

HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of Harting Parish Council held at the Henry Warren Hall, Nyewood on **Thursday 21 March 2024 at 7.30pm.**

Present: Mr Shaxson (Chair), Mr Bonner, Mrs Bramley, Mrs Cormack, Mrs Curran, Mrs Hewetson, Mrs Martin, Mr Olphert and Mr Palmer.

In attendance: Trish Walker, Parish Clerk.

There were no members of public in attendance.

250. Apologies for absence:, Mrs Maxwell Davies and Mr Miller, Dr K O’Kelly (County Councillor) and Mr T O’Kelly (District Councillor).

251. Declarations of Interest: Mrs Hewetson declared an interest in Agenda Item 8 as a member of Harting Climate Action Network.

252. Minutes from Meeting held on 15 February 2024.

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 15 February 2024 were reviewed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

253. Questions from the Public:

None.

254. Matters of Urgent Public Importance:

It was noted that the planning application for the houses to the East of Southbank had been granted permission subject to a number of conditions being satisfied. The Chair of the Planning Committee had attended the SDNPA Planning Meeting on 14 March 2024 to speak in objection on behalf of the Parish Council. The decision notice had still not been published on the SDNPA planning website.

255. 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 no matters arising from the reports.

256. Grant request from Harting Parish News

A grant application had been received from Harting Parish News requesting £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 editor of the Parish News was able to attend the meeting and confirmed the funding issues had primarily arisen from a large increase in printing costs and subscription numbers dropping over the last 5 years from 750 to 470. She also confirmed that this would not be an annual request.

It was agreed that the magazine was very important to the Parish and was also a useful means of communication for the Council.

After some discussion it was agreed the full request of £1000 should be granted to the Parish News.

The following proposal was made and agreed:

That the Council agree a grant to Harting Parish News for the sum of £1000 to help cover the costs of producing the monthly parish magazine

257. Grant request from Harting CAN (Climate Action Network)

A grant request had been received from Harting CAN asking for 50% of the cost of an Independent Energy Assessment (IEA) for Harting Community Hall. The group is working with the HCH management committee to look at renewable energy options for the hall. The IEA would estimate the various heat losses as well as predict the different types of renewable energy technologies that might be beneficial. It would also ensure eligibility to apply for grants.

The following proposal was made and agreed:

That a grant was agreed for Harting Climate Action Network for the sum of £300+vat to provide 50% of the cost towards an Independent Energy Assessment for Harting Community Hall.

258. Finance Committee – Year end budget

The minutes of the Finance Committee held on 11 March 2024 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 had reviewed the budget for the financial year ending 31 March 2024 and the following virements were agreed:
 - a) movement of £3.1k from the “contingency” budget to the “grants” budget.*
 - b) movement of £1k from the “maintenance” budget to the “grants” budget.**
- ii. To note the Finance committee had reviewed the earmarked funds for the financial year ending 31 March 2024 and the following movements of funds were agreed:
 - a) movement of £6166 from the general reserves to the earmarked reserves for the Harting Community Hall Solar Battery project*
 - b) movement of £620.82 from the earmarked funds for the Committee Room Refurbishment to the general reserves.**
- iii. to note the Finance committee confirmed the Council asset values for the year ending 31 March 2024 had been agreed and the insurance values would be updated and reported at a later date.*
 - iv. to note the Finance Committee had reviewed the Internal Control Review for the 2023/24*

259. Copyright Infringement Notification

The clerk had received an email from Dreamstime, a stock photo site stating that one of the photos used on the Parish Council website, since its creation in 2019, was subject to copyright and had been used without a licence. The picture in question was of the southern side of the Parish Church. It was initially felt this could be a scam email but further investigation by the Clerk in conjunction with the Council website provider confirmed this was genuine situation needing resolution. To avoid further legal action the Council was obliged to pay the licence fee of \$150 or £117.26. The Clerk had settled this account and would be reimbursed by the Council.

The following proposal was made and agreed:

To note the report

260. Harting Community Hall (HCH)– Upgrade to sound system

The Chairman of HCH had contacted the clerk to request the Council consider offsetting the cost of upgrading the sound system in the Hall using their grant held in the Council's reserves. The upgrade will provide a better quality sound for the film nights and other events as well as allowing more than one microphone to be used at the same time.

The cost of the upgrade is £1133.00 + vat. The Harting Society have donated £1000 to the Parish Council towards this project.

It was noted as there was some urgency to move this forward, and sufficient funds held in the HCH reserves, the Clerk in conjunction with the Chair and Chair of Finance agreed the project should proceed. this decision was made in accordance with section 4.1 of the Financial Regulations.

The Council agreed to gift the cost of the upgrade to Harting Community Hall.

The following proposals were made and agreed:

- i. To note that the Clerk in conjunction with the Chair and Chair of Finance, and in accordance with section 4.1 of the Financial Regulations, agreed the upgrade of the Harting Community Hall sound system at a cost of up to £1133 excluding VAT.*
- ii. That the Council agree to gift the upgrade of the Harting Community Hall sound system and to offset the cost against the Parish Council grant held in reserve.*

261. Tree Survey

The 18 monthly 'leaf off' Tree Survey, covering the area of the Warren and South Gardens, had been carried out on 27 February 2024 by Mark Welby, arboricultural consultant. There were 7 trees detailed in the survey report of which one is a high priority (requiring work within 2 months), four are of medium priority (requiring work within 12 months) and one which is not on Council owned land, another was just for comment with a further review in 2 ½ years.

The Clerk will request quotes for the necessary works and bring them to the Council for consideration.

The following proposal was made and agreed:

To note the report

262. SDNPA Local Plan update

The Council received an update on the Local Plan review. Although the final plan will not be adopted until 2027/28 the initial phases of consultation and community involvement are due to start at the beginning of June 2024 and will run for 8 weeks. It is hoped a more detailed timetable for the review will be issued at this time.

The Council had already submitted a Parish Priority Statement (PPS) at the end of December 2023.

It was agreed the Council needs to keep a close watch on this process and ensure pressure is maintained to ensure community needs are met. It was thought that there may be some benefit to parishes working together as further details of the Plan emerge.

The following proposal was made and agreed:

To note the report

263. Finance

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

Undisclosed	Clerk and RFO Salary	1,496.11
HMRC	Tax and NI contributions	432.72
Trish Walker	Reimbursement Copyright fee to Dreamstime LLC	117.26
Solarpowerful Ltd	Solar battery - Henry Warren Hall grant	6,000.00
Trish Walker	Clerk's expenses Nov 2023- March 2024	141.31
Clarity Accounting	Quarterly payroll charge	27.00
Trish Walker	Monthly Zoom subscription	15.59
Mark Welby	Tree Survey	660.00
Harting War Memorial Playing Field	Lengthsman	212.25
Mulberry and Co	Planning Training	540.00
Harting Parish News	Grant	1000.00

263.2. It was agreed that Mrs Curren and Mrs Bramley would authorise the March online payments.

263.3. Bank Reconciliation for March 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.

263.4. There was no income to note for March 2024.

264. Bank balance as of 29 February 2024 - £99,172.36 (includes earmarked funds £56.2k and budgeted spend to year end £3k)

265. Budget Statement to 29 February 2024

Noted.

266. Planning Committee

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 15 February 2024 were noted.

267. Feedback from WMPF and HCH representatives

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

268. Correspondence

There had been no correspondence other than regular items and those already included in the main agenda.

269. Clerk's report

The report was noted. It was reported that Drainline had been in the village and appeared to be jetting gulleys although they didn't appear to be priority gulleys. The Clerk would try to find out more information from WSCC.

270. Items for future meetings

Restoration of water pump

271. Date of next meeting: The next meeting would be held on Thursday 18 April 2024 at the Harting Community Hall at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.28 pm.