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Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held at Blackstone Pavilion, Blackstone Playing Fields, Woodmancote on Tuesday 9 January 2024 7.30 p.m.

Present: WPC Cllr Dixon, Cllr Austin, Cllr Batchelor, Cllr Donald, Cllr Morris, Cllr R Noel, Cllr W Noel

Others Present: Cllr Mike Croker (HDC) , 2 members of the public.

Cllr. Dixon noted that the meeting was being recorded and that CCTV was present in the room which could also be taking images.

2024-001. Apologies

No Apologies were received

2024 - 002 Meeting minutes

November and 1 December The confidential minutes of 14 November and 1 December 2023 **03**

2024 - 003 Actions & Updates

003.1 – Blackstone Wastewater Treatment Works - Cllr Morris confirmed that she had taken photos of the tankers parking on Blackstone Lane outside the Blackstone Treatment Works and sent these to Cllr Dixon who sent them to via email to Sue Cobb of Southern Water who had replied with apologies that there had been no progress in terms of stopping the tankers from parking on the road.

It was agreed that Cllr Dixon would continue to follow this up and that Cllr R Noel would also make contact with Southern Water and add his weight at a District level.

003.2 – Footpath from A281 to Bylsborough House – Cllr R Noel confirmed that there was no footpath warden allocated to the area. The footpath remains overgrown, and it was agreed that the Clerk would contact the landowner, Mick Hills, of Swains Farm Shop, to ask him to clear the path as a matter of urgency.

003.3 – Bus Shelter Replacement – Cllr Austin reported that he was still awaiting quotes for a new shelter.

003.4 – Anti-Litter Poster - Cllr Morris reported that the Henfield Parish Council Youth Coordinator was very excited about the idea of running a poster competition and that she would continue to follow this up.

003.5 – Anti-Fly tipping Poster – Cllr Morris confirmed that she had completed a poster for all WPC noticeboards and would email this to Cllr Dixon to print and put up. Cllr R Noel requested that this was also put up along the main roads. The Clerk confirmed that she had been in touch with the WSCC highways with regards to doing this and had been informed that a formal request detailing the number and size of posters would be needed to gain permission to do this. Cllr Noel agreed that he would look into the size and number required. Cllr Morris to develop the poster artwork.

2024-004 Public participation

A member of the public requested that the minutes for the WPC EOM and budget documents be posted on the website. The Clerk confirmed that she would do this without delay.

2024-005 Declarations of interest

Cllr R Noel declared that he knew the planning applicant for DM/23/0520

2024-006 Reports from outside bodies - Horsham District Council - Cllr Croker updated the Council:

- Following the HDC meeting held on 13 December 2023, the local plan will enter Regulation 19 Consultation – this will run from 19 January to 1 March. All comments submitted will not affect the content of the Plan but will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, and that all potential developments would still need to go through the Planning process.
- A new Head of Sustainability and Green Spaces has been appointed; and a new Rivers Charter for the Adur, Arun and Rother has been approved.
- A motion to discuss the Middle East situation was ‘timed out’ and would be discussed at the next meeting at the 11 January 2024
- There will be a by-election in Henfield on 24 February 2024 for a District Councillor following the death of Malcolm Eastwood
- Financial matters – The cost of The Capitol Theatre renovations is estimated to be £6.5 million including decarbonisation measures e.g. heat pumps, insulation etc and a further £4 million for facilities incorporating more seats, WCs and bars; the money is expected to come out of reserves – the theatre does not make a profit but is considered a community asset and it is hoped that with the new re-fit and increased capacity it will reduce its current loss of £385,000pa by half to around £180,000.

The 2024/25 budget is to be agreed at the February 2024 meeting.

2024-007 Planning

007.1 There were no new planning applications to discuss.

007.2 Other applications since publication of agenda: DM/23/0520 - Eastwood Farm Shaves Wood Lane Albourne Hassocks West Sussex BN6 9DY - Removal of restrictive covenant associated with Section 52 Agreement (restricted to agricultural use) – the application had been agreed by SDNP but not HDC. Cllr R Noel confirmed that the property is now for sale.

Cllr Batchelor pointed out that there was a planning notification for Ashleigh, Brighton Road. The Clerk was instructed to forward details of this to Cllrs.

2024-008 Planning update

DM/23/3009 - High Cross Farm Henfield Road Albourne West Sussex BN6 9JH - Retention of existing storage container for a period of 3 years. Approved.

2024-009 Blackstone Playing Field: Please note that item 8 was held under the 'Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 S.1(2). Which excludes members of the public due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

2024-010 Memberships

010.1 The Clerk reported back on the Associations available for membership to Parish Councils including the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), West Sussex Association of Local Councils (WSALC), Horsham Association of Local Councils (HALC) and Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), their benefits to members and membership costs.

It was RESOLVED that WPC would join NALC and SLCC and that this would be allowed for in the budget for 2024/25.

2024-011 Finance/Payments

011.1 Reconciled accounts were approved

011.2 Schedule of payments were approved

07/12/2023 Vision ITC £78.00 – Biennial. Gov.uk domain name charge

27/12/2023 Talk Talk £4.95 – Clerk's mobile phone

04/01/2023 WSCC £552.68 – Salary and oncosts

05/01/2023 Elizabeth Trundle £ 8.10 – Mileage to noticeboards

09/01/2023 Elizabeth Trundle £6.22 – Mileage to meeting.

09/01/2023 Elizabeth Trundle £6.00 – Working from home.

011.3 To approve WPC Budget for 2024/25

Cllr Dixon noted that the budget for SIDS had been lowered from £2,700 to £2,100 and for the Blackstone Playing Field Rent from £5000 to £100.

As per 010.1 above the Membership budget was increased from £140 to £161 to allow for NALC and SLCC membership costs.

The Clerk reported that it had been difficult to locate the actual 2022/23 spent figures but that she would look into this and update the Council at the next meeting.

It was RESOLVED to agree and approve the budget as per the supporting paper with the agreed above amendments.

011.4 To agree Precept increase for 2024/25

It was RESOLVED to approve a Precept increase for 2024/25 of 9.4%, from £15,141.04 to £16,416.64.

2024 – 012 Training

012.1 Decision deferred to March 2024.

2024 – 013 Items for the next agenda/to mention

Cllr Morris informed Councillors that the decision had been made not to modify the definitive map and statement, or to add a Restricted Byway to the Furners Lane footpath, at the meeting of the HDC Public Rights of Way Committee on 9 January 2024.

Cllr R Noel informed Councillors that there would be a memorial service for Malcolm Eastwood at St Peter's Church, Henfield, on 16 February 2024, at 2 pm.

Cllr W Noel informed Councillors that the Rev Paul Doick at St Peter's Church had been Canonised.

Cllr Austin confirmed that the salt bin next to the bus shelter opposite the old village hall does not need replacing but a hole drilled in the bottom of it to drain. Cllrs Dixon and Austin agreed to action this.

The meeting closed at 8.49pm

2024 – 014 Date of next meeting – 13 February 2024

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