

MEETING OF HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

You are hereby summoned to a Meeting of Harting Parish Council to be held
by video link on
Thursday 18 March 2021 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 18 February 2021.
- 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. Highways and Byways Advisory Committee (HABAC)**
To note the minutes of the HABAC held on 8 March 2021 (attached) and to consider the following recommendations:
 - i. That the maintenance of disused telephone boxes in the parish become the responsibility of HABAC*
 - ii. That Mr Miller should investigate the potential for the installation of a defibrillator in the West Harting phone box*
 - iii. That the quote from contractor B is accepted for the restoration of the fingerpost at the southern end of North lane at a cost of £1250*
 - iv. That the Council requests quotes for the restoration of the six fingerposts identified as needing professional restoration over the next two financial years with an estimated budget of £5000 per annum to finish by March 2023.*
 - v. That the Council find volunteers to clean and maintain the seven fingerposts that do not need professional restoration.*
- 8. Finance Committee**
To note the minutes of the Finance Committee held on 10 March 2021 (attached) and to consider the following recommendations:
 - i. to note the Finance committee has reviewed the budget for the financial year ending 31 March 2021 and no budget adjustments are necessary*
 - ii. that the Council considers projects for the estimated underspend of £15,000.*
 - iii. that the Council agree an Asset Review Working Group should be established to carry out a review of all the Council's assets, to feed into insurance renewal in June 2021.*
 - iv. that Mr Bonner, Mrs Gaterell, Mr Palmer and the clerk will form the membership of the Asset Review Working Group .*
 - v. to note the Finance Committee have reviewed the Internal Control Review*

9. Online banking (see supporting document for briefing note)

- i. That the Council agree to online banking being set up on the HSBC current account providing the necessary process can be put in place to satisfy the Financial Regulations
- ii. That the Council agree that Mr A Shaxson will be authorised as the Primary user for the purposes of setting up the online banking.
- iii. That the Responsible Finance Officer will be authorised as the Secondary user for the online banking.
- iv. That subject to (i) above the Council agree to open a Business Money Manager deposit account
- v. That the operation of these accounts would be reviewed after 6 months by the Finance Committee, and appropriate changes made in light of the experience and prevailing competitive opportunities to earn a higher rate of deposit interest.

10. Grant request (see supporting document for briefing note)

The following recommendation is made:

That the Council should award the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air ambulance a grant of £100

11. New Council laptop (see supporting document for briefing note)

The following recommendation is made:

That the Council agree to purchase a new Council laptop via JnR Computers for a sum in the region of £600.

12. Parish Council Emergency Group (PCEG) (see supporting document for briefing note)

The following recommendation is made:

To note the report

13. WSALC (West Sussex Association of Local Councils) update (see supporting document for briefing note)

The following recommendation is made:

To note the report

14. Finance

14.1. To approve expenditure for March 2021

Trish Walker	Clerk and RFO salary	941.00
HMRC	NI contributions	108.39
Mrs A Harris	East Harting Telephone Box - panes	21.36
Trish Walker	Clerks expenses	89.61
Petra Billings Woodland Consultancy Ltd	Consultant fees for Warren restoration	262.50
Mill Farm Plants	Holly and crab apple saplings	140.40

14.2. To note income for March 2021 - S106 balance £75.79

14.3. To note that the bank reconciliation for March 2021 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

14.4. To note the bank balance as of 28 February 2021 - £75,889.65

14.5. To note the budget statement for February 2021

15. Planning - To note the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 18 February 2021.

16. Correspondence -

17. Clerks report – (attached)

18. Items for future meetings

19. Date of next meeting - Council Meeting 15 April 2021 time and venue to be agreed

Supporting document – Harting Parish Council Meeting 18 March 2021

Agenda Item 7 – HABAC minutes

Briefing Note

Extracts from the minutes of the HABAC meeting held on 8 March 2021 are copied below to provide background for the following recommendations:

- vi. *That the maintenance of disused telephone boxes in the parish become the responsibility of HABAC*
- vii. *That Mr Miller should investigate the potential for the installation of a defibrillator in the West Harting phone box*
- viii. *That the quote from contractor B is accepted for the restoration of the fingerpost at the southern end of North lane at a cost of £1250*
- ix. *That the Council requests quotes for the restoration of the six fingerposts identified as needing professional restoration over the next two financial years with an estimated budget of £5000 per annum to finish by March 2023.*
- x. *That the Council find volunteers to clean and maintain the seven fingerposts that do not need professional restoration.*

Minute 4 (iv) - Phone boxes

It was noted that the phone boxes had not become the responsibility of any of the Council committees, but it was felt it was most allied with HABAC.

JM discussed the various options for the West Harting phone box, one of which is a defibrillator station. He agreed to take responsibility for the phone box and to gauge what the local community might wish to use it for.

It was noted that the Nyewood and East Harting phone boxes were looked after by the local communities. Sadly, both had suffered some broken panes of glass, but these were being replaced and the invoices will be sent to the Council for reimbursement.

The following recommendation is made:

- a. *That the committee recommend to the Council that maintenance of disused telephone boxes in the parish become the responsibility of HABAC*
- b. *That the committee recommend to the Council that Mr Miller should investigate the potential for the installation of a defibrillator in the West Harting phone box*

Minute 5 – fingerposts

North Lane/Square junction

The members considered two quotes to refurbish the fingerpost at the bottom end of North lane.

Contractor A £2100

Contractor B £1250

This post needs a considerable amount of work and is currently missing an arm.

After some discussion, it was agreed to recommend Contractor B to the Council for approval.

It was noted that some of the work will need to be carried out on site, so the immediate area will need to be kept clear of parked cars for a short while.

Plan for other locations

Following the previous HABAC meeting, JM had carried out a survey of the 14 fingerposts in the parish (see appendix A to HABAC minutes) and presented a list of prioritised repairs. This showed there were 6 fingerposts in need of professional work, the remainder were either in the process of refurbishment or just needed cleaning and minor maintenance which could be carried out by local volunteers.

The professional works are anticipated to be in the region of £1k-£1.5k per post.

JM was thanked for the work he had carried out.

The committee felt it was necessary to ensure the fingerposts were considered for a programme of maintenance as none has been done for many years. It was also agreed it would be a good idea to complete this project by the end of March 2023, when the current Council reaches the end of its term.

A recommendation was agreed to be put to the Council suggesting quotes were requested from the 3 contractors, that are now known to the committee, for the restoration of the 6 fingerposts requiring the most urgent attention.

The following recommendations were made:

- i. That the committee recommend that the quote from contractor B is accepted for the restoration of the fingerpost at the southern end of North lane at a cost of £1250*
- ii. That the committee recommend that the Council requests quotes for the restoration of the six other fingerposts identified as needing professional restoration over the next two financial years with an estimated budget of £5000 per annum to finish by March 2023.*
- iii. That the committee recommend the Council find volunteers to clean and maintain the seven fingerposts that do not need professional restoration.*

Agenda Item 8 – Finance minutes

Briefing Note

Extracts from the minutes of the Finance meeting held on 10 March 2021 are copied below to provide background for the following recommendations:

- vi. to note the Finance committee has reviewed the budget for the financial year ending 31 March 2021 and no budget adjustments are necessary*
- vii. that the Council considers projects for the estimated underspend of £15,000.*
- viii. that the Council agree an Asset Review Working Group should be established to carry out a review of all the Council's assets, to feed into insurance renewal in June 2021.*
- ix. that Mr Bonner, Mrs Gaterell, Mr Palmer and the clerk will form the membership of the Asset Review Working Group .*
- x. to note the Finance Committee have reviewed the Internal Control Review*

Minute 4 - Budget Monitoring 2020/21

The anticipated spend for the year ending 31 March 2021 was considered against the budget. The chair confirmed that it had been an unusual year due to the Covid-19 restrictions which had culminated in a potential underspend of about £15,000.

The members agreed that no adjustments were required to the budget headings.

The following proposals were agreed:

- i. *To report to the Council that the budget had been reviewed for the financial year ending 31 March 2021 and no budget adjustments are necessary*
- ii. *To recommend to that the Council considers projects for the estimated underspend of £15,000.*

Minute 5 - Asset Register

The Asset Register is agreed on an annual basis to satisfy the purposes of the annual audit as well as ensuring the Council has sufficient insurance cover. The members considered the register and agreed that a full audit of the assets should be undertaken. This audit will consider:

- identify the location and state of each asset and detail any necessary maintenance
- the valuation of the asset for insurance purposes
- review the Governance of the trustee led assets and assess if the Council can help to promote or improve facilities

It was noted that the War Memorial, situated in the church grounds, would normally be listed as a parish council responsibility. However, the church had taken responsibility for this. The clerk will ask for written confirmation from the church.

The following proposals were agreed:

- i. *that the Committee recommend that an Asset Review Working Group should be established to carry out a review of all the Council's assets, to feed into insurance renewal in June 2021.*
- ii. *that the Committee recommend that Mr Bonner, Mrs Gaterell, Mr Palmer and the clerk will form the membership of the Asset Review Working Group .*

Minute 6 - Internal Control Review

The members reviewed the Internal Control for the year ending 31 March 2021 and agreed to recommend the document to the Council.

The following proposal was agreed:

that the committee agree to confirm to the Council that the Finance Committee have reviewed the Internal Control Review

Agenda Item 9 – Online banking

Briefing Note

Mr Miller had carried out some research for options for both online banking and a deposit account, and the paper was presented to the finance committee on 10 March 2021.

The committee agreed that online banking would be beneficial, and the restrictions of the pandemic had highlighted the difficulties of a cheque only system.

There was some discussion about various other banking options that were available and used by other councils. However, the members agreed that the current bank account held with HSBC should be extended to include online banking and an associated deposit account.

It was noted that the HSBC will not allow for the two signatory authorisation currently favoured with the cheque system. The online banking would allow the clerk to set up payments, and then once agreed by the Council meeting, they would be authorised by a nominated signatory logging on to authorise the payments. A robust system will need to be put in place to ensure a second signatory is able to confirm that the payments are correctly set up before they are finalised.

The committees agree the following recommendations should be put to the full Council:

- vi. *That the Council agree to online banking being set up on the HSBC current account providing the necessary process can be put in place to satisfy the Financial Regulations*

- vii. *That the Council agree that Mr A Shaxson will be authorised as the Primary user for the purposes of setting up the online banking.*
- viii. *That the Responsible Finance Officer will be authorised as the Secondary user for the online banking.*
- ix. *That subject to (i) above the Council agree to open a Business Money Manager deposit account*
- x. *That the operation of these accounts would be reviewed after 6 months by the Finance Committee, and appropriate changes made in light of the experience and prevailing competitive opportunities to earn a higher rate of deposit interest.*
- xi.

Agenda Item 10 – Grant request

Briefing Note

A request for a grant of up to £500 had been received from the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air ambulance. This would be used to help fund 2 new Oxylog 3000+ ventilators for the rapid response vehicles which attend to the missions that cannot be attended by the helicopters, in 2020 this was about 34% of the calls.

The grant was initially considered by the members of the finance committee as its meeting on 10 March 2021 and it was noted that other requests in recent years had been awarded a grant of £100. As there are likely to be further requests from charities, it felt this would be a fair standard amount.

The following recommendation is made:

That the Council should award the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air ambulance a grant of £100

Agenda Item 11 – New Council laptop

Briefing Note

The current council laptop was purchased at the end of 2015. In recent years it has had two new batteries, but despite this there is no stored power and the laptop can only be used whilst connected to the mains. The audio no longer functions which means an alternative laptop has been used for all virtual meetings. One of the USB ports is also not working.

To ensure the Council work can be carried out effectively it is vital that a new laptop should be purchased. The finance committee considered this at its meeting on 10 March 2021 and agreed to recommend to the full Council that a new laptop should be purchased through the Council's IT suppliers, JnR Computers who will be able to arrange a discount set up the laptop. Initial enquiries show the cost to be in the region of £600.

The following recommendation is made:

That the Council agree to purchase a new Council laptop via JnR Computers for a sum in the region of £600.

Agenda Item 12 – Parish Council Emergency Group (PCEG)

Briefing Note

The PCEG continues to meet on a weekly basis and is focusing on 2 areas:

1. Careful wind down leading up to 21st June
2. Village party on 14th August – details to follow

The following recommendation is made:

To note the report

Agenda Item 13 – WSALC (West Sussex Association of Local Councils) update

The briefings given to previous Council meetings spoke of the problems with WSALC and the need to address them. Not knowing how effective that would be the chair and vice-chair of the Council were delegated responsibility at the 18th February 2021 Council meeting 'to take whatever action they consider is necessary to benefit Harting and other parish councils'.

On 23rd February the Chichester District ALC held an EGM. The chair and vice-chair were replaced, and two new delegates elected to represent CDALC as directors of WSALC. On 25th February WSALC Ltd held their twice-postponed AGM, which was attended by 81 people. As a result of voting on special resolutions the current chair and vice-chair of WSALC were removed, the proposed financial tie-up with Hampshire ALC was stopped, and there is to be re-establishment of a working arrangement with East Sussex ALC. The results of all votes were in the region of 93 – 94% in favour. Since then Mid Sussex and Horsham DALCs have held EGM and appointed new members to the board. The 'new' board of directors met on 11th March, and elected Douglas Denham St Pinnock as chairman and Martin Beaton vice-chairman.

The outcome is that Trevor Leggo has been retained as CEO and County Officer for West Sussex. He will be working 2 days a week for West Sussex ALC (and two for East Sussex). The services of Anna Beams and Anne Butt will also be retained, and is most likely that the organisation will retain the legal services provided by Ian Davidson. It is intended that CDALC as an organisation will be more relevant to parishes throughout Chichester District, especially if the new vice-chairman of CDALC can influence what happens. The subs for the coming year will be 10% less than the figures invoiced for; amended invoices will shortly be sent to parishes. In short this appears to be as good an outcome as we might have hoped for, with the minimum of disturbance.

The following recommendation is agreed:

To note report

Clerk's Reports - Harting Parish Council – 18 March 2021

Agenda Item 17

Items raised at previous meetings:

Topic/Date first raised	Item Detail	Action by	Status
Tree Works March 2016 (Minute 252)	Tree survey and associated tree works, and development of tree management plan	SB/ Clerk/AS Tree Working Group (TWG)	The contractor planting started in the week ending 8 March 2021 and is progressing well. The trees noted in the January 2021 Tree survey have been felled. The Tree Champion badges have been received and will be passed out to the regen volunteers.
Traffic Working Group (Minute 153)	A working group was created to address the problems of traffic and speeding in the village of South Harting	Traffic working group	New post in Nyewood has been erected and will be in use once the new bracket has been received.
HABAC November 2020	Quotes for North Lane finger post. South Downs Safer Roads Task Force. East Harting Flood Pond. Durford Lane and Bridge.	Clerk WSCC WSCC	See agenda item 7 Minutes of the meeting on 30 November 2020 still awaited Dangerous pot hole on edge of carriageway still to be filled by WSCC. A resident has coppiced a hazel which has helped, there has been no feedback from WSCC. The bridge is due for repair by the end of February. Historic England has given WSCC permission to go ahead.
Drop in sessions (Minute 127 – Sept 2019)	To hold monthly Saturday morning drop-in sessions at the White Hart	AOAC	There have been no drop in sessions as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions commenced in March 2020
Online Banking	To investigate online banking to enable the	Clerk	See agenda item 9

	setup and operation of a deposit account		
Footpath lights (Minute 89 – Sept 2020)	To disconnect and remove the footpath lights	Clerk	Estimates for the disconnection of the electrical supply and removal of lights are awaited
Allotments	Change of ownership and the potential impact on the allotments	Allotment Working Group	Advise to be sought from SSALC, if necessary, with regard to the current lease and the legal responsibility of the Council
PCEG Minute 266 Mar 2020	Set up of Parish Council Emergency Group in reaction to COVID-19 pandemic	TW, SG and SB	See agenda item 12
Insurance Claim	Claim from Hastings Direct for damage to a car from a tree falling from Council land on 28 February 2020	TW	A claim has been received from Hastings Direct, on behalf of a client, regarding alleged damage to a car from a tree falling from Council land in February 2020. The claim has been passed to the Council insurers who will be investigating the claim. The clerk will update as more information becomes available.
Annual Parish Council Meeting	Possible movement of AGM to first week of May 2021	TW	The current Coronavirus Act allowing Parish Councils to hold virtual meetings is due to expire on 7 May 2021. At this time there is no indication that this date will be extended, and therefore public Parish Council meetings would need to be held face to face. Councils are being advised to consider moving AGM meetings to the first week of May to ensure the statutory business can be carried out with all members present. A further update is awaited.
East Harting Phone box			Glass vandalised Local resident arranging the repair and will pass invoices to clerk for payment,

Trish Walker - Clerk