

## HURST GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024 in Hurst Green Village Hall starting at 7.45pm after public consultation at 7.30pm.

**Present:-** Councillor Browne (Chair), Councillor Brown, Councillor French, Councillor Johnson-Cloves, Councillor Levine and Councillor Price.

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

**1.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** - Councillor Pakenham, County Councillor Eleanor Kirby-Green, District Councillor Barnes and District Councillor Killeen.

### **2.0 ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

#### 2.1 Election of Chairperson and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Councillor Browne was proposed by Councillor Price and seconded by Councillor Brown  
**Unanimously supported.**

Councillor Browne accepted the appointment and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

#### 2.2 Election of Vice Chairperson and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Councillor French was proposed by Councillor Browne and seconded by Councillor Price  
**Unanimously supported.**

Councillor French accepted the appointment and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### 3.0 Election of Committees and Representatives

#### a) **Playing Fields**, i) *Stage Field*, ii) *Lodge Field*, ii) *Drewetts Field*

i) Councillors Browne and Johnson-Cloves agreed to cover Stage Field.

ii) Councillors Levine and French agreed to cover Lodge Field.

iii) Councillors Browne and Johnson-Cloves agreed to cover Stage Field.

iv) It was agreed to set up new representatives that would be responsible for new and future green spaces to be owned/maintained by the Parish Council.  
Councillors Brown and Price agreed to cover this.

#### b) **Footpaths & Roads**

Not appointed.

#### c) **Community Representatives**

Councillor French would liaise with the School.

Councillor Johnson-Cloves would liaise with the Village Hall committee.

#### d) **Representative to Rother Association of Local Councils**

Councillor Pakenham had agreed to cover this prior to the meeting. Councillor Price would cover as necessary.

#### e) **Representatives to East Sussex ALC (2)**

Councillor Pakenham had agreed to cover this prior to the meeting and Councillor Price.

#### f) **Tree and Environmental Warden**

The Council did not think this was necessary therefore not filled.

#### g) **Neighbourhood Plan representative**

Councillors French and Brown agreed to cover this.

#### h) **Finance Committee, *election of members and Chair***

Councillors Price (Chair), Browne, French and Levine appointed.

**i) Staffing Sub-committee, *election of members and Chair***

Councillor Price did not think this was needed as staff issues could be managed by a management group or representative from the Finance Committee. No appointments made.

**j) Planning Committee, *election of members and Chair***

It was decided to leave this until the Council had filled its two vacancies and had a full compliment of Councillors.

The Council agreed to set up a **new committee** for **Events** and Councillors Browne, Brown, Johnson-Cloves, Levine and Price agreed to serve on this new committee.

**4.0 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS: -**

To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

The RFO Anita Emery, queried agenda item 5.2 of the main meeting as she recalled agreeing to move over £9,670 from the Neighbourhood Plans Funds to the Community Shop fund and requested that this should be minuted. Clerk will amend for the next meeting.

Second Session minutes proposed by Councillor Johnson-Cloves and seconded by Councillor Brown. **Unanimously approved.**

**5.0 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.*

None received.

**5.1 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.

**6.0 FINANCE/RFO Report**

The RFO, Anita Emery gave the report which had been emailed out to Councillors prior to the meeting.

**6.1 To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2023-2024**

It was unanimously **resolved** to approve.

**6.2 To approve the Annual Accounting Statement for 2023-2024**

It was unanimously **resolved** to approve.

**6.3 To note the internal audit report and note any actions**

Noted. As per the auditor recommendation, the Council agreed and set a deadline of two months, for those Councillors and the Clerk to cease the use of non-council email addresses for council business.

**6.4 To approve the annual insurance for the year 2024-2025**

The RFO recommended that the Council should remain with Zurich for the next year due to the ongoing insurance claim. It was unanimously **resolved** to approve the Zurich quote for the year 2024-2025

**6.5 To approve bank reconciliation and corresponding bank statements**

Clerk noted donation from Caravan Tech for the D-Day event and reported that a register of Gifts and a gifts and donations policy would now need to be set up and approved. Proposed by Councillor Johnson-Cloves and seconded by Councillor French Unanimously **resolved** to approve.

**6.6 To approve expenses and payments as itemised on the schedule**

Due to the confidential nature one item of expenditure was left off the list to be discussed in the closed session before agenda item 11.0.

The Council requested that the payment to ESCC should be removed from the list whilst the Clerk checked to see if the Council could revert to the two free standard cuts.

Remaining items proposed by Councillor Johnson-Cloves and seconded by Councillor French

Unanimously **resolved** to approve.

- 6.7 To note year to date accounts  
Noted.

- 6.8 To approve the fixed asset register  
Unanimously **resolved** to approve.

The Chair thanked the RFO, Anita Emery for all her work for the Council as this would be her last meeting before leaving the Council.

## 7.0 **COMMUNITY Activities and reports.**

- 7.1 Neighbourhood Plan, progress report from steering group representative  
Councillor French gave the report.

- 7.2 Parish Correspondence and local resident issues  
Circulated via email to councillors as received.

- 7.3 Urgent issues requiring attention  
Nothing to note.

## 8.0 **PARISH COUNCIL ISSUES**

- 8.1 Motion, *'to re-adopt Standing Orders*  
Unanimously **resolved** to re-adopt.

- 8.2 Motion, 'to adopt new NALC Model Financial regulations 2024  
The RFO recommended that the Council should re-adopt the existing Standing Orders until the new model Financial Regulations could be studied in depth and amended for the Council later in the year.  
Motion amended to read, *'to re-adopt existing financial regulations.*

- Unanimously **resolved** to re-adopt.

- 8.3 Motion, 'to re-adopt parish policies and procedures'

Unanimously **resolved** to re-adopt.

- 8.4 Parish Streetlights update and resolution to progress replacement of lights currently out.  
It was agreed to postpone this to the next meeting and to check if Councillor Kirby-Green had an update re ESCC adopting the lights in Coronation Gardens. Clerk will send out Eric Ware's paperwork to Councillor Johnson-Cloves.

- 8.5 Resolution, 'That this Council should approach Rother District Council again with a view to taking over the control and running of the car park'. (Cllr. French).

To be postponed. Clerk to check if RDC still wish to pass it on to the council.

- 8.6 Resolution to look into repairs needed to the Lych Gate War Memorial and investigate avenues of funding for restoration works.

Councillor Browne has spoken to the coordinator of the Royal British Legion and they will look into this.

- 8.7 Motion, 'That this Council, as Trustees, supports the use of Drewetts Field for the annual village fete subject to a satisfactory method statement and risk assessment and will look into the provision of insurance cover via parish insurers. (Cllr. Johnson-Cloves)

Proposed by Councillor Johnson-Cloves and seconded by Councillor French.

Unanimously **resolved** to approve.

- 8.8 Motion, 'That this Council supports the use of Stage Field for the D-Day celebrations subject to a satisfactory method statement and risk assessment and will look into the provision of insurance cover via parish insurers' (Cllr. Browne)

Proposed by Councillor Browne and seconded by Councillor Johnson-Cloves.

Unanimously **resolved** to approve.

- 8.9 Motion, "Councillors are asked to approve the decoration of the village for D-Day celebrations and the village fete by hanging of flags from Parish Council owned lamp posts, bunting on parish council owned land, without obstructing public highways or footpaths" (Cllr. Johnson-Cloves).

Proposed by Councillor Johnson-Cloves and seconded by Councillor Browne.  
Unanimously **resolved** to approve

## 9.0 TRANSPORT, ROADS & FOOTPATHS

Potholes to report in Burgh Lane near to Cooks Field. Clerk will report.

## 10.0 PLAYING & STAGE FIELDS

### 10.1 Lodge Field regeneration project

Councillor French has managed to phone Andy Frost who has reported that the company is running behind with its scheduling due to the poor winter weather having a knock-on effect. They hope to start bringing materials on to site in about two weeks.

**11.0 CLOSED SESSION**, *Press and public excluded for the next agenda items due to the confidential and sensitive nature of the items to be discussed.*

The Chair suspended Financial Regulations for the next item which has been moved down the agenda and declared an interest in the item to be discussed as a tenant of the landlord to which the invoice pertained and left the meeting.

Councillor French took the Chair.  
Councillor Price left the meeting.

### 6.6 Payment of invoice to B&A Builders

After discussion it was agreed to make an interim payment of £12,000.

The RFO will move £4,000 from the Neighbourhood Plan Fund to the Community Shop hand back fund to cover the cost.

Councillor French would discuss the outstanding amount with the builders.

*Councillor Browne returned to the meeting and took the chair.*

### 11.0 Update re RFO vacancy and co-option of councillors to fill the Council vacancy

Vacancy for the RFO post has been advertised with an end date of the 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Residents interested in the Councillor vacancies to contact Clerk and will be invited to the next meeting and co-opted on or if numbers exceed vacancies to be invited to attend an interview. To be arranged dependant on interest.

## 12.0 Date and time of next Meeting

The next Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024 in Hurst Green Village Hall starting at 7.45pm with public consultation from 7.30pm.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.30pm.

Distribution of Minutes: -

All Parish Councillors

Parish Council Noticeboard

Parish Council Website

ESCC Councillor Eleanor Kirby-Green

RDC Councillor Barnes.

RDC Councillor Killeen

Signed Cllr. Derek French, Vice-chair

Dated 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024