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## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF ASHURST PARISH COUNCIL, HELD AT ASHURST VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 19<sup>th</sup> MAY 2022 AT 7.30PM

### Attendance.

Chairman	Cllr Fischel
Ashurst Parish Council (APC)	Cllrs Hammond, Hedley, Jesse, Knight, Nicholson and Russell
Horsham District Council (HDC)	Cllr Lloyd
West Sussex County Council	Cllr Lineham
Clerk	Elizabeth Leggo

#### 1. Election of Chairman.

The presiding Chairman, Cllr Fischel, asked for nominations for a Chairman for the forthcoming year. Cllr Fischel was nominated by Cllr Nicholson and seconded by Cllr Russell and it was unanimously agreed. Cllr Fischel accepted the position and remained in the Chair. 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.

#### 2. Election of Vice Chairman.

Cllr Russell was nominated by Cllr Fischel and seconded by Cllr Nicholson and it was unanimously agreed. Cllr Russell accepted the position and remained the Vice Chairman. Cllr Russell signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for Vice Chairman.

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

There were no questions from the public.

#### 3. Apologies for Absence.

None for this meeting.

#### 4. Declaration of Members' Interests.

None for this meeting.

#### 5. Approve the Minutes of the Meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022 and of the Extraordinary Meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022

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. Reports from District & County Councillors.

CLlr Lineham (WSCC) apologised for not making it to many meetings as he has several clashes with other commitments on Thursdays.

He advised that roadworks on the road opposite Spithandle Lane were coming up between 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> June

WSCC has obtained two velocity road pothole machines, and substantial repairs are being undertaken as part of an ongoing £32 million investment.

In 2018, West Sussex's Children's Services were the subject of a formal investigation, and as a result they were placed in a Trust. Since then, there have been several changes in personnel at the Council. West Sussex has now made such significant improvements that it no longer needs to be in a Trust. This is an important achievement. CLlr Lineham will be the new Chairman of the Select Committee for Children.

The Department of Transport has invited MPs to apply for noise cameras. These can detect vehicles that break legal noise levels. Andrew Griffith MP has pressed for cameras in this area, including the B2135.

The Council has embraced the Bus Enhanced Partnership Plan, as part of the bus service improvement plans. An allocation of £17.4 million has been made to West Sussex from Central Government.

There are several proposals to change speed limits in the county, for instance all school zones to be 20mph limit. There is also a proposal to have a 50mph limit on the A283 which would cover the junction for Ashurst.

CLlr Lloyd (HDC) reported that HDC had a small underspend at the year end. There are staffing issues within planning as it is very difficult to recruit surveyors.

HDC has had three 'Big Conversations' across the District, where environmental issues, planning and water neutrality have been discussed, alongside arrangements for the Queen's Jubilee.

HDC is working very hard with Natural England and Southern Water to resolve, by mitigation, the water neutrality issue. This will almost inevitably result in the ability to build fewer houses than the current government specified requirement. HDC will insist that 35% of all new developments must be affordable.

CLlr Fischel asked CLlr Lloyd if there was any reason not to develop the Horsham Local Plan while the water neutrality issue was being resolved. CLlr Lloyd said that this is not possible without knowing the housing number requirement. It is likely that the Plan will be on hold for the next 7-8 months.

## 7. Outstanding Actions.

Action	Outcome
CLlr Fischel to speak to the Landlord of the Fountain Inn regarding its registration as an Asset of Community Value.	Can now be actioned.
CLlrs Fischel and Russell to keep an eye on issues raised by HDC, when carrying out the weekly play equipment inspections.	Ongoing.
Clerk to re-invite a representative of ENSO to a meeting sometime this year.	Done -To present before the next meeting.
CLlr Fischel to investigate purchasing a new bench for the Recreation Ground	Ongoing.
CLlrs Fischel and Russell to investigate possibilities for a refurbished or replacement building at the Recreation Ground.	Ongoing – See 8 below.
CLlr Fischel to come up with a date for a Clear-Up at the Recreation Ground.	Done - Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> May.
CLlr Fischel to advise the organisers of the Platinum Big Lunch that the Recreation Ground and Cricket Pavilion are available for use on 5 <sup>th</sup> June.	Done.
It was agreed that the Council would object to the proposed change in parliamentary boundaries with a copy sent to Andrew Griffith.	Completed and circulated.

## 8. Recreation Ground Matters

**To receive the report on the Recreation Ground Trust's Income and to approve future Expenditure.**

The bank balance at HSBC as at 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022 was £10,639.07

Income received 24 <sup>th</sup> March to 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2022		
None for this period		
Expenditure authorised 24 <sup>th</sup> March to 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2022		
EDF	Electricity – March 2022	£4
HSBC	Monthly bank charges to 19 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2022	£5
EDF	Electricity – April 2022`	£4
HSBC	Monthly bank charges to 19 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2022	£5

It was **AGREED** to change banks and to move over to online banking for convenience and also to avoid the banking fees now being charged. Sufficient safeguards and controls will need to stay in place.

**To approve the Annual Accounts for 2021/22.**

Income: £5,250.00. Expenditure: £2,809.80

**To sign the forms to change the signatory on the bank account to the new Clerk.**

To be actioned at a later date, since the new Clerk was unwell and had not been able to attend the meeting.

**To confirm a date to meet at the Recreation Ground to have a clear up.**

The Trustees are due to meet on 28<sup>th</sup> May in order to have a general clear up and paint the Cricket Pavilion.

**To discuss the potential usage of the Ground by a new football club.**

The new Club is very keen to use the Ground. Volunteers have been down to clean up the John Eaton Hut.

**Playground inspection reports:**

The Clerk updated the Council on the latest report from HDC. There was no action required.

**Oak tree update:**

Permission has been granted for the work, which will take place later this year, when there is less leaf cover.

**Refurbishment/replacement of John Eaton Hut:**

Before making any decisions, the Trustees are waiting to see what level of demand for the Ground and the John Eaton hut will be forthcoming from both the interested footballers and Steyning cricket.

**Village events in Sumer 2022:**

The Platinum Jubilee Celebrations are taking place on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June.

The Flower Show will be held on 16<sup>th</sup> July. (Post meeting – now held over until 17<sup>th</sup> July at the Village Hall.)

The Dog Show will take place on 4<sup>th</sup> September.

**Other matters to be actioned:**

**Cllr Russell will be taking a sample for Legionnaire's testing.**

**Cllr Jesse agreed to roll and harrow the Ground when there has been some more rain.**

## 9. Planning Matters: To comment on planning applications received from Horsham District Council.

**DC/22/0397:** Relocation of 1 no. approved timber holiday cabin.

Site: Furzeffield Farm, Honeybridge Lane, Ashurst, West Sussex.

The Clerk was asked to submit the following:

Stance: Neutral

Comments: Same as before. (There seems to be little if any difference in this proposed revised location of the timber holiday cabin and that requested in the last application.)

## 10. Planning Decisions from HDC.

None for this meeting.

## 11. Financial Matters

The bank balance at Lloyds TSB as at **12<sup>th</sup> April 2022 was £10,712.89**

<b>Income received 24<sup>th</sup> March to 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022</b>		
Horsham District Council	Half precept	£6,600 (not included in above balance)
<b>Expenditure authorised 24<sup>th</sup> March to 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022</b>		
Public Works Loan Board	Village Hall Repayment	£1,445.63
Elizabeth Leggo	Reimbursement: Microsoft 365	£113.76
Elizabeth Leggo	Reimburse: Yola Internet Host	£146.85
WSALC Ltd	WSALC and NALC subscriptions	£91.55
Mulberry & Co	Internal audit	£234
BHIB Ltd	Insurance 2022-23	£332.96
Steyning Area First Responders	Annual defibrillator maintenance	£120
E Leggo	Office allowance Apr-Jun 2022*	£33.34
E Leggo	Salary Apr-Jun 2022*	£604.92
HMRC	E Leggo Tax – Apr-Jun 22*	£151.20

\*E Leggo working 50% normal hours for June whilst covering and handing over to the new Clerk.

**To sign the forms to change the signatory on the bank account to the new Clerk.**

To be actioned at a later date, since the new Clerk was unwell and had not been able to attend the meeting.

**To approve and sign the Income and Expenditure account for 2021/22.**

Income: £14,991.32.

Expenditure: £12,108.08

The Clerk has submitted the Annual Return to the Charity Commission.

With regard to the Internal Audit report, Cllr Fischel ran through certain areas where certain improvements were suggested by the auditor. It was agreed that the Council would work on these recommendations over the coming months. Some points to address included:

- Updating Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- Carrying out a review of a Risk Management Scheme.
- Reviewing actual performance against the budget, ideally on a quarterly basis.

Mulberry & Co were confirmed as the Internal Auditors for the Council & Moore UK as the External Auditor.

The balance of the Public Works Loan now stood at £42,000. A copy of the statement had been circulated.

## 12. Certificate of Exemption

The Certificate of Exemption from external audit for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22 was **APPROVED**.

## 13. Annual Governance Statement.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 is 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/RFO.

## 14. Accounting Statements.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Accounting Statement for 2021/22 is a true record of the Council's income and expenditure. The Accounting Statement was Agreed and signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/RFO.

## 15. Limited Assurance Review

It was **RESOLVED** not to have a Limited Assurance Review as the Council is exempt from external audit.

## 16. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

An amended version of the NALC Standing Orders had recently been published and circulated. This and the Financial Regulations were circulated to all councillors and taken as read.

It was **AGREED** that this item would be deferred to the next meeting as Cllr Fischel would meet with the new Clerk. Then any proposed changes to the documents would be approved formally by the Council.

**17. WSALC Update**

Councillors were encouraged to attend forthcoming training sessions. WSALC is now running well with good attendance on courses and there are County forums covering many local issues with widespread appeal.

**18. HALC Update**

Cllr Fischel advised that at the HALC meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> March, the date of its future AGMs had been changed to July and its name, HALC, was to be kept the same. There was a presentation from Jonathan Chowen, Leader of HDC, reiterating the points raised by Cllr Lloyd in 6 above.

**19. 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.

**20. Rampion Wind Farm**

Cllr Knight advised that he had received no updates since the last meeting. In addition, the Rampion Open Meeting scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022 in the Ashurst Village Hall had been cancelled.

**21. Grants**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council would make a grant of £100 to St Barnabas for the Home Night Service.

**22. Broadband in Ashurst**

Cllr Knight advised that 61 out of 63 properties had signed up for faster Broadband, but that the Parish was now waiting to hear from Openreach about the status of Ashurst's grant application from the Government and West Sussex County Council and the timing of its installation.

Cllr Nicholson advised that 17 houses now have Broadband in the south of the Village.

(It was agreed that Cllr Lineham would liaise with Cllrs Nicholson and Knight and discuss further.)

**23. Trees and Footpaths**

Cllr Fischel advised that Ashurst would be receiving an oak tree for the Queen's Green Canopy tree donation.

**24. GDPR**

The Council was reminded to delete emails over 6 months old.

**25. Ukraine Crisis**

Cllr Fischel asked councillors whether they thought there was anything we could do for the Ukraine Crisis.

**Action:** Cllr Fischel would find out about the Ukrainian families in the local area to see if any help is needed.

**26. Correspondence**

- Invitation to a Parish Council Safari at the Knepp Estate on 7<sup>th</sup> July. Cllrs Fischel, Knight and Hedley would like to attend.

**Action:** Cllr Fischel would contact Knepp to advise.

- Free Net Zero Workshop – Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May by zoom attendance.

**27. Reports from Outside Bodies**

Cllr Jesse advised that the Village Hall Committee was hoping to host a Harvest Supper at the Village Hall.

**28. Information Items.**

None for this meeting.

**Date of next meeting: Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022**

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:50PM**

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