

HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of Harting Parish Council held at Harting Community Hall
on **Thursday 21 October 2021 at 7.00 p.m.**

Present: Mr Shaxson (Chair), Mr Bonner, Mrs Bramley, Mrs Curran, Mrs Dawson, Mrs Gaterell, Mr Miller and Mr Palmer.

In attendance: Mrs Walker (Parish Clerk).

There were 6 members of public in attendance.

131. Apologies for absence: Mrs Bull, Mr Johnson-Hill and Mrs Martin.

132. Declarations of Interest: None.

133. Minutes from Meeting held on 16 September 2021.

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 16 September 2021 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

134. Questions from the Public:

The following points were raised by members of public in relation to the Climate Change agenda item:

- the planning authorities should be encouraged to stop houses being demolished and rebuilt wasting precious resources
- newly built houses in the parish should be carbon neutral
- the District Council should offer more specific recycling options
- verges in the Parish should be left to grow to encourage wildlife, where it is safe to do so
- residents should be encouraged to plant trees and wildlife meadows, gardens or containers
- perhaps a Repair Café should be opened in the parish
- could the Harting minibuses be electric
- provision of charging points in the parish

The Chair confirmed the policies in the SDNPA Local Plan were designed to encourage more environmentally friendly buildings. He also noted that the public attendance with regard to the Climate Change item confirmed the importance of this subject.

135. Matters of Urgent Public Importance: None

136. 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 success of the Milland Green Fair run by the Eco Rother action group
- The potential for more flexibility regarding speed policy and the impact this may have on requests for 20mph zones

- Dr O'Kelly was asked to investigate whether there is any news on the DfT 'Pavement Parking: options for Change' Consultation, which the Parish Council participated in a year ago. She undertook to do so.

137. New Homes Bonus - Nyewood noticeboard

The New Homes Bonus (NHB) application for £830, submitted to Chichester District Council (CDC) in June 2021 for a new noticeboard in Nyewood, had been successful. The members accepted the conditions of the Agreement, noting paragraph 2.1.4 concerning the restricted use of the monies, and it was confirmed the Clerk would sign the document on behalf of the Council.

The initial preference had been for a wooden noticeboard, but further investigation had shown this may not be as resilient in the long term as a coated metal noticeboard. The members agreed the metal noticeboard should be purchased and the wording would be 'Nyewood' with a picture of the Nyewood pheasant. The cost of the board will be £872.58 + vat.

The following recommendations were agreed:

- That the Council accept the conditions of the Agreement relating to New Homes Bonus (Parish Allocations) 2021/22 and that the Clerk shall sign the Agreement on behalf of the Parish Council.*
- That the Council agree to proceed with the purchase of the board from The Noticeboard Company at a cost of £872.58 + vat*
- That the Council agree the wording will be 'Nyewood'*

138. Tree report

Two tree -volunteer working parties had been held in the Warren during October with about 18 volunteers attending over the two mornings. They worked in groups to carry out essential weeding, searching for and protecting regeneration as well as checking for failed saplings. There was a general sense that the events were greatly enjoyed and a feeling that community working was developing. Further working parties will be arranged when necessary and it is hoped the volunteers unable to attend the October dates will then be available.

There are potentially 2000 seedlings to be planted in 2022, mostly in the Wace Plantation, but also in other areas that are sparsely planted. The planting will be community based with the current volunteers and others who indicate an interest as the time approaches. The community planting days are likely to take place in January or early February 2022. The SDNPA Rangers have indicated they are happy to support the sessions.

The success rate of the seedlings protected in the last year and the saplings planted in the last two seasons was noted to be high.

Dawn Nelson, a local botanist, had kindly agreed to undertake a botanical survey of the Warren to log the species that are appearing now the dense ash-tree cover has gone. This will provide a snapshot of the opportunistic light-seeking species that have sprung up and which will gradually disappear as the new canopy develops.

The members considered a request from the treasurer of a local cycling group to plant a tree in the Warren in commemoration of one of their very active members who had died suddenly at the age of 51. The group is willing to join one of the community planting days and incorporate the planting of a commemorative tree. After some consideration it was agreed this could happen and the Woodland & Tree Sub-Committee would liaise with the

group about the placement and species of the tree. It was agreed that a memorial plaque would not be allowed.

The following recommendations were agreed:

- i. To note the report*
- ii. To agree the request from the 'Team Axiom' cycling club to plant a commemorative tree in the Warren*
- iii. That the Woodland & Tree Sub-Committee liaise with the cycling club regarding the volunteer planting days and the species and placement of the commemorative tree.*

139. Platinum Jubilee 2021

The members considered the Platinum Jubilee due to take place from 2 June 2022 to 5 June 2022 and discussed the options for community events to mark the occasion. The 2 and 3 June will be bank holidays which will replace the usual Whitsun bank holiday.

The annual Harting Festivities will be taking place on Friday 3 June and it is intended that they will have a Jubilee theme, otherwise the content of the day will be as usual. The Street will be closed for much of the day, as is normally the case, subject to permission from WSCC. It was agreed that given the Festivities takes place on the Friday it would be sensible to keep other events reasonably simple but with the key objective of community cohesion.

On Thursday 2 June 2022 there will be a national Beacon lighting and it was agreed this should take place on Harting Down adjacent to the Clump, as has been the case on previous occasions. The clerk will contact the National Trust, the landowners, and the local farmer who has managed the beacon on previous occasions.

The members discussed the options of holding a community party, but it was suggested that local areas of the parish are likely to organise their own gatherings rather than attend a bigger event. It was agreed the Council should advertise the Big Jubilee Lunch event, due to take place on Sunday 5 June, and encourage residents to join with neighbours and friends to celebrate.

The following recommendations were agreed:

- i. To note the report*
- ii. To agree the intention to light a Beacon on Thursday 2 June and that the Clerk should register this with the National scheme and make initial contact with the landowner*
- iii. That the Council encourage residents to participate in the Big Jubilee Lunch scheme*

140. Completion of 2020/2021 External Audit

The external auditors, Moore concluded the audit on 24 September 2021 and the Notice of Conclusion of Audit was posted to the Council website on 30 September 2021. There were no major issues raised in the audit, although there was a comment

that the period of public notice had been for 31 working days rather than the statutory 30 days.

The Chair of the Finance Committee thanked the Clerk for her work on the annual accounts.

The following recommendation was agreed:

To note the completion of the 2020/21 External Audit.

141. PCEG & Flooding issues

The recent excessive rainfall on 2 October 2021 had caused flooding in the area of the junction by the Old Ship, in the Square and by Smithfield. A huge effort by the local residents to keep the drains clear and divert the water meant a disaster was averted, although one house did have some water ingress.

It was noted the Parish Council Emergency Plan contains a section addressing floods, and it was agreed a rapid response plan could be set up to trigger additional help, if the residents needed it.

The members considered whether there was any equipment that might be purchased to help with a flooding situation, but it was agreed the current range of items was sufficient.

The flooding resulted from partially blocked drains in some areas as well as a great deal of water flowing off the fields.

WSCC Highways have agreed to meet on site with the County Councillor and members of the parish council to discuss the causes of the flooding. It is hoped the meeting will be productive and an update will be brought to a future Council meeting.

The following recommendations were agreed:

- i. *To note the report*
- ii. *That the Council should work with the residents in the worse affected areas to set up a rapid response group that can help in emergency flood situations*

142. Climate Change

The members were asked to consider if there was the scope or interest within the Parish to form a Climate Change Working Group. It was swiftly agreed that the interest from the members of public attending the meeting sufficiently supported the formation of a Working Group, and indeed some were interested in becoming member of the group. It was agreed the next step would be to look for further support from within the parish and to then move forward to find ways in which the local community can make a difference. It was suggested that smaller material projects that could easily be managed would be a positive starting point. The Council would give assistance to the Working Group if it is set up, but it was stressed that it would not be a committee of the Council. Mr Miller and Mrs Dawson agreed to join the Working Group and will report back to the Council.

The following recommendation was agreed:

That a Climate Change Working Group would be formed and that further interest would be gauged from within the Parish via articles in the Parish Magazine, Council website and other appropriate methods.

143. Finance

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

Undisclosed	Clerk and RFO Salary	887.60
Harting Parish Council	Deposit cheque to open Unity account	500.00
Parish Council Websites	Annual website hosting and maintenance	240.00
Clarity Accounting Associates Limited	Payroll August to September 2021	27.00
David Chaffe	Data Protection Officer annual fee	150.00
Gallagher	Harting Community Hall insurance	1,433.76
Surrey Hills Solicitors	Advice in connection with Community Hall	600.00
Moore	External auditor fee	360.00
Trish Walker	Monthly zoom subscription	14.39
Trish Walker	Clerk's expenses	66.58
M H Kennedy & Son Ltd	Grass cutting	338.40
Debra Harknett-Godfree	Hall Bookkeeping	112.50
JRB Enterprise Ltd	Dog waste bags	102.60
Alpha Graphics	South Gardens signage	945.60

143.2. The income for October 2021 was noted.

Chichester District Council 2nd stage precept £27,081.00

144. Bank Reconciliation for October 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.

145. Bank balance as of 30 September 2021 £100,085.45

Noted.

146. Budget statement to 30 September 2021

Noted.

147. Planning Committee

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 16 September 2021 were noted.

148. Feedback from WMPF and HCH representatives

There was no update from the WMPF representative.

The HCH representative confirmed the HCH trustees were still keen to investigate the potential for a management arrangement with the Parish Council.

149. Correspondence

There were items of correspondence noted:

- HSBC – had requested Safeguarding information by 9 November, if it was not provided the account would be closed. The clerk had provided the necessary information.
- Festivities – The Chair of the Festivities Committee is concerned about the insurance cover for the event. This is to be investigated.
- Cycle ramp in the Warren – a request had been received asking permission for some young people to create a cycle ramp in the Warren. The clerk will confirm

this cannot happen due to the recovery of the woodland and because cycles cannot be used on a footpath.

150. Clerk's report

The report was noted.

151. Items for future meetings

Climate change Working Group

Harting Festivities

Fingerposts

Deposit account

152. Date of next meeting: The next meeting would be held on Thursday 18 November 2021 at Harting Community Hall, time to be confirmed.

153. Clerk's employment

The clerk left the room, and the Council went into private session.

The chairman introduced his report, drawing member's attention to the fact that the recent clerk's Annual Assessment highlighted that she is consistently working more hours than the 16 hours she is contracted to do. The Council AGREED the recommendation *that the Clerk's weekly hours are increased to 18 a week with immediate effect.*

The chairman introduced his report, drawing the Council's attention to the increasing pressures on finding and employing clerks. After proper consideration, and the Council noting the importance of paying a salary that properly reflects the Clerk's value to the Council and community, they AGREED the recommendation *that the Clerk's salary is increased to £17 / hour with immediate effect.*

The Clerk re-joined the meeting

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.