



NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT ROFFEY MILLENNIUM HALL, CRAWLEY ROAD, HORSHAM ON THURSDAY 18th MAY 2023 COMMENCING AT 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: A. Britten (Chairman), Mrs. K. Burgess, P. Burgess, J. Davidson, Mrs. G. Davidson-Fernandez, Mrs. R. Ginn, Mrs. J. Gough, R. Knight, T. Rickett B.E.M.*, D. Searle*, J. Smithurst, S. Torn, R. Turner and Mrs. S. Wilton (Vice-Chairman)

* denotes absence

In attendance: Sarah Norman (Clerk)
District Cllrs. Franke, Grant and Hellowell

FC/01/23 Election of Chairman of the Council 2023/24

The following nominations were made :-

- i. Cllr. Britten - Proposed by Cllr. P. Burgess and Seconded by Cllr. K. Burgess

Cllr. Britten was duly elected Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year and would sign the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office form after the meeting.

FC/02/23 Election of Vice-Chairman of the Council 2023/24

The following nominations were made :-

- i. Cllr. Wilton - Proposed by Cllr. Gough and Seconded by Cllr. Turner

Cllr. Wilton was duly elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

FC/03/23 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

It was **NOTED** that all Members elected to the Council at the May 2023 elections had signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Parish Clerk.

FC/04/23 Public Forum

There were no members of the public present at this point.

FC/05/23 Apologies for absence

The Council received apologies for absence from Cllrs. Rickett and Searle.

Members also received apologies from County Cllr. Nagel and District Cllr. Emery

FC/06/23 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of Interests.

FC/07/23 General Power of Competence

The Clerk's report was noted and it was **RESOLVED** that North Horsham Council meets the conditions laid down in The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, namely that at the time of this Resolution :

- i. the number of members of the council that have been declared to be elected is equal to or greater than two-thirds of the total number of members of the council
- ii. the Clerk to the Parish Council holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration including relevant training in the exercise of the general power

and therefore, at this the annual relevant meeting, reaffirmed its adoption of the General Power of Competence.

FC/08/23 Dispensations

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the Dispensation requests from Councillors A. Britten, Mrs. K. Burgess, P. Burgess, J. Davidson, Mrs. G. Davidson-Fernandez, Mrs. R. Ginn, Mrs. J. Gough, R. Knight, T. Rickett B.E.M., D. Searle, J. Smithurst, S. Torn, R. Turner, and Mrs. S. Wilton for the next 4 years until May 2027, for business relating to the Parish Precept and Members' Allowance as without the Dispensation, the number of persons prohibited from participating would be so great a proportion as to impede the transaction of the business

FC/09/23 Appointment to Council Committees and Outside Bodies

Members had received a draft of the potential appointments based on Members' feedback position and subsequently **AGREED** the following changes to the draft:-

- (i) Cllrs. Davidson and Turner to fill the vacancies on the Personnel Committee.
- (ii) The Chair and Vice Chair not to be automatically included on the Finance and Administration Committee.
- (iii) The Personnel Committee for 2023/24 to continue with 7 members.
- (iv) No appointment of a Community Highways Partnership Working Party
- (v) No appointment of a Climate Change Working Party but for Cllr. Gough to continue to act as the Council's representative to the HDC Climate group with reports back to Council, including any suggestions for action.
- (vi) Attendance at the Gatwick Airport Noise Management Board (NMB) to continue to be open to any Councillor and an opportunity to observe a meeting in public only.
- (vii) As last year, the Harwood Road allotments working party to remain in case any issues arise with the same membership as previously.

It was also **NOTED** that the appointment of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of each Committee would take place at their first meeting.

FC/10/23 Bank Signatories

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.1, the following Councillors were confirmed as Signatories for payments by the Parish Council :-

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| * Cllr Alan Britten | * Cllr Simon Torn |
| * Cllr Peter Burgess | * Cllr Ray Turner |
| * Cllr Joy Gough | * Cllr Sally Wilton |
| * Cllr Roland Knight | * The Clerk |
| * Cllr John Smithurst | * The Deputy Clerk |

FC/11/23 Minutes

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 2nd March 2023 were **AGREED** and were signed by the Chairman as being a correct record.

FC/12/23 Committees and Working Parties.

The following Committee Minutes were presented to the Council:-

- (i) Finance and Administration Committee Meeting held on 20th April 2023.
- (ii) Planning, Environment and Transport Committee Meeting held on 23rd March and 27th April 2023
- (iii) Property Committee Meeting on 6th April 2023

It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee Minutes as listed above be received and adopted.

FC/13/23 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

There were no reports given.

FC/14/23 Reports from District or County Councillors

As only recently elected, Cllr. Grant advised that there was no report on Council business, but the Members wanted to introduce themselves to the Parish Council and hoped they could work collaboratively with the Council over the coming 4 years.

Cllr. Franke, on behalf of Cllr Emery who had sent his apologies, brought up the issue of drug issues and ASB which were problems that had been frequently mentioned by residents during the campaign for the election and whether there was a possibility of funding from NHPC to support the extension of the Neighbourhood Wardens into North Horsham.

Whilst it was noted that this proposal had been discussed previously, and rejected largely on the grounds of costs, it was suggested and agreed that the matter should be revisited and placed on an Agenda during the 2023/24 municipal year.

FC/15/23 Report from the North Horsham Community Land Trust (NHCLT) link councillor

Cllr. Gough, as Chairman of the NHCLT reported that the group continues to seek possible projects but quick access to large amounts of finance continues to be a huge barrier. The group is currently seeking a company that would be prepared to provide a loan "in principle" and are also compiling a list of professionals who could be asked to advise at short notice, if a possible project should arise.

In the meantime, the emphasis remains on publicity and reaching out to the local community. An article was published in the West Sussex County Times on 6th April, and they will be having an information stall as the Sussex Green Hub on Saturday 27th May. In addition, they are intending to hire a Saturday morning stall at the Carfax market and have also booked a stall in Horsham Park, at the Rotary Centenary fun day on 9th July.

Contact with Aster Housing Association and Graham Saunders of AiRS continues, and the group has renewed its membership of the National Community Land Trust.

Finally, the group was pleased to be able to have a face to face meeting and thanks were given to the Parish Council staff for facilitating this. It is intended to hold a cheese and wine get together for all members at the end of June.

Cllr. Torn referred to the possibility of the Parish Council accessing a Public Works Loan on behalf of the NHCLT. The Clerk confirmed that she had contacted AiRS about this matter and had been advised that this was very much possible, and they were fairly sure CLTs had done this before. However, the matter would need to be investigated further to find out when and where and it was suggested that Graham Saunders was the best point of contact.

Members referred back to plans for the regeneration of the centre of Roffey which had the possibility of including affordable housing such as the NHCLT were looking to provide. After some discussion about the history of the proposal, it was agreed that this matter should be placed on a future Council Agenda for further consideration.

FC/16/23 Chairman’s Announcements

Members were advised that the Asset of Community Value Nomination for land at Durfold Road, Bakehousebarn Close and Haybarn Drive (as agreed at the Council Meeting held 2nd March 2023 - Min. FC/119/23 refers) had now been submitted to HDC, and also copied to Cllrs. Franke and Emery as the newly elected HDC Councillors for Holbrook West.

Simon Whitehead had also contacted the Council to express his thanks for the sympathy and condolences from all those at NHPC following the passing of Pauline back in February.

FC/17/23 Financial Matters

i. Finance Report to show income, expenditure and reserves for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Funding 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Precept (full year)	349,011
Environmental Grant (full year).	10,677
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Payment	11,805
Compensation from complaint relating to backdated NDDR	23,072
Total	394,565

Income 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Cost Centre	Actual income	Annual Budget
Admin	1,860	100
Allotments	983	900
North Heath Hall	64,492	50,000
Holbrook Tythe Barn	36,771	25,000
Multi Court Lettings	21,991	20,000
Roffey Millennium Hall	55,093	57,000
Total	181,190	153,000

Expenditure 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Cost Centre	Actual Expenditure	Annual Budget
Admin	51,341	52,670
Grants	5,780	10,000
Burial	7,461	7,460
Personnel	322,782	326,000
Planning, Env, Trans	0	1,500
Allotments	950	1,580
Amenity Rec & Open Spaces	36,698	52,270
North Heath Hall	25,685	27,207
Holbrook Tythe Barn	19,445	21,830
Roffey Millennium Hall	34,025	37,074
Total	504,167	537,591

The Council **NOTED** the Financial Report, including Reserves summary, to 31st March 2023.

ii. Expenditure Lists

The Council **AGREED** the expenditure lists for February 2023 totalling £471,589.06 and March 2023 totalling £50,336.51 as circulated with the Clerk's report and as published on the website.

iii. Asset Register

Members **NOTED** the Asset Register, showing a total asset value of £1,413,696 at 31st March 2023, as circulated with the Agenda

FC/18/23 Internal Audit Report 2022/23 - Final

Members **NOTED** the Final Internal Audit Report for the year ending 31st March 2023 including the following comments made by the Auditor :-

- i. Financial Regulations, Governance and Payments - I recommend the council follows the JPAG guidance on emails for councillors and that all councillors use their official email accounts for all council business.
- ii. Financial Regulations, Governance and Payments - The council may wish to consider increasing the Clerk authorisation level based on the size of the council and the Clerk's experience level.
- iii. Bank and Cash - I recommend the council aligns its process to the relevant Financial Regulation, either by altering its process or by amending the Financial Regulation to reflect the current process.

Following discussion Members **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the final report and the points raised.

In relation to the actions, in response Members **NOTED** the following

- a) Councillor .gov.uk email addresses had been sent up and were now in use
- b) The points raised in (ii) and (iii) would be considered when the review of the Financial Regulations was undertaken by the Finance and Administration Committee at the meeting in June.

Members proceeded to review the effectiveness of the Internal Audit as per the circulated document with the Agenda, and following discussion **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the review.

FC/19/23 Annual Governance and Accounting Return (AGAR) 2022/23

Members **NOTED** the Clerk's Report on this matter and the circulated AGAR form, partially completed.

The Council **NOTED** the completion of Page 3 of the AGAR by Mr. A. Beams of Mulberry & Co.

Members **NOTED**, as detailed in the Clerk's Report, the Governance Procedures undertaken in 2022/23 including:-

- The review of the scope of the Internal Audit undertaken at the Finance & Administration Committee Meeting held 23rd June 2022 (Min. FA/10/22) and as reaffirmed at the following meeting on 13th October 2022 (Min. FA/23/22 refers)
- The receipt of the External Audit, with no comments made was noted at the Finance & Administration Committee Meeting held 13th October 2022 (Min. FA/23/22 refers) and Council Meeting held 3rd November 2022 (Min. FC/78/22 refers)
- Review of the Financial Risk Assessment was undertaken at the Finance & Administration Committee Meeting held 13th October 2022 (Min. FA/32/22 refers)
- Consideration of the Internal Audit (Interim) was undertaken by the Finance and Administration Committee held 13th October 2022 (Min. FA/26/22 refers) with these Minutes received by Council on 3rd November 2022 (Min. FC/71/22 refers)
- Review of the system of internal control procedures and practices was undertaken at the Council Meeting held 2nd March 2023 (Min. FC/118/23 refers)
- Review and agreement of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit was undertaken under the previous Agenda item
- The Internal Control Working Party has met 4 times during the 2022/23 year on 27th June 2022, 26th September 2022, 28th November 2022 and 27th February 2023 with the Notes from these meetings presented to the Finance & Administration Committee.

The Council then considered the responses to the Statements in Section 2 of the AGAR 2022/23 (Page 4) and, having considered the Clerk's report and **NOTING** the Internal Auditors recommendations for this section, Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** answering 'Yes' to statements 1-8, noting that statement 9 was not applicable to the Parish Council.

Members subsequently **AGREED** that Section 1 be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

Members then moved to Section 2 - Accounting Statements for 2022/23 and following discussion it was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** that these be signed by the Chairman, **NOTING** that this Section had been signed by the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer prior to presentation to Council.

Finally, Members **NOTED** the following additional information that was to be submitted with the AGAR 2022/23 :-

- i. Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31st March 2023
- ii. Explanation of the differences between Box 7 and 8 on the AGAR
- iii. Summary and detailed explanation of Significant Variances between 2021/22 and 2022/23
- iv. Additional information as part of an Intermediate Request

Finally, Members **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the dates for the period of Electors' Rights from 5th June to 14th July 2023 (inclusive) as shown on the circulated Notice of Public Rights.

FC/20/23 Insurance arrangements for 2023/24

As detailed in the Clerk's report, the paperwork for the renewal on 1st June 2023 had been received from the Council's brokers, Gallagher, and the annual premium for the year 1st June 2023 to the 31st May 2024 (including IPT and all fees) would be £13,884.15, through Hiscox Insurance Company. It was **NOTED** that this was year 2 of a 3 year agreement and that this included index linking, which had been applied to the sums insured, and for this renewal was fixed at 12% for buildings and 8% for contents.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** to renew the Insurance Policy with Hiscox Insurance Company at an annual premium of £13,884.15 (inc.IPT).

FC/21/23 Annual Parish Meeting

Members received and **NOTED** the Annual Report and unconfirmed Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24th April 2023.

FC/22/23 Policies

As per the Clerk's report, Members had been advised of the availability of the policy under review on the Parish Council website and it was subsequently **RESOLVED** to adopt the reviewed Business Continuity Policy and Plan as recommended by the Finance and Administration Committee Meeting on 20th April 2023 (Min. FA/71/23 refers).

FC/23/23 Correspondence

The Council **NOTED** correspondence list 1 as circulated with the Agenda and list 2 issued immediately prior to the meeting, covering the period 2nd March to 17th May 2023.

FC/24/23 Date of next Meeting

The date of the next Meeting on 6th July 2023 was **NOTED**.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.15pm.

Signed

Date