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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 THURSDAY 19th JANUARY 2023 AT 7.30PM**

**Attendance.**

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| **Chairman** | Cllr Fischel |
| **Ashurst Parish Council (APC)** | Cllrs Russell, Nicholson, Hedley, Jesse |
| **Horsham District Council (HDC)** | Cllr Platt |
| **Clerk** | Emily Simpson |
| **Public** | There were no members of the public |

**To discuss any questions submitted by the public.**

There were none.

1. **Apologies for Absence**.

Apologies were received from Councillors Knight and Hammond which Councillors **RESOLVED** to accept. County Councillor Lloyd also sent his apologies.

1. **Declaration of Members’ Interests, notification of changes to Members’ Interests, and consideration of any requests for dispensation.**

There were none.

1. **Approve the Minutes of the Meeting of 24th November 2022.**

The minutes had been circulated to all councillors. It was **RESOLVED** to approve them as a true and accurate record. They were then signed by the Chairman.

1. **Reports from District & County Councillors.**

Councillor Platt reported on Water Neutrality. Natural England was now vetting every application submitted for water neutrality.

Horsham District Council had postponed approval of its Local Plan. (See Councillor Lloyd’s report below). Jonathan Chowen, the leader of Horsham District Council had resigned.

A sustainable transport infrastructure now needed to be provided for new builds.

Horsham District Council had released plans to become carbon neutral by 2030. An important part of this includes making changes to its vehicle fleet.

Councillor Lloyd was unable to attend the meeting but had provided a brief report in advance:

*The key thing to report is that the HDC Local Plan has been voted by the Conservative Group, to be delayed. It is unlikely therefore to go to Regulation 19 until later this year. Water Neutrality is therefore HDC's key defence on new developments as there is no Local Plan to add weight to the planning decisions that it makes. I will update the Council as and when more is known as to the effects that the decision will have on developers’ plans in the immediate future*.

1. **Outstanding Actions.**

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| **Action** | **Outcome** |
| Cllr Fischel to speak to the Landlord of the Fountain Inn regarding registration as an Asset of Community Value. | Post meeting note: Now spoken to the Landlord and have sent him the info. To discuss further but his initial response was favourable. |
| Cllrs Fischel and Russell to keep an eye on issues raised by HDC, when carrying out the weekly play equipment inspections. | Ongoing. |
| Invitation to Wilder Sussex representative to talk at a future meeting. | Cllr Fischel had spoken to Richard Black. He would like to come and speak but can’t do Thursdays. So maybe reschedule a later meeting to another day of the week. |
| Cllr Fischel to investigate purchasing a new bench for the Recreation Ground. | The purchase of a 150cm bench was to be deferred until Spring 2023. |
| Cllrs Fischel and Russell to investigate options for a refurbished or replacement building at the Recreation Ground. | Ongoing. Currently architects’ quotes are being sought. |
| Flooding on Peppers Lane | Clerk to report to WSCC. |

1. **Recreation Ground Matters** –
2. The bank balance for HSBC as at 20th November 2022 was £7,393.89. The Clerk reported that no statement had been received from the bank so the income and expenditure for the period from September 1st to November 20th would be reported at the next meeting.
3. The Clerk reported that three quotes had been received in respect of the 3 year grass cutting tender. The Chair opened the three quotes and, after careful consideration, it was **RESOLVED** that the quote from Sussex Land Services for £1,980 for 2023 should be accepted.
4. With regards to legionella testing and the cleaning of the shower heads, the Chair was flushing the water on a weekly basis and Councillor Russell was checking the temperature every month. He had dismantled and cleaned the shower heads and had photo evidence of this. He also advised that the immersion heater was working but he was yet to fully test it.
5. Ashurst United FC had paid the first instalment for use of the Recreation Ground. They were due to sign and return an updated agreement to the Clerk imminently.
6. Councillors discussed the electricity quotes received from Utility Aid as well as direct from EDF and after consideration **RESOLVED** to accept the 24-month contract from EDF via Utility Aid. Before this was agreed, however, the Clerk was asked to see if there were any other options with a lower daily standing charge since normal electricity usage was minimal.
7. The Chair advised that she was still waiting for the oak tree to be delivered from WSCC which was to be planted as part of the Queen’s Green Canopy project. WSCC had previously delivered the wrong tree.
8. The Chair informed the Council that she had spoken to Bartletts regarding the potassium fix for the oak tree. They would contact us in April to arrange a date for this process to be carried out. (Post meeting note: Bartletts confirmed their quote of £180 + VAT.)

Councillor Russell confirmed that the protective fence around the oak had been erected.

1. With regards to the replacement of the John Eaton Hut, the Chair said she was meeting with another architect to get an estimate of costs. Once we had three quotes, a presentation on this project would be made to all councillors.
2. **Traffic speeding through Ashurst on the B2135**

Councillor Nicholson said he had been in touch with West Sussex County Council regarding speeding and advised that the speed sign in Ashurst was now working after a conversation with Sussex Safer Roads. He also said that data regarding speed in both directions could be gathered from the one sign. Sussex Safer Roads Partnership reported that they had placed Ashurst in a triage situation and would assess the situation and then advise if either an ANPR or a Speed Indicator Device was an option. Councillor Nicholson reported that these would not be permanent solutions as they would only be in place for a short period of time. He confirmed, however, that regular speed watches for the Village continued to take place.

1. **Broadband in Ashurst**

It was reported that BT Openreach had given a much earlier than expected completion date of 20th August 2023 for the installation of fibre broadband to over 60 properties in Ashurst.

1. **Planning Applications**

Application Number DC/22/1730 Site: Loves Cottage Horsham Road Steyning West Sussex BN44 3AA. Description: Erection of a single storey side extension.

After discussion, the Council **RESOLVED** that it had no objection to this application.

1. **Planning Decisions from HDC**

Application Number DC/21/1068 Site: Small Piece of Woodland known as Furlong Shaw; situated approximately 200m north of 1 Merrion Cottages RH13 8EH. Description: A single shepherd’s hut rented out for holiday use and an associated kitchen and bathroom. (Lawful development certificate – existing). **Decision:** Split Decision.

1. **Payments and bank reconciliations**

The bank balance at Lloyds TSB as at13th December 2022 was £18,254.53.

1. The Clerk presented the schedule of payments since the last meeting on 24th November 2022 until 18th January 2023, together with the bank reconciliation up to 30th November 2022, (see Appendix 1), which Councillors **RESOLVED** to approve.

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| **Date** | **Payee** | **Cheque No** | **Cost Centre** | **Amount** |
| 1.9.2022 | PWLB \* | DD | PWLB | 1,434.50 |
| 18.1.23 | E Leggo (Backdated pay to 1 May ‘22) | 808 | Salaries & associated costs | 42.50 |
| 18.1.23 | E Simpson (Salary Dec & Jan) | 809 | Salaries & associated costs | 474.86 |
| 18.1.23 | E Simpson Office Allowance (Dec & Jan) | 809 | Salaries & associated costs | 26.67 |
| 18.1.23 | HMRC (Tax E Simpson Dec & Jan) | 810 | Salaries & associated costs | 118.80 |
|  |  |  | **TOTAL** | **2,097.33** |

\*This was omitted from the last schedule of payments as the bank statement had not been received.

1. **Budget 2023-24**

**To consider the draft Budget for 2023-24**

Councillors discussed the proposed budget and reiterated their desire to keep any precept increase to an absolute minimum considering the cost-of-living crisis. Councillors voted to **APPROVE** the budget and the Clerk was asked to submit the precept request to Horsham District Council for a sum of £13,400. (See Appendix 2 for details of the final Budget for 2023/4.)

1. **WSALC/NALC Update**

Councillors were reminded of the current training programmes on offer and were encouraged to attend maybe one course a year. The new councillor training should be attended by any new councillors after the upcoming election. The Clerk would circulate an updated list of courses.

1. **HALC Update**

The Chair referred councillors to the minutes of the last HALC/HDC meeting on 30th November 2022, to be found on our website. It covered the cost of living crisis initiatives, recent Climate Change workshops which had taken place, Water Neutrality and the Horsham District Local Plan.

1. **Rampion**

It was stated that the consultation period ended on 29th November and at this stage there was no further update. It was thought that local landowners were still in discussions with their advisers.

1. **Grants**

The Chair confirmed that there were no applications to discuss at this meeting.

1. **GDPR**

Councillors were reminded to delete all emails over 6 months old.

1. **Correspondence**

The Clerk reminded Councillors that there was the Wilder Horsham District workshop on Thursday 9th February 2023 at Ashington Community Centre.

1. **Reports from Outside Bodies**

There were none.

1. **Information Items**
2. **Future meeting dates**

Councillors **AGREED** that the next meeting would take place on March 16th at 7.30pm at the Village Hall. The following dates were also provisionally **AGREED**:

May 18th 2023 – Annual parish meeting, July 19th 2023 (Wednesday)

September 21st 2023 – with the Recreation Ground AGM held beforehand at 7pm, November 16th 2023.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.48pm.

Signed ……………………………………. Chairman Dated ………………………

**Appendix 1 - Bank Reconciliation as at 30th November 2022**

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| Bank Reconciliation November 2022 |  |  |
| Balance per bank statement |  |  |
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| **Closing balance 30th November 2022** | 18,898.20 |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Add: outstanding receipts** | 0.00 |  |
| **Less: outstanding payments** | -780.33 | unpresented cheques 804, 805, 806, 807 |
|  |  |  |
| **Net balance** | 18,117.87 |  |
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| **Cashbook** (balance as of 1st April 2022) | 10,612.89 |  |
| Add receipts (from 1st April - 30th Nov) | 13,200 |  |
| Less payments (from 1st April - 30th Nov) | -5695.02 |  |
| **Net balance** | **18,117.87** |  |

**Appendix 2 - Final Approved Budget for 2023/4**

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| **Expenditure** | **Budget 2023-24** |
| PWLB (Village Hall) | **£ 2,813.38** |
| Insurance (including rec) | **£ 350.00** |
| Hall hire\* | **£ 220.00** |
| Donation for dog show (nominal) | **-£ 220.00** |
| WSALC subscription | **£ 94.80** |
| HALC subscription | **£ 20.00** |
| Grants (Recreation ground) | **£ 4,500.00** |
| Grant (Recreation Ground - for bench) | **£ 500.00** |
| Grant mini bus | **£ 50.00** |
| Grant swimming pool | **£ 100.00** |
| Other grants | **£ 300.00** |
| Audit (external) |  |
| Audit (internal) | **£ 240.00** |
| Office 365 | **£ 120.00** |
| Website hosting | **£ 170.00** |
| Admin expenses | **£ 100.00** |
| Clerks salary | **£ 3,800.00** |
| Courses & training | **£ 400.00** |
| Travel allowance & expenses | **£ 50.00** |
| Chairmans allowance | **£ 50.00** |
| Office allowance | **£ 160.00** |
| Green initiatives | **£ 250.00** |
| Direct debt bank charge | **£ -** |
| Newsletter contribution\* | **£ 100.00** |
| Data protection (ICO) | **£ 35.00** |
| Operation Watershed | **£ -** |
| Parish Online | **£ 5.00** |
| Tree work | **£ -** |
|  |  |
| **Subtotal** | £ 14,208.18 |
| **Current Allocated reserves** |  |
| Election | £ 2,000.00 |
| Contingency fund | £ 5,000.00 |
| Unallocated reserves | £ 2,000.00 |
| **TOTAL** | £ 9,000.00 |
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| **Income** |  |
| Precept 2023/24 | £ 13,400.00 |
| Underpsend for 2022/23 carried forward to reduce precept | £ 808.18 |
|  |  |
| **Total** | £ 14,208.18 |