



## NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT ROFFEY MILLENNIUM HALL, CRAWLEY ROAD, HORSHAM ON THURSDAY 7<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023 COMMENCING AT 7.30pm

**Present:** Councillors: A. Britten\* (Chairman), Mrs. K. Burgess\*, P. Burgess, J. Davidson, Mrs. G. Davidson-Fernandez, Mrs. R. Ginn\*, Mrs. J. Gough, R. Knight, T. Rickett B.E.M.\*, D. Searle, J. Smithurst, S. Torn, R. Turner and Mrs. S. Wilton (Vice-Chairman)

\* denotes absence

**In attendance:** Sarah Norman (Clerk)  
District Cllr. Hellawell

---

*In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman Cllr. Sally Wilton, Chaired the meeting*

**FC/46/23 Public Forum**

There were no members of the public.

**FC/47/23 Apologies for absence**

The Council received apologies for absence from Cllrs. Britten, K. Burgess, Ginn & Ricketts.

Members also received apologies from County Cllr. Baldwin together with District Cllrs. Emery and Frank

**FC/48/23 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of Interests.

**FC/49/23 Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were **AGREED** and were signed by the Chairman of the meeting as being a correct record.

**FC/50/23 Decisions made by delegated power since 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023 for ratification**

Members **NOTED** that it had been necessary to comment on two amended planning applications due to a 14 day deadline as follows :-

DC/23/0354 - Morriswood, Old Holbrook

Previous decision - No Objection.

Delegated decision on amended plans - No Objection

DC/23/1009 - Leechpool Primary School, Leechpool Lane

Previous decision - No Objection

Delegated decision on amended plans - No Objection

The Decisions were **RATIFIED**.

### **FC/51/23 Committees and Working Parties.**

The following Committee Minutes were presented to the Council:-

1. Finance and Administration Committee Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023.
2. Planning, Environment and Transport Committee Meeting held 20<sup>th</sup> July and 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023
3. Property Committee Meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023 including recommendations to :
  - i. To receive and approve the updated Health & Safety Risk Assessment Document (Min. PR/033/23 refers)

Members also **NOTED** that the Personnel Committee Meeting scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> July 2023 had been cancelled due to lack of business.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee Minutes as listed above be received and adopted and all recommendations **RATIFIED**.

### **FC/52/23 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies**

As detailed in the Clerk's report, Members **NOTED** that Cllr Wilton had attended the following since the last Council meeting:-

- i) Meeting with HDC and Residents 27<sup>th</sup> July to discuss plans for the Roffey Rec - copy of notes circulated to Members on the correspondence email dated 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023
- ii) HALC AGM held 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023 - copy of Minutes circulated on the correspondence email dated 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023
- iii) HDC/HALC Meeting held 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023 - copy of Minutes circulated on the correspondence email dated 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Cllr. Searle reported that he had attended a meeting of the Wealden Works Community Liaison Group regarding the Incinerator. There was not too much to report other than the work was on target to start end of 2023/early 2024. The Finance, while not yet finalised, would be confirmed when a contractor had been appointed.

Cllr. Searle also reported that he had attended a meeting of the Warnham Community Liaison Committee regarding the Wienerberger Brickworks. A tour of the facility is planned for CLC members on 4<sup>th</sup> October. In addition, it was noted that there was an open day planned at the Ewhurst brick works on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September.

### **FC/53/23 Reports from District or County Councillors**

County Cllr. Andrew Baldwin, having sent his apologies, had provided the following written report which had been circulated at the meeting.

*In view of the recent news about RAAC I can confirm that WSCC is fully aware of the issue and has already completed a review of records for our maintained schools. No West Sussex County Council maintained school has been identified as containing any RAAC construction. WSCC will of course continue to monitor the situation closely and take appropriate action.*

*Each July we have a Member's day briefing on the current financial situation. Obviously, a lot can happen between now and when we set the 2024/25 budget. Below are the main points.*

*Challenging situation. Will have to make some difficult choices. Work is needed to balance the books.*

*As always, we started to look at the budget in July. The government gave us a 2 year settlement so we know how much we will get for 24/25. Budget is based on best assumptions. Excluding any impact from the adult social care reforms we are working on a gap of between £90 million and £170 million for the next 5 years depending on the level of council tax increase. If council tax increases by 4.99% then the gap reduces to £90 million which is about £17m a year. Current borrowing costs are £19m a year.*

*Putting £17 million into perspective - in the current financial year (2023/24) WSCC will spend £1.86 billion delivering vital services to a growing population of 882,676 residents and 37,400 businesses across the county.*

*The population of West Sussex has risen by 9.4% between 2011 and 2021. Service pressures have increased due to increase in population and inflation. WSCC has had to build in £35 million for inflation in 2024/25.*

*Since covid there has been a 72% increase in the number of requests for Education, Health and Care plans. Most of the increase is for pre school children. There is a big challenge around the timeliness of completion of these plans. They are supposed to be done within 20 weeks but this is proving difficult because of a shortage of Educational Psychologists to complete the work. This is a national problem, not unique to WSCC.*

*18% of children in West Sussex require SEND support – Special Educational needs and disabilities. The national average is 12.5%*

*WSCC is increasing the number of local SEND places and is providing more special support centres in mainstream schools through the capital programme. WSCC has put £20 million of our own money into a capital plan to increase the SEND provision. In addition central government has given us £20 million so £40 million in all to provide more specialist school places for SEND pupils.*

*Other pressures – recruitment challenge – 32 social workers have arrived from South Africa. 19 more going through the process to apply to come over.*

*There are financial pressures as a result of an increase in demand and complexity of external placements for children we care for as well as a lack of sufficiency in the market. This is a national issue – WSCC is pressing central government to look at supply and commissioning. 5% of children we care for have complex needs e.g. mental problems, autism, and it is difficult to find suitable places for some of them.*

*There is financial pressure on home to school transport – this is due to an increase in demand and the increase cost of taxi transport.*

*School place planning. We cannot predict parent preferences. As the local authority we are responsible for planning school places but academies and dioceses operate their own admissions processes. Whilst every school has to stick to the Admissions code laid down by the DfE if parental preference indicates that there is a shortage of secondary school places in a certain area and we ask an academy or church school to take them they are not obliged to do so. Whereas a local authority maintained school has to take them.*

*Care home charges increased by an average of 9% last year. Focus is on prevention as then people need less support.*

*WSCC spends £60 million net disposing of waste. Less than 10% goes to landfill.*

*We should have a better picture of the up to date situation in late October when we have the next members briefing on the Medium Term financial strategy.*

Cllr. Hellawell reported on behalf of the District Council. Activities had been relatively quiet over recent months as the new Administration bedded in and work was finished on projects hanging over from before the election. The main focus was the Local Plan review which was felt a priority due to development demands. HDC have received additional funding of £250,000 to help tackle the impact of the cost of living crisis and the distribution of funds to those in need across the District has begun.

Finally, Cllr, Hellawell welcomed the inclusion on the Agenda the consideration of Neighbourhood Wardens as the fear of ASB had been a frequent comment from residents when canvassing prior to the Election.

**FC/54/23**

**Report from the North Horsham Community Land Trust (NHCLT) link councillor**

Cllr. Gough, as Chairman of NHCLT reported that membership is slowly growing due to opportunities to attend some publicity events at Sussex Green Hub, a Saturday stall in the Carfax and the Rotary Fun Day event in Horsham Park. These events have resulted in the recruitment of 26 new members. A successful drawing competition based on the perception of their ideal home was judged by those who attended the first members' meeting and a WH Smiths token was sent to the winner of each of the three age group categories. The Trust's IT Directory created a QR Code for the stand at the Rotary event which had received over 70 hits.

With regard to future events, there will be a table for the Trust at the Sussex Green Hub (URC) on the morning of Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September. A second informal members' meeting will be held on 10<sup>th</sup> October at RMH, and wine, soft drinks and nibbles will be provided.

The resignation of John Smithurst from the Board as Treasurer was noted, and thanks were expressed for all the service and expertise that he had shared with the CLT. John was a founding member of the CLT, and his financial guidance would be sorely missed. A vacancy therefore existed for a Financial Director and any volunteers from the Council would be much appreciated.

More than ever, there is a desperate need for genuinely affordable housing in Horsham and this was clear from the comments received from local residents at all the public events. The CLT remain determined to succeed and are continuing to follow up possible sites and avenues for funding.

Finally, on behalf of the Trust, Cllr. Gough expressed gratitude to the Parish Council for their continued support.

### **FC/55/23 Chairman's Announcements**

Members were reminded of the need to return the completed revised Section H of the Register of Interests, as a matter of urgency, if not already done so.

It was also reported in the Clerk's report that there have been no meetings of the North of Horsham Parish Liaison Group for almost 12 months as the Water Neutrality situation continued to put a stop to all further development at the site. The Liaison Group members were contacted in March 2023 with a written update and once again in June with some aerial photos of the development. The matter would now be revisited in the autumn but with the continued moratorium on building, it is likely that there will be no meetings until 2024, or when a solution for the Water Neutrality issue is reached.

Members were advised that Cllr. Smithurst has resigned from the PET Committee and that there were now two vacancies on this Committee, and anyone interested in joining should contact the Clerk.

Finally, in an addition to the report circulated with the Agenda, Members **NOTED** that the completed External Auditor's Certificate for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 had now been received with no comments included. This had been published on the Parish Council website, together with the Notice of Conclusion of Audit, and was also posted on the Noticeboards.

### **FC/56/23 Financial Matters**

#### **i. Finance Report to show income, expenditure for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023**

##### **Funding to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023**

Precept (half year)	182,673
Environmental Grant (half year).	5,873
Climate Change Grant	2,076
<b>Total</b>	<b>190,622</b>

##### **Income to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023**

Cost Centre	Actual income	Annual Budget	Estimated income to 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2023*
Admin	7,211	200	67
Allotments**	982	995	995
North Heath Hall	22,541	71,000	23,667
Holbrook Tythe Barn	13,295	38,000	12,667
Multi Court Lettings	6,897	26,600	8,867
Roffey Millennium Hall	22,385	45,000	15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>73,311</b>	<b>181,795</b>	<b>61,263</b>

### Expenditure to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023

Cost Centre	Actual Expenditure	Annual Budget	Estimated expenditure to 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2023*
Admin***	23,155	54,570	27,190
Grants	2,330	10,000	3,333
Burial ****	1,865	7,460	2,487
Personnel	102,988	349,650	116,550
Planning, Env, Trans	0	1,500	500
Allotments	331	1,560	520
Amenity R&OS	15,087	56,485	18,828
North Heath Hall	10,977	30,778	10,259
Holbrook Tythe Barn	8,100	28,095	9,365
Roffey Millennium Hall	12,500	42,840	14,280
<b>Total</b>	<b>177,333</b>	<b>582,938</b>	<b>203,312</b>

\* Total cost centre budget for 2023/24 divided by 4/12th.

\*\* Allotment invoices are sent out annually. The full income is expected by the end of April.

\*\*\* Includes, in Actual Expenditure, Annual Insurance Premium of £13,884 paid May 2023 and includes, in Estimated Expenditure, Full Year Budget for Insurance of £13,500

\*\*\*\* Paid quarterly in Months 2,5,8 & 11

### Income

At the end of Month 4 of the 2023/24 year, revenue income continued to be higher than the anticipated by approx. 20% - equivalent to the position at the end of month 3.

### Expenditure

Overall, expenditure remained at approx. 13% lower than would be expected at the end of the month, as it was at the end of month 3. It was **NOTED** that the Personnel Budget was £13,562 (just under 12%) less than would be expected at this time of year and that the reason for this was twofold; firstly, due to staff resignations resulting in periods of understaffing but also the annual pay award payable from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 had not yet been agreed and therefore not implemented.

### Reserves

As at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 remaining funds, including the 1<sup>st</sup> half year precept payment received and General Reserves, stood at £308,132.

In addition, there were additional Earmarked Reserves of £274,333 - a reduction of £1,525 from the balance at the end of month 3, due to expenditure of £895 for works arising from the inspection of the partition wall at RMH and £630 for architect drawings for the proposed washroom works at NHH.

### Summary

It was **NOTED** that there was £12,049 more revenue income than budgeted for at the end of month 4 together with £19,291 less revenue expenditure than anticipated.

The Council **NOTED** the Financial Report to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023.

## ii. Payment Lists

The Council **AGREED** the payment lists for June 2023 totalling £71,462.03 and July 2023 totalling £43,594.87 as circulated with the Clerk's report and as published on the website.

### FC/57/23 Neighbourhood Wardens

As had been requested at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023 (Min. FC/14/23) refers) the Clerk had provided a report for Members on the matter which was duly **NOTED**.

Cllr. Wilton reported on the meeting she had attended at Roffey Rec as referred to earlier in the meeting under Min. FC/52/23. The strength of feeling from the residents regarding the activities and impact of a group of young people who gather at the Rec was profound and comments were made that residents can be left feeling intimidated.

A length discussion ensued with comments made as follows:

- i) Unlike other parishes, North Horsham does not have a centre for Wardens to patrol
- ii) ASB should be dealt with by the Police
- iii) Not felt to be a good use of money
- iv) A youth club could be an alternative

The Clerk referred Members to the report on the matter and that the remit of Wardens was much wider than just ASB and that their purpose was to intervene to try and prevent behaviour that resulted in ASB.

Following discussion, a proposal was tabled and seconded to proceed with an informal meeting with existing Wardens and to consult with residents on the proposal. Following the vote, the proposal was **REJECTED** with 2 in favour, 5 against and 3 abstentions.

### FC/58/23 CIL Working Party Meeting

It was **NOTED** that a meeting of the Working Party on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and the Notes of the Meeting were circulated with the Agenda.

Members considered the recommendations as detailed in the Notes of the Meeting, namely :

Provisions and Installation of Defibrillators at

North Heath Hall and Holbrook Tythe Barn	£1,610
Provision and installation of litter bin for Earles Meadow	£ 600

Members also noted that since the CIL Working Party Meeting, the Parish Council had been notified about the Community Automated External Defibrillators Fund and that an application for funding for the Defibrillator at North Heath Hall and Holbrook Tythe Barn could be submitted and funding from the CIL reserves only be used if the applications were unsuccessful - in whole or part.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendations for both projects but that an application be submitted to the Community Automated External Defibrillators Fund for full/part funding.

**FC/59/23 Health Services Provision**

Members discussed the various health service offers in the area including hospitals, surgeries, the use of paramedics in surgeries, the advancement in what can be treated by paramedics in an ambulance prior to attending hospital, day surgery and patients' services, the 111 service and clinics held at Horsham hospital. It was also noted that a new surgery was planned for the Mowbray development.

In summary it was agreed that the types of provision were ranging but there was not enough and longer opening times were needed.

It was therefore **AGREED** that the Clerk should write to Jeremy Quin MP and ask for his support in promoting the extension and longer opening hours of the services already being offered.

**FC/60/23 Business Plan Review**

The Chairman of the meeting reported that as there had been Members unable to attend the session on the previous Monday, to enable those Councillors to fully appraise themselves of the recommendations reached at that meeting, this item should be deferred until the November meeting. A copy of the draft document would be circulated with the Agenda and report for that meeting.

**FC/61/23 Roffey Regeneration**

As had been requested at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023 (Min. FC/15/23 refers), the Clerk had made enquiries with HDC about any potential regeneration in Roffey.

On reviewing the files, the Clerk had ascertained that a similar review had been undertaken back in 2018 and at that time, HDC had no current knowledge or plans for redevelopment/regeneration in this area. Furthermore, the most recent SHELAA assessments were completed in 2018 with the areas at the Star Pub (SA388) and Scrap Yard (SA387) identified but denoted as "Not Currently Developable".

Members **NOTED** that Strategic Planning at HDC had advised that there had been no change to the position in 2018 and that it was considered that the area was no longer actively being promoted for redevelopment. Finally, it was noted that there was no intention to run an updated SHELAA exercise in advance of the forthcoming Regulation 19 stage of the Local Plan.

A discussion regarding the potential for development followed and reference made to the plans that had been drafted for the redevelopment of the entire area some years previously.

Members noted the damage to the overhang of the Co-op store, and it was **AGREED** that the Clerk write to the Co-op to ask if there were any plans to make repairs or refurbishment to the exterior.



**FC/62/23 Correspondence**

The Council **NOTED** correspondence list 1 as circulated with the Agenda and list 2 issued immediately prior to the meeting, covering the period 7<sup>th</sup> July to 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

**FC/63/23 Date of next Meeting**

The date of the next Meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 was **NOTED**. Cllr. Searle gave his apologies in advance for this meeting.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 8.35pm.

Signed .....

Date .....