

HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of Harting Parish Council held at Harting Congregational Church
on **Thursday 15 July 2021 at 7.00 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 Bull, Mrs Curran, Mrs Dawson, Mrs Gaterell, Mrs Martin, Mr Miller and Mr Palmer.

In attendance: Mrs Walker (Parish Clerk).

There was 1 member of public in attendance.

79. Apologies for absence: Mrs Bramley and Mr Johnson-Hill.

80. Declarations of Interest: None.

81. Minutes from Meeting held on 24 June 2021.

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 24 June 2021 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

82. Questions from the Public:

The member of public asked if Agenda Item 9, New Homes Bonus, related to the new housing sited proposed in the Local Plan.

The clerk confirmed New Homes Bonus was calculated retrospectively and so related to the increase in houses in the previous two years.

83. Matters of Urgent Public Importance:

Mrs Gaterell confirmed the PCEG (Parish Council Emergency Group) would be standing down on 19 July 2021 as the Government Covid-19 restrictions will all be removed at that point. It was noted the PCEG will always be ready for any future emergencies that may arise. It was confirmed that, if any needs arose from the current increase in Covid numbers, there was still help available.

The experiences of the PCEG, in particular the buddy system, has shown that it would be desirable to carry on some of the services and thereby create an enduring support system for parishioners. It was suggested that a Wellbeing and Community Working Group should be established to consider the options available, and hopefully report back to the September Council meeting.

The following proposals were agreed:

- i. That the Council notes the PCEG (Parish Council Emergency Group) will be standing down on Monday 19 July 2021*
- ii. That the Council agrees to set up a Wellbeing and Community Support Working Group, from the members of the PCEG, to consider a more enduring provision of support for vulnerable residents*

84. Reports from the County and District Councillor

Dr O'Kelly, the County and District Councillor attended and had circulated a report prior to the meeting. The following points of interest were noted:

- The statistics for the new Covid cases in the Chichester District were not readily available at a parish level

85. Tree report

The members were informed that a large majority of the 3075 saplings planted at the end of March were thriving and the recent consistent periods of rain had helped to overcome the very dry period in April.

The Warren restoration volunteers had been contacted and had been asked to confirm if they were available to help with weeding, searching for and protecting new seedlings, and righting the canes and spirals that were leaning. The Chair had already carried out a lot of weeding and would be working with the volunteers to identify which areas were in need of attention. The initial response from volunteers had been positive. Twelve weed slashers had been purchased to aid the weeding.

It was also noted that the design for information boards to be placed at the north and south entrances of the Warren will be getting underway with input from the Tree Council.

The members noted the extremely high winds at the end of May 2021 had caused some tree damage and loss in the Warren and in the wider community. This had resulted in several trees falling in the Warren, two of which were cleared by local residents. There were five beech that had been left with lifted root plates and were leaning across public areas. The Clerk and Chairman agreed for a local contractor to remove the trees. Due to the dangerous nature of the trees a 80mm tracked cherry picker was used to carry out the works, the contractor was very careful and was able to limit damage to both the paths and the newly planted saplings.

The following proposals were agreed:

- To note the report*
- That the Council note that the Chairman and the RFO have agreed expenditure of £2000, in accordance with Section 4.1 of the Financial Regulations, for the felling of five trees in the Warren damaged in the recent storms.*
- That the Council note the Chairman and the RFO have agreed expenditure of £46.68 + VAT, in accordance with Section 4.1 of the Financial Regulations, for the purchase of 12 weed slashers.*

86. Habitual or Vexatious Complaints Policy

The Council noted that, despite having an agreed Complaints Policy and procedure, it is becoming increasingly necessary for all parish councils to adopt a Habitual or Vexatious Complaints Policy. This provides a mechanism for a Council and its staff to have a clear process for dealing with situations that arises from persistent complainants.

The members considered the draft policy and agreed its adoption.

The following proposal was made:

That the Council consider and adopted the Habitual or Vexatious Complaints Policy

87. New Homes Bonus (NHB)

At its June meeting the Council agreed the NHB application should be made for a new noticeboard in Nyewood. The application had been completed and three quotes were

included for information. The Council was required to give a preference on the application for the contractor they wished to use.

The following quotes were considered:

The Acorn Workshop £875 +vat

Noticeboard Company £696.58+ vat

Green Barnes £1968.61 + vat

The members agreed the quote from Acorn Workshop was the preferred option and that this would be indicated in the NHB application.

The following proposals were agreed:

- i. To note the report*
- ii. To agree that the New Homes Bonus application should be made in respect of a new noticeboard for Nyewood produced by Acorn workshop*

88. South Gardens signage

Following the discussion at the Council meeting on 24 June 2021 the clerk had contacted Chichester District Council (CDC) about the possible removal or relocation of the bins and dog bins in South Gardens. It was confirmed that dog waste can be placed in normal bins, however, it is preferable for there to be a good mix of rubbish rather than just dog waste. The CDC officer advised it was preferable to have the bins in a visible position to ensure people use them. They also confirmed that CDC would have to approve the relocation of bins, currently these inspections are not taking place and busy seaside towns in the District will have first priority this year.

The Clerk had also been in contact with the sign makers and had confirmed the proposed sign could be increased to result in a top height of 2 metres above the ground. The price of the sign would rise to £563 + vat, an increase of £67 on the previously agreed sum.

The members agreed that, given the raised height of the sign which will attract attention being above the line of the bins, that the sign should be ordered at the increased height and installed in the position recommended by the POSAC (Play and Open Spaces Advisory Committee).

The following proposals were:

- i. To note the report*
- ii. That the Council agree the post for the South Gardens signage should be lengthened to 2.5 metres at an additional cost of £67 + vat*
- iii. That the Council agree that given the increased height of the sign and the difficulty in arranging for the relocation or removal of bins, that the sign be erected in the position recommended by the POSAC meeting on 8 June 2021*

89. Parish Council Emergency Group (PCEG)

The PCEG was discussed under Matters of Urgent Public Importance and it was noted the PCEG would be standing down on 19 July 2021.

The arrangements for the Parish Gathering on 14 August 2021 were still progressing. 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 recommendation is made:

To note the report.

90. Review of Terms of Reference

The following proposals were agreed:

- i. *the Terms of Reference for the Aims and Objectives Advisory Committee were reviewed and agreed*
- ii. *the Terms of Reference for the Complaints Committee were reviewed and agreed*
- iii. *the Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee were and agreed*
- iv. *the Terms of Reference for the Highways and Byways Advisory Committee were reviewed by that Committee and the following changes were agreed:*
 - a. *Section 10 - the wording “notwithstanding 10” is replaced with “nothwithstanding 9”*
 - b. *Section 15 – the wording “Standing Orders” is replaced with “Terms of Reference”*

91. Complaints procedure

The Complaints procedure was reviewed and agreed.

92. Grants policy

The Grants policy was reviewed and agreed.

93. Retention of documents

The Retention of documents policy was reviewed and agreed

94. All Parishes Meeting 9 September 2021

The following proposal was agreed:

That Mr Shaxson and Mr Bonner will attend the CDC All parishes meeting on 9 September 2021.

95. Finance

Undisclosed	Clerk and RFO Salary	887.60
Wallis White & Co	Internal audit	326.40
Debra Harknett-Godfree	Year end account advice and prep	106.88
Debra Harknett-Godfree	Hall bookkeeping	78.75
Edge Entertainment Consultants Ltd	Inflatables for parish gathering	660.00
Trish Walker	Expenses April - July 2021	111.76
Trish Walker	Monthly zoom subscription	14.39
M H Kennedy & Son Ltd	Grass cutting	338.40
Justin Hindley	Tree felling in Warren - storm damage	2,000.00
Harting War Memorial Playing Field	Lengthsman	195.00

95.1. There was no income for June 2021

96. Bank Reconciliation for July 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.

97. Bank balance as of 30 June 2021 £87,745.02

Noted.

98. Budget statement to 30 June 2021

Noted.

99. Highway and Byways Advisory Committee (HABAC)

The unconfirmed minutes of the HABAC held on 6 July 2021 were noted and the following proposal was agreed:

That the Council agree to appoint K & R Power to disconnect and remove the footpath lights at a cost of £120.00

100. Planning Committee

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 24 June 2021 were noted.

101. Feedback from WMPF and HCH representatives

The WMPF AGM had been moved to Tuesday 20 July at 6pm at the Playing Fields. The WMPF representative reminded the councillors about the Picnic in the Park due to take place on Saturday 14 August, following the Horticultural Show. There will be light entertainment, free minibus transport for those that need it, food vans and hopefully some live music. Leaflets will be delivered to each household with the final details.

The Hall AGM is due to take place on 21 July 2021.

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

- A member of public, who had previously been in contact, had sent an email raising concerns in relation to the ash dieback tree works in the Warren in December 2019 and the subsequent Restoration project.
It was agreed the Clerk would respond to any new issues raised and refer the resident to previous correspondence for previously raised issues.

103. Clerk's report

The report was noted.

104. Items for future meetings

Review of policies

Jubilee 2022

105. Date of next meeting: The next meeting would be held on Thursday 19 September 2021. The time and venue will be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.