazard survey ('leaf on') – advised to fell 6 ash trees because of dieback and a few of other species
February 2018	Second tree hazard survey – 7 ash trees to be felled because of dieback and a few of other species
March 2018	The Woodland Trust offer to survey and report on the Warren as part of its grant-funded Ancient Woodland Restoration Project
June 2018	Survey undertaken. Report not received until.
December 2018	Woodland Trust report received. Ash dieback identified as single largest threat to The Warren. The report also notes that a Forestry Commission (FC) approved woodland management plan (WMP) would be beneficial to the long-term management of the Warren. Format of a WMP is standardised by the FC; approval triggers an application for a felling licence.
April 2019	Petra Billings, chartered ecologist, appointed to produce the recommended WMP
June 2019	Third tree hazard survey (report received 3 July). All ash trees affected by dieback; advised all should be fell as soon as possible, given the number of footpaths in the Warren and proximity to the B2146.
16 June 2019	Visit by Forestry Commission Regional Deer Officer to provide advice on deer fencing
20 June 2019	Council agrees ash felling in latter part of September if possible
16 July 2019	Felling licence application triggered following approval of WMP
July 2019	Ash dieback notices posted in South Gardens and the Warren warning of danger and of intention to fell
11 July 2019	Council appoint Euroforest to carry out ash removal and other works highlighted in the hazard report. Timber and brash to be removed and sold to a bio-mass facility to cover the cost of the operation.
1 September 2019	Forestry Commission Regional Woodland Officer visited and was content with planting proposal
27 September 2019	Felling licence issued 4-5 weeks later than expected due to an admin issue at the FC. Slot with contractor lost as a result of the delay.
18 October 2019	Tree felling work begins, along with the one of the wettest periods in recent years
11 December 2019	Completion of work – delay caused by long lead-time for essential power outage at northern end of the Warren
19 December 2019	Council appoint Petra Billings to create planting scheme and apply for a FC grant
20 December 2019	Footpaths through the Warren closed for 6 months for public safety and to allow recovery

Winter – Spring	Sustained high winds and loss of ash protection causes several beech trees in the Wace Plantation to fall
6 February 2020	Through the good offices of the FC's regional Programme Manager, representatives from Tree Council, DEFRA, Network Rail, FC and SDNPA plant 445 trees & shrubs at the southern end of the Warren. Tree Council suggest a Network Rail grant may be available: an outline of costs, put together by Petra Billings, was submitted in early March.
19 March 2020	Council agree planting scheme, budget and that deer fencing be used for part of the Warren to dramatically reduce the number of 1.5m high plastic guards needed for tree protection: within a fenced area, 60cm biodegradable spirals can be used to protect trees from rabbits and voles.
23 March 2020	Covid-19 lockdown. Planned Annual Parish Meeting, to have included discussion of the tree project, cannot be held
June 2020	Footpaths through the Warren are re-opened. Euroforest return to re-profile paths and gather remaining large brash for burning near loading bay (CDC advise against bonfires during pandemic)
12 August 2020	Council make formal application for Network Rail Community Planting grant administered by the Tree Council
19 August 2020	Application for gates across footpaths approved by WSCC
August 2020	Leaflet delivered to every household outlining the work carried out in the Warren and the future restoration project. Request for 'Harting Tree Champion' volunteers.
8 September 2020	WSCC confirm the footpaths are in a satisfactory condition
15 September 2020	NR Community Planting grant for £32,179 confirmed
30 September 2020	Ground works in preparation for the deer fence carried out
1 October 2020	Protection of beech saplings outside the area to be fenced begins
Future	
October 2020	Protection of regeneration
November 2020	Deer fencing to be erected
late November – March 2021	3800 native species of trees and saplings to be planted by volunteers through organised planting days and by professional contractors in areas where the terrain is difficult
October 2021	Protection of selected 2021 regeneration
late November – March 2022	Small-scale planting (c. 500 saplings) to replace failures and infill gaps
Annually onwards	General maintenance, including coppicing, keeping glades clear

Agenda 8 - Grant request- Harting Football Club new goal posts

The clerk has, following a previous conversation, received the following email (below in blue italics) from two members of Harting Football club.

Lovely to speak to you the other day. I'm just following up on our conversation in order to give you all the details you need for your meeting agenda.

Harting Football club's goal posts have been degrading for some time now, to the extent that we deem them unsafe for use, with extensive rust (underneath a fresh coat of paint), and semi-detached goal brackets that leave sharp and rusty edges exposed.

For these reasons we applied for a grant from the FA in order to fund new goal posts, and we're delighted that our application has been successful.

The grant is for 75% of the cost of purchase for a new set of goal posts, up to a maximum of £1,440.

We have identified our desired goal posts, and are hoping to use this opportunity to upgrade to a 'box-style' goal, as it eliminates the need for net brackets and pegs, which provide the biggest safety hazards, and tend to be the first things to break. The goals are aluminium, which will prevent rust and massively increase longevity.

The total cost of acquiring the new posts from the supplier will be £2,030. Of this amount, the FA will cover the remaining £1,440, once the difference of £590 has been paid by the club as a deposit.

We are currently seeking funding for this deposit, and would be immensely grateful for any support we might receive from the Parish Council to help continue the club's growth over the last couple of years.

As a side note, I am aware of the recent activity with the Playing Fields Committee, and would like to assure you that we are a separate organisation and the new goal posts will be property of Harting Football Club.

I've also written a little blurb about the recent history of the club below.

Thanks again for speaking to us, and both Matt and myself would be delighted to attend the virtual meeting on Thursday so that we can meet the council ourselves.

*Kind regards,
Joe Phillips*

A little about the club:

In the summer of 2018, Harting Football club was at risk of folding due to financial struggles and a sudden shortfall of players and management. Matt Weller, a lifelong Harting resident and player of 10 years, decided to alleviate the club of its debt to the FA and manage the club to ensure its survival. He subsequently appointed myself, a Harting resident of 23 years, as secretary.

Since 2018, the club has enjoyed stability, an abundance of players, and an enthusiastic and welcoming ethos. We have one squad of around 30 registered players, and provide very well-attended training sessions once a week on a local artificial pitch to prepare for games at the War Memorial Playing Fields on Saturday afternoons.

We were promoted in both of our seasons, jumping from Division Three South to the Southern Championship of the West Sussex Football League, which has taken us from junior to intermediate status in the English football pyramid (allowing us to face the likes of Worthing Town at home on 10 October in the county cup!).

The Council is asked to consider this request based on the information noted above and on the understanding that that goals are the property of the Football Club.

The following recommendation is made:

That the Council consider a grant application from Harting Football Club up to the value of £590 to help with the purchase of new goal posts

Agenda Item 7 – Tree Survey (Leaf Off)

The case of Cavanagh vs Witley Parish Council confirms that an eighteen-month cycle for tree surveys is essential for owners of mature trees adjacent to highways. The last tree survey (leaf on) was undertaken in the Warren in June 2019 at a cost of £390.

The next survey (leaf off) is due in December 2020.

The following recommendation is made:

That the Council commission a 'leaf off' tree survey to be carried out, by Nigel Fagg, Arboricultural and Safety Consultant, as soon as possible.

Agenda Item 8 - Office 365 Licences and IT support

Office 365 licences

It is imperative that each councillor is allocated an individual parish council email address to ensure compliance with GDPR. This also enables information to be gathered via a search if there are any Freedom of Information requests.

The Office 365 provides the individual email addresses along with the file sharing facility Sharepoint. The file sharing system and other benefits of Office 365 have not been fully utilised yet, but it is hoped that this will develop once time allows.

The Council currently holds 12 Basic licences at a cost of £72.00 per annum (1 is held by a Working Party member who needs access to the file sharing system) and 1 Business Licence used by the clerk at a cost of £112.80.

The total cost for the year is £976.80 plus vat.

IT Support Contract

Over the last two years the Council has held a contract with an IT Specialist.

The contract is now up for renewal and the councillors are asked to consider the option to continue this at a cost of £1,000 per annum.

The contract covers:

- help with any hardware problems encountered by clerk or councillors, including home visits
- setting up of any individual email addresses, if required
- set up of file sharing system with clerk and councillors
- help with data cleansing if needed
- advice and help in encryption of appropriate data
- training in the use of Office 365 and Sharepoint
- monthly check for any attempted data breaches.
- ongoing support in all these areas for a year.

The contract is based on an average of two hours per month at £50 per hour, which can be used for IT assistance or for training. Councillors are supported in their home if required. The usage is averaged over the months and if not used for a period can be combined to provide a block of training or IT clinics where councillors can drop by with any problems they may have with their laptops or phones.

The charges outside of an IT contract would be £60 call out fee and then £75 per hour. There would be no provision for assistance with GDPR or data sharing situations.

The following recommendations are made:

- i. That the Council agree to renew the 13 Office 365 licences for a further year at a cost of £976.80 plus vat*
- ii. That the Council consider the option to renew the IT support contract with JnR computers for a further year at a cost of £1,000 + vat*