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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST PARISH COUNCIL, HELD AT ASHURST VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 12th MARCH 2020 AT 8.00PM

Attendance:

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

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

One member of the public was concerned over the proposed nearby developments at Buck Barn and Mayfield as outlined in the Horsham District Local Plan, and wanted to ensure that Ashurst and the Council is taking the developments seriously and making appropriate representations. The Chairman explained the actions that the Council is taking.

1. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Barling.

2. Declaration of Members' Interests:

None for this meeting.

3. Approve the Minutes of 9th January Meeting and the Extraordinary Meeting of 13th February:

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

4. Reports from District & County Councillors:

Cllr Platt reported on the main item from the agenda of the last meeting of HDC, being the budget. The budget is £11.2 million, up £0.77million from last year. Rates are to be increased by 2%, meaning that Ashurst's tax base is now £148.30 and a Band D property will pay £235.46.

The Bramber Brooks Project has planning approval. This project is on the west side of the River Adur adjacent to Bramber High Street. The owner has turned some of the land into a nature reserve. The Environment Agency has been involved in this scheme and work will commence there in mid-summer.

In Steyning a group named the Steyning Greening Group is working to reduce the carbon footprint of Steyning and the local area. This group's next meeting has been postponed until autumn in light of the current Covid-19 pandemic.

5. Outstanding Actions:

Action	Outcome
Cllr Russell to organise a Legionnaires' test.	Completed – Negative result.
Clerk to write to Sussex Land Services to inform them that they have been successful in securing the grass cutting contract on the Recreation Ground and to ask if possible to do cuts on Thursday or Friday.	Completed.
Clerk to write to the unsuccessful grass cutting contractors.	Completed.
Cllr Fischel to speak to the Landlord of the Fountain Inn regarding registration as an Asset of Community Value.	Outstanding.
Clerk to update the precept form and upload to the website and submit this figure to HDC by 31 st January.	Completed.
Clerk to forward Cllr Knight the details of accessibility plug-ins & forward emails received from potential web designers.	Completed and plug-in added to existing website to ensure compliance with accessibility requirements.
Clerk to remove the tabs: Neighbourhood Plan and Youth from the website.	Completed.
Clerk to suggest either 3 September or 5 November for Glen Chipp, Chief Executive of HDC to attend a meeting.	Completed – Mr Chipp will attend the meeting of 3 rd September.
Posters to be designed to encourage volunteers for the Community Speedwatch Scheme.	Cllr Nicholson to do.
Cllr Russell to send the Clerk the document on Riparian Responsibilities from WSCC to be linked to the Parish Council website.	Completed.
Cllr Nicholson to draft enquiry for Clerk to send to Cllrs Lloyd and Platt regarding the extent and use of funds held for broadband by HDC.	Completed – Cllr Lloyd to get in touch with a contact at WSCC as HDC does not hold funds. Clerk to follow up with Cllr LLOYD.
Cllr Nicholson to invite someone from the Better Connected team to the Annual Parish Meeting, and Cllr Fischel to invite a representative from either KNEPP or the Wildlife Trust.	Better Connected team had been due to attend but now needs to be cancelled. Cllr Fischel had arranged with the Police to attend but again this now needs to be cancelled.
Clerk to share the meeting dates for the next year with all councillors, and upload to the website.	Completed.
Cllr Russell updated the Council on the Soft Sand Review. It was AGREED that he would send a draft to the Council before sending in comments.	Cllr Russell had sent in comments. Completed.
Parish Online – the Council AGREED to retain this subscription if it could be organised at a discounted rate as a group of small councils. Clerk to contact SSALC to arrange.	Completed.

Actions:

- *Clerk to follow up with Cllr Lloyd regarding apparent funds held for broadband by HDC.*
- *Clerk to add a link to the website to the Love West Sussex site for the public to report issues such as potholes.*
- *Annual Meeting - Better Connected needs to be cancelled (Cllr Nicholson) and likewise the Police (Cllr Fischel).*

6. Recreation Ground Matters:

The bank balance at HSBC as at 20th February 2020 was **£6,313.71**

Income received between 9th January and 12th March 2020.		
None for this period.		
Expenditure authorised between 9th January and 12th March 2020.		
EDF	Electricity	£80 (Jan & Feb)
Business Stream	Water	£54.78

To review Horsham District Council Playground Inspections:

The issues identified were noted by the Trust. The medium risk item is in hand with the current planned repairs, the loose eyebolt had already been seen to but will be checked again!

Medium risk: Climbing frame decaying.

Low risk: Swing chains wearing – loose eyebolt.

Action: Cllr Russell agreed to check the swing chains again.

To receive an update on the replacement parts for the play equipment:

Cllr Russell informed the Council that although he has had the parts to fix the climbing frame for some time, it has been too wet to do the work at present. He will get started as soon as the weather permits.

Action: A meter reading is required for EDF Energy. Cllr Fischel agreed to take the reading. The Clerk gave Cllr Fischel the letter with the details.

The latest negative legionnaires' test report has been received and was noted by the Trustees.

7. Planning Matters:

DC/20/0225: Demolition of existing two bay brick garage. Erection of a three bay oak framed garage with above storage space. Installation of solar panels on the south elevation. Batts Cottage, School Lane, Ashurst.

The Clerk was asked to submit the following to HDC although the deadline had passed for comments:

Stance: Support

Comments: No comments

8. Planning Decisions from HDC:

Ford Solar Farm: Installation of satellite communication mast: Permitted.

9. To discuss registering the Fountain Inn as an Asset of Community Value, and to agree how to proceed:

This was carried over to the next meeting.

10. Horsham District Local Plan:

Cllr Knight had attended the inter-parishes group last week to discuss the proposed Mayfield development. There was frustration in the group at the general inadequacy of the Plan and the lack of impact assessment by HDC. A document would be circulated next week by the Group to encourage people to make sure that they take part in the consultation and make their representations.

Cllr Fischel shared a draft letter to be submitted by Ashurst Parish Council to HDC regarding the Local Plan. Cllr Fischel asked if there were any suggested amendments to please let her know by Monday 16th March. She will then ask the Clerk to send the letter.

In addition, a draft letter for residents to edit and submit had also been prepared. The contents of which were approved.

The biggest concern was that in the Draft Local Plan, Ashurst has been changed from an unclassified to a secondary settlement, without any consultation and for no valid reason since Ashurst has not changed in any way since the current Local Plan was drawn up in 2015.

It was agreed that the letter to all residents, to include the Mayfield and Buck Barn poster as well as advice regarding the cancellation of the Annual Parish Meeting would be hand delivered to all households by the councillors.

11. Financial Matters:

The bank balance at Lloyds TSB as at 17th December was £11,838.55

Income received between 9th January and 12th March 2020.		
None for this period		
Expenditure authorised between 9th January and 12th March 2020.		
E. Leggo	Salary (Jan-March 2020)	£681.17
HMRC	E. Leggo Tax (Jan-March 2020)	£170.40
E. Leggo	Office Allowance (Jan-March 2020)	£40
Parochial Church Council of Ashurst	Grant towards Newsletter 19/20	£100
Public Works Loan Board	Loan Village Hall	£1,490.13
SSALC Ltd	Parish Online Subscription	£18
Ashurst Public Recreation Ground Trust	For Dog Show (contra with Village Hall hire)	£200

Precept:

The Clerk has submitted the precept request for 2020-21 to HDC for £12,300.

Action: Clerk to chase for an updated statement

12. Green initiatives in the Parish:

The Council discussed what it can do to become more environmentally friendly including being carbon neutral. Cllr Platt was present and advised that it would be good for a representative of the Parish Council to attend the Steyning Greening Group when it gets started in the Autumn. Cllr Platt also said he would consider what initiatives the Parish could undertake and would bring some ideas to the next meeting.

Other ideas from the Council included:

- It was suggested that in addition to the trees and hedge planting agreed for the Recreation Ground, people could be encouraged to join in planting trees on Bines Green.
- Recycling crisp packets, which Ashurst School may like to become involved in.
- Cllr Knight suggested that it might be good for the Parish Council to find out its carbon footprint and then aim to become carbon neutral. To be investigated further.

13. Website update:

The Council thanked Cllr Knight for the free plug-in he had found, which the Clerk could use to make the website accessible. This means that the Council will not need to invest in a new website and host, as the current website is now compliant with accessibility requirements which come into law in September 2020.

14. SSALC Update:

No courses had been attended by any councillors.

15. To receive an update on the application to the Community Highways Scheme for the installation of a Vehicle Activated Sign and on the current faulty Vehicle Activated Sign:

The Council had been disappointed to be informed by WSCC that its application to the Community Highways Scheme had been unsuccessful. The application had been a couple of points short of the threshold for consideration. Chris Stark, Area Highways Manager, had written to the Clerk to say that it was unlikely that the Scheme would fund a Vehicle Activated Speed sign since WSCC is currently decommissioning signs in need of repair, which is what ours was.

The Council accepted that it would seek other measures for speed control in the Parish, namely the Community Speedwatch Group which is in the process of being set up.

16. Community Speedwatch:

Cllr Nicholson had previously reported that he had only had one response to the request for volunteers in the last Newsletter. It had been agreed to create some posters and to discuss the issue further at the Annual Parish Meeting. However, as this meeting has been cancelled, it has been mentioned again in the latest Newsletter. It was also agreed that Cllr Nicholson would design some posters to be distributed around the village. A minimum of three volunteers are needed. Cllr Russell agreed to volunteer alongside Cllr Nicholson. One of the members of the public present also agreed to volunteer.

