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Village Centre
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The MINUTES of the Meeting of the COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE held at 7.30pm on Thursday 8th February 2024 at The Village Centre, Hurstpierpoint.

Members present:

Claire Majsai (Chair)	Bob Sampson (Vice Chair)
Susan Dyke	Helen Bedford
Duncan Ranger	Mark Froud
Michael Avery	Annette Street

Also present: Viv Aloy, Assistant Clerk and 4 members of the public

CE23/24.030. Apologies for absence: Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr Thompson

CE23/24.031. To receive and record Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest.

CE23/24.032. To receive and accept the minutes of the Community Engagement Committee meeting held on 9th November 2023: Members reviewed the minutes, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the minutes of 9th November 2023 meeting.

CE23/24.033. Adjournment for Questions from the Public:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to carry on the meeting as 2 of the members of the public in attendance were there to discuss a grant application and the remaining 2 had no questions.

CE23/24.034 The Committee reviewed Version 4 of the action plan, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the committee AGREED:

- i) to Version 4 of the 2023/24 Action Plan
- ii) for the Assistant Clerk to update Version 4 of the 2023/24 Action Plan as per the committee discussions and bring it to the next meeting as Version 1 of the 2024/25.

CE23/24.035. Budget Monitoring: The Committee reviewed the budget monitoring report for the Committee,

- a) The Nominal Ledger (Year to Date) and
- b) Detailed Income & Expenditure as of 31st January 2024, and it was:

RESOLVED That the Committee NOTED the budget monitoring report for the Committee including:

- a) the Nominal Ledger
- b) the Detailed Income & Expenditure as of 31st January 2024 noting that the unspent funds from the Tourism and Attractiveness budget would be allocated to replenish the festive lights EMR

CE23/24.036.1 New Small Grant Applications to be considered 2023/24: The Committee noted the Grants Budget 2023/24 was £4,000 with £1125 remaining and considered three grant applications that had been received.

Organisation	Grant Request For	Amount Requested	Amount Awarded
a) What's On Hurst	To provide 12 months of WhatsOnHurst.org website provision to the community	£434.66	£434.66 + evidenced cost of business account up to max £500
b) The Monday Group	To support the work of the Monday group maintaining and improving the rights of way network in your area for walkers	£500	£500
c) Friends of Twineham School	Projects specific loan boxes from the Schools Library Service	£500	£0

The Committee considered each application in detail before making their decision.

A member of the public spoke about "What's On Hurst", an event listings site for the area, designed to be a single place to find out about local events. Last year 560 events were advertised on the site, at no cost to the user. The site has had 24000 views, and over 12,000 individual visitors since June 2021 and has 250 email subscribers who receive a monthly email with local listings. A PDF of events is shared to local Facebook sites. The grant requested is for the cost of running the website for a year. Councillors enquired why the site was a business site which is more expensive, it was explained that the "widgets" which allow people to add their own events, and for these to connect with the calendar and for the mailing list, all require a business account. Councillors also expressed concern about the future of the site as they felt this should be made self-sustaining via advertising or ticket sales. Finally, Councillors queried the area covered, as the name suggests only Hurstpierpoint (no mention of Sayers Common) but were reassured that the site covers events throughout BN6 including Sayers Common, who have previously placed events on the site and receive the listings via their Sayers Common Villagers Facebook page.

The Monday Group application was considered, it was noted that they generally receive funding each year and the fantastic work done by the group in our open countryside was acknowledged, fixing stiles, building boardwalks and clearing footpaths. It was agreed that this work benefits all residents of the Parish who use these routes and that the footpaths would be in a significantly poorer state without the group.

Councillors discussed the Friends of Twineham school application and expressed concern that this is not, in their view, an additional extra or enrichment activity, but more a core part of the curriculum. It was also noted that the school itself lies outside the Parish and, although it was acknowledged that some children from our Parish do attend, there was insufficient detail about specific benefit to those children within the application itself.

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to:

- a) **award What's On Hurst the £434.66 requested, as a one-off grant, plus the cost of a business account (receipt for costs to be provided and up to the maximum £500 limit) in expectation that the site would become self-sustaining, and no further grants will be awarded in future years**
- b) **award The Monday Group the full £500 requested.**
- c) **refuse the application from friends of Twineham School for the reasons outlined in the discussion above.**

1 member of the public left at 8:35

CE23/24.36.2 Community Events Grant Applications to be considered 2023/24 The Committee noted the Community Events Budget was £3500 with £450 remaining.

There were no Community Events Grant Applications received.

CE23/24.36.3 Health & Wellbeing Grants application to be considered 2023/24 The Committee noted the Health & Wellbeing Grants Budget was £1,000 with £0 remaining.

There were no Health & Wellbeing Grant Applications received.

CE23/24.036.4 Health & Wellbeing Projects Budget 2023/2024. The Committee noted the Health & Wellbeing Projects Budget was £1,000 with £965.60 remaining.

Organisation	Grant Request For	Amount Requested	Amount Awarded
a) For The Mind	To run free weekly or monthly mindfulness groups to help people cope with grief, low mood, and stress.	£500	£0
b) MSOPC	Tea parties for older people in Sayers Common	£500	£500

The Committee considered each application carefully.

One member of the public, a mindfulness teacher trained by the NHS and a Cruse bereavement supporter, spoke about their project “For The Mind”. The grant application is to fund advertising and room hire for reliable, regular bereavement sessions in the village. An email of support was read out from the social prescribers.

Councillors requested information regarding any professional qualifications, where the sessions would be held, how many sessions the £500 would stretch to, safeguarding protocols and whether this would be run as a “course” or more of a “drop in” model. Councillors had concerns about lack of specific details about allocation of the funds, as well as whether this might be viewed as Parish Council funds being used to assist with business growth. It was also highlighted that bereavement support exists in the village through Befriended, who run courses plus their monthly bereavement café at Court Bushes. Councillors also felt there was generally insufficient detail in the application at this time.

MSOPC application was discussed, it was noted that this was in response to an identified need in Sayers Common to address loneliness in the village for older people. It was discussed that it would be useful for this to be a sustainable regular event with hopefully more than two tea-parties taking place. There was a query as to how much, precisely, each event would cost, and the Council would like feedback on costings for each event and numbers attending.

It was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED:

- a) to refuse the “For The Mind” application for the reasons outlined in the discussion above
- b) to award the £500 to MSOPC for tea parties in Sayers Common, with the proviso that they further evidence the costs once known.

2nd member of the public left at 09:20

CE23/24.037 Information Items, Correspondence Received and Requests:

CE23/24.037.1 Mid Sussex Applauds: It was noted that the deadline for nominations is 18th February. Suggestions include the Woodland Fauna and Flora group and Hurst Re-Think for the Environment and Climate Champion

category. Margaret Taylor, who ran the Girls Brigade and volunteers at St Lawrence School and the Melting Pot Café, was suggested for the Lifetime Achievement category, and finally Naomi from Hope was a suggestion for Volunteer of the Year, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED

For Assistant Clerk Aloy to contact the relevant parties to discuss the proposed nomination and obtain any relevant information for the nomination forms.

CE23/24.037.2 High Street Update – It was noted that Cllr Ranger is to stand down and be replaced by Cllr Thompson and that the Community Highways Scheme works will be starting soon, which will hopefully alleviate some of the traffic issues.

CE23/24.037.3 Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Community Forum: The Committee received the notes from the community forum held on 18th January at Court Bushes Community Hub and Cllr Majsai provided a verbal update. The event was very well attended and may have outgrown the Club Lounge. Consideration will be given to alternative venues. The plan is to have one Community Forum per year in addition to the APM to keep the networking going.

CE23/24.037.4 Hurstpierpoint Wassailing: Cllr Majsai provided a verbal update on the Wassail held on 13th January which was a great success with approximately 70 people. It is planned to do the event again next year and look at involving the primary school.

CE23/24.037.5 Grants Policy: The Committee noted that Cllr Majsai and Assistant Clerk Aloy are in the process of reviewing and re-writing the grants policy. It was suggested that applications should highlight if it is a recurrent funding or a one off, with the potential that some groups may not have to apply every year, but there is concern about the certainty of available funds each year, plus guaranteed funding for one charity may take funds away from another deserving cause. The proposed policy will come back to the April meeting with a view to allowing plenty of time to discuss it in depth.

CE23/24.037.6 External Communication: It was noted that releases are being made on Facebook in relation to the District Plan trying to break down the issues into “bite size” chunks and encouraging people to respond to the plan. It was acknowledged how complex the process is and hoping some ideas come out of the WILD meeting at Sayers Common in terms of ways to help people engage with the consultation.

There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting at 21:49