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Village Centre  
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West Sussex BN6 9UY

**Minutes of the Council Meeting** held on Thursday 25 April 2024 at 7.30 pm at Sayers Common Village Hall.

**Members Present:**

|                                   |                       |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Cllr Malcolm Llewellyn (Chairman) | Cllr Rodney Jackson   |
| Cllr Michael Avery                | Cllr Claire Majsai    |
| Cllr Sarah Baldey                 | Cllr Duncan Ranger    |
| Cllr Susan Dyke                   | Cllr Bob Sampson      |
| Cllr David Evans                  | Cllr Julia Shorrocks  |
| Cllr Barry Forster                | Cllr Annette Street   |
| Cllr Mark Froud                   | Cllr Lindsay Thompson |

**Also Present:** Sarah Groom, Clerk to the Council. Cllr Alison Bennett and Cllr Geoff Zeidler (MSDC), and ten members of the public. Cllr Joy Dennis (WSSC) sent her apologies.

**C23/24.153: To receive and accept apologies for absence:** Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Helen Bedford, and it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the Council **ACCEPTS** the apologies for absence for Cllr Bedford.

**C23/24.154: To receive and record declarations of interest:** There were no declarations of interest.

**C23/24.155: To receive and accept the minutes of the previous meeting of the Council held on 21 March 2024:** Members reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting, and it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the Council **AGREES** the minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2024.

**C23/24.156: Adjournment for Questions from the Public:** A number of issues were raised by the members of the public present. In response to a question, the Chairman explained that the drainage works for Reeds Lane Recreation Ground were out to tender and it was hoped works would progress over the Summer months. It was not yet clear how long the ground may require to settle, prior to the installation of the additional play equipment. Other matters raised were the potholes on the London Road near the bridge which had been reported to WSCC by residents. The drains on Reeds Lane were being cleared from 1-3 May 2024 by WSCC. A car had damaged the railing on the bridge over the stream on Reeds Lane half way along the road and is awaiting repair by WSCC. A broken MSDC dog waste bin on London Road is awaiting replacement and Cllr Bennett offered to follow up on this as a number of residents and the Parish Council and reported it. The MSDC Oakhurst play area needs attention, both the equipment and grounds maintenance. It was reported that the grass had not been cut yet this year. The MSDC Strategy lists the play area as receiving attention in 2 to 3 years. The area of trees adjacent to Oakhurst, south of the London Road bus stop was reported as being dangerous. The Parish Council will report this to the landowner.

**C23/24.157: Reports from Other Authorities:** Members received reports from representatives of:

**C23/24.157.1: West Sussex County Council (WSSC):** Cllr Dennis was not able to attend the meeting. Cllr Majsai requested an update on the community road verge trials in the parish.

**C23/24.157.2: Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC):** Cllr Jackson provided an update on the question received at the March meeting regarding the introduction of parking charges. An assessment was undertaken of the impact on the District Council budget and also on the businesses in town centres. Consultation with parish council Clerks will start in May and the issue was also raised at the recent Mid Sussex Association of Local Council meeting, who are calling for more engagement by MSDC officers. The Community Infrastructure Levy had not replaced Section 106 agreements for developer contributions at MSDC but a newly proposed levy is being discussed nationally. The South Downs National

Park Authority is using CIL contributions which passes a percentage of all development contributions directly to Parish Councils to spend, without them having to apply to the planning authority for it.

Cllr Bennet and Cllr Zeidler had submitted written reports previously circulated to all members. Cllr Zeidler had attended the Sayers Common Village Society meeting with Cllr Thompson and noted the request for updates on the plans for Berrylands Pond improvements, which are being discussed with the new contractor Glendale. Flooding issues remain a key issue for the village but action was being progressed by Southern Water, WSCC and MSDC. The current Naldretts Farm planning application for a Polo field was a concern and the Parish Council Planning Committee would be discussing it on 29 April 2024. Cllr Froud requested a copy of the WSCC Reg 19 response from Cllr Zeidler, and copies of the parking charges impact assessments from Cllr Jackson.

Cllr Majsai raised concern about MSDC's approach to funding rural play area improvements. Where Section 106 funding is available it should be used promptly. The Chairman gave the example of Fairfield Recreation Ground having Section 106 funds for a junior football pitch which has still not been delivered with only a few years before the money will be given back to the developer. Cllr Froud asked if MSDC could pass the funds to the Parish Council to complete the projects. Cllr Majsai was concerned that a 'Better Young Lives' meeting was held by MSDC which the Parish Council was not invited to, or advised of the outcomes of, despite all the work done to try to raise the issue of a lack of youth provision. Cllr Bennett shared the frustration and would investigate the meeting arrangements. The Chairman thanked Cllrs Bennet, Zeidler and Jackson for their reports. Cllrs Bennett and Zeidler left the meeting at 8.10.pm.

**C23/24.158: Committee Minutes:** Members received the minutes of the:

**C23/24.158.1: Parish Strategy Working Group** (4 April 2024): There were no recommendations for Council. Cllr Froud gave an update on the work completed to date and advised Council that the implications would be discussed at a future informal session for councillors.

**C23/24.158.2: Planning Committee** (8 April 2024): There were no recommendations for Council. The Chairman asked that the formal response sent to MSDC on the S106 funding for DM/23/2794 Gatehouse Farm be cross checked against the comments submitted on the planning application. Cllr Shorrocks confirmed the Committee had discussed it.

**C23/24.158.3: Community Engagement Committee** (11 April 2024): There was one recommendation for Council:

**C23/24.158.3.1: Grants Application Process:** The Committee discussed the proposed revised grants application process and agreed to recommend it to Council for adoption, and it was: **RESOLVED: That Council AGREES the revised grants application process.**

**C23/24.158.4: Finance, Governance & Estates Committee** (18 April 2024) There were three recommendations for Council as follows:

**C23/24.158.4.1: Final Year End Adjustments:** The Committee agreed to recommend to Council the year end adjustments made for the 2023/2024 accounts to allow for creditors, debtors, accruals and receipt in advance, and the transfers to and from the General Reserve and Earmarked Reserves for approval, and it was: **RESOLVED: That Council AGREES the year end adjustments made for 2023/24.**

**C23/24.158.4.2: Standing Orders:** The Committee agreed to recommend to Council amending Standing Order 18d (iv) for Financial Controls and Procurement, and it was: **RESOLVED: That Council AGREES to amend Standing Order 18d (iv) for Financial Controls and Procurement to remove the requirement for tenders to be returned in an envelope, to allow them to be returned by email.**

**C23/24.158.4.3: Court Bushes Community Hub Repairs:** The Committee agreed to recommend to Council the appointment of Contactor A at a cost of £11,269+VAT, subject to receipt of a third quote, and the approval of Aviva and Mid Sussex District Council as landlord. A third quote had been received which was slightly more than the lowest quote, and it was: **RESOLVED: That Council AGREES to appoint Contactor A at a cost of £11,269+VAT, subject to the approval of Aviva and Mid Sussex District Council as landlord.**

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

- i. **Parish Strategy Working Group (4 April 2024)**
- ii. **Planning Committee (8 April 2024)**
- iii. **Community Engagement Committee (11 April 2024)**
- iv. **Finance, Governance & Estates Committee (18 April 2024)**

**C23/24.159: Court Bushes Community Hub:** Members considered a proposal to hire the Club Lounge exclusively to Kiddie Capers Childcare from 1 August 2024, and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the Council AGEED to investigate the hire of the Club Lounge exclusively to Kiddie Capers Childcare from 1 August 2024.**

**C23/24.160: Hurstpierpoint High Street Traders Survey:** Members considered a short survey for High Street Traders to improve the understanding of the issues that the businesses face and how the Parish Council and other public agencies might support them to ensure a thriving High Street. Some concerns were expressed regarding the survey including the expectations that could be raised as to the Parish Council's ability to influence MSDC when parking charges are introduced in the Trinity Road and Brown Twins Road car parks. Suggestions were made on the formatting of the report, and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES that the survey be amended and re-presented to the 23 May 2024 Council meeting for approval.**

**C23/24.161: Reports from Representative on Outside Bodies:** Members received reports from representatives on outside bodies as follows:

**C23/24.161.1: Sayers Common Village Society:** Cllr Thompson attended the last meeting of the Society and the main issues raised concern flooding and drainage. The other issues raised were covered under the report by Cllr Zeidler. A weight limit on Reeds Lane is still wanted and the Chairman will raise this at the next Highways Working Group meeting. A village centre is being considered and a proposal is being worked up.

**C23/24.161.2: Hurstpierpoint Society:** Cllr Dyke was not able to attend the next Society meeting on Monday 29 April 2024, as she was attending the Planning Committee meeting instead.

**C23/24.161.3: Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils:** Cllr Jackson had attended the MSALC meeting on 18 April 2024 and the draft minutes and presentation had been circulated. Matters covered included the security of elected officials, the Code of Conduct, declarations of interest and civility and respect issues. Presentations on the Weald to Ways wildlife corridor and Local Nature Recovery Strategies were given. The Chairman noted the disappointing conflict between the excellent work of nature groups such as the Woodland Flora and Fauna Group, and the housing numbers in the Mid Sussex District Plan Review.

**C23/24.161.4: West Sussex Association of Local Councils:** The Chairman and Vice-Chairman had attended the WSALC Chairman's meeting on 23 April 2024. The Chairman had pressed for an update from the MSDC Monitoring Officer on the MSDC position on publicly available personal information.

**C23/24.161.5: Hurst Festival:** Cllr Sampson announced the Festival will hold two events in Sayers Common in 2024.

**C23/24.162: Information Items:**

**C23/24.162.1:** Cllr Majsai reminded Members that the Heritage Orchard open day is Friday 26 April 2024 from 2-4pm and the Annual Parish meeting is on Tuesday 21 May 2024 at 7pm in the Village Centre.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.40pm.

Chairman