

HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of Harting Parish Council held at Harting Congregational Church
on **Thursday 24 June 2021 at 6.45 p.m.**

The meeting was held at the Congregational Church due to the ongoing coronavirus restrictions and the need for social distancing. The Coronavirus Act 2020 allowing councils to hold public meetings via video conferencing ceased on 7 May 2021.

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

In attendance: Mrs Walker (Parish Clerk).

There were 2 members of public in attendance.

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone back to the first face to face meeting since March 2020.

50. Apologies for absence: Mrs Bull and Mr Palmer

51. Declarations of Interest: None.

52. Minutes from Meeting held on 6 May 2021.

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 6 May 2021 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

53. Questions from the Public:

The following questions were raised by two members of the public:

- Was there any progress or information on any extra safety precautions and signage on Harting Hill following the removal of the ash trees. The opening up of the area has also encouraged dangerous driving by motorcyclists.
The Chair confirmed concerns had been logged with WSCC and the County Councillor about the need for more and improved signage and hoped some actions would be forthcoming. The Clerk also suggested the member of public should log their concerns via the LoveSussex website.
- Why is the Council not keeping to the Woodland Management Plan produced in July 2019
- Why did the Council negotiate the worse price for the ash timber
- Why are the tracks too narrow to allow access for emergency vehicles, why are trees planted in the track
- There are some trees that have been disturbed in the recent high winds that need removing
- Questions regarding the article in the August 2020 parish magazine
The Chair confirmed the ash trees had needed to be felled for safety purposes and, although it has been a great shame, the restoration project is now well underway and most people in the community have accepted the circumstances. He confirmed that the timber sales had more than covered the cost of the tree felling works and

that a substantial grant had been awarded by the Tree Council, which is covering the vast majority of the restoration work. He also confirmed trees had been planted to narrow the tracks to deter cyclists from using the footpaths.

The Chair, and a member of the Council urged the member of public to take a positive step forward with the Council and join the group of volunteers that are signed up to help in the Warren.

The member of public was not agreeable to this and stated there would be many people who had concerns for a long time to come.

The Vice Chair took the opportunity to state the whole Council was in support of the Chair and had all agreed the course of action taken during the tree works.

After some heated discussion the Chair drew the period for Public Questions to a close and the member of public left the meeting.

- 54. Matters of Urgent Public Importance:** It was noted there had been another spate of burglaries in West Harting. It was noted that people in the neighbourhood were being made aware so they can try to keep their premises as secure as possible.

55. Reports from the County and District Councillor

Dr O'Kelly, the County and District Councillor was unable to attend the meeting due to a local by-election, however she had circulated a report prior to the meeting. The following points of interest were noted:

- The need to supply neighbour notification letters for planning applications is being reviewed
- The Government initiative to retain rural bus services should be significant for the parish

56. Internal audit 2020/21

The Council noted that the Internal Audit had been completed by Peter White Ltd without any issues.

The following proposal was agreed:

To note the completion of the Internal Audit for 2020/21

57. Annual Governance and Accountability (AGAR) statement 2020/21

The statement had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. The members reviewed the responses to the questions read out by the Chairman and agreed that "Yes" should be the response to all the statements.

The clerk and the Chairman signed and dated the Governance Statement.

The following proposal was agreed:

that the Council approves the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21

58. Accounting statements 2020/21

The accounting statements had been circulated to the members in advance of the meeting. The Chairman proposed that the Accounting Statement for 2020/21 should be approved and the Annual Return submitted to the external auditor.

The members agreed and the RFO and Chairman signed and dated the Accounting Statement.

The following proposal was agreed:

that the Council approves the Accounting Statements for 2020/21

59. Notice of public rights and publication of unaudited Annual Governance and Accountability statement

The members noted that the unaudited AGAR and the notice of public rights would be published and the 30 working days of inspection would be set for the period 25 June 2021 to 6 August 2021.

The following proposal was agreed:

To note that the period for the public inspection of the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2021 will be from 25 June 2021 to 6 August 2021.

60. New Homes Bonus (NHB)

The Chichester District Council (CDC) Grants and Concessions Panel met on 24 March 2021, and approved the Indicative Allocation for the New Homes Bonus (NHB) 2021/22. Harting is one of the eligible parishes as there has been an increase of 5 properties during the period from 2/1/2018 to 31/12/2020 and a sum of £830 is available to the Parish. The NHB is not automatically provided to parishes, an application has to be submitted by 30th July 2021, the panel will then meet in September to finally allocate the sums.

The aim of the NHB is to:

- To improve quality of life for the community, and stimulate cohesive and vibrant communities
- To allocate monies and reward communities where significant development has occurred
- To facilitate infrastructure where there are deficits within a community or area
- To enhance local facilities available to new and existing residents
- To encourage communities to identify their needs and work collaboratively to address them

The members discussed the proposal that had been put forward which included new bench seat for the Street in South Harting, refurbishment of fingerposts and a new noticeboard for Nyewood.

After some discussion the members agreed the Nyewood noticeboard was the preferred option as there is not noticeboard currently in the village. It was agreed the benches may be considered at a later date with funds being used from other funding options.

The following proposals were agreed:

- i. To note the report*
- ii. That the New Homes Bonus application should be made for a new noticeboard*
- iii. To agree the noticeboard would be located by the bus shelter in Nyewood*
- iv. To agree the clerk will complete the New Homes Bonus application on behalf of the Council*

61. Parish Council Emergency Group (PCEG)

The PCEG continues to meeting via Zoom on a weekly basis. There have not been any issues of concern.

The arrangements for the Parish Gathering on 14 August 2021 continue. Facilities for people to buy food will be available from a variety of mobile vans, it is unlikely that alcohol will be on sale due to licensing arrangements. It is hoped local musicians will be able to provide some entertainment. A portable disabled toilet will also be arranged. It is hoped that local organisations and groups will take the opportunity to set up a stall to advertise themselves.

A leaflet will be produced and delivered to each household to advertise the event and give an update on the status of the PCEG.

The following proposal was agreed:

To note the report.

62. Review of Terms of Reference for the Planning Committee and Finance Committee.

The following proposals were agreed:

- i. To note the Terms of Reference for the Planning Committee have been reviewed by that Committee and no amendments are proposed*
- ii. To note the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee have been reviewed by that Committee and it is recommended the sections in paragraph 2 regarding the Health and Safety and Risk Management are removed as they are now the responsibility of the Aims and Objectives Advisory Committee.*

63. Review of Data Protection Policy

The Data Protection Policy was reviewed and agreed.

64. Review of IT Security policy for councillors

The IT Security Policy for councillors was reviewed and agreed.

65. Review of IT Security policy for staff

The IT Security Policy for councillors was reviewed and agreed.

66. Review of Media and Press Policy

The Media and Press Policy was reviewed and agreed.

67. Finance

Undisclosed	Clerk and RFO Salary	941.60
HMRC	Tax and NI contributions	104.52
War Memorial Playing Fields	Balance of grant from 2020/21	1,455.00
Came & Company	Parish Council insurance	1,053.44
Clarity Accounting	Quarterly payroll charge	27.00
M H Kennedy & Son Ltd	Grass cutting	338.40
Mulberry & Co	Clerk training	42.00
Trish Walker	Zoom subscriptions for May/June 2021	28.78
Playsafety Limited	Play area inspection	181.20

67.1. The income for May 2021 was noted:

£896.43 vat refund

68. Bank Reconciliation for June 2021

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.

69. Bank balance as of 1 June 2021 £89,035.02

Noted.

70. Budget statement to 31 May 2021

Noted.

71. Finance

The unconfirmed minutes of the Finance Committee held on 1 June 2021 were noted and the following proposals were agreed:

- i. *That the Council note the cost of the North Lane fingerpost has increased by £390 to £1640 as a result of additional work to the finial fixings and that the Council Chair and the RFO have agreed this increased expenditure in accordance with section 4.1 of the Financial Regulations.*
- ii. *that a full review of the asset register has been completed and has identified:*
 - a. *an understatement of assets in the Council insurance schedule which has been addressed in the insurance renewal due 1 June 2021*
 - b. *necessary maintenance is required to some items of street furniture and quotes will be gathered for future consideration.*
- iii. *that the insurance schedules have been reviewed and that the Council schedule has been updated to include the correct valuations for all the Council assets.*
- iv. *that the Financial Regulations have been reviewed.*
- v. *that the subscriptions to NALC and WSALC should be retained at the current level and that the clerk should be refunded for any SLCC membership any historic costs that have been incurred*

72. Planning Committee

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 5 May 2021 and 2 June 2021 were noted.

73. Play and Open Spaces Advisory Committee (POSAC)

The minutes of the POSAC held on 8 June 2021 were noted. There was some discussion regarding the positioning of the new South Gardens sign, the planned signage was not very tall so it was felt the emphasis may be on the bins that are inside the gate rather than the sign. The options to move the bins and perhaps remove the dog bins were discussed.

It was agreed the decision should be deferred until further information was available. The clerk will ask the contractor if the signage can be increased to 2.5 metres tall and will contact Chichester District Council about the options and costs associated with the removal or relocation of bins.

The following proposal was agreed:

To note the play area inspection had been carried out on 18 May 2021, there are no high risk issues, and quotes will be sought for the necessary actions and repairs and will be taken to a future Council meeting for consideration.

74. Feedback from WMPF and HCH representatives

The WMPF have welcomed the Parish Council representatives and the AGM is likely to be on either 12 or 15 July 2021.

The Hall AGM is due to take place on 6 July 2021 and it is anticipated the current Chair will be resigning. The hall has received grants during the period of lockdown and this has placed them in a strong financial position.

75. Correspondence: The clerk had received an item of correspondence to report to the meeting:

- A potential buyer for one of the properties backing onto south Gardens had asked if vehicular access might be permitted through South Gardens to the rear of the property. The clerk had responded to say the Council would not be able to allow access due to the well used play area and recreational facilities and the need to keep the area secure from traveller incursion. It was also stated the access road leading to South Gardens was not owned by the Council.

76. Clerk's report

The report was noted and an update was requested regarding the status of the online banking. The clerk confirmed this was underway but the processes for making online payments, with the HSBC account held by the Council, needed clarification to ensure they were robust and conformed to the Financial Regulations.

77. Items for future meetings

Review of policies

Jubilee 2022

South Gardens signage

78. Date of next meeting: The next meeting would be held on Thursday 15 July 2021. The time and venue will be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.