

HURST GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 27th September 2022 in Hurst Green Village Hall starting at 8.00pm after public consultation.

Present:- Councillor Browne (Chair), Councillor Brown, Councillor Duddridge, Councillor Hampton, Councillor Price, Councillor Wright, District Councillor Barnes and County Councillor Eleanor Kirby-Green.

The Clerk and RFO, Anita Emery were in attendance along with eight members of the public.

A minute's silence was held in respect of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

1.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: -

Councillor Kenchington, Councillor Janes and Councillor Johnson.

2.0 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: -

To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on Tuesday 26th July and Tuesday 30th August 2022.

Minutes proposed by Councillor Price and seconded by Councillor Wright.

3.0 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS - *in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct: to receive any disclosure by Members of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.*

Councillor Browne declared an interest in agenda item 5.2 as a tenant of the site owner. and declared an interest in agenda item 9.2 RR/2022/2230/P as a relative of the farm manager and RR/2022/2167/P and RR/2022/2168/L. as he has worked for he applicant.

Councillor Brown agreed to chair the meeting for these agenda items.

3.1 APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION – *to consider written requests from Members for Dispensation and to consider the length of time the dispensation should be granted for i.e. as a one-off relating to a matter on this agenda, or ongoing for a set period and relating to any agenda within that period.*

None received.

4.0 FINANCE/RFO Report

The RFO, Anita Emery gave the report.

Noted for agenda item 10.1 that at the current rate of interest at 5.24% the repayment per annum would be £7060 in respect of the PWLB.

4.1 To approve the bank reconciliation

Bank reconciliation was emailed to all Councillors prior to the meeting.

This was unanimously approved.

4.2 To approve expenses and payments as itemised on the schedule

Expenses and payments schedule was emailed to all Councillors prior to the meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Hampton and seconded by Councillor Price.

This was unanimously approved.

The Chair, Graham Browne declared an interest in the next agenda item as he sits on the Rural Rother Trust board and did not take part in the discussion or vote.

Councillor Brown took the Chair for this agenda item.

4.3 To consider donation to Rural Rother Trust

It was **unanimously approved** to grant a donation of £100 to the trust.

Councillor Browne resumed the Chair.

5.0 **COMMUNITY Activities and reports.**

5.1 Neighbourhood Plan, progress report (Cllrs. Brown & Wright)

Councillor Brown gave the report which has been distributed before the meeting.

The RFO, Anita Emery left the meeting at 8.14pm.

The Regulation 14 consultation ended on the 17th September and now the Plan is moving on towards regulation 15. The responses rec'd now need to be reviewed to see if changes to the plan need to be made and an external consultant needs to be appointed. The Council's existing external advisor, Alison Eardley has put in a bid for this work which had been distributed to Councillors. Government grant money from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will cover this.

Councillors Brown and Wright asked the Council if it was happy to approve Alison Eardley to continue as the external consultant and if the Council was happy to apply for the grant to cover this cost.

The Council **unanimously approved** Alison Eardley as act as the external consultant and to apply for the grant to cover this cost.

Councillors Brown and Wright asked the Council for approval for the RFO to return the unspent money from the previous grant to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. This was **unanimously approved**.

Councillor Brown has meet with trustees of Bellhurst Nature Conservation Trust who, whilst not wanting to make the area a designated Green Space, were happy to meet with Council representatives re improvements to the area.

Councillor Hampton declared an interest in this as a neighbour of Burgh Wood and did not take part in any further discussion to do with this item.

It was agreed to set up a working party to look into this and a local resident in attendance agreed to lead on this.

i) To approve Regulation 14 consultation responses to go forward to RDC

Councillor Brown reported that the responses do not actually go to RDC but are used to see if the plan needs to be modified after the consultation and therefore the agenda item heading is misleading.

Due to the sensitive and personal nature of some issues to be discussed in the above agenda item the Chair asked for members of the public to be excluded for this agenda item. The public left the room.

Councillors Brown and Wright declared an interest in this agenda item and left the meeting.

The remaining Councillors and the Clerk reviewed the responses to go forward. One response would not be forwarded in its entirety due to the content not relating to the consultation and the Clerk will contact the respondent re this.

The Chair invited the public back into the meeting along with Councillors Brown and Wright.

The Chair, Graham Browne declared an interest in the next agenda item and left the meeting. Councillor Brown took the Chair for this item.

5.2 Old Community Shop Building. – report from working party

The Council agreed to accept an offer to privately meet with the owners of the former community building to understand their offer and any terms to a possible buy back of the council's lease, and to seek to gain this as a written offer.

The Council agreed that it would be advantageous to seek to resolve the matter of the future of the former community building as soon as possible, ideally before the next scheduled Council meeting. Following a question from a member of the public, the Council discussed and were reminded by the Chair that whether or not it was right for Councillors to participate in any discussion or taking part in any voting on any item remains a decision for each elected member, with Councillors taking decisions with full consciousness of the consequences of their actions.

Councillor Browne returned to the meeting and took the chair.

5.3 District and County Councillors reports

Councillor Barnes gave her report.

Councillor Eleanor Kirby-Green emailed her report to Councillors prior to the meeting and added that ESCC had rec'd one of the largest grants in the country towards an innovative public transport scheme worth 41millions.

5.4 Clerk's report

The Clerk gave her report, which had been emailed to Councillors prior to the meeting.

5.5 Parish Correspondence and local resident issues

Nothing more to report.

5.6 Urgent issues requiring attention

Raised manhole cover in the pavement outside Lodge Field needs to be reported urgently as serious trip hazard. Clerk will report.

6.0 **To consider amendments to Standing Orders and adopt changes**

Councillor Brown read out the motion which was seconded by Councillor Wright.

Motion - *That this Council for reasons of good governance and general expediency will amend its Standing Orders to include the following item. 'All agenda items to be discussed shall require an accompanying supporting paper to be produced and issued to Councillors along with the meeting agenda. Supporting papers need not be lengthy, but must succinctly explain as a minimum: a) a summary of the matter to be discussed b) details of any considered or known options c) details of any known or likely impact d) details of any financial implications and e) provide a recommendation to Council. Procedural agenda items, including minutes approval, dispensations, date of next meeting etc. are excluded from this requirement. Urgent matters by their nature, are also excluded from this requirement, however should time allow, consideration should be given as to whether a supporting paper would be appropriate.*

The Chair moved to amended the motion to include only sections a), b), and e).

This was **unanimously agreed**.

Amended motion, - *That this Council for reasons of good governance and general expediency will amend its Standing Orders to include the following item. 'All agenda items to be discussed shall require an accompanying supporting paper to be produced and issued to Councillors along with the meeting agenda. Supporting papers need not be lengthy, but must succinctly explain as a minimum: a) a summary of the matter to be discussed b) details of any considered or known options c) provide a recommendation to Council. Procedural agenda items, including minutes approval, dispensations, date of next meeting etc. are excluded from this requirement. Urgent matters by their nature, are also excluded from this requirement, however should time allow, consideration should be given as to whether a supporting paper would be appropriate*

The amended motion was **unanimously approved**.

Standing orders to be updated and put on the next agenda for final approval.

The Chair moved that agenda items 7.0, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.5 should be postponed to the next meeting due to time constraints.

This was **unanimously agreed**.

7.4 To consider erection and position of a flagpole

This item was briefly discussed and it was agreed to ask if the owner of the Old Court House if they would consider the placing of a flagpole in their garden. Chair to ask.

7.6 To consider working with the Village Hall on work to upgrade the front Garden (Cllr. Wright)

Brief discussion on this item with the Chair agreeing to speak to the Royal British Legion and investigate this issue further.

8.0 TRANSPORT, ROADS & FOOTPATHS

8.1 ESCC – to consider urban grass cutting service for 2023 options 1, 2 or 3

It was **unanimously agreed to go with option 1** the standard two cuts per year.

9.0 PLANNING

Councillors noted that planning application RR/2021/2798/P was a revised scheme, and that it was potentially concerning that residents would not have realized this. Councillors expressed their surprise that this planning application had not been withdrawn and resubmitted as a new application, as had happened with the planning application opposite the school. Councillor Barnes will investigate this .

APPEAL - Bantham Farm has gone for appeal (*parish of Ticehurst*)

9.1 RDC Planning decisions

None rec'd.

*Councillor Browne declared an interest in the three planning applications and left the meeting.
Councillor Brown took the Chair.*

9.2 Planning applications

RR/2022/2230/P - The Quarries, Ticehurst Road, Hurst Green.

Demolition of agricultural dwelling and construction of replacement agricultural dwelling. **Supported.**

RR/2022/2167/P & RR/2022/2168/L- Merriments House, Merriments Lane, Hurst Green TN19 7RQ.

Installation of new access gate and relocation of existing gates closer to dwelling. Erection of 2 garage outbuildings and associated ground works. Garage to be positioned A North of access on West boundary and garage B North of dwelling. Erection of new greenhouse East of dwelling in kitchen garden. **Supported.**

Councillor Browne returned to the meeting and took over the Chair.

Councillor Barnes and Councillor Eleanor Kirby-Green left the meeting at 10.05pm

10.0 PLAYING & STAGE FIELDS

The Chair reported on the clearance of the second goalpost in Drewetts Field by volunteers who had also hung up the goal post net provided by the Council and requested that a letter of thanks should be sent. Clerk to action.

It was **unanimously agreed** that a second net should be purchased to replace the old damaged top goal post net. Clerk to action.

10.1 Lodge Field, regeneration progress report.

The motion below was proposed by Councillors Janes and Johnson and seconded by Councillor Browne in their absence.

Motion - *"This council resolves to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling U Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £70,000 over the borrowing term of 20 years for the replacement of children's play equipment in Lodge Field, Hurst Green. The annual loan repayments will come to around £ 6446*. It is also intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments by approximately 11% which is the equivalent of an additional £0.17 a week on a band D property a move supported by the residents, confirmed by a village survey. It should be noted that these are current calculations and could be subject to slight change given the volatile interest rates.*

This was **unanimously supported**.

** note comment by RFO under agenda item 4.0*

10.2 Stage Field, condition report and to pass any motions re upkeep and maintenance

Clerk waiting to hear back from Sussex Waste re price for rubbish clearance.

The Chair asked the Council if it was the wish of the Council for him to cut back the hedges as usual. This was **unanimously supported**.

11.00 **Items for the next agenda**

Neighbourhood Plan.

Standing Orders

Other items to be emailed to Clerk as necessary.

12.0 **Date and time of next Meeting**

The next Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 25th October 2022 in Hurst Green Village Hall starting at 8.00pm with public consultation from 7.45pm.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.14pm.

Distribution of Minutes: -

All Parish Councillors

Parish Council Noticeboard

Parish Council Website

ESCC Councillor Eleanor Kirby-Green

RDC Councillor M Barnes.

Signed

Cllr. Graham Browne

Dated

25th October 2022