



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST WOOD VILLAGE COUNCIL held on
Tuesday 3rd December 2024, 7.00 pm at the Council's Meeting Room

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Rebecca Roberts (Clerk), RFO, Samantha Booker, District Councillor Belsey and

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 0

ABSENT: Cllrs Fairbourn & Loveday

1. a. County and District Councillors' Reports

County Cllr Russell sent her apologies

District Councillor Belsey reported that the new parking charges have indeed gone through, which means an extension of charges to 8pm and to weekends and bank holidays.

The District Plan has had the first two weeks of the public examination and the second phase is expected next year. Housing targets may be increased following the change of government.

Gatwick Airport – the Public Examination on the Northern Runway is now completed with a decision expected early next year.

b. Public Questions – None

2. Apologies for absence – Cllr Fairbourn - apologies were received and **resolved; the reasons were accepted**

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

4. Chairman's Announcements – Cllr Haite thanked The Clerk and Assistant Clerk for organising the Christmas Market and also to all those who helped, notably Cllr Spoor who organised the mulled wine; going to purchase the ingredients, obtaining glasses and urn and making the mulled wine up on the day. Also, to Will Roberts who volunteered as Father Christmas and did an excellent job. Cllr Haite also wanted to express thanks to the stall holders for their varied and interesting stalls. It was one of the most successful markets to date.

5. To confirm the Minutes of the Village Council meeting held on 5th November 2024–. The minutes of the meeting were **approved** 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.

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

a. Planning Committee – None

b. Finance, Administration & Human Resources Committee – Minutes were received and noted from the meeting held on 26th November 2024. Budget recommendations discussed under item 11b.

c. Events Working Group – None

8. To approve the Draft Pensions Discretions Policy as recommended at the Finance, Administration and Human Resources Meeting of 26th November – Resolved; members approved the Policy

9. To receive an update on recent & planned events

a. **Remembrance Sunday** – the event went really well, with a good attendance from residents. The speakers worked well in playing the National Anthem and Reveille.

b. **Christmas Market** – Although not all figures are in, it seems that a surplus of just over £100 was made after expenses, which includes the cost of over-time for staff, as well as the Village

Christmas Tree, the chocolates for Father Christmas to hand out and the cost of the mulled wine. The event was a huge success with many positive comments made. The raffle made £257, which means that a donation of **£128.50** will be made to St Catherine's Hospice.

- c. **VE-Day 80** – No further update.

10. Highways

- a. **To receive an update on potential traffic calming measures in the village** –the Public Consultation is currently taking place and will end on 12th December 2024. Details have been placed on the Council's website.

11. Finance

- a. **Accounts to pay**

The accounts payable from 1st to 30th November totalling £5,306.48 were **ratified and approved by the Council**

- b. To receive and approve the Finance Pack for November 2024 (which includes the RBS income & expenditure report, & bank reconciliations) – **the Finance Pack was received and noted. Cllr Phillips** took members through the draft budget and noted a new line had been added for the Handyman. It was noted that during both the last financial year, as well as the current financial year, that money has had to be taken from the Public Sector Deposit Fund in order to cover the day-to-day expenditure of the Council. This money should be replaced and therefore, due to this, as well as rising costs, the Precept will need to be raised again. Members discussed further and in principle **approved raising the precept to £86,000**. This equates to an increase of 0.87p per month for a Band D property.

12. To discuss parking difficulties in Wray Close – Cllr Haite thanked Cllr Russell for getting in touch with Mims Davies MP to ask her to enquire about parking improvements in Wray Close & Allens Close – most notably, the removal of the garages to free up some space for residents' parking which was discussed during a meeting with Councillors some time ago. A response has been received from Clarion Housing which states that the housing team are aware of the parking issues, but that demolition of the garages would require substantial work and is not currently financially viable. Councillors were very disappointed by this response and the length of time taken to receive it.

13. **To consider Grant Applications** – (amount spent so far this year is £525 + approx. £150 for the chocolate box appeal as agreed at the meeting of 5th March 2024 and the budget was £2,500)

- a. Ashurst Wood Short Mat Bowling Club requested £350 for new foot-mats, canvas holders and 4 devices to enable members to pick up bowls without bending down – **Resolved; members agreed to award a grant of £350**

14. **Consultations** – Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings – Cllrs decided to submit a response from the Council as a whole and went through the document fully. It was agreed that remote attendance at meetings could only be justified in exceptional circumstances and that proxy voting should not be introduced. The Clerk will submit the response.

15. **To receive reports from Councillors who have attended outside bodies** – Cllr Forbes attended the Village Centre Trustees Meeting. There is currently a transition phase as new members are taking on the roles of booking secretary and Chairman. The removal of the salt grit bag was also brought up again. The Clerk is to get quotes for its removal.

16. **Items of correspondence** - Previously circulated.

17. **Items for reporting or inclusion on future agenda:** Date & format for the Annual Village Meeting 2025

18. **Date of next meeting** – 4th February 2025

Meeting closed: 8:02pm

Chairman.....

Date.....