

# HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of Harting Parish Council held at Harting Community Hall  
on **Thursday 15 February 2024 at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Mr Shaxson (Chair), Mrs Bramley, Mrs Curran, Mrs Hewetson, Mrs Martin, Mr Miller and Mr Palmer.

Mr Tim O'Kelly attended in his role as District Councillor.

In attendance: Trish Walker, Parish Clerk.

Ahead of the meeting a presentation was given by Ed Waller, who grew up in South Harting and is also the son of the proprietors of the Village Stores. He is trained in Sound Art and Design and spoke to the Council about a project he was considering making an audio recording of the lives of the people in Harting and the surrounding areas as well as the 'sounds' that are unique to the area. In some ways this could be an audio update of the 1956 film 'Life in Harting'. He was interested in making it into a radio documentary. The members were interested in the project and suggested it may be worthwhile trying to find a way to capture a video recording as well. The possibility of trying to arrange an exhibition at the Petersfield Museum was put forward, and the members suggested making contact with not only Petersfield Museum, the West Sussex Records Office and Novium Museum, but finding out who in the community might like to be involved. The members thanked Ed for coming and asked him to keep them updated.

There were no members of public in attendance.

**230. Apologies for absence:** Mr Bonner, Mrs Cormack, Mrs Maxwell Davies and Dr K O'Kelly (County Councillor).

**231. Declarations of Interest:** None.

**232. Minutes from Meeting held on 18 January 2024.**

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 18 January 2024 were reviewed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**233. Questions from the Public:**

None.

**234. Matters of Urgent Public Importance:**

None.

**235. 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.

There were some questions to Mr O’Kelly concerning the potential closure of the Petersfield Household Waste Recycling Facility and how this may impact on the Midhurst facility. He confirmed there should be sufficient capacity for the additional load but noted that residents now need to book a slot to the tip. Mr O’Kelly confirmed the food waste collection would be happening before the end of 2026 and that this would mean an extra bin for householders. This would lead to the weight of general waste being dramatically reduced.

There was concern that the wording in the WSCC budget had been changed to protecting the environment rather than addressing the climate crisis. It was noted Dr O’Kelly would be proposing the words ‘climate crisis’ are included.

### **236. Grant request from Harting Parish News**

A grant application had been received from Harting Parish News requesting an amount of £1,000 to help provide financial stability to ensure the continuation of the Parish News, which had been heavily affected by the rise in printing costs.

The members considered the application but felt there were several points that it would be useful to address before a decision was made. It was agreed the matter would be deferred until the March Council meeting when a member of the Parish News team will hopefully be able to attend.

The members recognised the importance of the Parish News in the community and the good work that is done by the volunteers that produce it.

*The following proposal was made and agreed:*

*That the item should be deferred until the March Council meeting when a member of the Parish News team may be able to attend and more information would be available.*

### **237. Internal Audit Fees**

Mulberry & Co. have been carrying out the Internal Audit for the Council since 2021. The audit is carried out in two parts each year with a face to face detailed audit taking place in Sept/Oct covering all aspects and an online year end audit covering the annual governance and accountability return.

The audit hourly fee increased to £65 per hour for 2023/24, up from £60 per hour for 2022/23. There is now an opportunity for the Council to agree to a three-year engagement term which would fix the price at £65 per hour until the end of the 2025/26 financial year audits.

*The following proposal was made and agreed:*

*That the Council agreed to a three- year engagement with Mulberry & Co to supply the internal audit service until the end of the 2025/26 financial year audits at a fixed cost of £65 per hour.*

### **238. South Gardens grass cutting contract 2024-25**

MH Kennedy & Son Ltd have cut the grass in South Gardens for some years. They have continued to provide a reliable and satisfactory service with little direction needed from

the Council and have always left the area secure and tidy. They also seem to be very fair and will not cut the grass unless it is really needed.

The quote for the grass cutting for the year 2024 had been set at £175.00 + vat per cut, based on one cut per fortnight depending on weather and growth, an increase of 8.38% on the previous year.

The Financial Regulations state that three quotes do not need to be provided for “work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council” (Fin Regs 11.1 (a) iv).

This work is a continuation of a current contract and as the work has been satisfactory it was agreed the contractor should be retained for another year. However, the Council did agree that we needed to test the market, and that the service should be put out to tender next year.

*The following proposal was made and agreed:*

*That the Council accepted the quote of £175.00 + vat per cut for South Gardens from MH Kennedy & Son Ltd for the year 2024-25.*

### **239. Emergency Advisory Committee**

The minutes of the Emergency Advisory Committee (EAC) held on 5 February 2024 were noted.

The EAC had met and made initial arrangements to ensure a Flood Action Group was sufficiently ready to help if any future flooding events occur. Further training and organisation of this group will be developed in the coming months.

The Terms of Reference were considered and, having noted the membership of the committee should be up to eight, were agreed.

*The following proposals were made and agreed:*

- i. The unconfirmed minutes of the Emergency Advisory Committee held on 5 February 2024 were noted*
- ii. That the Terms of Reference for the Emergency Advisory Committee, with the addition of the number of members ‘8’ added to paragraph 5, were agreed.*

### **240. Annual Litter Pick update**

At its January meeting the Council had decided to hold the Annual Litter Pick on Saturday 16 March 2024. However, following the meeting further information became available and it was noted the monthly Repair Café was due to take place at the time. The members agreed it would be sensible to move the date for the Litter Pick to Saturday 9 March 2024.

*The following proposal was made and agreed:*

*To note that as a result of further information following the January Council meeting the Annual Litter Pick date had been changed to 9 March 2024.*

### **241. Finance**

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

Undisclosed	Clerk and RFO Salary	1,442.11
Trish Walker	New defibrillator battery - Church	425.39

Mulberry & Co	Councillor and Clerk Training	162.00
Mulberry & Co	Councillor Training	54.00
Trish Walker	Monthly Zoom subscription	15.59

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

**241.3. Bank Reconciliation for February 2024**

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.

**241.4.** There was no income to note for February 2024.

**242. Bank balance as of 31 January 2024 - £101,271.45** (includes earmarked funds £56.2k and budgeted spend £6k)

**243. Budget Statement to 31 January 2024**

Noted.

**244. Planning Committee**

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 18 January 2024 were noted.

**245. Feedback from WMPF and HCH representatives**

There were no reports from the War Memorial Playing Field or Harting Community Hall.

**246. Correspondence**

An email had been received from Harting CAN outlining plans to plant some wildflower plugs in the grass area where the phone box is situated in East Harting.

**247. Clerk's report**

The report was noted. The Clerk confirmed the leaf off survey in South Gardens and the Warren was due to take place on 17 February 2024. A meeting would be arranged for the Speedwatch group and there will be a push to get this moving.

**248. Items for future meetings**

Restoration of water pump

**249. Date of next meeting:** The next meeting would be held on Thursday 21 March 2024 at the Henry Warren Hall, Nyewood at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.