



PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF A FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 18th July 2024 AT THE VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: Ellis-Brown (Chair), Campbell, Court, Curd, Esdaile, Hare & Hunt

OTHER: Harry Quenault (Clerk) & Cllr Kenyon

The meeting opened at 7:30pm.

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received as follows:

Cllr Clarke (Personal commitment)
Cllr Trembling (Illness)
Cllr Lee (Personal Commitment)
Cllr Marcusson (Personal Commitment)
Cllr Martin (Personal Commitment)

28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO REGISTER OF INTERESTS

Cllr Campbell declared an interest in agenda item 12 because he sat on the Cricket Club board. He agreed to leave the room for this segment. Cllr Hunt also declared an interest in agenda item 8, due to her being a trader on the Highstreet. She agreed not to participate in the vote.

There were no changes to the Register of Interests.

29. MINUTES OF FULL COUNCIL

The Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting from 20th of June 2024 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and these were duly signed by the Chair.

30. COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes, Reports and Recommendations of Committees (other than separate agenda items) as follows:-

PLANNING & SERVICES COMMITTEE

Members received the Minutes of the Meetings held on 23rd May 2024, 6th June 2024 and 20th June 2024.

FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE

Members received the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th June 2024.

RECREATION & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Members received the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th June 2024.

However, the Clerk was asked whether the 14th of March Recreation and Open Spaces had been reviewed by the Full Council. The Clerk would review this.

This comes about due to major concerns about Nutbourne Common. It was asked whether Nutbourne Councillors should have more involvement. Brambles are believed to be swarming the heather. Bracken is rife, with it concealing the Queen's Jubilee Tree.

The Clerk clarified that work had been undertaken in collaboration with the South Downs National Park authority. It was also mentioned that several Councillors are involved with the care of the Common, including two members from Nutbourne.

31. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no public speakers, therefore the Chair moved onto the next agenda item.

32. DISTRICT & COUNTY REPORTS

West Sussex County Council Report:

There have been no new developments regarding the A29. County-wide, there are 1,500,000 road issues currently being addressed.

There is significant pressure to clear the footway to Pulborough in Coldwaltham.

Long term options to Highway matters are being considered through the Transport and Infrastructure meeting.

A proposal for single-way infrastructure on the A29 is under review for highway access. The major carriage work on Stream Lane is expected to be completed soon.

There is hope to implement a 40 mph speed limit on rural lanes as part of an integrated plan. Priority lane use in villages aims to slow down traffic, making villages calmer and reducing HGV usage on our roads.

Thanks were extended for participation in the Transport and Infrastructure meeting and the progress at Swan Corner. However, concerns remain about Stream Lane, frequently used by Nutbourne residents, particularly impacted by the closure of West Chiltington Road.

There was an enquiry about the accessibility of the kissing gate in Glebe field for buggies, as currently, they cannot use it. The alternative route is via Church Hill, Pulborough. The County Councillors will take this issue and review it with colleagues.

Horsham District Council Report:

Horsham District Council is relocating to new premises, which will save money on lease costs.

We have a new MP for the district, who remains both a County Councillor and a District Councillor.

The Local Plan will be reviewed by the inspector on July 27th. This is a positive development, and a review of parking will be included in the document.

There is a future budget shortfall, and the district is actively involved in addressing this issue.

Members **NOTED** the District & County Reports.

33. CO-OPTION OF A NEW COUNCILLOR

The Council discussed the application they had received.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept to co-opt Tom Macklin on to the Parish Council, with the proviso that Tom signs the Register of Interest within 14-days.

34. CHRISTMAS TREES

The Clerk introduced the topic by informing the Council that the price of trees had risen to £120 per tree, with an estimated requirement of roughly 52 trees, resulting in a total cost of £6,240.

Councillors noted that the trees were originally intended to make the High Street distinctive during the winter period and foster collaboration with local businesses.

However, several Councillors expressed concerns that the expenditure on Christmas trees was not justified within the budget and that the funds could be better allocated elsewhere.

The Clerk pointed out that nearby villages spend significantly more on their Christmas lights during this period, often going out to official tender and entering into contracts, which makes having Christmas lights a common practice.

A compromise has already been made by removing the hanging baskets on the high street, with the argument being that we must cut our cloth according to our resources.

Additionally, it was noted that the Remembrance Day event in November was disappointing, and it was suggested that we aim for greater representation next year. This suggestion was agreed upon by the council.

The Council **RESOLVED** to provide Christmas trees but limited the number to 40, with the first 40 businesses receiving them. This would require others to contact the company directly. In addition, the businesses must increase their minimum contribution to £40 per tree.

35. OFFER OF A VAN

The report was presented by the Clerk.

Comments were made regarding the service and maintenance of a shared vehicle, highlighting issues related to shared ownership, such as minor damage and the responsibility processes and procedures in place.

The offer of the shared vehicle was considered kind and generous

The Council **RESOLVED** to kindly turn down the van offer, due to the investment of a new vehicle which was agreed upon at the last meeting and the issues over shared ownership.

36. NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN REPORT

The Council **NOTED** the June Neighbourhood Warden Report.

37. PRESS AND PUBLIC EXCLUSION

The Council **RESOLVED** to exclude press and public for the next two agenda items.

38. BOWLS CLUB

The matter was explained by the Clerk.

The question was raised about who retains the freehold under the covenant. It was explained that we would retain the freehold with a long-term leasehold arrangement.

Regarding maintenance costs, it was clarified that there would be no additional responsibility reverting to the parish council. A peppercorn rent would be in place to prevent any financial burden.

There was a query about changes to the bar's drinking hours. It was noted that while increased flexibility is likely, any changes would need to comply with HDC licensing laws.

Taking on this responsibility is a significant step. Due diligence and feasibility will be undertaken by Cllr Clarke and the Clerk to ensure the necessary resources are available for managing this long-term tenure.

It was also mentioned that many young people use the facility in Pulborough, with a noticeable increase in young professionals.

Members **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Lee, Cllr Clarke & Cllr Len Elliss-Brown alongside the Clerk to discuss and enter into a long-standing agreement with the Bowls Club which would include discussing the land ownership behind the club.

39. **FIELD CLUB UPDATE**

The Clerk informed the Full Council that at the recent Finance and Policy meeting, it was decided to reduce the rent contribution for the field club sports to zero, provided they submitted a detailed financial statement and signed constitution. All three clubs have complied accordingly. Given that the total amount received by the Club is just over £1,000, it is not expected to significantly impact the current precept and can be recovered through other means.

At the last Full Council meeting, the Council was asked if the Cricket Club could receive additional land from the Parish Council. After researching the matter, the Clerk advised that this was not financially viable due to the high cost of land in the south of England and the potential taxpayer burden. It was recommended that the Cricket Club contact local developers who might provide a ground within a new development.

The Clerk also expressed disappointment over a now-deleted social media post suggesting that the Cricket Club was no longer playing on Parish Council land, which surprised us, key stakeholders and Sussex Cricket. Despite this, it was advised that the cricket club be allowed to continue playing on the recreation ground until the end of the season. The situation would then be reviewed to decide if they should play there next season.

It isn't at all beneficial, as the ECB has invested substantially to improve the cricket square. Moving to another facility would be irresponsible, and the ECB does not support such a move.

After much discussion, the Council **RESOLVED** to permit the cricket club to continue using the recreation ground until the end of the season but will not support any additional land ownership. The decision on their use of the ground for the next season will be deferred to the September council meeting.

40. **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE**

The Clerk advised that this matter was for noting but emphasised the importance of the Council being aware that District Councillors, Andy Tilbrook and David Hurst, had been involved in the resubmission of the neighbourhood plan to Horsham District Council. This resubmission was necessitated by feedback received from Norman Kwan at Horsham District Council which has now been incorporated into the neighbourhood plan. The plan has undergone rigorous testing in collaboration with these individuals to ensure satisfaction, despite the lengthy process and delay to receive the water neutrality statement from Horsham District Council.

We are pleased to report that all necessary changes were completed within a week. The Clerk expressed gratitude to the District Council Councillors and the Neighbourhood Plan team. The plan is now back in the hands of Horsham District Council, who have scheduled a meeting to discuss it on August 6, 2024. All relevant parties have been invited.

The Clerk advised that if you would like a copy of the updated plan, please let him know, and he will print it for you, as it is a significant document too large to include in any pack or deliver due to its size.

The focus of Horsham District Councillors has been on the Local Plan. With the plan now going to the inspector, they have time to address our referendum in September. Benefits include an increase to 25% of CIL money.

The idea is to begin a new Neighbourhood Plan almost immediately after the current one passes the referendum. Despite the significant cost, it is believed to be worthwhile.

Comments were made about the new government in place and whether this may change how Neighbourhood Plans work.

The Council **NOTED** the above information from the Clerk.

41. SOSCA – DRINKING WATER

This was **NOTED** by the committee.

42. HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL 106 & CIL UPDATE

A comment was made about the parish council being entitled to the full CIL amount from the new development at New Place Nurseries. The potential way to secure this is through the introduction of an Infrastructure Development Plan. Horsham District Council stated that they will find a way to allocate the entitled CIL monies despite the delay in the referendum.

Members **NOTED** the appendices presenting the up-to-date Section 106 figures & CIL update.

43. APPRENTICE UPDATE

The Clerk advised the Council that because the Staffing Committee has had so many changes in personnel that some members of this Council may be unaware that the staffing committee, as per last year's budget, agreed that we have a new biodiversity officer and groundskeeper.

The Clerk was pleased to announce that this position is now active and we are collaborating with West Sussex County Council, who will cover 100% of the training fees and Brinsbury College, our local course provider.

The job advertisement has already received one applicant, but we are hoping for more. Applications are accepted online through the official findapprenticeship.gov.uk website.

Interviews will take place in August, with the closing date in the first week of August. The selected applicant should start in September.

The Council **NOTED** the above information from the Clerk.

44. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr. Ellis-Brown is attending the Families Support Work meeting at St Mary's Church.

Thank you was noted to Bev, Fred, Cllr Curd, and Cllr Esdalile for the incredible work on painting and restoring the play park. It looks fantastic!

The Council **NOTED** all reports above.

45. PAYMENTS

Maximus	£1476.06
Lakers Building Supplies	£3.86
Pulborough Stoolball Club	£151.94
BSG Plumbing & Heating	£2,675.00
Len Ellis-Brown	£299.93

The meeting closed at 8.49 pm.

.....Chair

.....Date