



## NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT ROFFEY MILLENNIUM HALL, CRAWLEY ROAD, HORSHAM ON THURSDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> NOVEMBER 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 Cllr. Hellowell

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*Due to the absence of the Chairman the Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Wilton, would chair the meeting*

**FC/64/23 Public Forum**

There were no members of the public.

**FC/65/23 Apologies for absence**

The Council received apologies for absence from Cllrs. Britten, Ginn and Searle. Members also received apologies from County Cllrs Baldwin and Nagel. No apologies had been received from Cllr. Torn.

**FC/66/23 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of Interests.

**FC/67/23 Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were **AGREED** and were signed by the Chairman of the meeting as being a correct record.

**FC/68/23 Decisions made by delegated power since 7<sup>th</sup> September 2023 for ratification**

Members **NOTED** that it had been necessary to incur expenditure for investigative works into damp at North Heath Hall as a significant problem had been identified in the nursery toilets. A damp survey was undertaken as a matter of urgency at a cost of £400 plus VAT, authorised under the Clerk's delegated powers as per FR 4.5 and funded by the R&R Earmarked Reserves. The written report from this survey was awaited but a verbal summary of the findings recommended that a first step in identifying the source would be the clearance and subsequent CCTV survey of the drains outside in the car park. Quotes were obtained and so as not to delay any necessary action, approval of any necessary expenditure will be undertaken in liaison with the Chairman of the Property Committee, be ratified at the next Property Committee Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December and noted at the Council meeting in January.

The Decision was **RATIFIED**.

## FC/69/23 **Committees and Working Parties.**

The following Committee Minutes were presented to the Council:-

1. Finance and Administration Committee Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023.
2. Planning, Environment and Transport Committee Meeting held 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023
3. Property Committee Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023
4. Personnel Committee Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023

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

## FC/70/23 **Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies**

As detailed in the Clerk's report, Members **NOTED** that Cllrs. Gough and Knight had attended a training session at HDC on planning matters, and the slides from this had been circulated to all Members as part of the weekly correspondence list on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023. Cllr. Gough provided the following additional report to Members :

### Appeals against decisions

- If a decision is considered unreasonable financial payment can be issued which makes it costly for the Council to defend, or if decisions are not consistent, it is also difficult for the Council to defend.
- Ecology can only be used if supported by evidence based knowledge.
- Planning compliance enforcement plan to be updated next year.

### Water neutrality (Relates to all development within the Sussex North water supply zone)

- Any planning permission granted prior to September 2021 is now subject to water neutrality, if there remains a further consent required from the council.
- A water neutrality statement is now required for all development that consumes water and to all permitted development that will increase water consumption at a site.
- Roads and infrastructure on a multi-phased development do not require water neutrality.
- Residents do not need to show water neutrality for additional rooms added to their property.
- Swimming pools need to show how water is being replenished.
- Drilling bore holes for extracting water from underground streams requires expert advice and a report from a professional hydrologist.

### Plan making reforms (To be included in the Levelling up and Regeneration Act to be ready before November 7" 2023 to be ready for the King's speech)

- Reasons for reform:-
  - Plans are too long and are physically complicated. Should be simpler and shorter with less evidence requirements.
  - Assessments which are required to be completed in written form should be completed in 6 months on standard forms.
- Principles of change  
National Policy Framework will be divided into 2 parts:-
  - NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework)
  - NDMP (National Design Model Code policy)

- Housing Stock and Local Plans
  - Standard method for calculating housing stock will still exist.
  - 5year housing land supply will be fixed on adoption of Local Plan. (Neighbourhood Plans to get similar protection and to be reflected in the local Plan) .
  - Supplementary planning documents will be replaced by supplementary plans which are local authority site specific (not district wide)
  - The Local Plan has its own principles but could be over-ruled by
  - Government plans and policies
  - Government is seeking local design codes which applicants must follow.
  - Government will increase permitted development e.g. storage buildings can become residential buildings.

Finally, it was noted that the last opportunity for old style Local Plans will be 30" June 2025.

The written report from Cllr. Searle was also **NOTED**, following his attendance at meetings regarding Weinberger Brickworks, Warnham; BIFFA Mechanical Biological Treatment Facility; Brittaniacrest Recycling and 3R's Development Local Liaison Group; Horsham Town Community Partnership AGM; and Horsham Older Peoples' Forum.

#### **FC/71/23 Reports from District or County Councillors**

District Cllr. Hellowell reported that work on the budget for 2024/25 (inherited from the previous Administration) is ongoing. A new Council Plan 2023-2027 has been adopted setting out this Administrations objectives for their current term.

Work is continuing on the Local Plan and as referred to in the Clerk's report, this will be considered by HDC in December.

Recent resident engagement has raised the issue of shoplifting, particularly in Coltsfoot Drive, together with ongoing ASB with the local parks identified as hotspots.

Finally, it was reported that WSCC were to be consulted regarding the recurring flooding at Gorrings Brook/Pondtail Road. A brief discussion followed highlighting that blockages can be a cause but also noted that when the sluice gate at Warnham Nature Reserve is opened, the water levels reduce.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Hellowell for his attendance.

#### **FC/72/23 Report from the North Horsham Community Land Trust (NHCLT) link councillor**

Cllr Gough reported as the NHCLT Chairman that whilst shareholding had improved, the difficulty in getting volunteers with time available to undertake work for the Trust was proving challenging and it was acknowledged that this is a problem for all voluntary organisations.

Following Jeremy Quin MP speaking to the group at the recent Carfax event, he reached out to Rachel Maclean MP, the Minister of State for Housing and Planning on behalf of the Trust and she had responded saying that the Government were considering a range of measures which may support the growth of the community-led housing sector.

Peter Beckley, Secretary to the Trust, had produced an excellent Newsletter and it was hoped that there would be more to come. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Simon Torn who had agreed to join the group to assist with the finances.

Discussions are ongoing with District Councillors and the Trust is in contact with the Horsham Blueprint Forum which comprises of representatives from the Neighbourhood Councils. Links have been maintained with the Sussex Green Hub with a stand in front of St John's Church on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September, with valuable feedback received about the challenges facing those looking for affordable accommodation.

The Trust's AGM will be held on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

Finally, thanks were expressed to the Parish Council for its continued support to the Trust and for allowing the use of the Knepp Room at no cost for their regular meetings.

#### **FC/73/23 Chairman's Announcements**

As requested at the last meeting (Min. FC/59/23 refers), a letter had been sent to Jeremy Quin MP regarding Health Service provision in the area. A response had been received and circulated to all Members as part of the weekly correspondence round up email issued on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

A letter had also been sent to the Co-op as instructed at the last meeting (Min. FC/61/23 refers) but at the time of the meeting no response has been received.

As circulated to all Members as part of the weekly correspondence list on 25<sup>th</sup> October, the Cabinet at HDC had now agreed a proposed timetable (known as the Local Development Scheme) for the preparation of the new Local Plan with a copy of the link to view this, circulated in the Clerk's report. The draft Regulation 19 Proposed Submission Local Plan is programmed to be considered by Cabinet and Council on 11 December 2023. HDC have produced a Local Plan Review Newsletter on their website, with a link circulated. It was proposed that this matter be placed on the Agenda for the January Council meeting to note the timetable when approved by HDC and consider any action by the Parish Council.

Finally, Members were made aware of a training session, organised by HDC on Standards and the Code of Conduct. The event would be online and all Parish Councillors were invited and encouraged to attend. Anyone wishing to do so was asked to advise the Clerk who would liaise with HDC accordingly.

i. Finance Report to show income, expenditure for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**Funding to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

Precept (full year)	365,346
Environmental Grant (full year).	11,745
Climate Change Grant	2,076
<b>Total</b>	<b>379,167</b>

**Income to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

Cost Centre	Actual income	Annual Budget	Estimated income to 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2023*
Admin	11,838	200	100
Allotments**	982	995	995
North Heath Hall	31,921	71,000	35,500
Holbrook Tythe Barn	18,671	38,000	19,000
Multi Court Lettings	10,721	26,600	13,300
Roffey Millennium Hall	33,372	45,000	22,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>107,505</b>	<b>181,795</b>	<b>91,395</b>

**Expenditure to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

Cost Centre	Actual Expenditure	Annual Budget	Estimated expenditure to 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2023*
Admin***	33,017	54,570	34,035
Grants	2,630	10,000	5,000
Burial ****	3,730	7,460	3,730
Personnel	155,440	349,650	174,825
Planning, Env, Trans	0	1,500	750
Allotments	460	1,560	780
Amenity R&OS	24,582	56,485	28,243
North Heath Hall	15,333	30,778	15,389
Holbrook Tythe Barn	13,713	28,095	14,048
Roffey Millennium Hall	18,298	42,840	21,420
<b>Total</b>	<b>267,203</b>	<b>582,938</b>	<b>298,219</b>

\* Total cost centre budget for 2023/24 divided by 6/12th.

\*\* Allotment invoices are sent out annually. The full income is expected by the end of April.

\*\*\* Includes, in Actual Expenditure, Annual Insurance Premium of £13,884 paid May 2023 and includes, in Estimated Expenditure, Full Year Budget for Insurance of £13,500

\*\*\*\* Paid quarterly in Months 2,5,8 & 11

**Income**

At the end of Month 6 of the 2023/24 year, revenue income continues to be higher than the anticipated by approx. 18% - an increase of 4% to the position at the end of month 5.

The second half year instalment of the precept of £182,673 was paid across by HDC before the end of September

**Expenditure**

Overall, expenditure is approx. 10% lower than would be expected at the end of the month, a widening of around 3% when compared to the end of month 5. It should be noted that the Personnel Budget continues to be around 12% less than would be expected at this time of year for the reasons reported previously.

## **Reserves**

As at 31st September 2023 remaining funds, including the full year precept payment received and General Reserves, stood at £441, 004.

In addition, there are additional Earmarked Reserves of £269,111 - a reduction of £2,346 from the balance at the end of month 5, due to expenditure of £1,096 from the R&R EMR for repairs to the lift at RMH and the use of a total of £1,250 from the NHH Washroom Refurb EMR - £560 for the HDC Building Control submission and £690 for structural plans.

## **Summary**

As mentioned above, there is £16,110 more revenue income than budgeted for at the end of month 6 together with £31,016 less revenue expenditure than anticipated.

The Council **NOTED** the Financial Report to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

## **ii. Payment Lists**

The Council **AGREED** the payment lists for August 2023 totalling £45,616.45 and September 2023 totalling £57,299.38 as circulated with the Clerk's report and as published on the website.

### **FC/75/23**

#### **External Audit**

Members **NOTED** receipt of the External Auditor's certificate for the 2022/23 Audit, that no comments were raised by the Auditor, and that a copy of the Certificate together with the Notice of Conclusion of Audit had been published on the Parish Council website.

### **FC/76/23**

#### **Scheme of Members' Allowance**

Having reviewed the Scheme, **NOTING** that there had been no update to the Report of the HDC Independent Remuneration Panel (April 2021), Members **AGREED** to continue to adopt the Scheme of Members' Allowance for 2024/25 allowing for an annual Members' Allowance of £514 in line with the Report of the HDC Independent Remuneration Panel (April 2021) and being 9.4% of the basic allowance for HDC Councillors. Members **NOTED** that the next review would be undertaken in November 2024.

### **FC/77/23**

#### **CIL Working Party Meeting**

Members **NOTED** the Notes of the CIL Working Party held 27<sup>th</sup> October, circulated prior to the meeting and published on the Parish Council website including the update on the installation of the defibrillators at North Heath Hall and Holbrook Tythe Barn. Members were reminded that part of that decision, was that an application for funding from the Community Automated External Defibrillators Fund be submitted and funding from the CIL reserves only used if the applications were unsuccessful - in whole or in part. However, when the fund opened it became apparent that applications would only be accepted for units that were to be sited in the public domain, available to anyone at all times. Therefore, as the units at HTB and NHH would be inside the buildings, it was not possible to submit a bid.

Fortunately, at the same time, contact was made by Cala Homes, a developer at Mowbray, offering to install a defibrillator within the Parish. It was therefore agreed that Cala Home would fund the purchase of the unit at Holbrook Tythe Barn and as a result, the CIL Funding will only be required to fund the purchase of the North Heath Hall unit and the installation of both units.

Discussion then followed as to why these units were being installed inside rather than outside. It was noted that the unit NHH had been at the request of the Nursery and the Clerk was asked to confirm that the unit there would have the appropriate pads for use on children under the age of 8. Cllr. Knight, as Chairman of the Property Committee that had originally discussed these proposals in April 2023, also recalled that the potential for vandalism had been a factor in the decision to place the units inside. However, it was suggested that the potential for vandalism should not be a deterrent and therefore the possibility of applying for funding to install external units should be considered.

With regard to the recommendations of the Working Party, Members considered and subsequently **AGREED** to the following :-

- i) A bin would not now be funded for siting by the Veteran Oak
- ii) The Council set up a Working Party to consider potential to provide some kind of festive decorations for Christmas 2024 with a membership comprising of Cllrs. Davidson, Davidson-Fernandez and Knight. It was also suggested that Cllr. Searle be invited to join as the originator of the suggestion. The Working Party would be for recommendations only and would report back to Council.

#### **FC/78/23 Business Plan Review**

Members **NOTED** the draft reviewed Business Plan following the sessions held in June and September and following consideration, **AGREED** to adopt the 2023/26 Business Plan.

The Clerk advised that she would now begin to bring elements of the agreed Action Plan to Council for consideration of how these objectives may be met.

#### **FC/79/23 Youth Justice Programme**

Members **NOTED** the Clerk's report regarding this initiative which supports young people aged (10-17/18) to give back to local communities by completing unpaid work hours or community reparations ordered by courts. Following discussion, whilst there were no immediate suggestions for activities on which to work with the Youth Justice team it was **AGREED** that suitable tasks be identified by the Clerk in the future, authority be delegated to allow the works to proceed.

#### **FC/80/23 Policies**

Members **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the following :-

- i. Disciplinary Policy - as recommended by the Personnel Committee 5th October 2023 (Min. PER/26/23 refers)
- ii. Grievance Policy - as recommended by the Personnel Committee 5th October 2023 (Min. PER/26/23 refers)

- iii. Pension Policy - as recommended by the Personnel Committee 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 (Min. PER/26/23 refers) and the Finance and Administration Committee 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023 (Min. FA/37/23 refers)
- iv. Grants Policy - as recommended by the Finance and Administration Committee 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023 (Min. FA/37/23 refers)
- v. Allotments Rules - as recommended by the Property Committee 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (Min. PR/047/23 refers)

**FC/81/23 Correspondence**

The Council **NOTED** correspondence list 1 as circulated with the Agenda and list 2 issued immediately prior to the meeting, covering the period 7<sup>th</sup> September to 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023.

**FC/82/23 Date of next Meeting**

The date of the next Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 was **NOTED**.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 8.10pm.

Signed .....

Date .....