

HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of Harting Parish Council held at Harting Community Hall
on **Thursday 16 November 2023 at 8.15pm.**

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

Mr Tim O'Kelly attended in his role as District Councillor and Dr Kate O'Kelly in her role as County Councillor.

In attendance: Trish Walker, Parish Clerk.

There were four members of public in attendance.

163. Apologies for absence: Mr Olphert.

164. Declarations of Interest: None.

165. Minutes from Meeting held on 19 October 2023.

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 19 October 2023 were reviewed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

166. Questions from the Public: A member of public commented on the Flooding agenda item to be discussed later in the meeting and confirmed that the situation outside their property, on the West Harting road was very problematic.

167. Matters of Urgent Public Importance: None.

168. 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.

Dr O'Kelly mentioned the County Council budget setting process was well underway but it was very challenging. There has been a great increase of need and expenditure in the areas of adult and social care services and this is impacting on the remainder of the budget.

Mr O'Kelly confirmed that the District Council budget was in a much better position, at least for the next couple of years.

169. Parish Priority Statement Working Group (PPSWG)

A parish meeting had been held ahead of the Council meeting and 73 local residents had attended. The evening had been well received and after a presentation summarising the findings of the recent survey, those attending were moved into groups and asked to discuss and highlight the three main priorities for the Parish over the next 15 years.

It was agreed the meeting had been very positive and the initial feedback had been good. It was noted there had been 150 responses to the online and paper based survey. The PPSWG would now meet to summarise the findings and produce the Parish Priority Statement (PPS) in line with the SDNPA (South Downs National Park Authority) proforma.

The draft PPS will be presented for approval at the Council meeting on 21 December 2023.

*The following proposals were made and agreed:
To note the report*

170. Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) application B2146 Hampshire County border to Hurst Farm)

At its meeting on 19 October 2023 the Council had agreed to make a TRO application to reduce the speed limit to 40mph on the stretch of the B2146 from the Hampshire County border to Hurst Farm.

As part of the application the Council is required to provide evidence of support from the local residents and the County Councillor. The residents in that area are being contacted to gauge support and to gather evidence of that support. Hampshire County Councillor, Robert Mocatta, and Buriton parish council will also be contacted to request their support for the application.

The application further asks if there is any funding available from the parish council to contribute to the potential scheme. The members noted there was an amount of £1000 included in the 2023/24 budget for Highways and agreed that £500 should be pledged to support the application.

The following proposals were made and agreed:

i. To note the report

ii. To agree that a sum of £500 should be pledged as part of the Traffic Regulation Order for B2146 Hampshire Council border to Hurst Farm.

171. Flooding in the Parish

It was reported that the recent period of continual rain has caused many problems with several areas in the parish suffering from flooded roads and paths. Some of this has resulted from blocked drains although the problem is mostly due to the volume of rain. The stretch of the B2146 between the Congregational Church and Cow Lane had been a particular problem with the road flooding on 5 occasions in the previous two weeks, residents had needed to intervene to redirect water into the large drain at the side of the Telephone exchange. If no measures had been taken there was a high likelihood that the properties near the junction would have flooded. The current problem, as in the previous two years, is connected to the huge amount of water pouring out of a number of fields.

It was also noted there were four other areas of concern in the parish which could also benefit from some attention. These were the areas arounds Smithfield, North Lane, Bridge Meadow and Hurst.

With the increasing frequency of very wet weather, the situation is very concerning and the members were asked to consider making an Operation Watershed application to try and address some of the highlighted.

In the short term, to alleviate the situation on the B2146, the members are asked to consider agreeing to purchase some items such as sandbags and boards to give immediate help. There was a balance of £1820.45 from the previous Operation Watershed scheme some years ago which had been ring fenced within the Council funds.

It was also noted there were a good number of gulleys within the Parish which are blocked and although reported to WSCC are seemingly not of high enough priority to be cleared. If WSCC remain unwilling to clear them, the members agreed to use some of the Operation Watershed ring fenced funding to employ contractors to clear the most problematic gulleys. The members also agreed that, in an attempt to alleviate flooding, it would be a good idea to ask residents if they would keep an eye on, and if possible clear the drains adjacent to their properties. It was noted this is particularly important in the autumn when leaves are constantly blocking the drain covers. It would be stressed this would be a matter of clearing the covers only where it was safe to do so and reporting any further problems to the clerk.

The following proposals were made and agreed:

- i. that the Council agree to investigate an Operation Watershed application to take account of the flooding issues in the 5 affected areas in the parish; B2146 immediately west of South Harting, Smithfield, North Lane, Bridge Meadow and Hurst.*
- ii. that the Council agree to use funds from the £1820.45 held from a previous Operation Watershed application to purchase items to be used to divert the water during times of flooding*
- iii. That the Council agree, if the WSCC does not act promptly, to use funds from the £1820.45 held from a previous Operation Watershed application to employ contractors to clear the most problematic blocked gulleys in the parish, subject to cost.*
- iv. That the Council agree to approach WSCC to request flood signage to be used on the B2146 leading into South Harting and at Hurst*
- v. That the Council agrees to ask residents to keep an eye on and clear the drain covers, where it is safe to do so, in the vicinity of their homes to alleviate flooding and standing water on the roads.*

172. Defibrillators in the parish

The Council owns two disused BT phone boxes in East and West Harting. Since adoption the two boxes have been refurbished but no long term usage for them had been decided. In past years consideration has been given to installing defibrillators in the phone boxes, however without any grants available to fund the purchase these ideas were not progressed.

The Department of Health and Social Care is now inviting interested organisations to register expressions of interest for its £1million Community Automated External Defibrillators (AED) Fund. The British Heart Foundation has also re-opened grant applications for funded defibrillators.

Funding under these schemes varies from full funding, where the need is likely to be greatest, to match funding. The full cost of a defibrillator and cabinet would be in the region of £1500.

It was noted the installation of the defibrillators would be dependent on certain conditions such as a constant electricity supply to ensure the defibrillator stays at the right temperature in cold weather and is also visible in the dark. There would be an ongoing cost for replacement pads and batteries if these projects were to be taken forward.

The members agreed, in the first instance, for the clerk to investigate and make applications for grants for the two phone boxes. The views of the residents local to the two phones boxes will also be requested with regard to the potential installation of AED's. John Miller agreed to canvass West Harting residents, and Sheila Bramley will make enquiries concerning East Harting.

The following proposals were made and agreed:

- i. That the clerk proceeds to apply for grant funding for two defibrillators*
- ii. That opinion is gauged from West and East Harting residents that, on the basis of successful grant bids or sufficient funding being available, defibrillators might be located in the disused phone boxes.*

173. Permissive footpath to War Memorial Playing Field

The owners of Church Farm, South Harting, had very kindly introduced a permissive path leading from Cow Lane to the War Memorial Playing Field. The path runs alongside the edge of the field to the south of the B2146 and creates a safe route to and from the Playing Fields without the need to negotiate the busy main road. This was very beneficial to the community and the members agreed that a formal thank you should be sent.

The following proposal was made and agreed:

That the clerk contacts the landowners to thank them for introducing the permissive path.

174. Harting Community Hall – Car park white lines

In May 2022 HCH introduced painted car parking lines in the Hall car park, this was funded from the Parish Council grant held in reserve. Since this time, and with the creation of the Humphrey Sladden meeting room, it had become evident that a keep clear zone was needed at the bottom of the steps leading from the fire exit doors. The cost of the updated marking is £250 + vat.

The following proposal was made and agreed:

That the Council agree to gift the line marking carried out by Parkmarks at a cost of £250 + vat and that this shall be offset against the Parish Council grant held in reserve

175. Local Government pay agreement 2023

NALC (National Association of Local Councils) had confirmed that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services had reached an agreement on the rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The award was based on a flat rate of £1925 based on 37 hours per week, this equating to £1 per hour.

It was noted this pay award would be automatically applied to the clerk's pay in December as the payscale is specified within the employment contract.

The following proposal is made and agreed:

To note the report

176. Finance

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

Undisclosed	Clerk and RFO Salary	1,364.71
Chichester District Council	Uncontested election costs	427.50
Trish Walker	Monthly Zoom subscription	15.59
Parkmarks (Southern) Limited	Box hatch lines at Village Hall (grant)	300.00
MH Kennedy & Son Ltd	Grass cutting	193.76

176.2. It was agreed that Mrs Curran and Mr Miller would authorise the November online payments.

176.3. Bank Reconciliation for November 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.

176.4. The income for November 2023 was noted:

£2168.62 vat refund

177. Bank balance as of 31 October 2023 - £110,573.02 (includes earmarked funds £44.3k and budgeted spend £24k)

178. Budget Statement to 31 October 2023

Noted.

179. Planning Committee

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 19 October 2023 were noted.

180. Feedback from WMPF and HCH representatives

There was no report from the WMPF.

There was no report from the HCH.

181. Correspondence

An email had been received from a former resident, who still has strong ties with the area, outlining a potential project to create 'an anthropological piece about the lives of people in Harting and the surrounding areas, creating a sense of who the people who live here are and what life is like'. The aim would be to record interviews with residents as well as recording the familiar sounds of the parish.

The members were very interested in the project and it was felt an invitation should be extended to speak ahead of a future parish council meeting.

182. Clerk's report

The report was noted.

183. Items for future meetings

Parish Priority Statement
Restoration of water pump
2024-25 budget setting

Co-option

184. Date of next meeting: The next meeting would be held on Thursday 21 December 2023 at Harting Community Hall at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.