



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST WOOD VILLAGE COUNCIL** held on  
Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024, 7.00 pm at the Council's Meeting Room

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Haite (Chair), Broad, Fairbourn, Forbes, Granger, Loveday, Phillips, Spoor & Tyrrell

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Rebecca Roberts (Clerk), RFO, Samantha Booker, County Councillor Russell and

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** 0

**ABSENT:** 0

**1. a. County and District Councillors' Reports**

**County Cllr Russell** reminded members that the 20mph TRO application has gone through moderation, but has no update on the Public Consultation which was originally set for November.

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) are in the middle of budget setting, although no final decisions have been made as they are waiting for the settlement from central Government. There will be no cuts to services in West Sussex however, but there are some funding cuts. Overall, WSCC are looking at 3% plus 2% for the Council tax and are in a good financial place.

**District Councillor Belsey** sent his apologies.

**b. Public Questions – None**

**2. Apologies for absence – None**

**3. To receive Declaration of Interests from Members in respect of any matter on the Agenda:**  
None

**4. Chairman's Announcements –** Cllr Haite reported that she and Cllr Spoor had met with a resident who had applied for the role of Village Handyman and is pleased to say that he was offered the position, currently on a self-employed basis.  
Cllr Haite also thanked Tom Aronson for kindly cleaning the War Memorial and also extended thanks to Eric Lamprell for fixing the wobbly handrail at the memorial in time for Remembrance Sunday. Finally, Cllr Haite thanked Cllr Spoor for helping conduct the interview for the Handyman and showing him around the village.

**5. To confirm the Minutes of the Village Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024–** Cllr Forbes stated that item 8 on the agenda was to approve the Health & Safety Risk Assessment, but, although approved, subject to changes as an evolving document, this was omitted from the minutes. The minutes of the meeting were then **approved subject to this amendment** and were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate account of the meeting.

**6. Clerk's Report –** the Clerk's report was received and noted. Cllr Haite stated that she had a conversation with the PCSOs during their last surgery in the office – she had asked them about the Police Hub in East Grinstead, as it is not always manned when it is supposed to be. She was advised to make reports on-line as these reports are always picked up and there can be patterns in the reporting. This will be added to the next Council Newsletter.

**7. To receive the minutes of Committees and reports from working groups and to consider any matters arising:**

a. Planning Committee – Minutes were received and noted from the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> October

- b. Finance, Administration & Human Resources Committee – Minutes were received and noted from the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> October
  - c. Events Working Group – None
8. To approve the Health & Safety Risk Assessment – this was approved at the meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024
9. **To receive an update on the Ashurst Wood Youth Club** – Chris Loveday, Youth Leader reported that they are full and now have a waiting list. There are 49 children on the books. 35 children attended last week for the pumpkin carving competition, judged by Cllr Belsey. Chris reported that they would like to have another volunteer to help out each week. Additionally, Chris will be attending a meeting at Mid Sussex District Council regarding Youth Services and support for Youth Clubs. There will be the Christmas Party on the final meeting of the year on 11<sup>th</sup> December.
10. **To receive an update on recent & planned events**
  - a. **Remembrance Sunday** – Cllr Haite will lay the Council wreath. Cllr Forbes will play the National Anthem, the Last Post and the Reveille at the appropriate times. There are plenty of volunteers to man the road closures.
  - b. **Christmas Market** – The Clerk reported that the pitches are full. All donations for the raffle should be taken to the office. It was agreed that if no alternative is found, that the Clerk should purchase a Christmas Tree from Dove Barn Nurseries for £150 + £20 delivery.
  - c. **VE-Day 80** – No further update.
11. **Highways**
  - a. **To receive an update on potential traffic calming measures in the village** – no further update – Cllr Russell will try to find out when the Public Consultation will take place.
12. **Finance**
  - a. **Accounts to pay**

The accounts payable from 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> October totalling £6,976.97 were **ratified and approved by the Council**
  - b. To receive and approve the Finance Pack for October 2024 (which includes the RBS income & expenditure report, & bank reconciliations) – **the Finance Pack was received and noted.**
  - c. To consider the first draft of the budget for 2025/26 as discussed at the Finance, Administration & Human Resources Committee Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> October – Cllr Phillips stated that the rise of National Insurance Employer contributions will have an impact on the budget, which will need looking at.
  - d. To agree that all staff now receive their backpay to tally with the NJC pay-scales that have now been agreed – **resolved, all staff have received their backpay.**
  - e. To agree the recommendations of the Finance, Administration & Human Resources Committee with regard to the job evaluation report produced by Chris Rolley – **resolved, members approved the report, with some agreed changes.**
  - f. To ratify the expenditure of £125.00 a replacement door handle and plates to the office door – **resolved, members ratified the expenditure.**
  - g. To approve the expenditure of £418.04 for the repair of the cross-trainer gym equipment at John Pears – **resolved, members approved the expenditure**
  - h. To approve a donation of £175 to the Royal British Legion for the Council's Remembrance Poppy Wreath – **resolved, members approved the donation**
  - i. To approve the expenditure of £120 for the Assistant Clerk/RFO to undertake the Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration (FILCA) Course – **resolved, members approved the expenditure**
13. To discuss parking difficulties in Wray Close - It was noted that parking is difficult everywhere in the village, but especially so in Wray Close, with residents parking on the grass verges and having to park in different roads entirely and walking home. Cllr Russell stated that West Sussex Highways had looked at using grasscrete on verges, but it was very expensive, however, she will follow up on what happened to this proposal. The Village Council did have a meeting in previous years with Cllr Belsey and Clarion Housing to discuss demolishing the garages and turning that area into parking

spaces for residents, but again, nothing has happened. Cllr Russell stated that she was meeting with the MP for Mid Sussex, Mims Davies MP and will raise the issue with her.

14. **To consider Grant Applications** – (amount spent so far this year is £350 + approx. £150 for the chocolate box appeal as agreed at the meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and the budget was £2,500) – None
15. **Consultations** – Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings – Cllr Haite urged all members to read the consultation and for it to come back on the next agenda, where members must decide if they will respond to the consultation individually, as a Council as a whole, or both.
16. **To receive reports from Councillors who have attended outside bodies** –None
17. **Items of correspondence** - Previously circulated.
18. **Items for reporting or inclusion on future agenda:** Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings.
19. **Date of next meeting** – 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024

Meeting closed: 8:03pm

Chairman.....

Date.....