



## NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT ROFFEY MILLENNIUM HALL, CRAWLEY ROAD, HORSHAM ON THURSDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> MAY 2024 COMMENCING AT 7.30pm

**Present:** Councillors: A. Britten (until Min. 21.3), Mrs. K. Burgess, P. Burgess\*, J. Davidson (Chairman), Mrs. G. Davidson-Fernandez, Mrs. R. Ginn, Mrs. J. Gough, R. Knight, S. Raby, 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)

Candidates for Co-option : Mr N Grant, Mr N Simmonds and Mr G Turner  
District Cllr. B. Walters (part of meeting)

---

#### **FC/01/24 Election of Chairman of the Council 2024/25**

The following nominations were made :-

- i. Cllr. Davidson - Proposed by Cllr. Wilton and Seconded by Cllr. Knight

Cllr. Davidson 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.

The newly elected Chairman spoke on behalf of the Council and thanked Cllr. Britten for his service, having served as the Chairman for seven years. Cllr. Turner reiterated these comments noting that during his term of office, Cllr. Britten has steered the Council through challenging times including the Covid pandemic.

#### **FC/02/24 Election of Vice-Chairman of the Council 2024/25**

The following nominations were made :-

- i. Cllr. Wilton - Proposed by Cllr. Turner and Seconded by Cllr. K. Burgess

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

#### **FC/03/24 Public Forum**

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

#### **FC/04/24 Apologies for absence**

The Council received apologies for absence from Cllrs. P. Burgess and Ricketts.

Members also received apologies from County Cllr. Baldwin.

**FC/05/24**     **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of Interests.

**FC/06/24**     As PCSO Norman had not arrived, Members **AGREED** to vary the order of business and take Agenda item 7 next, in accordance with SO 10 (a) (vi)

**FC/07/24**     **Co-option for Councillor Vacancies**

It was **NOTED** that Mr. C. Mitchell was not in attendance and therefore his Co-option application could not be considered.

Members had been sent the applications forms for the 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. Following a vote it was **AGREED** :

The application for Co-option from Mr N Grant was **REJECTED**.  
The application for Co-option from Mr N Simmonds was **ACCEPTED**.  
The application for Co-option from Mr G Turner was **ACCEPTED**.

It was **NOTED** that the Declarations of Acceptance of Office would be signed after the meeting.

**FC/08/24**     **Local Policing Report**

The Chairman welcomed PCSO Sophie Norman who updated the meeting. Following the written report circulated at the previous meeting, thankfully crime levels in North Horsham remained low and there were no major issues to update on. There had been some criminal damage at Holbrook Tythe Barn and areas known for drug activity and ASB were being monitored. There had been a spate of vehicle thefts, but this issue was now being investigated by a specialist team and had resulted in a reduction of incidents. There were concerns about burglaries, so patrols were continuing.

Work was ongoing with the schools and other appropriate services to deal with a group of young people who had been identified as causing problems in a specific area.

The Clerk asked if the Police had been advised of vandalism to the new equipment installed by HDC at Roffey Rec. It was confirmed that this had not and therefore, the Clerk would make enquiries to ascertain exactly what had happened.

It was noted that PCSO Norman covers Roffey and Holbrook with a new PCSO taking over Rusper, Faygate and Warnham.

The likelihood of knife crime in the Parish was raised and PCSO Norman confirmed that this is very low in Horsham.

Rough sleepers and shoplifting were discussed. With regard to the latter, it was hoped that shops such as Co-op on Fitzalan Road would be able to be part of the DISC scheme that is already being used in the Town Centre, which should help identify shoplifters. However, it was noted that the reports of shoplifting from that Co-op branch are actually very low.

The Chairman thanked PCSO Norman and her colleague for attending and hoped to see her again at future Council meetings.

#### **FC/09/24 Appointment to Council Committees and Outside Bodies**

Due to the incoming, newly Co-opted Members not having a chance to consider their potential appointments, it was **AGREED** to leave the Committee memberships and Outside Bodies as they currently stand and carry out the review at the July Council meeting.

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

#### **FC/10/24 Bank Signatories**

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.1, the following Councillors were **AGREED** 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/11/24 Minutes**

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were **AGREED** and were signed by the Chairman as being a correct record.

#### **FC/12/24 Decisions made by delegated power since 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024 for ratification**

The Parish Council was consulted by HDC on an application to release S106 funds designated for refuse and recycling services and facilities. Comments were sought from members of the PET Committee and following liaison with the Chairmen of the Council, the Finance and Administration Committee and the PET Committee, no comment was made to HDC.

The decision was **RATIFIED**.

#### **FC/13/24 Committees and Working Parties.**

The following Committee Minutes were presented to the Council:-

- 12.1 Planning, Environment and Transport Committee Meetings held on 27<sup>th</sup> March and 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024
- 12.2 Property Committee Meeting held 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2024
- 12.3 To receive and adopt the Minutes of the Finance & Administration Committee Meeting held 11<sup>th</sup> April including the recommendation to approve the Direct Debit and Standing Order Mandates (Min. FA/69/24 refers) and 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024 (recommendation regarding AGAR to be considered under Agenda item 20)

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

#### **FC/14/24 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies**

Cllr. Searle reported that the Biffa site had begun to slowdown works in readiness to start to take food waste. There would be a meeting in the next 2 months to discuss how the process would work. It was noted that business food waste would be the first collected with domestic properties joining the scheme later.

Cllr. Wilton reported that she had recently attended the HALC/HDC meeting which had been at the Capitol. There had been discussions regarding the refurbishment works at the Theatre/cinema building which could result in the facility being out of action for up to 12 months. However, it was hoped that venues around the District could be identified to host art and culture events during the closure. The meeting had also been updated on changes to the complaints process which would see a reduction in timeframe from 21 to 10 days.

#### **FC/15/24 Reports from District or County Councillors**

Cllr. Raby, as a District Councillor, updated the meeting that an Electric Car event would be held on 24<sup>th</sup> May on the upper car park at Parkside, and would offer an opportunity to test drive electric vehicles.

Cllr. Baldwin, having sent his apologies, provided the following written report as received at the meeting :

*I copy Sarah in on relevant e mails as and when they are received so a lot of the following is already known but just in case I am summarising them with latest update.*

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

*Engaging with the family about the matter hasn't been too successful to date. WSCC have this week instructed our contractor to recover the items in question. Due to the location Traffic Management will be required to remove the items safely and we are hoping to join this up with some planned sign repair works we have in the location.*

##### ***Drainage at North Heath Primary school***

*The work was completed in the Easter holidays and hopefully the problem has been sorted. A WSCC Project Manager will check it out in May – delayed as the person dealing had to go into hospital for an operation.*

##### ***Pondtail Road – (1) overgrowing trees between Beech House and entrance to Durfold Road and (2) broken fence opposite 159 Pondtail Road***

*Raised these with Highways. Highways Manager says “Sites have both been inspected, the trees appear to have an issue so I have passed this over to our tree team for an assessment by one of our arboriculturists. The fence is on the boundary line so unsure who is responsible, I have passed this over to our fencing team to ask for their assessment and we'll either raise a job to repair or liaise with the adjacent land owner.”*

### **New Bus route serving Bohunt school and Mowbray estate**

Metrobus are starting a new service in May that will support pupils reaching Bohunt school. Route 71 will be timed to get pupils to and from Bohunt to suit their start and finish from 11th May. The timetable and map can be found here <https://www.metrobus.co.uk/May>

### **TRO in Coltsfoot Drive**

The scheme has been approved. Highways have left a small section of parking which won't cause issues for visibility but will allow people to park for the shops, also having vehicles here will slow vehicle speeds down. WSCC is currently talking to Sussex Police and our parking strategy team to ensure they support our proposals before going to formal consultation.

### **FC/16/24 Report from the North Horsham Community Land Trust (NHCLT) link councillor**

Cllr. Gough, as Chairman of the NHCLT, gave the following report to the meeting.

*2024 is a difficult year, as there is much uncertainty as we await the outcomes of the General Election and what may follow in terms of the provision of genuinely affordable housing for local people.*

*From the many conversations we have had in our local area in Horsham, being able to afford somewhere to live had become our residents' biggest cause for concern. The high cost of private rental and the inability to raise the large amount of money required for a mortgage deposit is a constant worry to many of our residents.*

*In common with many local charities and other nearby CLTs, it is very difficult to find volunteers who, can afford the time to give physical, practical support, although they are very much supportive in what we are trying to achieve.*

*We have recently been attending, networking and linking with a variety of other business and charitable organisations in the Horsham area and have already booked a table for the Rotary Summer festival in Horsham Park.*

*Gaining access to a promise of a loan of a large sum of money to enable us to quickly purchase an appropriate renovation property or piece of land, is an ongoing problem. We are always in competition with developers with readily available finance.*

*However, we are determined to succeed and continue to follow up possible sites, renovation projects and avenues for funding.*

*Thank you once again for your continued support and interest. It is greatly appreciated.*

## FC/17/24 Chairman's Announcements

- 16.1 The Clerk recently attended the monthly meeting between Horsham District Clerks and Insp. Neil Durkin of Sussex Police with subjects including a presentation on the powers of the Police when dealing with unauthorised encampments, future "roadshows" and Community Speed Watch Schemes, about which neighbouring Neighbourhood Council's kindly offered to give any assistance to NHPC if required. With regard to the "roadshows", the Clerk asked Insp. Durkin for involvement of North Horsham Parish Council for any events in Horsham as a whole, as the Parish outside of the main Town area forms a substantial part of the town with its own economic, retail and educational sites, in addition to the large amount of residence.
- 16.2 Following the Council's decision at the last meeting to support a TRO application for yellow lines in Coltsfoot Drive (Min. FC/119/24 refers), WSCC have advised that the TRO has been approved for the next stage in the process and following liaison with Sussex Police and the WSCC parking strategy team, it will be published for formal consultation.
- 16.3 As notified to all Councillors by email on 1<sup>st</sup> May, two factor authentication will shortly become mandatory to access Parish Council emails with guidance provided by both Microsoft and the Parish Council's IT Services provider. Members were therefore urged to do this as soon as possible when prompted, to ensure continuity of access to emails.

## FC/18/24 Financial Matters

### 17.1 Finance Report to show income, expenditure and reserves for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

#### Funding 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Precept (half year)	365,346
Environmental Grant	17,909
S106 Funding	11,745
Climate Change Grant	2,076
<b>Total</b>	<b>397,076</b>

#### Income 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Cost Centre	Actual income	Annual Budget
Admin	27,590	200
Allotments	982	995
North Heath Hall	67,539	71,000
Holbrook Tythe Barn	39,936	38,000
Multi Court Lettings	26,696	26,600
Roffey Millennium Hall	71,452	45,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>234,195</b>	<b>181,795</b>

### Expenditure 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Cost Centre	Actual Expenditure	Annual Budget
Admin	67,310	54,570
Grants	6,531	10,000
Burial	7,461	7,460
Personnel	334,053	349,650
Planning, Env, Trans	0	1,500
Allotments	731	1,560
Amenity Rec & Open Spaces	38,127	56,485
North Heath Hall	27,755	30,778
Holbrook Tythe Barn	24,325	28,095
Roffey Millennium Hall	40,088	42,840
<b>Total</b>	<b>546,381</b>	<b>582,938</b>

The Council **NOTED** the Financial Report, including Reserves summary, to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

#### 18.2 Payment and Transfer Lists

The Council **AGREED** the Payment and Transfer lists for February (£58,830.89) and March 2024 (£50,470.08) as circulated with the Clerk's report and as published on the website.

#### 18.3 Asset Register

Members **NOTED** the Asset Register, showing a total asset value of £1,417,350 at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, as circulated with the Agenda

#### FC/19/24 Internal Audit Report 2023/24 - Final

19.1 Members **NOTED** the Internal Audit Report 2023/24 (Final) as circulated prior to the meeting, including that no issues had been identified and the recommendation from the Internal Auditor that the Council answer "Yes" to questions 1 to 8 of the Annual Governance Statement with question 9 being not applicable.

19.2 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/20/24 Annual Review of the Council's Internal Control Procedures and Practices

Members **NOTED** the draft Statement of the Parish Council's Internal Controls, as circulated with the Agenda, and subsequently reviewed the financial management and system of internal control and subsequently **RESOLVED** to :

- (i) **APPROVE** the Statement of the Parish Council's Internal Control
- (ii) **AGREE** that the financial management was adequate and effective
- (iii) **AGREE** that the Council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions.

#### FC/21/24 Annual Governance and Accounting Return (AGAR) 2023/24

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

**21.1** The Council **NOTED** the completion of Page 3 of the AGAR by Mr. A. Beams of Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd.

**21.2** Members **NOTED**, as detailed in the Clerk's Report, the Governance Procedures undertaken in 2023/24 including:-

- The review of the scope of the Internal Audit as part of the reappointment of Mulberry & Co as the Internal Auditor was undertaken at the Finance & Administration Committee Meeting held 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023 (Min. FA/20/23)
- The receipt of the External Audit, with no comments made, was noted at the Council Meeting held 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 (Min. FC/75/23 refers)
- Review of the Financial Risk Assessment was undertaken at the Finance & Administration Committee Meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023 (Min. FA/35/23 refers)
- Consideration of the Internal Audit (Interim) was undertaken by the Finance and Administration Committee held 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023 (Min. FA/46/23 refers) with these Minutes received by Council on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 (Min. FC/89/24 refers)
- Review of the system of internal control procedures and practices was undertaken under Agenda item 19
- Review and agreement of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit was undertaken under Agenda item 18.2
- The Internal Control Working Party has met 4 times during the 2023/24 year on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023, 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024 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 2023/24 (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.

**21.3** Members then moved to Section 2 - Accounting Statements for 2023/24 and following discussion it was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the Statement.

***Cllr. Britten left the meeting***

**21.4** Having agreed the Statements, Members further **AGREED** 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.

**21.5** Finally, Members **NOTED** the following additional information that was to be submitted with the AGAR 2023/24 :-

- i. Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024
- ii. Explanation of the differences between Box 7 and 8 on the AGAR



- iii. Summary and detailed explanation of Significant Variances between 2022/23 and 2023/24
- iv. A breakdown of the types of reserves held between General reserves, Earmarked Reserves and Restricted (ring fenced) reserves
- v. Additional information (intermediate review) requested by Moores, as circulated by email prior to the meeting

**21.6** Finally, Members **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the dates for the period of Electors' Rights from 3<sup>rd</sup> June to 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024 (inclusive) as shown on the circulated Notice of Public Rights.

#### **FC/22/24 Code of Conduct Dispensation Scheme**

Members noted that at the Council meeting held 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022, Members adopted the current Code of Conduct Dispensation Scheme (Min. FC/36/22 refers) and at that time it was stated that HDC would deal with requests and advice in relation to dispensations on an individual basis, but they reserved the right to revisit this in the future and the Parish Council would be notified accordingly.

As no such notification has been received from HDC, Members **AGREED** that the existing Scheme continue to be adopted unamended, with a review in May 2026, unless triggered sooner by an amendment being agreed by HDC.

#### **FC/23/24 Insurance arrangements for 2024/25**

As detailed in the Clerk's report, the paperwork for the renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024 had been received from the Council's brokers, Gallagher, and the annual premium for the year 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024 to the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025 (including IPT and all fees) would be £14,736.70 through Hiscox Insurance Company. It was **NOTED** that this was year 3 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 £14,736.70 (inc. IPT).

#### **FC/24/24 Festive Lighting Working Group**

Members received the Notes and recommendations from the meeting of the Working Group held 11<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the **RECOMMENDATION** of the Working Group and proceed with the installation of the 20 trees and string lighting with an increased Budget of £4,200.

#### **FC/25/24 Community Engagement**

It was **NOTED** that a stand had been manned at Roffey Millennium Hall (RMH) on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April between 11am and 2pm, with 6 Members of the Council in attendance.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** that a further date should be identified in the summer, preferably when a large event was taking place at RMH. It was further **AGREED** to not pursue attendance at the fetes of local schools at the current time but revisit in 2025.

**FC/26/24 Correspondence**

The Council **NOTED** correspondence list 1 as circulated with the Agenda and list 2 issued immediately prior to the meeting, covering the period 7<sup>th</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024.

**FC/27/24 Date of next Meeting**

The date of the next Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023 was **NOTED**.

Members also **NOTED** the Clerk’s request to alter the agreed meeting dates in April and May 2025 to ensure that there was sufficient time to complete the year end accounts before presentation to the Finance and Administration, and for the Internal Audit to be completed enough in advance of the Annual Meeting of the Council.

It was subsequently **AGREED** to make the following amendments to the Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25 :-

- Finance and Administration Committee scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> April 2025 - moved to 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025
- PET Committee Meeting scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025 - moved to 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025
- Council Meeting scheduled for 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025 - amended date 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025
- Personnel Committee scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025 - amended date 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.37pm.

Signed .....

Date .....

