



## NUTHURST PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023,  
at Mannings Heath Village Hall, commencing at 7.30pm.**

**PRESENT:** Cllr N Bryant (Chair), Cllr C Kenny (Vice Chair), Cllr W Bayley, Cllr V Court, Cllr K McGovern, Cllr M Oswell-Penton, County Councillor Nigel Jupp, District Councillor Dennis Livingstone.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Lisa Wilcock (Locum Clerk) and 7 members of the public.

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr S Catterall.

**254-23/24 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was **noted** apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Cllr S Catterall.

**255-23/24 CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLORS**

It was **resolved** to co-opt Sara Maynard on to the Council. Locum Clerk to send papers to her home address for completion.

**256-23/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr V Court declared a personal interest in Agenda item LC8-23/24 d. Cllr K McGovern declared a personal interest in Agenda item LC10-23/24 in the matter of DC/17/06.

**257-23/24 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE FULL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting from 16<sup>th</sup> August 2023, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023 with one amendment. The Council **noted** recommendations made within the Staffing Committee notes dated 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and the Finance Committee notes dated 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023. All minutes will be published on the website except minutes from the Staffing Committee.

**258-23/24 PUBLIC SESSION**

The Chairman invited questions from the public, reminding those in attendance that each question is limited to 2 minutes in accordance with Standing Order 3(g).

- A resident noted that the agenda was not published online and asked if the Extraordinary General Meeting held in August was quorate, how many complaints had been made against existing Councillors and the Clerk and when the AGAR will be published. The Clerk responded that the Council laptop had been passed her earlier that day which will enable her to update the website, the extraordinary meeting was not quorate in August, she had no complaints against her but was unaware of how many complaints there were against the Councillors the AGAR will be made public once the External Auditors have released it back to the Council.
- A resident noted that streetlights were out and needed immediate attention. The Council reminded members of the public that they are not permitted to maintain Council owned property and that streetlights were an agenda item for action.
- A resident complained that the drains in the roads were badly blocked throughout the whole Parish causing flooding in some areas. The Clerk will issue a report to WSCC copying in County Councillor Nigel Jupp. A photo of one drain was issued to the Clerk by Cllr Oswell-Penton for use within the report.

- It was noted by the Council that a resident stated that when Cricket is being played the playground should be closed however the Facebook page was promoting its use while the cricket was being played.

**259-23/24**

#### **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

A Local Plan workshop was held at the Drill Hall in Horsham for Parish Councillors to understand the proposed Local Plan and its impact to their own Parishes. There are sites within Nuthurst and particularly one site in Mannings Heath which potentially could allocate up to 100 houses. Further updates will be issued in due course.

**260-23/24**

#### **DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS**

District Cllr Dennis Livingstone provided an update for councillors and residents:

- A briefing from the Police held by Neil Durkin – there is a new app for reporting any disturbance quickly. Noted that there is a rise in shop thefts, vandalism and an intolerance of dogs. It was noted that youngsters gathering being reported when they have not committed any criminal acts and the public should not keep calling to report them for gathering. Noted that the Police have attended schools in the area to discuss crime. Noted that Horsham is one of the safest places in the Country.
- There is a Community Climate Fund available to the Parish Council Horsham District Council aims to enable local community groups and organisations to take action to reduce carbon emissions in their local communities. The fund will support new projects that will make a difference and also benefit the wider community. HDC want successful applicants to spread the message on the actions they have taken to inspire others.
- The Local Plan is expected to go forward to Regulation 19 soon. The district currently has a Government target of 900 houses per year.
- The District Councillor asked this Parish Council to stop making complaints to the Monitoring Officer about one another. Complaints to the Monitoring Officer are a last resort and the Parish Council should have one interest which is to work together for the Community. The residents are our priority.
- A question was raised about a gap between 2031 and 2040 as housing may need to increase. Noted that there are only 400 houses required in the area but the Government target is higher. The response was that the Government use a formula which works out housing need for each District. Noted that the national plan for Water Neutrality has not been released to date.

*County Councillor Nigel Jupp arrived at 2020hrs his report was heard after the finance section of the meeting but his report appears in this section of the minutes.*

County Councillor Nigel Jupp provided an update for councillors and residents:

- Apologies noted for late arrival as the meeting clashed with Southwater Parish Council.
- RAAC reports show that WSCC maintained schools in the area are not affected by RACC issue. One Primary school is affected but this is not a WSCC maintained school.
- Noted that applications for Secondary schools should be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023. Parents are encouraged to apply for 3 choices and their allocated school will be issued to them on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024.
- Noted that a test of 44 miles of roads have a new type treatment which enhances the ability to move water off the carriageway.
- A question was raised as to whether RAAC affects other public buildings such as hospitals and police stations. The County Councillor could not answer this as they are not WSCC run buildings.

- Noted that the issues of the blocked drains in the Parish were noted by the County Councillor. Clerk to contact the County Councillors after the meeting.

261-23/24

#### FINANCES

- To note the Reconciliation for August 2023** – The report was noted.
- To approve the schedule of payments for September 2023** – The report was approved.
- Update on the External Audit** – the Local Clerk contacted Moore's and issued them with the final 2 documents before the AGAR is returned to Council. The Locum Clerk was advised that this was due by the end of September. The AGAR will be accepted by Council at the next meeting.
- To consider a grant application for the Copsale Village Hall** – it was **proposed** that a grant of £1500 was required by the Village Hall for the purchase of tables, chairs and a dishwasher. It was **agreed** to grant Copsale Village Hall with the grant unanimously with one abstention. Clerk to issue the Hall with a grant application form for completion.
- To consider the purchase of defibrillator cabinets** – it was **proposed** that new defibrillator cabinets are to be needed at the Good Shephard and Copsale Hall. Noted that quotations were received in advance of the meeting. The recommended supplier is a company in Ireland who offer a cabinet that does not rust with a 10-year guarantee. The cabinets are £400 each with a carriage of £35. Installation is £150 per cabinet. It was **agreed** unanimously to go ahead with the order and installation. Clerk to be provided with all invoices.
- To consider the purchase of replacement defibrillator pads** – it was **proposed** that due to the pads having past their expiry date new pads are required. Quotations were supplied in advance of the meeting. The total cost is £24.50 plus VAT. It was **agreed** unanimously to go ahead with the order. Clerk to be provided with invoices.

*The Locum Clerk notes that cheque payments will be made until the Council has multiple signatories on the bank account. The Locum Clerk does not have access to the online banking system.*

262-23/24

#### REVIEW NUTHURST PARISH COUNCIL POLICIES

The Council were issued with a **Procurement Policy** in advance of the meeting. It was **agreed** that this policy should be considered by the Finance Committee and represented back to Full Council at the next Parish Council meeting. Item carried.

263-23/24

#### PLANNING MATTERS

**DC/23/1706 – 4 Forest Close, Mannings Heath, RH13 6JQ.**

It was RESOLVED no objection to the application.

**DC/23/1673 – The Timbers, Mannings Heath, RH13 6EF**

It was RESOLVED no objection to the application.

**DC/23/1591 – The Haven House, Sedgewick Lane, RH13 6QE.**

It was RESOLVED to object to the application as the dormer seems to overlook the neighbouring property.

**DC/23/1491** – noted the Council have already responded to this application.

## 264 – 23/24 FINANCE MEETING RECOMMENDATIONS

It was **resolved** to **accept** the recommendations made by the Finance Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 as follows:

- 1 The **adoption** of a Procurement Policy see agenda item LC 10 23/24. Carried to next Finance meeting for final edit.
- 2 The recommendation that multiple Councillors are added as signatories to the Bank. **Action Chair to provide bank mandates to Cllr Court, Cllr Maynard, Cllr Bayley and Cllr Catterall.**
- 3 The recommendation that the ex-gratia payment made to the previous Clerk be formalised to meet PAYE requirements via a Settlement Agreement. This will allow the payroll department to allocate Tax and NI to the payment which will be presented to Council for payment at the next meeting. **Clerk to issue a letter and instruct payroll.**
- 4 The recommendation that the Parish Council owned iPhone 11 is passed to the Locum Clerk. **This has been completed.**
- 5 The recommendation that the direct debit for the SIM card be transferred into the name of the Parish Council. **This has been completed.**
- 6 The recommendation that the cost of the iPhone is presented to Council and added to the Asset Register. **The asset register is to be updated by the Locum Clerk.**
- 7 **The recommendation for the purposes of a robust response to the Auditor is the Parish Council were without a Clerk, only 2 remaining Councillors were signatories which then put the Council in a position where financial decisions had to be made by the Chair who was also acting as Clerk. The Council recognises that in future the proposer to a purchase cannot also approve a purchase even though a second signatory is required. The Locum Clerk refers the Council to their own Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.**
- 8 The recommendation that a full list of payments made during the period without a Clerk are issued to Council. **This is to be completed by the Locum Clerk.**
- 9 The recommendation that the Grant payments for last FY be ratified and that the Budget FY24/25 be started for Council approval by November 2023 . Council to nominate a Councillor to work with the Clerk. The Locum Clerk will work with Cllr V Court to produce a Budget FY24/25.
- 10 It was **noted** that the Grants were not ratified in the APM in May 2023 due to a lack of Clerk. The following Grants were **ratified** by the public during this session. £1000 Nuthurst Cricket Club, £500 St Andrews School, £432 Link Magasine, £300 Air Ambulance.

## 265 – 23/24 A272 LETTER RECOMMENDED FOR PUBLICATION

The Council considered a letter recommended by an informal working party who met on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023 which was distributed in advance of the meeting. It was **resolved** to refer the issues to the County Councillor for escalation to WSCC Highways. The Clerk to write to the County Councillor copying all Councillors.

## 266 – 23/24 EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL - PLAYGROUND

It is **noted** that there was an order placed on the Playground which expires in October. It was **resolved** to hold a public meeting to address the issues at the playground in October. The Clerk to set up an extraordinary meeting. Item carried.

**267- 23/24     STREETLIGHTS**

It is **noted** that there are two streetlights in need of immediate repair one of which was reported to the Council by a member of the public. It was **resolved** to instruct the electrician to repair the streetlights as soon as possible. Locum Clerk to issue instruction to an electrician with the approval of Cllr W Bayley and Cllr N Bryant.

**268 – 23/24     EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was **resolved** to exclude the press and public from the meeting to discuss recommendations made by the Staffing Committee.

Meeting closed at 2118hrs

DRAFT