MINUTES of the Meeting of THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT Committee held at 7.30pm on Thursday 14 January 2021 via Teams Video Conferencing.

Members present:

Claire Majsai (Chair)
Bob Sampson (Vice-Chair)
Tony Lank
Michael Avery
Duncan Ranger
Helen Olsen Bedford
Malcolm Llewellyn

Also present: Lorna Cooksey, Assistant Clerk to the Council
Wendy Baldwin, Food bank representative

CE20/21.024 Apologies for absence: Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Evans, Cllr Jee and Cllr Griffiths.

CE20/21.025 Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest.

CE20/21.026 Minutes of the previous meeting of the Community Engagement Committee of 8th October 2020: The minutes of 8th October 2020 were received and accepted and would be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

CE20/21.027 Adjournment for questions from the public: There being no members of the public present the committee was not required to adjourn the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders.

CE20/21.028 Hurstpierpoint Food bank: The Chair introduced the committee to the food bank representative and asked whether she could update everyone on the work being carried out. The representative explained that the food bank was set up a couple of years ago at Court Bushes working alongside the Melting Pot Café. Since the pandemic the food bank operation has moved to deliveries. During the first lockdown the food bank was really busy but during the Christmas period the demand reduced. In the last two weeks and with the new lockdown, demand has grown again and the food bank has delivered to five families each week. The representative explained that although these numbers seemed low it was a good amount for our parish. It was explained that the majority of supplies come from Burgess Hill food bank but that the Co-op has a bin which is currently overflowing with donations. The Chair asked if the Christmas period was quiet due to the schools being closed. The representative was unsure but said it could be contributed to this. It was expressed that as a parish there is good community support, and the food bank has witnessed neighbours stepping in and helping with items they could not supply. Before the pandemic Burgess Hill food bank had been considering whether the service in Hurstpierpoint should be cancelled. The representative stressed that herself and her colleague wanted it to carry on and they were happy to run it. Cllr Sampson said the service was vital even if it just provided for one family in the parish. The representative commented that the cupboard at Court Bushes was very small and difficult to store food donations in. The Chair asked how people in the parish were aware of the service they provided. It was confirmed that the food bank post updates regularly on Hurst Hub, their own Facebook page, and with emails to service providers. She also explained that doctors, schools, churches, benefit office etc... can all provide the vouchers needed and they are normally best placed to know if a family needs help. The Chair explained that the Parish Office had also advertised though Hurst Life as a place to contact for a food bank voucher and that this had been used a few times since the advert. It was explained that the Parish Council are very keen to support the food bank and the Chair suggested writing to the Burgess Hill branch to encourage that it continues. The representative felt that at the moment the service would not be stopped. The committee asked where the service was being provided in the parish and at present the areas mostly used are Willow Garden, Willow Way, Iden Hurst and the new social housing. Cllr Llewellyn raised

concerns that families new to financial crisis due to the pandemic would not know how to access the service and asked if the food bank were confident that these people weren't being missed. The representative said there were no abnormal trends at the moment and unfortunately not something she could confirm, but as they work with Citizens Advice anyone needing help should be referred. She also said that sometimes people are uncomfortable using a service directly in the village they live in, so it was possible people/families were using the Burgess Hill or Hassock service instead. The Chair offered help through advertising on the parish councils' website, Facebook page and Hurst Life articles. The foodbank representative was thanked by the committee for the work they have done though the pandemic and continue to do.

Wendy Baldwin left the meeting at 7:48pm.

CE20/21.029 Police Reports: The Chair briefed the committee on the answers supplied from Sgt Crabtree from the last Community Engagement meeting held in October 2020. A discussion took place about the statistics of violence and sexual offences in Hurstpierpoint and Cllr Ranger confirmed he was happy with the information that had been provided. Concerns were raised around whether the incidents were actually within the Priory hospital and not over spilling into the wider community. The Chair confirmed that as a secure unit she felt the figures were correct and the incidents would have been in the Priory. The Chair explained that Sgt Crabtree had been invited to attend tonight's meeting but was unable and he would be invited to future meetings. An update from the Chair following the meeting: - as well as the female low secure unit, The Priory also provides other care for people with mental illnesses and/or personality disorders. See their websitehttps://www.priorygroup.com/nhs/locations/priory-hospital-burgess-hill

CE20/21.030 Parish Council Grant Applications:

The Chair briefed the committee on the situation with grant requests and the reason why they had been deferred through 2020/21. The Chair explained that now the financial situation was clearer for the Parish Council they were now in a position to award grants. It was explained to the committee that they should prioritise applications relevant to the current situation and very local groups. The committee was updated that due to the pandemic groups such as Know Dementia and the Older Peoples Tea parties had not been operating and could not be considered for a grant until they were operational.
A discussion took place about the grant application from Albourne, Sayers Common & Twineham Parochial Church. Cllr Sampson was asked whether he was aware of any help they received but he explained that he was not involved. Cllr Llewellyn explained that unfortunately the costs of running churches and graveyards when there is no income is an ongoing issue. It was asked whether the Clerk could investigate whether something could be regularised in form of support as each year a grant application is considered. The committee felt there may be another option to fund this dependency including using our own contractors to reduce costs. The committee agreed to grant £500.
Co-opted member Olsen-Bedford highlighted the work carried out by the Monday Group in the first lockdown and felt they were doing an amazing job. Cllr Lank agreed but was concerned that a lot of the work was being carried out in other parishes such as Ditchling and did not want to financially support other parishes. Cllr Lewellyn also commented about the great work they have completed and that recently the Parish Council had used their skills to install benches, but a donation and cost of materials had been given. The committee agreed that any donation would need to be spent in our Parish and that they were keen to understand and gain confidence that resources were being reimbursed back from the appropriate landowners. Cllr Lank suggested a meeting to discuss the committees concerns. Co-opted member Olsen-Bedford felt that landowners were being supportive and helping in their work. The Chair suggested inviting the Monday Group to the next Community Engagement committee meeting and if more complex issues needed to be discussed this could be organised outside of the meeting. Cllr Sampson highlighted that a huge amount of work had been actioned by the group in Hurstpierpoint and that our residents

would still benefit from work carried out in parishes such as Ditchling. The committee agreed to award a grant of £500 for work to be carried out only in the parish of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common.
Cllr Sampson referred to the document sent to the Councillors after the agenda was published requesting help to purchase a battery for the defibrillator at the Hurstpierpoint Cricket Club. Cllr Sampson felt this cause should be supported. Cllr Lank agreed especially as the Parish Council had agreed to do the same for the bowls club. Co-opted Member Olsen-Bedford asked if we should have a policy with the cricket club and the other de-fibs in the parish. It was asked whether this de-fib was an internal or external unit, and it was confirmed it was external. The committee agreed that it should be considered by Estates & Facilities whether the Parish Council should take responsibility for all de-fibs in the parish. The committee agreed to award the grant of £148 for the replacement battery for the defibrillator but declined to award the refurbishment grant of £500.
Co-opted member Olsen-Bedford explained that she was keen to support the two grants from Victim support and West Sussex Mediation. The committee agreed that both grants would be positive for the community. The Committee agreed to award West Sussex Mediation services £150 and St Peter & St James Hospice £400.
The Air Ambulance grant was discussed by the committee, but it was agreed that the small amount of grant would not have an impact on such a large organisation although everyone agreed their work was fantastic.
The committee discussed the grant application for Victim Support and the critical service they provide. Cllr Llewelyn questioned if this should be a Health & Wellbeing grant but it was agreed to award £300 from the grant budget.
The Chair explained to the committee that the lead contact for the youth club provision in Hurstpierpoint run by Sussex Clubs for Young People had been in touch with the Assistant Clerk. The information received made it clear that the youth club relied on year-to-year funding which had unfortunately not fully been secured due to the pandemic. The email received explained that increasing the youth club provision in Hurstpierpoint to two days a week could benefit the young people, but the Chair explained that she had concerns that SCYP could not financially support this. The committee agreed that this group is essential to the community and would like to support it further and once they are clear about the current situation, they can continue. The Chair requested for the committee to agree a £500 donation once she had investigated further their situation. The committee agreed to authorise the Chair to award £500 upon satisfactory findings but felt that the Parish Council needed to work with them to draw up a plan to ensure that a package of sustainable, reliable financial support was available from all the relevant authorities in the future.

Grants gifted in 2020/21

Organisation	Grant Request for	Grant Approved	Date
Knit 'n' Natter	**To help the group continue**	**£220**	**Granted in 19/20 budget but paid in 20/21 budget.**
Hurst Covid-19 Neighbours Support Group	**Thank you, posters, thank you cards, and street banners produced to thank everyone involved in the Neighbours support group.**	**£165.51**	**November 2020**

Grant applications that have been received and deferred for 2020/21:

Grant Budget 2020/21: £4,000

Grant Budget Remaining 2020/21: £3,798.50
(Total includes a refund of £18.50 from another grant that the cheque was not cashed, Hurst Covid-19 grant paid from budget line 3020)

Organisation	*Grant Request For*	*Amount Requested*	*Grant Approved*
Know Dementia	*To cover the costs of part support for Memory Moments Café for the year April 2020- March 2021*	*£500*	*Grant Declined*
West Sussex Mediation Services	*To support the provision of free mediation services to the residents in your parish who are experiencing conflicts in their lives.*	*£150*	*Approved £150*
Victim Support	*Support for victims and volunteers' expenses.*	*£50-£500*	*Approved £300*
Older Peoples Tea Parties	*Outings to garden centres, Christmas party and some tea expenses*	*£300*	*Grant Declined*
St Peter & St James Hospice	*Patient transport services delivered by our 40 volunteer drivers. A free door to door service for patients attending wellbeing services.*	*£400*	*Grant Approved £400*
Air Ambulance Kent, Surry and Sussex	*To help reach the £14 million required to continue providing our vital pre-hospital care to patients across Kent, Surrey and Sussex.*	*£250*	*Grant Declined*
The Monday Group	*To support the work of the Monday Group to maintain and improve rights of way for footpath users.*	*£500*	*Grant Approved £500*
Albourne, Sayers Common & Twineham Parochial Church	*To assist with the maintenance of fabric and the grounds of Christchurch, Sayers Common; and to assist with disability access.*	*£700*	*Grant Approved £500*
Hurstpierpoint Cricket Club	*To aid the overall refurb & redecoration of the communal space & social area within the pavilion including new flooring.*	*£500*	*Grant Declined. (Grant Approved for £148 for De-fib.)*

CE20/21.030.1 Health & Wellbeing Budget: The committee was updated about advertising the Health & Wellbeing grants in the last Hurst Life article. The Parish Office had only received one response, but this was deemed unsuitable. The Chair proposed to the committee to support Citizens Advice, Young Minds and Refuge as services which are in high demand since the pandemic due to the impact on mental health particularly of young people, on rates of domestic violence and on the financial situation of many residents. The committee fully agreed and felt these were services that could be used by everyone. The committee agreed to award £500 to each organisation. Co-opted member Olsen-Bedford felt it was important to advertise our support to these organisations and include it in the next Hurst Life article.

CE20/21.031. Community Initiatives and projects

CE20/21.031.1 Budget Monitoring: The budget was received by the committee. The Chair explained that a grant was given by Mid Sussex District Council during the pandemic and this was showing as income. The super Sunday event had not taken place in 2020 and the £2,500 would be put back into general reserves. Cllr Llewellyn highlighted that there would be an overspend on the Hurst Life articles due to the increase in pages and asked if a sum of money should be moved across from the newsletter budget line. The committee agreed this should be actioned by the Finance Officer.

CE20/21.031.2 Review of Action Plan: The committee agreed to review the Action Plan in April 2021. It was commented that due to the pandemic a lot of areas could not be actioned unfortunately.

CE20/21.031.3 Hurst Festival Update: The committee noted that Cllr Hand had agreed in principle with the Chair of Hurst Festival that the Parish Council would sponsor the 'Super Sunday' event in 2021. The festival committee agreed that they would be back in touch when they have a budget for this event to show the Parish Council.

CE20/21.031.4 Heritage Trail: The Chair outlined the background to the Heritage Trail and expressed the need for this work to be a priority as it is something positive the parish could use through the pandemic. The Chair raised that another hold up was due to the branding manual being created by a Hurstpierpoint Society representative. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that the Clerk was chasing this document and it would be an agenda item for Council when received. Cllr Llewellyn highlighted his concerns with paying for an advertising application when the map was an information board. He confirmed this matter had been raised already with the Clerk and alongside the Assistant Clerk they were looking for confirmation as to whether this is correct or not. The committee agreed that this was a large amount of money and if didn't need to be paid then it shouldn't be. The committee agreed that they did not want to hold up the project and would like to progress it as fast as possible.

RECOMMENDATION: The committee **AGREED** that the Council should go ahead with ensuring this project is delivered quickly and specific and reasonable costs will be put against the Tourism & Attractiveness budget.

CE20/21.031.5 Dog Poo Fairy Campaign: The Chair thanked the volunteers who had kindly displayed the smaller posters in the parish. The Maintenance Officer was thanked for actioning the larger posters. Cllr Lank encouraged notices to be put up near his house. The Chair confirmed that she would put up the remaining smaller posters that are at the Parish Office.

CE20/21.031.6 Communication Strategy: The request for ideas for improving the Parish Council's communication with residents has been included in the February Hurst Life article. Co-opted member Olsen-Bedford asked for this request to go on the Parish Council Facebook page and website. The Chair asked the Assistant Clerk to also email all other Councillors to ask for their feedback before a meeting is organised. The Assistant Clerk was asked to organise the Communication meeting for the end of February with the Chair of Council, Clerk and Chair of Community Engagement.

CE20/21.031.7 Christmas Lights and Village Garden for 2021/22: The Chair asked for the committees' opinions on the Christmas lights and whether improvements needed to be made. Cllr Lank said that the lights were really appreciated in the village and a great feature and the committee agreed. The Chair explained that if we would like to improve the lights two possible options had been suggested: 1. Adding more fixings in Hurstpierpoint High Street to in-fill the gaps. 2. Using streetlamps to hang lights from, potentially in Sayers Commons. Cllr Sampson thought that adding some lights to Sayers Common would be a lovely idea and potentially the Community Shop could help with the costs. The Chair encouraged that any improvements should involve the Estates & Facilities committee as they had the expertise in this field. Cllr Sampson raised that in previous years the landlords in Hurstpierpoint High Street had been very negative about having brackets and lights attached to their building hence the gaps in the High Street. Co-opted member Olsen Bedford raised the questions of whether more lights are needed and could the money be better spent elsewhere when they are only up for three weeks. The committee discussed this, and all agreed that any money spent should not be for renting lights but only purchasing them. Cllr Ranger wanted to consider using 'used lights' but only if they come with a guarantee. Cllr

Llewellyn questioned where in Sayers Common would be the best place to add lights to make an impact as it doesn't have a definite vocal point. The committee discussed whether the roundabout or the Sayers Common shop as possible locations. Cllr Sampson volunteered to research whether the community of Sayers Common would like lights, what sort of lights would they like, could extra funding being gathered and where would the lights be best placed. The Chair asked if Cllr Sampson could work alongside Cllr Jee and the Village Society but stressed that the budget was very small for this and that it was only an idea at the moment. Co-opted member Olsen-Bedford asked why we were only using Merlin Lighting and Cllr Llewellyn explained that in 2017 they had been through a process of purchasing lights and they were the chosen contractor due to costs. Cllr Llewellyn raised that in 2020 we were able to purchase an addition string of lights thanks to Hurstpierpoint Society. This string helped fill a gap between the other lights in the High Street using the hooks normally used by Hurst Festival for their bunting. It was suggested to explore extending this string of lights to the East and West. The Assistant Clerk confirmed the reason this hadn't been done before is because Merlin Lighting confirmed that some of the brackets were unsafe and would not be able to hold the weight of the lights. To proceed these brackets would need to be repaired or replaced. The Chair supported the vision of extending the string of lights along the High Street but only if it did not take up excessive office staff time. The Chair felt that the Community Engagement committee should decide the vision for the Christmas Lights and the Estate and Facilities Committee should then execute the idea using the Tourism & Attractiveness budget.

RECOMMENDATION: The committee **AGREED** that the vision for Christmas Lights in 2021 is to add an additional string of lights in Hurstpierpoint High Street and/or add some lights to Sayers Common which will be dependent on the research carried out by Cllr Sampson and bought to the next Community Engagement meeting for discussion. Once agreed the project will be handed over to the Estates and Facilities committee.

The Village Garden plans for 2021 was discussed and it was agreed that as the planters and borders were only introduced this year, no further changes will be added. The committee agreed that the feedback had been very positive so far and until we allow the garden to grow, we won't know what needs adding or changing. The Chair asked the Councillors to also think about other areas in the parish that could potentially be improved and for ideas to be bought to the next meeting.

CE20/21.031.8 Health & Wellbeing Network: The Chair updated the committee on the online meeting that she had attended with the main topic being financial support available to Mid-Sussex residents. The Chair explained the meeting clarified what services were available and this information inspired the Hurst Life article in January. The hope is once the pandemic is over then clinics etc will start returning to Court Bushes again.

CE20/21.031.9 Annual Parish Meeting: The committee agreed that an online approach to the May meeting would be best in the current climate and consideration could be made for an event in September alongside Hurst Festival to celebrate the community. Co-opted member Olsen-Bedford confirmed she could help work on something engaging to make the virtual meeting more interesting. Cllr Llewellyn confirmed that the government has now recognised that we can potentially engage with more of the community if we use online services and hybrid meetings. The Assistant Clerk was asked for the proposed date and it was confirmed this is the 18th May 2021.

RECOMMENDATION: The committee **AGREED** to re-appoint the working group to establish plans for the next Annual Parish Meeting in May 2021. The Assistant Clerk was asked to organise the meeting.

CE20/21.032 Publicity: The Committee noted the following:

CE20/21.032.1 The Parish Councils response to Lockdown 3: The Chair asked the committee for ideas and suggestions. Cllr Ranger and Co-opted member Olsen-Bedford agreed that the leaflets in the first lockdown had been useful and felt an updated version in March would be appreciated by the residents. Cllr Llewellyn asked if the information on the leaflet would be any different from what is included in Hurst Life. The Chair suggested that as not everyone reads Hurst Life and potentially, they are therefore not seeing this information a good approach might be to do both, the committee agreed. The Chair said that the volunteers would not be used on this occasion and asked if the Assistant Clerk could contact the distributer to see if they are working. The Chair agreed to produce the leaflet in March using the first leaflet as a template assuming they can be delivered.

CE20/21.032.2 Newsletters: The committee noted that the newsletters remain on hold until the new financial year. Hurst Life has been used as our key communication tool with the Parish. In the December and January issue's an extra page was purchased to display help numbers and information that could assist residents. The newsletter and Hurst Life programme has been created by the Assistant Clerk ready for the new financial year.

CE20/21.032.3 Website: The committee noted that the website is being assessed weekly to ensure the information is up to date and accurate. The Assistant Clerks are regularly adding 'announcements' and sharing on our Face Book page. Recently work has taken place on adding the High Street Improvement information, changing the home page to show announcements at the top and updating the format of the transparency page. The Assistant Clerk has created a six month and yearly check to ensure information that should be changed and updated is actioned by the Parish Office.

CE20/21.032.4 Social Media: The Assistant Clerk updated the committee that since trying to improve followers on Facebook our 'likes' had grown from 132 to 192 in a month. Co-opted member Olsen-Bedford suggested using influencers from the village. Cllr Sampson and Co-opted member Olsen-Bedford agreed that the Facebook advertising campaign is a good idea for a low cost. The committee agreed to support a one-off campaign using postcodes to see what the hit rate would be for our 'likes' and 'follows'. Cllr Llewelyn felt strongly that we shouldn't open our page up to have reviews as we may become a target. It was also felt that we should avoid Facebook live unless we have something inspiring and positive to post. The committee agreed that including information/updates on our page from other groups/organisations in the parish would be a positive approach and make our page more interesting and community based. The Assistant Clerk was asked to put together a list of who could be contacted such as the allotment association, gym club, bowls club etc... Co-opted member Olsen-Bedford encouraged that we should ask them to send us a monthly update, so we don't have to chase them. In return for advertising their posts we would ask that they encourage their members to join our page to see all updates.

CE20/21.033 Information Items, Correspondence Received and Requests:

Cllr Sampson raised that the gateways into Sayers Common were very dirty. Cllr Llewelyn confirmed that Cllr Jee had already written to the Clerk about this and although they had been washed it had not made a difference. The Clerk is now investigating whether there is a particular product that should be used on them to help clean them.
Co-opted member Olsen –Bedford asked for an update on the broadband issue and if Cllr Dennis had been spoken to. Cllr Llewellyn confirmed that he had spoken to Cllr Dennis and an information pack had

been sent to the Councillors. Co-opted Member Olsen-Bedford asked for the Parish Office to send the link.

There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting at 9.46pm.