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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF ASHURST PARISH COUNCIL, HELD AT ASHURST VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 16th MAY 2019 AT 7.00PM

Attendance

Chairman	Cllr Fischel
Horsham District Council (HDC)	Cllr Lloyd
Ashurst Parish Council	Cllrs Hammond, Jesse, Nicholson and Russell
Clerk	Elizabeth Leggo
Public	3 members of the public were present

1. Election of Chairman.

The presiding Chairman, Cllr Hammond, asked for nominations for a Chairman for the forthcoming year, since he was standing down.

Cllr Fischel was nominated by Cllr Hammond and seconded by Cllr Russell and it was unanimously agreed, Cllr Fischel accepted the position as Chairman. It was noted that the Chairman automatically becomes Chairman of Ashurst Recreation Ground Committee in addition to that of the Council. Cllr Fischel signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for Chairman.

Cllr Hammond thanked the members of the Council and the Clerk for their ongoing support during his time as Chairman. The Council and Clerk in turn thanked Cllr Hammond for his last four years as a popular and effective Chairman.

2. Election of Vice Chairman.

Cllr Fischel asked for nominations for Vice Chairman. Cllr Russell was nominated by Cllr Jesse and seconded by Cllr Nicholson and it was unanimously agreed. Cllr Russell accepted the position and signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

To provide an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions or make statements at the Chairman's discretion.

Nick Hedley wished to thank the Council for all the support that he had received over his 30 years plus as a Parish Councillor. He said that it was with a heavy heart he was standing down.

Cllr Hammond thanked ex-Cllr Hedley on behalf of the Council for his years of service, and the Council praised his local knowledge and contacts. Cllr Hammond presented him with some crystal goblets on behalf of the Council and Parish.

3. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Knight. Cllr Barling (West Sussex County Council) and Cllr Platt (HDC) also gave their apologies.

4. Declaration of Members' Interests.

None for this meeting.

5. Approve the Minutes of the Meeting of 28th February 2019

The minutes had been circulated to all councillors and were taken as read. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes are a true record of the meetings and were signed by the Chairman.

6. Outstanding Actions.

Action	Outcome
Clerk to draw up a monthly water sampling rota to be put up in the John Eaton Hut for councillors to complete when sending samples to EnviroChem.	Cllr Russell said that a rota is not necessary for the monthly sampling and would email the Clerk with the results for filing each month. Running the water in the outside cloakroom would be undertaken by whoever was doing the weekly playground inspection. (A revised rota was required.)
Clerk to contact Partridge Green Football Club (PGFC) regarding the additional game fees.	PGFC have agreed to the proposed fee.
Playground repairs: Clerk to order swing seat.	Ordered and delivered to Cllr Jesse. Note: Cllr Jesse agreed to fit the swing.
Playground repairs: Cllr Fischel to contact Cllr Russell with the details of the climbing frame parts, Cllr Russell to order these and undertake repairs.	Cllr Fischel had provided Cllr Russell with details of the climbing frame. Cllr Russell has received quotes – See below.
To submit comments on Soft Sand Review of the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan.	Cllr Russell has submitted comments on behalf of the Council.
Petition for the Community Highways Scheme funding to be signed by residents of the Parish.	Completed at the Annual Parish Meeting. Note: Additional signatures were obtained from those attending the Village Hall Annual Meeting, the Fountain etc.
Cllr Nicholson to write an update for the Newsletter about the Sussex Police 'In the Know' emails.	Completed.
Cllr Nicholson to update the Parish on the speed data and Community Speed Watch at the Annual Parish Meeting	An informative update was given at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Actions:

Clerk to prepare revised rota for Recreation Ground

Cllr Jesse agreed to fit the swing.

7. Reports from District & County Councillors

Cllr Lloyd informed the Council that there was not much to report due to the election on 2nd May. The Conservatives had lost several seats at Horsham District Council to the Greens and Liberal Democrats. The Council is soon to elect a Chair and members to different committees. The Parish Council was pleased to hear that the proposed changes to planning committees had

not been made and thanked Cllr Lloyd for his efforts on this.

Cllr Lloyd recommended that the Council look at the HDC website to see the diary of its Year of Culture events in the District.

Finally, Cllr Lloyd informed the Council that HDC would be doing a lot more on green issues this year.

Cllr Fischel led the Council in congratulating Cllr Lloyd on his re-election.

Cllr Nicholson proposed that the Council writes a letter of thanks to Michael Willett. It was further agreed to write a letter of welcome to Cllr Platt, our new HDC Green representative.

Action: Clerk to draft letters to send to Michael Willett and Cllr Platt.

8. Recreation Ground Matters.

The bank balance at HSBC as at 20th April 2019 was **£6,201.47**

Income received 28th Feb – 16th May 2019		
Ashurst Parish Council	Grant	£1300
Partridge Green Football Club	Rent for use of Ground	£275.62
Expenditure authorised 28th Feb – 16th May 2019		
EDF energy	Electricity John Eaton Hut	£111.70
Horsham DC	Non-domestic rates	£99.79
Sussex Land Services	Grass cutting – March	£315
Wicksteed	New cradle swing	£162.76

To approve Annual Accounts for 2018/19.

The Accounts for 2018/19 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

For 2018/19:

Income = £3,786 Expenditure = £4,466

Play equipment updating

Cllr Russell presented some prices for the parts to repair the climbing frame. It was agreed that Cllr Russell would obtain further quotes and would ask if any further reduction on the existing quote was available. This item to be deferred to the next meeting for a decision.

Leases

The lease between the School and Recreation Ground Trust is going to be signed at the forthcoming meeting of the School's Governing Body. The Chairman of the Cricket Club and Cllr Hammond had discussed and agreed a fee of £500 for the Cricket Club for this year.

John Eaton Hut

The Clerk was asked to contact the Football Club to ask them to undertake an end of season clear up as the John Eaton Hut had been left in an unsatisfactory state. She was also asked to remind PGFC that they should not be playing additional games in April without the prior written permission of the Clerk.

Sewerage Treatment Works

Cllr Fischel agreed to write a letter to the Diocese of Chichester, confirming that the Trust approves the work in principal but with the following conditions:

- i) The Trust will be involved in the final siting of the septic tank and pipe work.

- ii) The Trust will assume no financial liability.
- iii) The current drainage system to/from the existing buildings on the Recreation Ground will be maintained.

Actions:

- ***Cllr Russell to obtain further quotes for the parts to repair the climbing frame and to ask if any further reduction on the existing quote was available.***
- ***Clerk to contact Football Club regarding a clear up and about playing in April.***
- ***Clerk to add items to the agenda for the extraordinary meeting of 30th May – to decide upon ordering parts to fix the climbing frame, and to agree the date of the Annual Recreation Ground Meeting.***
- ***Clerk to receive a signed copy of the lease from the school and send a copy to WSCC (including the invoice department) as requested by the School.***
- ***Clerk to send revised annual lease running from April 2019 to the Chairman of Ashurst Cricket Club.***
- ***Cllr Fischel to write to the Diocese of Chichester as above.***

9. Planning Matters.

No planning applications were received for consideration at this meeting.

10. Planning Decisions from HDC

Application Number: DC/18/2487: Hawking Sopers Guesses Farm Spithandle Lane Wiston Steyning West Sussex BN44 3DY.

Change of use of existing agricultural barns to a single dwelling (Use Class C3), and erection of replacement garage, with associated landscaping

Decision: Application Permitted on 12/03/2019

Application Number: DC/19/0415 Site: New Wharf Farm Horsebridge Common Ashurst Steyning West Sussex BN44 3AL Description: Change of use of milking parlour to canine hydrotherapy facility (sui generis) including modifications to the building Decision: Application Permitted Date of Decision: 17/04/2019

Application Number: DC/19/0299 Site: Southview Steyning Road Ashurst West Sussex Description: Erection of a single storey front/side extension and conversion of loft into habitable living space with the installation of a side dormer window and the erection of a front porch Decision: Application Permitted Date of Decision: 26/04/2019

11. Financial Matters

Mulberry and Co were confirmed as the Internal Auditors for the Council and Moore Stephens as the External Auditor. The Clerk was due to see Mark Mulberry on 4th June to review and sign off the Annual Governance and Accountability Return including the Year End March 2019 Accounts.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council did not wish to have a Limited Assurance Review of the 2018/19 accounts.

The remaining balance of the Public Works Loan was noted as £45,000.

The bank balance at Lloyds TSB as at 21st March 2019 was **£8,230.09**

Income received 28th Feb – 16th May 2019		
Horsham District Council	Half Precept	£5,745 (not included in above balance)
Expenditure authorised 28th Feb – 16th May 2019		
E Leggo (reimbursement)	Microsoft Office 365 subscription	£113.76
E Leggo (reimbursement)	Yola domain renewal	£11.45
E Leggo (reimbursement)	Yola information privacy	£7.95
E Leggo (reimbursement)	Yola silver renewal hosting	£84.95
Horsham Association of Local Councils	HALC subscription	£15
Parochial Church Council of Ashurst	Newsletter contribution for 18/19	£65
WSALC Limited	WSALC & NALC subscription	£86.39
Ashurst Public Recreation Ground Trust	Annual Grant	£2,550
Safe Custody Bank Charge	Safe Custody Bank Charge	£7.50
E Leggo	Expenses	£15.07
Ashurst Public Recreation Ground Trust	Donation for Dog Show from Village Hall 18/19 (notional)	£150
Chas Hammond (reimbursement)	Reimbursement for gift for Nick Hedley (taken from Chairman's Allowance)	£57.55

Action: Clerk to write to the bank again to find out what the safe custody charge is for and cancel the standing order if no documents are being held.

12. Annual Governance Statement.

It was **RESOLVED** that the councillors considered the Annual Governance Statement for 2018/19 to be a correct record of a sound system of internal control and accounting. The Annual Governance Statement was approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk as RFO. (See Appendix 1 for the review of effectiveness of Internal Control for Ashurst Parish Council.)

13. Accounting Statements

It was **RESOLVED** that the Accounting Statement for 2018/19 is a true record of the Council's income and expenditure. The Accounting Statement was Agreed and signed by the Chairman and the Clerk as RFO.

14. Grants

The Council reviewed an application from the Community Minibus Association asking for a grant towards running costs. It was **RESOLVED** to make a grant of £50 to the Association.

The Council reviewed a grant application from The St Barnabas Hospice Outreach Project. It was **RESOLVED** to make a grant of £50 towards the St Barnabas Hospice Outreach Project as the Council felt that this service was very important to rural communities, like Ashurst.

The Council reviewed a grant application from The No Incinerator For Horsham. In this case, the Council decided not to make a grant since this was not sufficiently relevant to Ashurst.

15. Appointment of Two Representatives for HALC & Voting Representatives for WSALC

It was **AGREED** that Cllrs Fischel and Knight remain as the representatives for the Horsham Association of Local Councils and as voting representatives for the West Sussex Association of Local Councils.

16. To review Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The documents had been circulated to all councillors and were taken as read. It was proposed by Cllr Russell and seconded by Cllr Nicholson that all documents be Adopted. This was **RESOLVED** by the Council.

17. To reaffirm the Council's eligibility to hold the General Power of Competence

It was unanimously agreed and **RESOLVED** to reaffirm eligibility, as the Council still has 6 elected councillors (out of a possible 7), and a qualified Clerk.

Following the election, there is a vacancy for a councillor. The Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the Co-Option Policy and advertise the vacancy on the website and noticeboard with a deadline for interested candidates of Thursday 23rd May. An extraordinary meeting to co-opt a councillor would then be held on 30th May.

Cllr Jesse gave apologies and left the meeting at 8.10.

18. SSALC Updates

It was noted that recent correspondence in the SSALC Newsletter outlined new regulations to make all websites meet accessibility standards by 23rd September 2020.

Action: Clerk to check that Yola are updating their websites in line with this legislation.

19. To receive an update on Section 106 funds and the Community Highways Scheme

It was **AGREED** that the Council now had all the necessary information to support an application to the Community Highways Scheme (speed data for the B2135, a residents' petition and the support of Cllr Barling) The Clerk was asked to proceed with the application.

Action: Clerk to confirm with WSCC the deadline for applications in 2019/20 and to check how many signatures are needed to demonstrate public support.

20. Operation Watershed

Cllr Russell advised the Council that he is about to submit our application to West Sussex County Council for the flooding on the B2135 at Godsmark Farm.

21. To receive an update from Horsham Association of Local Councils.

Cllr Fischel advised the Council that Cllr Val Court has stepped down as a councillor and would therefore be vacating her position as Chairman of HALC, a significant role that she had carried out for many years. A new chairman is yet to be elected, but this will be done at the forthcoming Annual Meeting of HALC.

An informative presentation had been given by Sussex Police about speed checks and how these are carried out with current resourcing levels. Their efforts concentrated on motor cyclists who both caused a considerable number of accidents and were also often on the receiving end of these incidents.

22. Broadband for Ashurst

Cllr Nicholson informed the Council that the fibreoptic broadband has gone live, but that there have been problems for some properties accessing it. Cllr Nicholson agreed that he would chase this up with the West Sussex County Council and would find out about how much it would cost

the community to improve the service and top up the cost via the Community Partnerships Option.

Action: Cllr Nicholson to contact WSCC and find out about the Community Partnership Option.

23. Dangerous tree in the Parish

It was reported that the tree in question has not been cut back as promised by the landowner to WSCC.

The Council was grateful to the local Tree Warden for a report on the trees at the Recreation Ground. This report is included in Appendix 2 at the end of these minutes.

Actions:

- **Clerk to thank the Tree Warden for her report**

24. Village Hall Update

Recent correspondence from the Village Hall Chairman regarding security was shared with the Council. The Village Hall Annual General Meeting was taking place at the same time as this meeting.

25. Correspondence.

- Clerks and Councils Direct
- Remainder sent via email.

26. Reports from Outside Bodies.

None for this meeting.

27. Information Items.

SSALC training is available for booking.

Action: Clerk to book Cllr Fischel on to SSALC Chairmanship Training

Dates of the next Meetings

All meetings held at the Village Hall at 8 o'clock unless specified otherwise.

Extraordinary meeting on 30th May

Thursday 4th July 2019

Thursday 5th September 2019

Thursday 7th November 2019

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.32pm

Signed Chairman Dated

Appendix 1

Review of effectiveness of Internal Control for Ashurst Parish Council

Annual governance statement criteria	Evidence of internal control
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepared receipts and payments accounts in accordance with regulations; • Used excel; • Internal audit verification.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All cheques signed by the clerk and two councillors; • Quarterly financial summaries are published on the Council's website.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this smaller authority to conduct its business or on its finances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council review and adopt the NALC Financial Regulations at every annual council meeting in May; • Internal audit verification.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual return for 2017/18 is displayed on the Parish Council website, with details of how electors can arrange to view the original copy • The annual return for 2018/19 will be uploaded once approved by the Council • A notice of public rights to view the annual accounting records during a designated 30-day period, is displayed on the website and noticeboard.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this smaller authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover when required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An internal audit is carried out annually.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excel is used for accounting purposes; • All cheques signed by the clerk and two councillors; • Quarterly financial summaries are published on the Council's website.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal audit for 2016/17 raised the matter of undated agendas. This has been rectified. • Internal audit for 2016/17 raised the matter that apologies are received in the minutes, but their acceptance is not noted. This has been rectified.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year end, have a financial impact on the smaller authority, and where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable for this financial year
9. Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	<p><i>For Ashurst Public Recreation Ground:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepared receipts and payments accounts in accordance with regulations • Used excel

Elizabeth Leggo, Clerk and RFO, May 2019

Appendix 2

Report from the Tree Warden

The only thing of note is oak dieback to the left/north of the footpath entrance. I think it is now important to contact the new owner and request that he cuts off the overhanging dead branches of both the first tree (which is very obviously dying) and adjacent relatively healthy trees which have single very accessible dead lower branches.

Any of these branches could give rise to significant injury if falling over or near the mow- line, and I have mentioned them previously. It should be left to a qualified tree surgeon to determine what degree of cutting back is needed in the case of the first big tree.

According to current data, we are not yet in an area which has been colonised by the oak processionary moth, but it is moving southward and at some stage we may need to alert residents to be on the lookout for this destructive introduction which is directly harmful to people.