



NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT ROFFEY MILLENNIUM HALL, CRAWLEY ROAD, HORSHAM ON THURSDAY 7th MARCH 2024 COMMENCING AT 7.30pm

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. Warwick Hellowell
Candidates for Co-option : Mr N Emery, Mr C Franke and Mr S Raby

FC/108/24 Public Forum

There were no members of the public.

FC/109/24 Apologies for absence

The Council received apologies for absence from Cllrs. Gough and Smithurst.

County Cllr. Baldwin had also sent his apologies.

FC/110/24 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of Interests.

FC/111/24 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th January 2024 and the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 26th February 2024 were **AGREED** and were signed by the Chairman of the meeting as being a correct record.

FC/112/24 Decisions made by delegated power since 11th January 2024 for ratification

As detailed in the Clerk's report, one decisions had been made using Delegated Authority and the following was **RATIFIED** :

- i) Pre-Planning Consultation for base station installation on Rusper Road - due to the deadline for comments being before the next meeting of the PET Committee Meeting it was necessary to agree comments on this under the Delegated Authority process. Following canvassing of the PET Committee Members, the following response was agreed by the Chairman of the Council, the Chairman of the PET Committee and the Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee : *"The Parish Council has no comment to make on the plans as circulated for the base station installation at Rusper Road. Of course, should a full planning application come before the Committee in future, they will base their comments at that time, on the plans and details presented to them as part of the application."*

FC/113/24 Committees and Working Parties.

The following Committee Minutes were presented to the Council:-

1. Finance & Administration Committee Meeting held 15th February 2024 including the **RECOMMENDATION** to continue with the current procedure for payment authorisations for the current Administration to May 2027 (Min. FA/58/24 refers)
2. Planning, Environment and Transport Committee Meeting held on 25th January and 22nd February 2024
3. Property Committee Meeting held 8th February 2024 including the **RECOMMENDATION** for expenditure of £16,250 for the refurbishment of the washrooms at NHH (Min. PR/086/24 refers)
4. Personnel Committee Meeting held 1st February 2024

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

FC/114/24 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

Cllr. Searle had provided the following report in advance of the meeting.

Biffa Brookhurst Wood

A presentation given to the Local Liaison Group which gives an update on the operations at Brookhurst Wood had been circulated to all Members via email. Disposal of batteries in household waste continued to cause fires at the plant and disrupts operations. This had an impact on weekend operations to recover the time. To make residents more aware of the issue it was suggested and **AGREED** to include an article in the next Newsletter.

Wealden Works Community Liaison Group

Cllr., Searle had attended the Community Liaison Group meeting on 28th February and those present were very complimentary on the article that CHER had published in the AAH magazine and requested that similar articles be published at suitable stages of the project. CHER representative advised that they were still in the process of finalising the contract with HZI which they envisaged would be concluded in June 2024 with a start on site in late summer. HDC were developing a project to monitor the air quality once the incinerator is operational. CHER is funding the project but would not have any input into the development as they wish to remain independent. Next meeting would be convened on Wednesday 5th June, and it was hoped that CHER will confirm the start date.

FC/115/24 Reports from District or County Councillors

Cllr. Hellowell reported that HDC had agreed a balanced budget for 2024/25 but future years would be more challenging and would be largely dependent on the settlement from central Government.

The Capitol refurbishment had been approved which was necessary as the venue, now some 20 years old, was beginning to show signs of wear and tear. The programme of works would take 2 years and whilst it can be fully funded by HDC, the Council continued to seek alternative funding from other sources to reduce the burden on the District Council.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Hellowell for his report.

A written report from County Councillor Andrew Baldwin was circulated at the meeting as follows :-

Budget settings 2024 – 25

The County Council set the budget for 2024/25 on 16 February. An extra £81.9m will be invested into vital day-to-day services. The extra revenue funding includes:

- an additional £31.2m for vulnerable children and young people,*
- £18.3m more for adults' social care,*
- an extra £4m to maintain the county's 4,000km of roads*
- and £27.8m to manage increased costs, as inflation levels remain high*

The meeting also agreed a revised council plan setting out the County Council's priorities and a series of measures to balance the budget for the year ahead (2024/25) - including budget efficiencies of £15.7m, an increase in core council tax of 2.99%, and an additional adult social care precept of 2%. This is an increase for an average Band D property of £81.54 per year or £1.57 per week.

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission SEND (Special Education Needs and Disabilities) inspection of West Sussex Local Area Partnership

Last Thursday 29 February the findings were released. The report gives West Sussex Local Area Partnership the middle rating for delivery, planning and commissioning of services.

Strengths identified in the report include:

- There is effective support for children accessing support from children's social care*
- There are positive examples of identifying need and provision early through the early help offer*
- Good practice was seen in Early Years settings, Special Schools and Further Education provision*
- Children and young people receiving support through a specialist service encounter skilled professionals and have their needs accurately identified, assessed and reviewed*
- The proactive work the West Sussex Parent Carer Forum undertake in representing families of children and young people with SEND*

Areas for improvement in the report include:

- Leaders should identify and address 'waiting well' arrangements for health services including speech and language provision, neurodevelopmental pathways and CAMHS.*
- The drive to improve timeliness and consistency of education, health and care plans needs to be accelerated*
- Leaders need to ensure sufficient suitable specialist school places and alternative provision*
- Leaders should strengthen their approach to preparing young people with SEND for adulthood*
- Some children and young people with SEND have experiences which are inconsistent*

Request for a pedestrian guard rail in Holbrook School Lane

Last year a resident asked NHPC and myself to instal a small metal pedestrian guard rail to stop children running down the footpath outside the houses at 33 to 39 Holbrook School Lane and into the road. This is the sort of guard rail you see in many places like on the Rusper Road end of the footpath from Gateford Drive. Following 2 site inspections I have made with the Highway Manager the footpath isn't wide enough to fit a guard rail as it would deny prams and wheelchairs access. I suggested a bollard but that too is a nonstarter.

The Area Highways Manager said "I have taken a look at some measurements here, and the footway measures 1.7m from boundary to boundary. This is on the presumption that the hedge is cut back to the boundary line and then does not over grow/encroach the footway again. Should we have 1.7m footway width and look to install a bollard as suggested as an alternative to a section of pedestrian guard rail, the bollard would need to be located central to the footway in order to be effective. Typical bollard with is roughly 0.2m, meaning remaining footway width is 1.5m but of course centralising the bollard means we have 0.75m of footway either side of the bollard and we require an absolute minimum of 1m. Therefore unfortunately a bollard is not a viable option.

Whilst I understand the fact that these are children coming out of a footway to a road, there is an expectation still that parents are supervising and preventing children from running straight into a live carriageway. Hope this provides some clarity about the position not to install any Pedestrian Guard Rail or as an alternative, a bollard".

Drainage issues at North Heath school

Last year a house next to the school had their garage flooded on 2 occasions. During half term last month a detailed inspection took place using cameras etc and the cause of the flooding was found to be within the school grounds. Quotes have been obtained to do the necessary work on the drainage on the school site and this should be completed in the Easter break. I believe that Southern water will be carrying out their responsibility with the drain which flows across the school's land. Once this is all completed we should not have any further issues with flooding to Erica Road properties.

Floral tributes and banners on A264 central reservation at Rusper Road roundabout

Working in conjunction with Sussex Police we are hoping the two banners and most of the floral tributes left on the central reservation on the A264 at the Rusper Road roundabout will be removed in the next few weeks. It is a sensitive situation.

Massive pothole junction of North Heath Lane and Coltsfoot Drive

I noticed this on Sunday 3 March. I emailed Members Highways on Sunday evening and rang them today. I expect this to be sorted urgently as it is dangerous.

FC/116/24 Report from the North Horsham Community Land Trust (NHCLT) link councillor

As Cllr. Gough could not attend the Meeting, Members **NOTED** the following report, circulated in advance.

We are grateful for the continued North Horsham Parish Council support for the North Horsham Community Land Trust and also for the acknowledged support for Community Land Trusts in the Horsham District Local Plan.

2024 has been a difficult year, as the provision of new housing in the Horsham area has remained very challenging due mainly to the water neutrality difficulties. There also continued to be a lack of suitable land. However, we have been keeping a watching brief on possible opportunities which may arise, for renovation or conversion of existing properties.

Our membership of the National Community Land Trust network provides us with much needed updates and training. They were able to promote the cause of Community Land Trusts in relation to the Leasehold Reform Bill which is going through Parliament and is currently at the House of Lords Committee stage.

The House of Lords have raised and agreed CLY exemption from the inability to receive leasehold payments from house purchase and rentals. This is very important as property leasehold payments are an important source of CLT income and enables CLTs to fund future projects in perpetuity.

Our emphasis this year has been on publicity and building relationships with our local community. We have the opportunity to attend and join a variety of business and charitable networking organisations within our area to publicise our aim of providing much needed genuine affordable housing in Horsham.

We will be having a table at the Sussex Green Hub at the United Reform Church in Horsham on Saturday 30th March from 10am and have already booked a table at the Rotary Festival in Horsham Park this summer. We also hope to have an occasional booking for a table in the Horsham Carfax market in the spring/summer months.

Sadly, in keeping with other local charities and organisations, our members are very supportive but do lack the time to give much needed voluntary physical support.

However, we are determined to succeed and continue to follow up possible sites and avenues for funding. Thank you once again for your continued support.

FC/117/24 Chairman's Announcements

Members **NOTED** the following :-

Unfortunately, due to operational duties, the planned attendance at this meeting of PCSO Sophie Norman from Sussex Police had not been possible but had been rearranged for the next meeting on 2nd May. In the meantime, the following report was circulated by email and was also available at the meeting:-

When going through the reports for North Horsham on summary there has been around 43 calls in the whole of north Horsham for the last 2 and a bit months for ASB and drug related reports. There has been approx. 8 vehicle break ins and approx. 9 shoplifts been reported.

What I have observed and hot spots that have heighten high viz patrols added due to a few issue areas have been in Holbrook - surrounding roads of Greenfinch Way and in Roffey - Oak Tree Way and surrounding roads and Birches Road. These have been due to an increase in ASB by youth causing nuisance and non-permanent criminal damage after schools and early evenings. This is being monitored closely and preventive measures are being put in place to target and deter.

When looking into these closer into the vehicle breaks, this is not exclusively in north Horsham as this is part of a wider operation which lots of resources and time have been added in to. An increase in patrols to deter has taken place and will continue to as perk times to try and deter any other crimes.

Overall North Horsham is reported as a low crime area. I know over the last 6 months issues such as parking issues have been raised unofficially but at this stage it would be something we would monitor. If there is any other concerns of anything I have mentioned or not mentioned please report on 999 if it's a emergency or 101 for non-emergency line.

The latest quarterly S106 and CIL report was received on 31st January 2024 and was available in the Parish Office if Members wished to view it. There were no changes to the listings previously received and it was anticipated that there would not be any CIL funding payable in April 2024.

Following a successful site inspection at the Harwood Road allotments attended by Cllrs. Knight and Searle, and after receiving confirmation from the Harwood Road Allotments Tenants' Association of their agreement to the updated terms of the Lease and the additional administration charge of £25, the new Lease for a 5-year period from 29th February 2024 had been signed as agreed at the last meeting (Min. FC/103/24).

Following agreement at the Extraordinary Council Meeting held 26th February 2024, the comments and Representation Forms for the Local Plan Regulation 19 Consultation were submitted to HDC the same day.

FC/118/24 Financial Matters

i. Finance Report to show income, expenditure for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st January 2024

Funding to 31st January 2024

Precept (half year)	365,346
Environmental Grant	11,745
S106 Funding	3,952
Climate Change Grant	2,076
Total	383,119

Income to 31st January 2024

Cost Centre	Actual income	Annual Budget	Estimated income to 31 st January 2024*
Admin	19,867	200	166
Allotments**	982	995	995
North Heath Hall	55,580	71,000	59,167
Holbrook Tythe Barn	33,162	38,000	31,667
Multi Court Lettings	20,786	26,600	22,167
Roffey Millennium Hall	58,083	45,000	37,500
Total	188,460	181,795	151,662

Expenditure to 31st January 2024

Cost Centre	Actual Expenditure	Annual Budget	Estimated expenditure to 31 st January 2024*
Admin***	51,181	54,570	47,725
Grants	3,821	10,000	8,333
Burial ****	5,596	7,460	6,217
Personnel	277,062	349,650	291,375
Planning, Env, Trans	0	1,500	1,250
Allotments	690	1,560	1,300
Amenity R&OS	33,775	56,485	47,071
North Heath Hall	23,754	30,778	25,648
Holbrook Tythe Barn	19,979	28,095	23,413
Roffey Millennium Hall	32,572	42,840	35,700
Total	448,430	582,938	488,032

* Total cost centre budget for 2023/24 divided by 10/12th.

** 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 10 of the 2023/24 year, revenue income continued to be higher than the anticipated by approx. 24% - an increase of 2% to the position at the end of month 9.

Expenditure

Overall, expenditure continued to be approx. 8% lower than would be expected at the end of the month, similar to the gap at the end of month 9. However, this was affected by expenditure relating to S106 grants from HDC being included and if this expenditure was removed from the calculations, the difference would be approx. 10%.

Reserves

As at 31st January 2024 remaining funds, including the full year precept payment received and General Reserves, stood at £344,683.

In addition, there remained additional Earmarked Reserves of £260,317- no change since the position at the end of month 9.

Summary

As mentioned above, there was £36,798 more revenue income than budgeted for at the end of month 10 together with £39,602 less revenue expenditure than anticipated but this increased to £50,533 when the S106 funded expenditure is excluded.

The Council **NOTED** the Financial Report to 31st January 2024.

ii. Payment Lists

The Council **AGREED** the Payment and Transfer lists for December 2023 totalling £42,338.49 and January 2024 totalling £52,400.96 as circulated with the Clerk's report and as published on the website.

FC/119/24 TRO Application for Coltsfoot Drive

Members received and **NOTED** the request from the local residents for support for a TRO to extend double yellow lines on Coltsfoot Drive. Furthermore, Members were informed that County Cllr. Andrew Baldwin also supported the application.

The Clerk informed the meeting that a further email had been received from the residents proposing to extend the yellow lines further than shown on the plans circulated with the Agenda, to go past Trefoil Close, and that residents from that road also supported the TRO application. However, it was **NOTED** that Cllr, Baldwin had not been able to confirm his support for the extended proposal. During discussion, It was reported that historically there had been a proposal to provide an area for car parking from the flats, but it was not known if this was still a viable option.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** to support the TRO application

FC/120/24 Co-Option for Councillor Vacancies

Members had been sent the applications forms for the three candidates for Co-option, in advance by email with the Agenda.

The Chairman **adjourned the meeting**, invited each candidate to give a short presentation on why they wished to be Co-opted to North Horsham Parish Council and asked for Councillors to raise any questions. During the adjournment, Members wished to discuss the applications from the potential Co-optees in private and attendees were asked to leave the room.

The **meeting was reconvened** with all readmitted to the room. A recorded vote (by show of hands) was requested by Cllr. Rickett, seconded by Cllr. K. Burgess.

For the Co-option of Mr. C. Franke :-

In Favour

Cllr. Searle
Cllr. P. Burgess

Against

Cllr. Knight
Cllr. Ginn
Cllr. Rickett
Cllr. Davidson-Fernandez
Cllr. Turner
Cllr. Davidson
Cllr. Britten

Abstention

Cllr. K. Burgess
Cllr. Wilton
Cllr. Torn

The application for Co-option from Mr. C. Franke was therefore **REJECTED**.

For the Co-option of Mr. S. Raby :-

In Favour

Cllr. Knight
Cllr. Searle
Cllr. Ginn
Cllr. K. Burgess
Cllr. Wilton
Cllr. P. Burgess
Cllr. Davidson-Fernandez
Cllr. Turner
Cllr. Davidson
Cllr. Britten

Against

Cllr. Rickett

Abstention

Cllr. Torn

The application for Co-option from Mr. S. Raby was therefore **APPROVED**.

For the Co-option of Mr. N. Emery :-

In Favour

Cllr. Searle
Cllr. P. Burgess

Against

Cllr. Knight
Cllr. Rickett
Cllr. Davidson-Fernandez
Cllr. Davidson

Abstention

Cllr. Ginn
Cllr. K. Burgess
Cllr. Wilton
Cllr. Torn
Cllr. Turner
Cllr. Britten

The application for Co-option from Mr. N. Emery was therefore **REJECTED**.

FC/121/24 Business Plan 2023-26

Having **NOTED** the Clerk's report, it was **AGREED** to focus on point 6.2 of the agreed Business Plan and increase community Engagement. Members discussed various ways that this maybe done including a future community fun day, surgeries, tabletop sales and school fayres.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** that an initial Councillor Drop-in stand would be held on Easter Saturday, outside Roffey Millennium Hall. The Clerk was asked to make arrangements for Councillors to attend on the day and also provide a display board to give information about the Parish Council and its achievements.

The Clerk was also asked to make enquiries at the local primary schools about having a stand at summer fayres or other similar school events.

FC/122/24 North of Horsham Parish Liaison Group

Members **NOTED** the updates in the Clerk's report, and as circulated by email, and furthermore that a meeting of the full Liaison Group had been scheduled for 19th April with all Parish Councillors invited to attend.

FC/123/24 Solar Panels

Members received the quotations and the background for this proposal that came from the Property Committee.

Discussion took place about the costs involved, the practicalities especially with security of the flat roof at Roffey Millennium Hall.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** that the Council would not proceed at the current time. However, Members asked that funding be investigated for the potential installation at Holbrook Tythe Barn (the cheapest of the three sites), with the matter reconsidered when setting the budget for 2025/26.

FC/124/24 WSCC Consultation on closure of Littlehaven Infant school and site

Members **NOTED** the Clerk's report and received the response questionnaire as published with the Agenda.

Whilst it was noted that there had been reports that the vacated Littlehaven Infant School site would be used as a SEND education facility, this was not referred to in the Consultation.

Members discussed the proposal considering issues such as changes to child numbers, the impact of the extension of the Bohunt School to accommodate primary ages and the need for SEND facilities.

Following the discussion, it was **AGREED** that the Clerk should respond to the Consultation with the following comments :

- North Horsham Parish Council would not support the closure of the school with the site being sold for development
- North Horsham Parish Council would support the closure of the school if the result was a trio of schools, including a repurposed Littlehaven Infant School site for the provision of a SEND educational facility.
- North Horsham Parish Council is concerned that any increase in the number of pupils accessing the Northolmes School would exacerbate an existing issue of problem parking in that area and would ask that, should the Northolmes School be extended to a Primary School, consideration be given to measures to tackle this issue.

FC/125/24 Policies

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

- i. Flag Flying Policy
It was **AGREED** that an 80th D-Day commemorative Flag be purchased and flown from the RMH flagpole on 6th June 2024. It was **NOTED** that this would result in the Union Flag not being flown on this day to commemorate the King's coronation.
Members also **NOTED** the 80th anniversaries of VE Day and VJ Day in 2025 and **AGREED** that flags should be flown on these days as appropriate. The Clerk was also instructed to investigate whether commemorative flags for these anniversaries would be available in due course and if so, purchase as necessary.
- ii. Tree Works Policy - as recommended by the Property Committee meeting held 8th February 2024 - Min. PR/085/24 refers
- iii. Bus Shelter Policy - as recommended by the Property Committee meeting held 8th February 2024 - Min. PR/085/24 refers

FC/126/24 Correspondence

The Council **NOTED** correspondence list 1 as circulated with the Agenda and list 2 issued immediately prior to the meeting, covering the period 11th January to 6th March 2024.

FC/127/24 Date of next Meeting

The date of the next Meeting on 2nd May 2024 was **NOTED** and that this would be the Annual Meeting of the Council.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 8.47pm.

Signed

Date