Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 24 March 2022 at 7.30 pm at Court Bushes Community Hub.

Members Present:

Cllr Malcolm Llewellyn (Chairman)	Cllr Rodney Jackson	Cllr Claire Majsai
Cllr Allan Brown (Vice-Chairman)	Cllr Seth Jee	Cllr Duncan Ranger
Cllr Michael Avery	Cllr Tony Lank	Cllr Bob Sampson
Cllr Helen Bedford	Cllr Martin Machan	Cllr Julia Shorrocks

Also Present: Cllr Alison Bennett (MSDC) and Sarah Groom, Clerk to the Council. One member of the public was present.

C21/22.133 To receive and record apologies for absence. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr David Evans. It was advised Cllr John Lowman would not be attending, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ACCEPTS the apologies of absence from Cllr David Evans and Cllr John Lowman.**

Cllr Joy Dennis (WSCC) and Cllr Colin Trumble (MSDC) also sent their apologies.

C21/22.134 To receive and record declarations of interest. Cllr Jee declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was a member of the Sayers Common Village Society and a petitioner for a separate Sayers Common Parish Council, reference Minute C21/22.140.

C21/22.135 To receive and accept the minutes of the previous meeting of the Council: Members received the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2022, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24 February 2022 and they were duly signed by the Chairman.**

C21/22.136 To consider whether to adjourn the Meeting in accordance with Standing Orders to receive questions from members of the public in attendance: There was one member of the public in attendance who did not wish to speak, so no adjournment was required.

C21/22.137 To receive verbal reports from Representatives of other Authorities: The following reports were received:

> **C21/22.137.1 West Sussex County Council County (WSCC):** Cllr Dennis was not able to attend the meeting. There were no questions raised. The Chairman understood a 20 mph zone had been agreed around Hurstpierpoint College.
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> **C21/22.137.2 Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC):** Cllr Bennett thanked the Chairman for his letter regarding the review of the District Plan which had been circulated to all Members with the letter sent by the MSDC Leader Cllr Ash-Edwards to Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities. Cllr Bennett had discussed the previous lack of engagement of the Parish Council by MSDC with the appropriate parties at MSDC. The Chairman outlined the content of an email received a few hours earlier from Cllr Trumble explaining the proposed consultation meetings planned for the future, although being mindful of the fact that some new homes will still need to be provided. Cllr Bennett further explained MSDC had agreed their new 2022/2023 budget, a new Sustainable Economy Strategy, and plans were being established for the new Centre for Outdoor Sport in the north east of the parish. The Chairman hoped the aspirations of the local sports clubs were all being

incorporated into these plans. MSDC was happy to meet with anyone from the Parish Council to discuss their re-wilding project proposed for Nursery Close. Cllr Sampson will liaise with Cllr Bennett regarding a housing transfer request on behalf of a resident. The Chairman thanked Cllr Bennett for her report and she left the meeting.

C21/22.137.3 West Sussex Association of Local Councils / Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils: Cllr Brown and Jackson confirmed there was no update.

C21/22.138 To receive the minutes and where appropriate, consider the recommendations of the following Committees: The Chairs introduced the following sets of minutes:

C21/22.138.1 Planning & Environment Committee (3 March 2022) No recommendations for Council.

C21/22.138.2 Community Engagement Committee (10 March 2022) There was one recommendation for Council as follows:

CE21/22.040.6 St Lawrence Fair: The committee discussed the Parish Council presence at the St Lawrence Fair, and it was RESOLVED: (1) That the committee AGREED to attend the St Lawrence fair (2) The committee AGREED to ask at the next full council meeting for volunteers to set up and run the stall so a rota could be produced. (3) The committee AGREED to ask at the next full council meeting for volunteers to design and create the display boards for the day. (4) The committee AGREED to ask at the next full council meeting whether it was appropriate to have a game at our stall, and it was:

RESOLVED: That Council AGREED that:

i. **A rota would be produced that all councillors would add themselves to, to cover the stall on Saturday 2 July 2022. A preference for the location of the stall will be submitted.**
ii. **A small number of key messages would be agreed to put on the display boards for the day.**
iii. **A game (such as splat a rat) could be included on the Parish Council stall**.

C21/22.138.3 Finance & Governance Committee (17 March 2022) There were two recommendations for Council as follows:

F21/22.110 Reserves Policy: The Committee reviewed the Reserves Policy and RESOLVED: To recommend the Reserves Policy to Council for approval and adoption, and it was:

RESOLVED: That Council APPROVED and ADOPTS the Reserves Policy and NOTES the general principle that the General Reserve would be a minimum of three month net revenue expenditure, which was a figure of £70,402.00 for 2022/2023.

F21/22.111 Earmarked Reserves: The Committee reviewed the Earmarked Reserves and RESOLVED: To recommend the adjustments to the Earmarked Reserves to Council for approval and adoption, and it was:

RESOLVED: That Council APPROVES and ADOPTS the adjustments to Earmarked Reserves as recommended by the Finance & Governance Committee as follows:

i. **To create a new earmarked reserve called 'South Avenue' for resurfacing, tree works and pavement improvements, transferring approx. £33,673 from General Admin Miscellaneous Income Code 3500-101 made available from the £180,000 South**

Avenue Easement, which is the balance following the streetlighting loan repayment of £147,335.30 and other smaller receipts.

ii. **To create a new earmarked reserve called 'Professional Support' from all the General Admin Cost Centre (101) underspends including 5150, 5170 & 5180 Staff Training, Cllr Training and Professional Support which will have approx. a £4,000 underspend. This would be used for e.g. Legal expenses on land acquisition, District Plan Review support or Employee TUPE support.**

iii. **To transfer all underspends on the Cemetery (201) Cost Centre of approx. £12,840, from over recovery of income (3210), and underspends on Property maintenance (5400) and Projects (7520) to the existing South Avenue Cemetery EMR (320) to support future plans and liabilities at that site. It was noted there are also various Section 106 funds that relate to the future Cemetery plans.**

iv. **To top up the Court Bushes Sinking Fund Reserve with approx. £3,500 from the year end underspend on Court Bushes Cost Centre (211).**

v. **A transfer from the Van earmarked reserve would fund the van leasing costs in the Vehicles & Machinery Cost Centre (212) of £1,874.**

F21/22.112 Asset Register: The Committee reviewed the Asset Register and RESOLVED: To recommend the Asset Register to Council for approval and adoption, and it was:

RESOLVED: That Council APPROVES and ADOPTS the Asset Register and NOTED that a covering document was being produced that would explain the purpose of the document to the reader with definitions included and the criteria for items to be included on the Register.

Following the review of the Committee minutes, Members:

RESOLVED: That the Council RECEIVES the minutes of the following Committees and AGREES the recommendations:

i. **Planning & Environment Committee (3 March 2022)**
ii. **Estates & Facilities Management Committee (10 March 2022)**
iii. **Finance & Governance Committee (17 March 2022)**

C21/22.139 MSDC District Plan Review: Members considered the latest position on the review of the District Plan by MSDC as discussed under Minute C21/22.137.2 above. Members noted the offer from Mid Sussex District Council to organise a series of communication meetings which would be attended by representatives of the Parish Council. Members also discussed the principles of a Parish Neighbourhood Plan under future Government Planning Policy, and it was:

RESOLVED: That Members NOTED the latest position with the Local Plan Review process and that the Parish Council would be represented at the proposed MSDC consultation meetings.

C21/22.140 MSDC Community Governance Review: Members considered the draft response to the Mid Sussex District Council community governance review and agreed the Parish Council's response would be submitted by 15 April 2022. In summary the Parish Council is not supportive of the proposals unless the residents can justify a separate Parish Council for Sayers Common village. If they do, then the Parish Council will support the proposal, if the electoral ward boundaries are amended. The Chairman suggested the difficulties of recruiting new councillors was emphasised and all the key items were set out as bullet points in the summary box.

Members took a vote on the decision to submit the letter as amended, once the final version was circulated by email, which resulted in 11 votes in favour and one against by Cllr Jee, and it was:

RESOLVED: That Members AGREED the response to the MSDC Community Governance Review, as amended and signed off by email, to be submitted by 15 April 2022.

C21/22.141 MSDC Public Space Protection Orders: Members considered MSDC's proposed Public Space Protection Order for Fairfield Recreation Ground, Hurstpierpoint and any other appropriate sites in the parish. It was suggested that South Avenue Recreation Ground be included if it met the criteria, and it was:

RESOLVED: That Members NOTED the proposed MSDC Public Space Protection Orders and AGREED that South Avenue Recreation Ground be considered for the list.

C21/22.142 European Pension Certificates: Members considered how the Parish Council can assist a small number of residents with a signature and official stamp of the Parish Council, so that they could claim their European Pensions. Members were concerned about the implications of authorising people's identity but were happy to support the Chairman's offer to provide this service for residents free of charge, and it was:

RESOLVED: That Members AGREED that the Chairman of the Council, or a Councillor, could sign a European pension claim form using a stamp with the name of the Parish Council affixed, once satisfied that the identity, address and marriage status of the applicant has been confirmed.

C21/22.143 Court Bushes Lighting Scheme: The Chairman explained the history of the lighting provision in the Function Room at Court Bushes Community Hub and Members considered two quotes for the replacement lighting, and it was:

RESOLVED: That Members AGREED to appoint Contractor A at a cost of £3,102.35 (no VAT), with a manufacturer's warranty of 3 years, to upgrade the lighting in the Court Bushes Function Room.

C21/22.144 The Council NOTED the following information items, correspondence and requests:

C21/22.144.1 NALC Smaller Council's Committee: Members noted the letter from Cllr Graham Ford, Chair of the NALC Smaller Councils Committee and did not wish to make any further comment.

C21/22.144.2 NALC Briefing Note: Ukraine: Members noted the NALC Briefing Note on the war in the Ukraine. Members noted the amount of support forthcoming from the community and enquiries made to them to date. The Parish Council would play its part at the appropriate time and was planning an informal liaison meeting with the Holy Trinity Church.

C21/22.144.3 Giganet Presentation: Members noted the Giganet installation roll-out presentation and the work underway on the ground.

C21/22.144.4 WSCC Transport Plan 2022-2036: Members noted the West Sussex County Council Transport Plan 2022-2036 Consultation Report has been published.

C21/22.144.5 Coronavirus Memorial: Members noted the new commemorate stone and bench at the Village Green kindly gifted by Freeman Brothers. A small installation ceremony had been held on 23 March 2022 to mark two years since the start of the coronavirus lockdowns. The Chairman will write and thank Freeman Brothers for their gift for the community.

C21/22.144.6 Councillor Attendance at Meetings: The Chairman reminded Members they are legally summoned to attend the Council and Committee meetings and should make effort to attend even if they thought that they had nothing to contribute to the agenda. For Council to deliver it needed to

avoid being inquorate at its meetings. With the new audio visual equipment in the Village Centre Conference Room, Members could watch the meetings via Microsoft Teams if unable to attend in person. Permission to hold meeting virtually are still being requested of the Government.

The Council RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the following items, the press and public be excluded under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

Confidential Matters:

C21/22.145 Hurst Meadows: Members receive a verbal update on land matters relating to Hurst Meadows.

Consideration is being given to the land at Brown Twins Road and a RICS Red Book Valuation has been obtained. Any further proposals regarding this piece of land will be presented to a future Council meeting for approval.

Informal discussions are underway following an approach about other small areas of land in the Hurst Meadows vicinity, which may be beneficial to the Parish Council to secure for improved public access and these would be subject to the cost of legal fees and some fencing.

It was noted that the Section 106 funds that relate to the majority of the Hurst Meadows estate would not apply to these new land parcels and therefore the Hurst Meadows earmarked reserve (No. 350) could not be used for this work.

In order to support the associated costs, the Chairman outlined a proposal to create a new earmarked reserve called Hurst Meadows Access. This reserve could acquire all underspends on Highways & Byways (207) approx. £305 and Services (213) approx. £5,000 and generally from any other underspends, and it was:

RESOLVED: That Council AGREES that:

i. **discussions can continue regarding the acquisition of small land parcels in the vicinity of Hurst Meadows**
ii. **legal fees and fencing costs would be incurred that relate to the above; and**
iii. **a new earmarked reserve called Hurst Meadows Access is created, to help fund the costs associated with any new land acquired in the Hurst Meadows vicinity, outside the remit of the S106 funds, from underspends specifically in Cost Centres 207 and 213 and generally from any other underspends in the Parish Council's 2021/2022 budget that keeps the General Reserve in the region of £70,402.**

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

Chairman