

# HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of Harting Parish Council held at Harting Village Hall, South Harting  
on **Thursday 16 March 2023 at 7.30 p.m.**

**Present:** Mr Shaxson (Chair), Mr Bonner, Mrs Bramley, Mrs Curran, Mrs Dawson, Mrs Gaterell, Mrs Martin, Mrs Maxwell Davies, Mr Miller, Mr Olphert and Mr Palmer.

In attendance: Trish Walker, Parish Clerk.

Ahead of the meeting a presentation was given by Angela Henslow and Malinka van der Gauw, members of the Friends of Rother Valley Way (FoRVW). After giving some background to the group they outlined the aims to ultimately create a traffic free path running between Midhurst and Petersfield with the first phase focussing on the stretch from Nyewood to Petersfield. Where possible the path will run along the old railway track. It was noted there were still many negotiations to be carried out regarding land ownership but there was a greater support for this since the pandemic.

There were four members of public in attendance.

**256. Apologies for absence:** Dr O’Kelly, County and District Councillor.

**257. Declarations of Interest:** Mrs Maxwell Davies and Mr Miller declared an interest in agenda item 9 Village Hall Committee Room refurbishment as members of the Hall Management Committee.

**258. Minutes from Meeting held on 16 February 2023.**

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 16 February 2023 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**259. Questions from the Public:** None.

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

**261. Reports from the County and District Councillor**

Dr O’Kelly, the County and District Councillor had circulated a report ahead of the meeting.

**262. Finance Committee**

The minutes of the Finance Committee held on 23 February 2023 were noted. Mr Bonner, the Chair of Finance, confirmed the financial situation was strong coming in just

under budget. However, there was the need to vire some funds between budgets to take account of some unbudgeted items.

The following proposals were made and agreed:

- i. To note the Finance committee has reviewed the budget for the financial year ending 31 March 2023 and to agree the following recommended virements:
  - a. a movement of £6.2k from the “contingency” budget to the “grants” budget.*
  - b. a movement of £2.1k from the “capital” budget to the “grants” budget.*
  - c. a movement of £800 from the “capital” budget to the “admin” budget.**
- ii. to note the Finance committee confirms an audit has been taken of the Council assets to be reported in the annual accounts for 2022/23*
- iii. to note the Finance Committee has reviewed the Internal Control Review for the 2022/23*

### **263. Charles III Coronation celebrations update**

At its February meeting the Council agreed to support the arrangements for the Coronation celebrations and to support a grant of up to £4000 to Harting School Parent Teacher Association (PTA) for the Coronation garden, subject to further clarification of costs and installation details.

A detailed account of cost was subsequently circulated to councillors for consideration. Taking account of the comments the Chair, Chair of Finance and the Clerk agreed the funds should be allocated up to the value of £3539 to cover the cost of construction materials and planting.

It was also confirmed the Headteacher was happy for the garden to be open at least six times a year as well as by appointment.

The Council agreed to gift the construction materials and plants, where possible, to the PTA to ensure maximum benefit can be made from reclaiming the vat.

The members agreed that Mrs Maxwell Davies should be congratulated on the work undertaken for this project.

*The following proposals were made and agreed:*

- i. To note that following the circulation of further detailed costings the Chair in conjunction with the Chair of Finance and the Clerk agreed, with regard to 4.1 of the Financial Regulations, that up to £3539 will be granted to the Harting Primary School PTA to cover the cost of the coronation garden and that this cost covers construction materials and plants.*
- ii. To note the Headteacher is happy for the garden to be open at least six times a year and also by appointment*
- iii. That the Council agree to gift, where possible, the materials and plants to Harting Primary School PTA.*

#### **264. Village Hall Committee Room refurbishment**

The Hall Management Committee had submitted a report, with detailed costings, to the Parish Council regarding the proposed refurbishment of the Committee Room at the Village Hall. This room has not been used for some years as there was a belief it did not conform to fire safety standards. However, it has now been confirmed that as long as the room is not used for public meetings, there is no need for a fire escape. It was also confirmed that it can be securely separated from the Pre School who use the hall 4 days a week.

The room is currently seen to be a wasted space and could potentially be used to generate more income for the hall. The refurbishment would aim to make the room suitable for small business meetings or other small group meetings, as well as improving the current storage facilities used by the Parish Council. Currently the Council archive documents and papers along with emergency equipment is stored there.

The refurbishment is estimated to cost in the region of £6400 plus vat and the Committee had requested the Council contribute one third of the cost due to their ongoing use of the room. The remaining amount would be covered by the grant held in reserve for the hall plus the 2023/24 grant due on 1 April 2023.

The proposals were then considered and, following some discussion about the identified need for the room, and noting the Council as Sole Trustee was due to meet later to consider the works, agreed in principle.

An amendment was proposed to add the words 'in principle' to proposals (i) and (ii) which read:

- i. That the Council agree to contribute one third of the cost of refurbishing the Village Hall Committee Room at a cost of £2222.50 + vat*
- ii. That the Council agree to gift the remaining two thirds of the cost of refurbishing the Village Hall Committee Room at a cost of £4441.17 + vat and that this is offset against the reserved grant sum held for the Village Hall.*

The amendments were agreed.

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

- i. That the Council agree, in principle, to contribute one third of the cost of refurbishing the Village Hall Committee Room at a cost of £2222.50 + vat*
- ii. That the Council agree, in principle, to gift the remaining two thirds of the cost of refurbishing the Village Hall Committee Room at a cost of £4441.17 + vat and that this is offset against the reserved grant sum held for the Village Hall.*

#### **265. Speedwatch**

The Scheme was put on hold while the Community Highways Scheme application was developed and submitted in 2022. Following the news of the successful application the members agreed it was a good time to progress the Speedwatch group. A good number of volunteers have been identified and it is hoped one of them may be willing to lead the group. The Clerk has been in contact with the PCSO and awaits more detailed information regarding the volunteer training and the potential loan or purchase of the equipment.

It was suggested, and agreed, that the Highways and Byways Advisory Committee (HABAC) is given the delegated authority to set up this project to enable it to progress as swiftly as possible.

*The following proposals were made and agreed:*

- i. That the Council agree to progress the setting up of a parish Speedwatch team*
- ii. That the responsibility is delegated to HABAC to progress this initiative*
- iii. That the sum of up to £3000 is agreed to purchase the necessary Speedwatch equipment and set up the Scheme*

## **266. Bike stands**

A report had been submitted, following discussion at the January 2023 Council meeting, providing more details about the costings and location of the proposed bike stands. However, it was agreed there was a need for more clarity and the matter should be discussed in some detail by HABAC at its next meeting in April. The item was deferred until a later meeting.

*The following proposal was made and agreed:*

*That the discussion about the bike stands will be deferred until HABAC has met to discuss more specific locations and their implications*

## **267. Finance**

**267.1.** It was proposed and agreed that the following payments should be made:

Undisclosed	Clerk and RFO Salary	1,418.71
HMRC	Tax and NI contributions	426.80
M H Kennedy & Son Ltd	Grass cutting	181.44
Hindley Treecare	Tree works	2,535.00
Trish Walker	Clerk's expenses August - March	189.73
Clarity Accounting	Quarterly payroll charge	27.00
Harting Repair Café	Harting CAN - Part grant payment	300.00

**267.2.** It was agreed that Mr Miller and Mrs Bramley would authorise the February online payments.

**267.3.** The income for February 2023 was noted.

Vat refund £3085.77

## **268. Bank Reconciliation for March 2023**

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.

**269. Bank balance as of 28 February 2023 - £78,181.39** (earmarked funds £38.8k)

**270. To note the budget statement to 28 February 2023**

Noted

**271. Planning Committee**

The minutes of the Planning Committees held on 16 February 2023 were noted.

**272. Feedback from War Memorial Playing Field (WMPE) and Harting Community Hall (HCH) representatives**

WMPE

There were no updates.

HCH

There were no updates. An earlier agenda item had considered the refurbishment of the Committee Room.

**273. Correspondence**

None

**274. Clerk's report**

The Clerk's report was noted and it was confirmed the cross county meeting regarding Hurst Farm to Stanbridge farm section of the B2146 road was arranged for 19 April 2023.

**275. Items for future meetings**

Restoration of water pump

South Downs Local Plan review and Parish Statements

**276. Date of next meeting:** The next meeting would be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 20 April 2023 at Harting Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.