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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST PARISH COUNCIL, HELD AT ASHURST VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 13th JANUARY 2022 AT 7.30PM

Attendance.

Chairman	Cllr Fischel
Ashurst Parish Council (APC)	Cllrs Hammond, Hedley and Russell
Horsham District Council (HDC)	Cllr Lloyd
Clerk	Elizabeth Leggo

To discuss any questions submitted by the public.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Jesse and Nicholson (APC), and Cllr Platt (HDC).

2. Declaration of Members' Interests.

None for this meeting.

3. Approve the Minutes of the Meeting of 2nd December 2021

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

4. Update on COVID-19.

Meetings can still be held face to face. Face coverings are mandatory in indoor public spaces unless an exemption is held.

5. Reports from District & County Councillors.

Cllr Platt sent his apologies, but emailed the following update to the Clerk:

The new Council leader was formally voted in at an extra Council meeting before Christmas. New Cabinet members are in place and the memberships of Committees and Policy Development and Advisory Groups (PDAGs) agreed. There is a new Cabinet position to cover Environment and Rural Affairs and I have joined the PDAG for that. Tim Lloyd continues as Chair of Planning (South) and might be able to give more information on the Cabinet and its new direction. The new leader, Jonathan Chowen, has indicated that he intends to use the Water Neutrality issue to reduce the massive housing allocations built in to the HDC draft plan. There has not been any resolution of the Water Neutrality issue, and this not expected to happen for some months. Meanwhile, planning applications involving water use are on hold.

Councillors have been briefed on the proposed budget for next financial year. There are continuing uncertainties relating to Covid, Government funding and other issues, but it looks reasonably sound.

Cllr Lloyd attended and updated on the following:

- There is a new Leader for Horsham District Council.

*Draft minutes of the Meeting of Ashurst Parish Council on 13th January 2022
Minutes subject to approval by the Council on 24th March 2022*

- The budget has not been agreed yet, but it is looking like council tax will be increased by 2.9%.
- It is also looking like the District Council may end the financial year with a small surplus.
- Garden waste collections are going to increase marginally in cost.
- A food waste trial has been hugely successful, and it is looking likely to be rolled out in April.
- Carbon neutrality – HDC has moved forward with internal strategies to reduce the carbon rating
- The CEO of HDC has resigned.
- Cllr Lloyd has been elected as the Chairman of planning South for the District.

6. Outstanding Actions.

Action	Outcome
Cllr Fischel to speak to the Landlord of the Fountain Inn regarding 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.
Cllr Russell to follow up Watershed Grant possibility with Ms Furlong.	Ongoing
Action: Cllr Russell to chase up WSCC for a response and update on Operation Watershed	Ongoing
Cllr Fischel will arrange to meet with Norman Kwan of Horsham District Council to talk about the potential of starting a new Neighbourhood Plan for Ashurst. She would also raise again the issue of Ashurst's proposed reclassification as a secondary settlement.	Cllr Fischel has met with Norman Kwan who advised that there is little point in starting up a Neighbourhood Plan now.
Clerk to re-invite a representative of ENSO to a meeting early next year	To do – for the ? meeting – Susie ? -
Cllr Fischel to investigate purchasing a new bench for the Recreation Ground and report back.	
Cllr Fischel would arrange for the deer fencing to be erected during the holidays, if possible.	Complete
Clerk to advise the Football Club of the Council's decision on charging a lower rate for matches and to ask if the Club could help with the Spring clear up at the Ground	Complete
Cllrs Fischel and Russell to investigate possibilities for a refurbished or replacement building at the Recreation Ground	Ongoing
Cllr Fischel to come up with some dates for a Spring Clear up at the Recreation Ground	
Cllr Russell agreed to speak to an electrician about carrying out the necessary PAT tests.	

7. 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 **20th December 2021 was £10,761.87**

Income received 2nd December 2021 to 13th January 2022		
None for this period		
Expenditure authorised 2nd December 2021 to 13th January 2022		
EDF	Electricity – December 2021	£4
Cllr Fischel (reimbursement)	Deer fencing	£380.25

There has been a request to use the Cricket Pavilion and Recreation Ground on Sunday 5th June for the Jubilee. The Trustees AGREED to this.

Cllr Fischel and Cllr Russell AGREED to meet at the Recreation Ground to further discuss the redevelopment of the buildings.

8. Planning Matters.

None for this meeting.

Planning Decisions from HDC.

Parish: Ashurst PC

Application Number: DC/21/2591

Site: Merrion Farm Bines Green Partridge Green West Sussex RH13 8EH Description: Non Material Amendment to previously approved application DC/20/1769 (Installation of a 36m x 50m clay-lined earth walled slurry lagoon with associated surrounding engineering works) to allow for an amendment to the wording of Condition 3.

Decision: Application Permitted

Date of Decision: 07/12/2021

9. Proposed solar farm at Huddleston Farm, Steyning

Both the Clerk and Cllr Fischel had made contact with ENSO to invite a representative to the December meeting, but unfortunately neither had received a response. The Clerk will be re-inviting a representative to the **next meeting**.

Cllr Lloyd informed the Council that he had heard nothing on this from HDC.

Action: Clerk to re-invite a representative of ENSO to a forthcoming meeting.

10. Rampion 2 Windfarm Update

Again, Cllr Lloyd has heard nothing on this from HDC on this proposal, and neither has any member of the Council.

11. Financial Matters.

The bank balance at Lloyds TSB as at **8th December 2021 was £13,161.68**

Income received 2nd December 2021 to 13th January 2022		
None for this period		
Expenditure authorised 2nd December 2021 to 13th January 2022		
Parochial Church Council of Ashurst	Newsletter contribution	£100

The Council AGREED to precept HDC £13,200 for 2022-23. This is an increase of 1% on the 2021-22 precept of £13,050.

Action: Clerk to submit precept request to HDC

12. Community Speedwatch

Cllr Nicholson gave his apologies for the meeting.

Cllr Fischel informed the Council that Cllr Nicholson had received a letter from a member of the public about the accident outside the Fountain Inn on New Years Eve, asking whether the Council could do more for traffic calming in the village. It was agreed that the Council has done all it can in this area by commissioning a speed survey, applying for a vehicle activated speed sign and setting up community speedwatch.

13. Trees and footpaths

Cllr Fischel informed that the Oak Tree has a TPO, therefore planning permission is needed to undertake the work. Cllr Fischel has this in hand and hopes the work on the oak tree will go ahead soon.

14. WSALC Update

The Clerk has circulated all of the current training courses to councillors. The Clerk has contacted WSALC for advice on recruitment (see item 23 below).

15. HALC Update

Cllr Fischel informed the Council that there are no updates for this meeting.

16. Local Plan

Cllr Fischel spoke to Norman Kwan who advised that there is little point in starting a Neighbourhood Plan at this stage.

17. Grants

None for this meeting.

18. GDPR

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

19. Correspondence

None for this meeting.

20. Reports from Outside Bodies

It was noted that Flix in the Stix had suspended temporarily due to Covid-19 concerns.

21. Information Items.

It was suggested that the Council invite Andrew Griffith MP to speak at the Annual Meeting of the Council. As a date has not yet been decided for this meeting it was agreed to add this to the agenda for the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to add to the agenda for the next meeting

Due to the nature of the information concerning staff and salary the next item took place under Standing Order 11 and was be discussed in Closed Session. There were no members of the public present for the meeting.

22. The Clerk's Resignation

The Clerk submitted her resignation to the Chairman in mid-December 2021 and gave three and a half months-notice. She has also offered to stay on for a further 2 months to train a new Clerk if this is needed.

The Clerk and Cllr Fischel would speak to WSALC about recruitment and organise a job description and advert.

The Clerk thanked the Council for their years of support. The main reason for her resignation was that she wished to have more time to work in her main job in the NHS, which has become increasingly demanding under Covid.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Fischel to draw up a job description, person specification and advertise the role

Date of next meeting: Thursday 24th March 2022

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm

Signed Chairman Dated