

# **HARTING PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES**

Minutes of the Meeting of Harting Parish Council held in **Harting Community Hall, Peasecroft, South Harting** on **Thursday 17 January 2019 at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Mr Shaxson (Chair), Mrs Bramley, Mr Healey, Dr Bowman, Mr Bonner, Mr Powys Maurice, Mrs Dawson, Mr Stuttaford and Mr Johnson-Hill.

In attendance: Mrs Patricia Walker (Parish Clerk)

There were 4 members of public in attendance.

**207. Apologies for absence:** Mr Palmer

**208. Declarations of Interest:** Mr Johnson-Hill and Mrs Bramley as Trustees of Harting Community Hall.

**209. Minutes from the Council Meeting held on 20 December 2018**

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

**210. Questions from the public**

A member of public asked the Chairman of the Council why a “red card” had been issued in relation to a planning application and why the red card had subsequently been withdrawn.

The Chairman responded to say this was a matter which relates to his role as a District Councillor and it is therefore a matter for the District Council rather than the Parish Council.

**211. Matters of Urgent Public Importance:** None.

**212. Reports from the County and District Councillors**

Dr O’Kelly (County Councillor) confirmed that Highways England have rejected the application to upgrade the A27 in the next round of funding. Both the Northern bypass and Southern options have been deemed unworkable. The local MP and leaders of WSCC and CDC are meeting with Highways England on 25 January to find a way forward. The WSCC budget for 2019/20 has been published and will be debated on 15 February 2019. It is proposed to increase the precept by 4.99%.

Dr O’Kelly confirmed the continued threat to the subsidised bus routes across the County as, subject to adoption in February 2019, the budget for this area will be reduced by £300k. At this stage WSCC have not published the affected routes, it is anticipated the bus companies will be informed in January 2019.

The budget also proposed cuts to housing related support.

Dr O’Kelly confirmed the review of Velo South has been deferred until 13 March 2019. The broadband project has been completed, and locally Hurst residents will be able to order broadband from 28 January 2019.

Dr O’Kelly will be holding a drop-in session at the White Hart, South Harting on the 24 January 2019 from 10.30-12.30.

Mr Shaxson gave a report as the District Councillor. The CDC planning enforcement team now have a deputy manager in post, this follows a time during which the post was vacant.

CDC have been asked to consider the impact of a hard Brexit, it seems the greatest issue would be the traffic impact if vehicles were held up getting into Portsmouth harbour. Some of the parts for the waste disposal work is imported from Europe, but provisions have been made for this.

Mr Shaxson reminded councillors that the elections were coming up in May 2019, nominations will start on 20 March 2019. Posters and flyers to advertise the election are available from SSALC.

### **213. Ancient Woodland Restoration (AWR) Survey and Report**

Dr Bowman presented the AWR survey and report, carried out in June 2018 and received 31 October 2018, and stressed how fortunate the Council was to have had the survey and report commissioned on its behalf by the Woodland Trust as part of its AWR Project funded by the Heritage Lottery. The report mainly covers the Warren, but some comments have been made regarding South Gardens.

The report assesses the current condition of the woodland and the threats to it and provides recommendations for the future management of the area. The varied ecology of the Warren is evident in the report and it is hoped that measures can be taken to improve and enhance the area whilst continuing to ensure public safety.

A tree management plan would be essential to be able to apply for grants, as well as to provide the Council with an overall plan to ensure the future welfare of the Warren. The report divides the Warren into four zones with South Gardens being the fifth zone. All of the zones are classified as ‘threatened’ and require works to be carried out; these works have been prioritised.

The Tree Working Group have carried out most of the priority 1 recommendations and it is hoped that further work can be carried out with a combination of arborists and volunteers. The Tree Working Group should continue until the new Council is formed in May 2019 and investigate some of the possibilities raised in the report.

The proposals were considered. An amendment was proposed to remove the words “South Gardens and” from original proposal (ii) which read:

*“That the Clerk contacts the Diggers School requesting that intensive usage of the Parish Council owned land in South Gardens and the Warren be confined to the area of the hollow way which is already devoid of vegetation”*

The amendment was agreed.

The following proposals, including substantive proposal (ii), were then agreed:

- i. That the Tree Working Group reports back to the Council's April 2019 meeting having investigated the volunteer groups mentioned in the AWR report, potential sources of grants and the cost of commissioning a tree management plan*
- ii. That the Clerk contacts the Diggers School requesting that intensive usage of the Parish Council owned land in the Warren be confined to the area of the hollow way which is already devoid of vegetation*
- iii. To find out if there is anyone in the Parish with ecological experience who could liaise with volunteer groups or be willing to organise work parties to undertake those tasks which do not require an arborist*
- iv. To note the recommendations in the AWR Report regarding the restoration of the South Gardens ponds and to request that the Play and Open Spaces Advisory Committee (POSAC) considers these recommendations and advises the Council within the next six months on the approach that should be taken*

#### **214. Committee Meeting Room Working Group**

The Chairman reported that following the October meeting the clerk had approached the trustees of Harting Community Hall (HCH) regarding the redevelopment of the facilities to provide a suitably sized and accessible meeting room. A response was received asking the Council to provide some options for consideration.

It was agreed that a Working Group should be formed to consider the various options, and to liaise with HCH and the Parish Council.

The following proposal was agreed:

*That a Meeting Room Working Group (MRWG) should be formed from members of the Parish Council with a brief to, in conjunction with the Community Hall Trustees, research and develop a possible proposal to create a permanent Meeting Room at Harting Community Hall, and to bring proposals to the Parish Council. The group to consist of the Chairman, Mrs Bramley, Mr Johnson-Hill and Mr Stuttaford.*

#### **215. Notices of meetings held in public**

Standing Orders do not say where notices of meetings held in public must be posted.

Currently, the official noticeboard is adjacent to the White Hart in South Harting and by tradition the noticeboard in Nyewood, as well as on the Council's website. The current noticeboard in Nyewood is in a poor condition and is difficult to use; it has therefore been proposed that the use of this noticeboard cease on safety grounds.

Most parishioners now use the Council's website to access agendas, and it is intended that with some improvements the information will be easier to find. It was therefore also proposed that Standing Orders should state that the official venue for meeting notices should be the Council's website, with paper copies being posted outside the White Hart whenever possible and when the website is unavailable. One member asked if parish councils are allowed to use their websites as official 'noticeboards'; Dr Bowman proposed that this part of the proposals be deferred to allow the clerk to seek advice from SSALC.

The proposals were considered, and it was agreed that proposal (ii) as detailed below should be deferred until further information has been received.

*ii. To agree to the insertion of a new paragraph in the Council's Standing Orders which clarifies where notices of meetings are officially posted:*

*3d. Public notices will officially be posted with the due notice period on the Council's website. Whenever possible and when the website is known to be unavailable, notices will also be posted on the Council's noticeboard adjacent to the White Hart, The Street, South Harting GU31 5QB. Members of the public can also contact the Clerk for information on forthcoming meetings (clerk@harting-pc.gov.uk).*

The following proposal was agreed:

*i. To agree that the current noticeboard in Nyewood is no longer used.*

## **216. Online banking**

The clerk reported on progress made towards opening a deposit account. The Council's bank HSBC offer an interest-bearing account which works alongside the current account. However, transfers to and from the account can only be operated via the online banking system.

The prospect of receiving CIL monies in the future increases the need for a deposit account to ensure the Council's reserves are managed effectively.

The clerk suggested the Council enrolls in on-line banking and opens a deposit account, but that the current system of making payments by cheque is continued until at least May 2019 when the new Council has been formed.

To operate on-line banking for payment purposes there would be a requirement for internet access at meeting venues, and the Standing Orders will need to be reviewed.

The following proposals were agreed:

*i. that the Council agree, in order to open a deposit account, to sign up to the online banking provision provided by HSBC and that this will be operated by the current bank signatories.*

*ii. To agree that the online system will only be used to transfer funds to and from the deposit account, and that the current cheque payment system will continue to be used until at least May 2019*

## **217. POSAC Update**

The members noted the unconfirmed minutes of the POSAC held on 8th January 2019. The Chairman gave further details about the Lifebuoy Housing unit proposed for South Gardens and hoped that it would not attract the attention of vandals.

Details of the Working Party taking place in South Gardens on 26 January at 9.30am were also confirmed.

The proposals were considered. An amendment was proposed to change £350 to £500 in original proposal (i) which read:

- i. that the Council should agree to the purchase and installation of a Lifebuoy Housing unit containing a 600mm life belt and a 30 metre throw line with the cost not exceeding £350.*

The amendment was agreed.

The following proposals, including substantive proposal (i), were then agreed:

- i. that the Council should agree to the purchase and installation of a Lifebuoy Housing unit containing a 600mm life belt and a 30 metre throw line with the cost not exceeding £500*
- ii. to note that a Working Party to clear the area around the most northerly pond will take place on Saturday 26th January 2019 at 9.30am.*

## **218. South Gardens Access Road**

Mrs Bramley outlined some advice supplied to the Council by Surrey Hills solicitors in relation to the claim for ownership of the South Gardens access road.

The solicitor had confirmed the following points:

- The conveyance of 1937 transferred South Gardens and The Warren to the Council, but the land has not been registered with the Land Registry.
- The conveyance does not include the access road, however it does refer to the Council having rights from the highway to the point marked A, which appears to be the area of concern
- The Deed between the Council and Valarie Williams appears to grant rights over the section of road from the highway to point A. This could be evidence that at some point between 1937 and 1982 the Council acquired the road.
- The deed of release dated 2000 supports this, whereby the successors in title to Valarie Williams are released from paying the annual charge of £50 for rights of access over the road, and any rights granted are returned to the Council.
- The minutes also show the Council maintaining the road and culvert as if it were within its ownership.

On the basis of this the solicitor has recommended that the Council:

- should register the land included in the conveyance (South Gardens and The Warren).
- register the relevant length of road not included in the conveyance on the basis that the deeds have been lost. The legal term is 'lost deeds'.

It was noted that the RFO in conjunction with the Chairman, Financial Regulations 4.1, had agreed to proceed with the expenditure of £550-£750 + vat in relation to the cost of Surrey Hills solicitors.

The proposal was considered, and an amendment was proposed to add the words "and follow the advice given by Surrey Hills Solicitors".

The amendment was agreed

The following substantive proposal was then agreed:  
*To note the report and to follow the advice given by Surrey Hills Solicitors.*

#### **219. Harting Community Hall (HCH) Solar panels**

The Chairman reported that the trustees of Harting Community Hall (HCH) had received an offer from an anonymous donor willing to cover the cost of the installation of solar panels on the Community Hall.

The Trustees have approached the Council, as owners of HCH, to ask for permission to proceed with this and apply for planning permission to install the panels.

It was noted that the purchase and installation of the panels needs to be completed by 24th March 2019 to benefit from the available government grants.

The Council agreed to give permission in accordance with the lease between HCH and Parish Council - clause 3 sub- clause 3.

The following proposal was agreed:  
*that the Council, as owner of HCH, that solar panels should be considered for installation on the HCH.*

#### **220. Traffic Working Group Update**

Mrs Bramley reported that the Traffic Working Group had met with the traffic consultant, Laurie Shaw, and he would be preparing proposals for a 20mph limit with options including road narrowing and a possible crossing to South Gardens. In the meanwhile, the Traffic Group are investigating both the possibility of permanent Speed Indicator Devices and if there is local interest to set up a Speedwatch group.

The following proposal was agreed:  
*To note the report*

#### **221. All Parishes Meeting 28th February 2019**

It was noted that the All Parishes Meeting would take place at East Pallant House, Chichester on 28th February 2019 at 7pm, and that the clerk and two members of the Council were invited to attend.

The following proposal was agreed:  
*that Mrs Dawson and the Clerk should attend the CDC All Parishes meeting on 28th February 2019*

#### **222. Finance**

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

Trish Walker	Clerk & RFO Salary - January	725.52
Came & Co	WMPF Insurance	930.67
Harting War Memorial Playing Field	Lengthsman	146.00

**222.2.** The following receipts were noted:

£5000.00 bequest from the late Diana Turner to be used only for the War Memorial Playing Fields.

**223. Bank Reconciliation for January 2019**

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.

**224. To note the bank balance as of 31 December 2019 - £70,438.61**

**225. Budget Statement for 31 December 2019**

Noted

**226. Planning**

The unconfirmed minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 10 December 2019 were noted.

**227. Correspondence**

None

**228. Clerk's report**

Noted

**229. Items for future meetings**

Litter pick morning

**230. Date of next meeting**

21 February 2019 at 7.30pm

*As the publicity of the next item might have been deemed prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the members resolved that the press and public would be excluded during consideration of the next agenda item, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s2.*

**231. Land Ownership Issue**

The Council debated this item and agreed the resolutions in the confidential report dated 17 January 2019

The meeting closed at 8.50pm