

**Hurst Green Parish Council
Supporting Paper**

Motion to change the start time of Council meetings

Summary of the matter to be discussed:

There are over 30 Parish Council's in Rother District, each routinely starting their meetings between 6.30pm and 7.30pm in the evening. Hurst Green Parish Council starts its meetings at 8pm.

By the time procedural items have been dispensed, it is usually at least 8.30pm before important agenda items are tabled for discussion. As such, meetings regularly finish past 10pm, with members of the public and attendees often leaving before the end of the meeting.

Whilst no scientific evidence has been gathered in support of this motion, the late start of Council meetings is likely to be influencing Councillors and Officers abilities to fully concentrate on proceedings. Likewise, from a practical perspective, Council meetings held in the winter months mean attendees traveling home late in the dark and sometimes dangerous weather conditions.

Details of any considered or known options:

Acknowledging that some Councillors and Officers routinely turn up for the Council's public consultation time at 7.30pm, this portion of the Council's agenda does not appear to be particularly effective, or well attended - with those choosing to address the Council often only addressing a small number of Councillors, and with these items spilling over and continuing as regular agenda items.

It would appear sensible to repurpose this informal session, and instead start each council meeting at 7.30pm. This would bring Hurst Green in-line with the majority of Councils in Rother.

Moving the start time would have no impact on members of the public to attend meetings and contribute to the proceedings.

Provide a recommendation:

That Councillors give consideration to the following motion proposed by Cllr. Brown:

Motion - That this Council for reasons of accessibility, increasing public attendance and improving the alertness of Councillors, and to regularise meeting start times with other councils within Rother District, and to avoid meetings regularly extending past 10pm, shall with immediate effect change the start time of its meetings from 8pm to 7.30pm.