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| Graphical user interface, text, application  Description automatically generated | **Clerk to the Council:** Emily Simpson  **Tel:** 07881714526  **e-mail:** [ashurstclerk@outlook.com](mailto:ashurstclerk@outlook.com) |
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**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST PARISH COUNCIL, HELD AT ASHURST VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 10th MAY 2023 AT 7.30PM**

**Attendance.**

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| **Chairman** | Cllr Fischel |
| **Ashurst Parish Council (APC)** | Cllrs Knight, Nicholson, Russell |
| **Horsham District Council (HDC)** | There were none. |
| **Clerk** | Mike Simpson |
| **Public** | There were three members of the public. |

1. **Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman**
2. **To elect a Chairman for the next Council year**

Councillors **RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Fischel as Chairman and it was noted that the Chairman automatically becomes Chairman of the Ashurst Recreation Ground Trust in addition to that of the Council. Cllr Fischel signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for Chairman.

1. **To elect a Vice Chairman for the next Council year**

Councillors **RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Russell as Vice Chairman.

1. **Attendance and apologies for absence**

Councillors **RESOLVED** to accept apologies from Councillor Hammond.

1. **Co-option**

Councillors considered an application from Mark Knight and **RESOLVED** to co-opt him onto the Council. He then signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting as a councillor.

1. **To Receive Declarations of Interest, Notification of Changes to Members’ Interests and to consider any requests for a dispensation**

There were none for this meeting.

1. **Appointments to outside bodies**

Councillors **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllrs Fischel and Russell to HALC and Cllrs Fischel and Russell to WSALC.

1. **Public session**

A member of the public spoke of his concern about vehicles speeding through Ashurst, especially north bound traffic. They frequently recklessly overtook the school bus or bicycles and, with no verge for pedestrians, walkers were also at risk. He appreciated the Council could not do much but asked if it could lobby WSCC and the police to do something.

Cllr Nicholson confirmed he was in frequent communication with Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) but as there had been no recent significant incidents, this stretch of road was not considered to be a priority. At the March SSRP meeting, the Council had requested authorisation to erect traffic calming measures such as slow signs or indeed to have another VAS installed.

**ACTION**: Cllr Nicholson would follow up to see what progress had been made.

The Council wanted to encourage more residents to get involved with Speedwatch so more frequent sessions could take place.

There was a further enquiry as to how much longer tipping lorries would come through Ashurst as this had been going on for 2 years. The Chair suggested this was taken up directly with HDC.

1. **Approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 16th March 2023**

Councillors **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes from the meeting on 16th March 2023 as a true and accurate record.

1. **County Councillor Reports**

There were none.

1. **District Councillor Reports**

There were none. Both of the new councillors for the District Council had sent their apologies but looked forward to meeting the members of the Parish Council in the near future.

1. **HALC update**

Cllr Fischel reported that there had been no meeting since the last Council meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for 26th July.

1. **Certificate of Exemption**

The Certificate of Exemption from external audit for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23 was approved.

1. **Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)**
2. **Internal Audit Report**

Councillors reviewed the internal audit report for 2022-23 and **RESOLVED** to approve it.

1. **Section 1 of the AGAR**

Councillors reviewed Section 1 and **RESOLVED** to approve it. This was then signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

1. **Section 2 of the AGAR**

Councillors then reviewed Section 2 and **RESOLVED** to approve it. This was then signed by the Chairman, having already been signed by the Responsible Financial Officer.

1. **Notice of electors’ rights**

Councillors confirmed the dates for the notice for electors’ rights as 12th June to 21st July 2023.

1. **Insurance Renewal**

The Clerk informed the Council that the policy was currently in a 3 year Long Term Undertaking and so this would be automatically renewed on the terms already agreed unless it was advised of any amendments. The Clerk advised that the renewal date was 1 June 2023. Councillors reviewed the policy and **RESOLVED** to approve the renewal premium of £368.92.

1. **Planning Applications**
2. **DC/23/0610 Honeybridge Farm Honeybridge Lane Ashurst West Sussex**

Application to confirm the existing siting of a static caravan within residential garden to provide ancillary accommodation for a period in excess of ten years (Lawful Development Certificate Existing).

No objection

1. **DC/23/0644 Doves Farm Spithandle Lane Wiston West Sussex.**

Replacement of existing garage with a new garage.

No objection

1. **DC/23/0685 New Wharf Farm Horsebridge Common Ashurst West Sussex.**

Change of use of land to paddleboard training, storage and hire of canoes, kayaks and paddle boards, retention of shingle hard surfacing for associated car parking and the siting of two storage trailers and a porta loo between April and September each year.

No objection

1. **Planning Decisions from HDC**

There were none.

1. **Payments and bank reconciliations**

The bank balance at Lloyds as of 10th May 2023 was £21,955.91.

The Clerk presented the schedule of payments since the last meeting on 16th March 2023, together with the bank reconciliation up to 31st March 2023 (See Appendix 1).

Councillors **RESOLVED** to approve this.

The Clerk also confirmed that the first half of the precept had been received on 28th April 2023 for a sum of £6,700.

**Schedule of payments since the last meeting (16th March 2023)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Payee** | **Cheque No** | **Cost Centre** | **Amount** |
| 3.5.23 | E Simpson (reimbursement for Yola Silver Annual Renewal) | BACS | General, admin & insurance | 119.95 |
| 3.5.23 | E Simpson (reimbursement for Yola Domain Renewal) | BACS | General, admin & insurance | 18.95 |
| 3.5.23 | E Simpson (reimbursement for Yola Registration information privacy) | BACS | General, admin & insurance | 7.95 |
| 3.5.23 | WSALC subscription 2023-24 | BACS | Subscriptions & Audit | 94.80 |
| 3.5.23 | BHIB Insurance Premium 2023-24 | BACS | General, admin & insurance | 368.92 |
| 3.5.23 | Mulberry & Co | BACS | Subscriptions & Audit | 90.00 |
| 3.5.23 | E Simpson (Salary April & May 2023) | BACS | Salaries & associated costs | 475.05 |
| 3.5.23 | E Simpson (Office allowance April & May 2023) | BACS | Salaries & associated costs | 26.66 |
| 3.5.23 | HMRC (E Simpson tax for April & May 2023) | BACS | Salaries & associated costs | 118.60 |
|  |  |  | **TOTAL** | **£1,320.88** |

1. **Recreation Ground**
2. **To receive a report on the Recreation Ground Trust’s income and expenditure for the period 21st January 2023 to 20th March 2023.**

The bank balance as at 20th March 2023 was £6,668.69.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Income received 21st January 2023 – 20th March 2023** | | |
| EDF | EDF energy rebate | £150.00 |
|  |  | **Total income = £150.00** |
|  |  |  |
| **Expenditure authorised 21st January 2023– 20th March 2023** | | |
| Wicksteed | Cradle swing replacement | £179.03 |
| Bartlett tree experts | Potassium phosphite solution | £144.00\* |
| Cllr Ali Russell | Reimbursement for Envirochem water testing | £34.51 |
| E Simpson | Reimbursement for Business Stream (water rates) | £37.74 |
| HDC | Non-domestic rates bill | £101.38 |
| EDF | Electricity | £18.00 |
| HSBC Bank Charges | To 19 Jan 2023 | £5.40 |
|  |  | **Total expenditure = £520.06** |

\* pending completion of work

1. The Chair and Clerk had spoken at length about the issues with HSBC and it was **AGREED** that the Clerk would open a bank account with Lloyds for the Recreation Ground Trust as it was proving extremely difficult to add the Clerk to the HSBC account.

**ACTION:** Clerk to proceed with opening up account

1. The Chair informed the Council that the current fees were £1,300 for West Sussex County Council to hire the Recreation Ground on behalf of Ashurst School. These fees now needed to be reviewed as it was time to invoice WSCC for 2023-24. After discussion, the Council **AGREED** to the following charges on a three year contract: £1,400 for the first year, £1,450 for the second year and £1,500 for the third year.

**ACTION**: Clerk to send WSCC 2023-4 invoice and new 3 year contract.

1. After discussion, the Council **RESOLVED** to charge Ashurst United Football Club (£750 per annum for the hire of the Recreation Ground for 2023/24 with the same terms as its last contract.

**ACTION**: Clerk to draw up revised 2023/24 contract.

1. The Clerk confirmed that Cllr Russell had kindly taken receipt of the cradle swing for the playground and replaced it himself.
2. The Clerk received a call from a lady who coached the Ashington Cougars U9’s football team. She said they were looking for a new ground to train every week, ideally on a Tuesday after school. She would like to know whether the Recreation Ground might be available for hire on a weekly basis. They did not need any weekend fixtures. After discussion, the Council decided not to proceed with this proposal, as it might clash with Ashurst United Football Club’s requirements.

**ACTION**: Clerk to advise Ashington Cougars that we were unable to help out.

1. The Chair advised the Council that the cost for the potassium phosphite solution for the oak tree located at the corner of the car park, adjacent to the main road, was £120+ Vat. She advised that the treatment was due to take place shortly.

Discussion then ensued about a B2135 litter pick on a Sunday in June. Councillors voiced concerns that it was a dangerous road and they wanted confirmation that volunteers would be covered under the Council’s insurance.

An incident regarding a school child falling into the rope surrounding the cricket square, during playtime had been reported. The Council discussed whether anything further could be done to alert the public to the existence of the rope protecting the square. It was agreed that a sign would be erected. In addition, a letter would be sent to the school suggesting that it reminds all their pupils that they should avoid the area around the cricket square.

**ACTIONS**: Chair to ask Cricket Club to put up a sign on the roped off area.

Clerk to draft letter to be sent to the school.

1. The Chair reported that she had now met with 3 architects. They would be invited to a future meeting to discuss their ideas with the Council. It was still to be decided if it would be a refurbishment or a new build, with its more stringent standard requirements.

**ACTION**: Chair to organise for November meeting.

1. **Speedwatch and Speed Restrictions at Bines Green**

Ashurst’s Speedwatch initiatives had been discussed during the public session. It was agreed that it was as active as it could be with the limited number of volunteers currently signed up to help.

Councillors were not sure whether West Grinstead’s request to extend the 60 miles speed limit signs along Bines Green Common would slow down traffic. From Ashurst’s point of view, it was felt that it would be preferable to have a 40 mile speed limit in place before the current 30 mile limit through the village. Councillors RESOLVED to remain neutral on this.

**ACTION**: The Chair would speak to the West Grinstead Chair explaining the Council’s reasoning.

1. **Rampion**

Cllr Knight said he had received a letter which referred to Ashurst Parish Council as landowner. Clearly, this is not the case. Councillors **AGREED** not to respond to this consultation as the Council had already stated its position twice in the past. Cllr Knight confirmed that the Council’s policy had always been not to comment on the route of the cable corridor but to encourage Rampion to liaise with landowners in an open-minded discussion.

1. **GDPR**

Councillors were reminded to delete emails older than 6 months.

1. **Correspondence**

The Clerk reminded councillors that their expenses return had to be submitted to Horsham District Council by 1st June, even if it was a nil return.

1. **Future Council Dates**

The Clerk reported that future council meeting dates had already been agreed and were as follows:

12th July 6.30 pm. (Annual Parish Meeting followed by Council Meeting at 7.30pm)

21st September 7.30 pm (Recreation Ground Annual Meeting beforehand at 7pm.)

16th November 7.30 pm.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9pm.

Appendix 1

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| Bank Reconciliation March 2023 |  |  |
| Balance per bank statement |  |  |
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|  |  |  |
| **Closing balance 31st March 2023** | 15,255.91 |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Add: outstanding receipts** | 0.00 |  |
| **Less: outstanding payments** | -100.00 | Cheque 811 |
|  |  |  |
| **Net balances** | 15,155.91 |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Cashbook** (balance as of 1st April 2022) | 10,612.89 |  |
| Add receipts (from 1st April - 28th Feb) | 13,200.00 |  |
| Less payments (from 1st April - 28th Feb) | -8,656.98 |  |
| **Net balance** | **15,155.91** |  |