

HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of Harting Parish Council held at Harting Community Hall
on **Thursday 15 June 2023** at **7.30 p.m.**

Present: Mr Shaxson (Chair), Mr Bonner, Mrs Bramley, Mrs Curran, Mrs Maxwell Davies, Mr Olphert and Mr Palmer.

In attendance; Trish Walker, Parish Clerk.

Ahead of the meeting a presentation was given by members of Harting CAN group who outlined the great progress the group had made since its inception at the end of 2021. The group has several working groups which cover topics such as energy, earth matters, reuse and recycling, transport and learning and community. The group asked the members to consider ways in which the Council and Harting CAN might be able to work together in the future in particular with adopting a Climate and Nature charter. It was noted a neighbouring parish had such a Charter in place. It was agreed more information should be circulated to the Council about this.

There then followed a discussion about the possibility of Harting CAN members becoming councillors, particularly as there was the option to co-opt two members later in the meeting. After a lot of debate the Harting CAN members present felt this was not an option at the current time.

There were three members of public in attendance.

53. Apologies for absence: Mrs Martin and Mr Miller, Dr O’Kelly (County Councillor) and Mr O’Kelly (District Councillor).

54. Declarations of Interest: Mr Shaxson declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 13 ‘Election of representatives to the SDNPA Board’.

55. Minutes from Meeting held on 18 May 2023.

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 18 May 2023 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

56. Questions from the Public:

A member of public raised concerns about the following issues:

- The potential impact of parking once the new shop has opened in The Square when staff and customers will be travelling into an area which already has insufficient parking.

The Chair thanked the member of public for raising the issue and confirmed that whilst everybody was aware of the existing parking issues there was little that could be done as there had always been a shop there, albeit empty for some years, and so there was no change of use.

A second member of public asked the Chair of Finance why the Chair had been allowed to misuse Council funds for grants to the Nyewood hall which stated was situated in the Rogate parish.

The Chair, after stating this was a serious allegation, explained that a boundary review had taken place in 2019 and that area of Nyewood had been transferred to the Harting parish.

The member of public apologised for the misunderstanding and then asked the Clerk about something she had allegedly said at a Warren working party.

The Clerk confirmed that was incorrect.

57. Matters of Urgent Public Importance: None.

58. Reports from the County and District Councillor

Dr O’Kelly, the County Councillor and Mr O’Kelly, the District Councillors, had circulated reports prior to the meeting.

59. Election of representatives to the SDNPA Board

Mr Shaxson left the meeting at this point and Mrs Bramley took the Chair. It was agreed the Council would vote for just one candidate and that would be Mr Shaxson.

The following proposal was made and agreed:

That the Council considers the ballot paper for the election of representatives to the SDNPA Board and agreed to vote for Mr Andrew Shaxson.

Mr Shaxson then rejoined the meeting and took the Chair.

60. Co-option of two new councillors to the Harting Ward

Despite advertising the two vacancies and approaching some potential candidates no applications had been received. The members noted their disappointment and hoped this might be rectified in the future. It was noted that the Casual Vacancy process would need to be followed if any candidates were to now come forward.

61. Internal Audit 2022/23

The Council noted that the Internal Audit had been completed by Mulberry & Co without any issues.

The following proposal was made and agreed:

To note the completion of the Internal Audit for 2022/23

62. Annual Governance and Accountability (AGAR) statement 2022/23

The statement had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting, and considered by the Finance Committee. The members reviewed the responses to the questions read out by the Chairman and agreed the response to all the statements. The responses were all agreed as ‘yes’.

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

The following proposal was made and agreed:

that the Council approves the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23

63. Accounting statements 2022/23

The accounting statements had been circulated to the members in advance of the meeting, the considered by the Finance Committee. The Chairman proposed that the Accounting Statement for 2022/23 should be approved and the Annual Return submitted to the external auditor.

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

*The following proposal was made and agreed:
that the Council approves the Accounting Statements for 2022/23*

64. 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 19 June 2023 to 28 July 2023.

*The following proposal was made and agreed:
To note that the period for the public inspection of the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2023 will be from 19 June 2023 to 28 July 2023.*

65. South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) Local Plan Review – Parish Priority Statement

Parish Councils within the National Park had been invited to prepare Parish Priority Statements (PPS) setting out the principal needs and prevailing views of the local community, these will be used in the preparation of the Local Plan Review and decisions on policy development, land allocation and designations.

The Council agreed that this should be completed and noted it would require at least one public meeting to ensure the public were supportive of the Statement. The completed Statement will need to be submitted b 31 October 2023.

The members agreed that a Working Group should be set up to further this work and the Council members would be Mrs Shaxson, Mrs Bramley and Mr Bonner. It was noted that other members could be co-opted by that group.

The following proposals were made and agreed:

- i. That the Council agree that, in the absence of a Neighbourhood Development Plan, a Parish Priority Statement should be completed to feed into the SDNPA Local Plan Review*
- ii. That a Working Group should be set up to lead this process and bring recommendations back to the Council. The members would be, in the first instance, Mr Shaxson, Mrs Bramley, Mr Bonner and the Clerk.*

66. Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information policy was reviewed and agreed.

67. Data Protection Policy

The Data Protection Policy was reviewed and agreed.

68. Complaints procedure

The Complaints procedure was reviewed and agreed.

69. IT Security policy for councillors

The IT Security policy for councillors was reviewed and agreed.

70. IT Security policy for staff

The IT Security policy for staff was reviewed and agreed.

71. Finance

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

Undisclosed	Clerk & RFO Salary - June	1,418.71
HMRC	Tax and NI contributions	398.64
Mulberry & Co	Internal Audit 2022-23	162.00
Clarity Accounting Associates Ltd	Quarterly payroll charge	27.00
M H Kennedy & Sons Ltd	Grass cutting	387.53
M J Visual Systems Ltd	Wall fitted multimedia - Committee Room grant	566.40
Harting War Memorial Playing Field	Lengthsman	224.30
Harting War Memorial Playing Field	Balance of Annual Grant	658.17

71.2. It was agreed that Mr Shaxson and Mr Miller would authorise the June online payments.

71.3. There was no income to note for May 2023.

71.4. Bank Reconciliation for June 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.

72. Bank balance as of 31 May 2023 - £97,884.87 (earmarked funds £41.3k)

73. Budget Statement to 31 May 2023

Noted.

74. Planning Committee

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 18 May 2023 were noted.

75. Finance

The unconfirmed minutes of the Finance Committee held on 6 June 2023 were noted and the following proposals were made and agreed:

- i. To note the insurance schedules for the Council, Community Hall and the War Memorial Playing Fields have been reviewed.*
- ii. To note the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee have been reviewed by that Committee and it is recommended the following changes are made:*
 - a. That the words "to review risk assessments" in Section 2, bullet point 2, should be removed.
- iii. That the Financial Regulations have been reviewed.*
- iv. That the Council's subscriptions to NALC, WSALC and the Clerk's membership to SLCC should be retained at the current level.*

76. Feedback from WMPF and HCH representatives

There were no reports.

77. Correspondence

None.

78. Clerk's report

The report was noted and it was confirmed that a copy of the lease for the public toilets had been received which shows the White Hart as the owners and therefore they will need to give permission for the bike racks to be installed on the wall there.

79. Items for future meetings

Committee membership

Restoration of water pump

South Downs Local Plan review and Parish Statement

Public bins – increase in number

80. Date of next meeting: The next meeting would be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 20 July 2023 at Harting Community Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.