

HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of Harting Parish Council held on **Thursday 19 November 2020**
at 7.00 p.m.

The meeting was held via Zoom video link in accordance with the Coronavirus Act 2020

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

In attendance: Mrs Walker (Parish Clerk).

There was 1 member of the public in attendance.

130. Apologies for absence: None.

131. Declarations of Interest: Mr Johnson-Hill declared an interest in agenda item 8(i)a as a Trustee of Harting Community Hall

132. Minutes from Meeting held on 15 October 2020.

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 15 October 2020 were agreed as a true record and would be signed by the Chair when circumstances allow.

133. Questions from the Public:

The member of public asked to contribute to agenda item 7.

134. Matters of Urgent Public Importance:

None.

135. Reports from the County and District Councillor

Dr O'Kelly, the County and District Councillor had circulated a report prior to the meeting and the members raised the following points:

- How does the WSCC Community led hub benefit local people, and can it help people to get a flu jab.

Dr O'Kelly confirmed the hub was an 'umbrella' structure which aims to provide help and stop anyone missing out, it includes the new local track and trace system.

- How will WSCC achieve the required savings, will this be through any structural changes.

Dr O'Kelly confirmed that the anticipated Government white paper is not imminent, so structurally there is unlikely to any changes. Various aspects are being considered with regard to savings including reviews of the recycling centres across the County and the bus subsidies.

136. Tree update The Grant for the Restoration Project

It was noted that the grant awarded to the Council from the Network Rail Community Planting fund (administered by the Tree Council) was being paid in two tranches: 90% had already been received, but not in time for the income to be noted on the agenda, the remaining 10% will be received at the end of the project on production of all relevant documentation.

About 15 Harting Tree Champion volunteers had helped to find the natural regeneration in the Warren and a total of about 700 seedlings have been located and protected with biodegradable

spiral guards. The Chair had also protected about 60 beech seedlings, as these are outside of the area to be deer fenced, have been protected with large tree guards.

It was noted that the level of regeneration was very encouraging and with the added protection of the deer fencing, the ground flora and fauna will be able to flourish.

The deer fencing was in the process of being installed and would hopefully be completed during the following week.

The ongoing Covid-19 restrictions and lockdown had meant the community planting days, planned for 3-5 December, were being postponed until January or February 2020. This decision had been supported by Petra Billings, the Tree Council and the SDNPA (South Downs National Park Authority) Rangers.

There will be about 800 tree and shrub saplings planted by the community sessions, via adult and family sessions, in in the New Year. To date 57 volunteers have registered an interest in becoming a 'Harting Tree Champion'. The volunteers have made contact via articles in the Parish magazine, the tree leaflet, posters at the four entrances to the Warren, the website and as a result of the Parish Meeting.

A variety of designs for a Harting Tree Champion badge, funded by the NR/TC grant, had been designed by Paul Martin. The councillors had received the designs via email and agreed to move ahead with the 'seasonal' badge. It was agreed that Mr Martin would be thanked for his help with the badge design.

The community planting sessions are very likely to be subject to strict restrictions to ensure they are Covid-safe. Mrs Bull, one of the councillors, has volunteered to work with the WTSC (Woodland and Tree Sub Committee) to help pull together all of the Covid-related issues. It is assumed that the 'rule of six' will still be in operation in January.

A planting day was due to take place on 3 December with members of the Tree Council and Network Rail potentially planting 400 trees with the CEO of Network Rail joining for part of the day. However, the 'rule of six' and the lockdown had caused the event to be dramatically scaled down with plans for only 25-50 trees being planted to enable a 'photo opportunity' to coincide with the launch of Network Rail's Sustainability Strategy.

The members noted that a quote from MJO Forestry, a local firm based in West Dean, had been used as part of the grant application, this allows for 2/3rds of the total planting to be carried out by the contractors. The contractors will plant the areas outside of the deer fence and on the steep and rough areas.

The members were pleased to note that two volunteers had offered to deal with the brash pile alongside the area previously used as a loading bay. The cleek will provide them with the necessary health and safety advice and risk assessments.

Although the emphasis is currently on this planting season it was agreed that the on-going maintenance of the area is very important to ensure the young trees and shrubs thrive, and in particular are not overwhelmed by weeds in their early years. It is hoped that the Harting Tree Champions, and the renewed interest in the Warren, will engender long-term and active participation in looking after the woodland, but this will need to be reviewed on a regular basis with a plan in place to move forward.

The following proposal was agreed:

To note the report

137.Grants 2020/21

Mr Bonner, the Chair of Finance outlined the proposed grants for the year 2021/22.

The following proposals were agreed:

i. To agree that the Council allocates grants as shown in the draft budget (item 9) for 2021/22 to:

*a. Harting Community Hall and the War Memorial Playing Fields – (£2300 each)
£4600 total*

- b. Harting Parish hospital car scheme - £180*
 - c. Petersfield Citizens Advice Bureau - £300*
 - d. Allotment rents -£25*
 - e. The Parish Church and Congregational Church burial grants – (£200 each) £400 total*
 - f. Other applications received from organisations with local connections.*
- 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.*

138. Budget and Precept 2020/21

Mr Bonner, the Chair of Finance outlined the proposed budget and precept requirements for 2021/22. He noted that the Finance Committee had reviewed and agreed the proposed budget.

The members reviewed the budget and agreed that the precept should be raised by 2% to ensure the reserves are kept at a reasonable level to cover any unanticipated costs.

The following proposals were agreed:

- i. that the Council agree to request £54,162 as the precept from CDC (Chichester District Council) for the financial year 2021/22.*
- ii. That the Council agree the Budget for the financial year 2021/22*

Harting Parish Council - Budget 2021/22

<u>Budget Headings</u>	Budget 2020-21	Likely spend 2020-21	Proposed Budget 2021-22	Budget Increase/ decrease	
Staff Salaries					
Salary	12,000.00	12,227.38	14,000.00	2,000.00	1
Pension	-	-	600.00	600.00	
Total Staff Salaries	12,000.00	12,227.38	14,600.00	2,600.00	
Admin					
IT/website and telephone	900.00	739.00	550.00	-350.00	2
Microsoft Licence	1,100.00	976.80	1,100.00	0.00	
IT support	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	
Chairmans allowance	200.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	
Audit fees	500.00	500.00	600.00	100.00	
Admin	1,500.00	2,826.61	2,000.00	500.00	3
PC Insurance	400.00	360.07	500.00	100.00	
Training	500.00	216.00	200.00	-300.00	
Legal	500.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	
Election	200.00	-	300.00	100.00	
Total Admin	6,800.00	7,318.48	6,950.00	150.00	
Subscr/Memberships					
SALC/NALC	450.00	415.51	500.00	50.00	
Capital expenditure					
Open spaces, major repairs and replacements	5,000.00	4,000.00	6,000.00	1,000.00	4
Total Capital	5,000.00	4,000.00	6,000.00	1,000.00	
Maintenance					
Woodland Management	2,500.00	2,245.00	2,000.00	-500.00	5
Highways	5,000.00	2,335.00	4,500.00	-500.00	6
Mixed repairs	3,500.00	2,970.08	2,500.00	-1,000.00	
Waste bins/dog gloves bags	700.00	563.87	800.00	100.00	
Grass cutting	2,400.00	1,971.50	2,300.00	-100.00	
Lengthsman	750.00	755.00	850.00	100.00	
Tree survey	400.00	590.00	-	-400.00	7
Total Maintenance	15,250.00	11,430.45	12,950.00	-2,300.00	
Grants					
Hall	2,250.00	2,250.00	2,300.00	50.00	
S137 - eg. Citizens Advice	300.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	
WMPF	2,250.00	1,455.00	2,300.00	50.00	
Churchyards	400.00	400.00	400.00	0.00	
Hospital car	200.00	180.00	180.00	-20.00	
Allotment rent	50.00	25.00	50.00	0.00	
Hall insurance	1,300.00	1,393.46	1,300.00	0.00	
Hall bookkeeping	500.00	579.38	500.00	0.00	
WMPF insurance	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00	
Grants	-	2,605.00	-	-	
Total Grants	8,450.00	10,387.84	8,530.00	80.00	
Contingency	5,150.00	-	6,470.00	1,320.00	8
Total Budget	53,100.00	45,779.66	56,000.00	2,900.00	

Notes:

The orange columns show the budget and anticipated year end spend for 2020-21.

It is anticipated there will be a budget underspend for 2020-21 in the region of £7000

The blue column shows the budget proposed for the year 2021-22

Note 1. increase reflects the potential need for extra hours

Note 2. 2020-21 contained a sum for the development of the new website

Note 3. Includes £500 for council leaflets

Note 4. Capital element includes £1k for office equipment @ needed

Note 5. Includes £1k for Petra Billings advice.

Note 6. Speedwatch, fingerposts refurbishment.

Note 7. A tree survey is due to take place in Nov 2020, next one will be in 2022-23 financial year

Note 8. £2k included in contingency fund in relation to the Emergency plan

139.Appointing delegate at SSALC (Surrey and Sussex Association of Local Councils) and WSALC (West Sussex Association of Local Councils) meetings

The Chair outlined the background to the SSALC and WSALC organisations. He stated that the AGM of West Sussex Association of Local Council's (WSALC) Ltd was due to take place by Zoom on 2nd December 2020.

It was noted that, although members of HPC have attended meetings of WSALC in the past, they have not been officially 'appointed' by the Council.

It was felt it was necessary to ensure, the Council has appointed representatives with voting rights, given the controversy surrounding the current value for money study being carried out by WSALC.

Subject to being clarified by further information yet to be received, it is proposed that Andrew Shaxson and Sheila Bramley, as chair and vice-chair of the Council, are appointed the Council's official appointees with voting rights. This appointment will last until the AGM of the Council in May 2021, or unless there is need to amend the appointments during the interim period.

The following proposals were agreed:

- i. *that Andrew Shaxson and Sheila Bramley are appointed voting representatives of the Council at meetings of WSALC*
- ii. *that the appointments are reviewed at the AGM of the Parish Council in May 2021 and annually thereafter*

140.Highways and Byways Advisory Committee (HABAC)

The minutes from the HABAC meeting on 6 November 2020 were noted and the following proposals were agreed:

- i. *that the Council agree an article will be placed in the Parish magazine asking parishioners to note any footpaths that appear to have dropped off the official footpath register*
- ii. *that the Council ratify the initial response to the South Downs Safer Roads Task Force.*
- iii. *that the Council agree that HABAC (Highways and Byways Advisory Committee) will take responsibility for the Speed indicator Device (SID)*
- iv. *that the Council agree that HABAC should organise a team of volunteers to move the SID and recharge the batteries.*
- v. *that the Council agree that Mr Palmer and Mr Shaxson will complete the online survey for the Government consultation on pavement parking expressing a preference for option (ii) 'A legislative change to allow local authorities with civil parking enforcement powers to enforce against unnecessary obstruction of the pavement'*

141. Annual Governance and Accountability (AGAR) statement 2019/20 – Amended part 2

The clerk gave details of a discrepancy on the AGAR part 2, which had been raised by the external auditor. The error had arisen due to the transfer of the ring fenced ‘youth club’ monies to the capital fund, as agreed by the Council in December 2019.

Section 7 of the AGAR part 2 were amended from £40,313 to £37,103 and the Council approved the change.

The following proposal was agreed:

that the Council approves the amended Annual Governance and Accountability Statement Part 2

142. South Downs National Park Authority Parishes Workshop - West Sussex (2/12/2020)

The following proposal was agreed:

That Mr Bonner and Mr Miller would represent the Council at the South Downs National Park Authority Parishes Workshop on 2 December 2020.

143. Finance

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

Undisclosed	Clerk & RFO Salary - November	887.00
C Read	Refurbishment of W Harting phone box	743.00
Petaprint	Printing of Emergency Packs	350.00
MH Kennedy & Sons	Grass cutting	338.40
Wallis White & Co (Petersfield) Ltd	Internal audit	309.60
Petra Billings	Consultant fees for Warren restoration	575.00
Patricia Walker	Monthly Zoom subscription	14.39
C Read	Repair of phone box glass	77.00

143.2. There was no income in November

144. Bank Reconciliation for November 2020

It was noted that the bank reconciliations had been scrutinised and will be signed by the Chairman of the Finance Committee. The Chairman of the Council will sign the reconciliation in accordance with the Council’s Financial Regulations when circumstances allow.

145. Bank balance as of 31 October 2020 £75,759.50

Noted.

146. Budget statement for October 2020

Noted.

147. Planning Committee

The minutes of the Planning meeting held on 15 October 2020 were noted.

143. Finance Committee

The minutes of the Finance meeting held on 4 November 2020 was noted.

148. Play and Open Spaces Advisory Committee (POSAC)

The minutes of the POSAC meeting held on 26 October 2020 were noted.

149. Correspondence

The clerk had received emails from two residents who were concerned about the machinery being used to erect the deer fencing in the Warren during the wet weather and the potential damage to the footpaths. The councillors confirmed they were aware of the machinery and the Chair was in daily contact with the contractors. It was agreed the clerk would respond on behalf of the Council.

Clerks report

The report was noted.

150.Items for future meetings

Allotments

151.Date of next meeting – The next meeting would be held on Thursday 17 December via video conferencing, the time will be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 8.43 pm.