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The MINUTES of the Meeting of the COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE held at 7.30pm on Thursday 14th November 2024 at Sayers Common Village Hall.

Members present:

Claire Majsai (Chair)	Bob Sampson (Vice Chair)
Lyndsay Thompson	Annette Street
Susan Dyke	Michael Avery
Duncan Ranger	

Also present: Viv Aloy, Assistant Clerk, Cllr Barry Forster and 7 members of the public

CE24/25.022. Apologies for Absence: Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr Sarah Baldy and Cllr Helen Bedford.

CE24/25.023. Declaration of interest: All Cllrs declared an interest in the Village Centre Charity grant application as trustees for the charity.

CE24/25.024. To receive and accept the minutes of the Community Engagement Committee meeting held on 12th September 2024: Members reviewed the minutes, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the minutes of 12th September meeting

CE24/25.025. Adjournment for Questions from the Public:

One member of the public wished to discuss the phase 2 plans for Reeds Lane and another member of the public wanted to discuss the Christmas Tree item. It was:

RESOLVED: That Committee AGREED to move forward item 8.2 and 8.3 of the agenda. The resolutions are contained in CE24/25.029.2 and CE24/25.029.3 respectively.

4 members of the public left at 20:08

CE24/25.026 Members discussed Version 3 of the 2024/2025 action plan, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED:

- i) to Version 3 of the 2024/25 Action Plan
- ii) for the Assistant Clerk to update Version 3 of the 2024/25 Action Plan as per the committee discussions and bring it to the next meeting as Version 4 of the 2024/25 Action Plan.

CE24/25.027. Budget Monitoring: Members reviewed the budget monitoring report for the Committee, noting:

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

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

- a) the Nominal Ledger (year to date)
- b) the Detailed Income & Expenditure as of 31 October 2024

One member of the public left at 20:12

CE24/25.027. Suggested Draft Budget for 2025/26 The committee discussed the proposed draft budget in detail. It was

RESOLVED that Committee AGREE to present the Draft Community Engagement budget to the Finance and Governance Committee in December.

While discussing the Parish Council Events budget, one Councillor remarked on how excellent the Remembrance Sunday parade and service was. Committee wished to pass on official thanks to the office team and particularly the Clerk for organising the day.

CE24/25.028 Grants:

CE24/25.028.1 New Small Grant Applications to be considered 2024/25: Members noted the Grants Budget 2024/25 was £4,500 with £2,440.09 remaining.

There were THREE small grant applications received.

Organisation	Grant Request For	Amount Requested	Amount Awarded
a) St Catherine's Hospice	Supporting the Community Team who care for local residents facing the end of life, within the comfort and familiar surroundings of their own home.	£500	£500
b) St Peter & St James Hospice	Towards providing expert care to adults in our community living with a life limiting illness	£500	£500
c) Hurst Toy Bank	To assist with the purchase of presents for children in the community whose families wouldn't otherwise be able to afford to buy for	£500	£300

The Committee discussed each application in detail.

Councillors mentioned that £500 was very little in the scheme of the costs involved in the day to day running of a hospice. It was suggested that we should invite them to the Community Forum and ask if there was any other practical assistance that the council could offer.

A member of the public spoke about Hurst Toy Bank. Families in need are identified by staff at schools and pre-schools, now including those in Twineham and Albourne, and matched anonymously with a family to buy a suitable gift. If there are insufficient gift givers, grant money is used to top this up or balance out the types of gifts within families. It also funds wrapping paper, tape, and last year some supermarket vouchers. It was noted from the accounts, that last year there were considerable surplus funds. The representative explained that they had sufficient presents and financial support on Just Giving last year, but that this is not the case every year and it is very difficult to predict. One Councillor expressed concern about the supermarket vouchers as there is no way to guarantee that the money would be spent on what it was intended for. It was suggested that a lesser amount be granted this year, as the initiative had been self-sustaining last year and that any surplus is spent on additional gifts/edible treats for each family. Depending on donations and need this year, any future application could be adjusted accordingly.

A unanimous vote was taken, and it was:

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- a) AWARD £500 to St Catherine's Hospice**
- b) AWARD £500 to St Peter & St James Hospice**

c) AWARD £300 to Hurst Toy Bank and that any surplus should be on additional gifts/edible treats rather than vouchers

One member of the public left at 20:47

CE24/25.28.2 Community Events Grant Applications to be considered 2024/25 Members noted the Community Events Budget was £4,000 with £33 remaining.

There were no Community Events Grant applications received.

The Committee discussed the request from WSFB for £30.60 to cover the hire of the Club Suite to run free first aid drop-in workshop. It was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREE to use the remaining £33 in the Community Events budget to fund the cost of hiring the Club Suite and towards biscuits for the event.

CE24/25.028.3 Health & Wellbeing Grants application to be considered 2024/25 Members noted the Health & Wellbeing Grants Budget was £1,000 with £748 remaining.

Organisation	Grant Request For	Amount Requested	Amount awarded
4Sight	To support 6 residents of the parish living with sight loss	£390	£390

The Committee discussed the application in detail. It was noted that as they are keen to speak to council about what they do, rather than speaking before committee, it was suggested that 4Sight be invited to speak at the January Community Forum. It was:

RESOLVED that the Committee AWARD 4Sight £390 and invite a representative to the Community Forum.

CE24/25.028.4 Sustainable Communities Grants applications to be considered. Members noted the Sustainable Communities Grants budget was £1,500 with £1,500 remaining.

There were TWO Sustainable Communities Grant applications received.

Organisation	Grant Request For	Amount Requested	Amount Awarded
a) The Monday Group	To support the work of the Monday group, maintaining and improving the rights of way network for walkers	£500	£500
b) The Village Centre	To install a compost bin behind the Village Centre building	£52	£52

The Committee discussed each application in detail. The high quality of the application from The Monday Group was noted, particularly how well they evidenced how they address our sustainability strategy objectives.

For the Village Centre application, while it was noted that all Councillors are trustees for the charity, there was no individual pecuniary interest. It was:

RESOLVED that the Committee

1)AWARD £500 to the Monday Group towards their ongoing work.

2)AWARD £52 to The Village Centre to install a compost bin.

CE24/25.028.5 Health & Wellbeing Projects Budget 2024/2025. Members noted the Health & Wellbeing Projects Budget was £1,000 with £0 remaining.

There were no new Health & Wellbeing Projects received.

CE2024/25.029 Information Items, Correspondence Received and Requests:

CE24/25.029.1 High Street Update: The Committee received a verbal update from Cllr Thompson, which focused primarily on the upcoming Santa Sunday event which will have more stalls and entertainment this year. This event has been widely publicised including in the December parish council Hurst Life pages.

CE24/25.029.2 Reeds Lane Recreation Ground Phase 2: The Committee discussed the briefing note in detail. One member of the public asked why the Council is pressing ahead with a proposal from 2018/2019 with no recent further consultation with the public. They felt that the village has changed considerably and some of the new residents were never consulted and may not even be aware of the plans. Councillors expressed again that much direct feedback had been received since 2019, as detailed in the briefing note, and that many comments from residents are more about why it has taken so long rather than suggesting it be delayed yet further. Councillors highlighted the suggestion in the briefing note of creating two designs and then bringing these back to the residents of Sayers Common to decide. The member of the public asked if this could be a physical consultation with displays of the designs held in the Village Hall rather than just online. Another member of the public asked why the design varied so much from previous designs. Councillors explained that aspects of the proposal were taken from various consultations, including those directly with children. It was:

RESOLVED That Committee AGREE for two designs to be presented to the residents of Sayers Common, including physical displays in the Village Hall at a date and time to be agreed by Committee.

CE24/25.029.3 Sayers Common Christmas Tree: The Committee discussed the briefing note in detail. One member of the public expressed frustration at the apparent slow pace of the project. Councillors highlighted the comments made at the November 2023 Community Engagement Committee, recorded in the minutes, regarding the issues the parish council were having with the festive lighting providers and with rising costs. Extensive research has been done by the office both into new potential new suppliers and into this project. As the briefing note explained, there were numerous logistical concerns with the site and power requirements for the type of display requested, plus lengthy delays in getting responses and costings from third parties. The overriding reason for delay, which was supported by previous comments in the meeting from residents, was that it would be better to wait and incorporate this request into any design for a future new village centre. Councillors highlighted that including power solutions in any new village centre design would facilitate any future project. It was:

RESOLVED: that

- 1) The Committee does NOT AGREE to the installation of additional festive lights at this time for the reasons outlined in the briefing note**
- 2) The Committee AGREE to revisit the project once further progress has been made on the new “village centre” plans.**

CE24/25.029.4 Hurstpierpoint Wassail 2025: The Committee received the notes of the 25.10.24 Hurstpierpoint Wassail meeting and discussed the plans for this year and the potential for a workshop in the school. They noted that the funds remaining in the Parish Council Events would be sufficient to cover the event.

CE24/25.029.5 External Communication: Councillors noted that the old “Hurstpierpoint Hub” Facebook group was recently closed, and this has limited our recent exposure. There is a new group which is rapidly growing, and the parish council already posts there. One councillor asked whether an external review of our communication strategy should be considered to improve engagement from the public. Councillors and office staff have attended communications training webinars and courses, and it is felt that our current strategies are working reasonably well and that there are no better solutions out there which do not require a lot of additional Office time. The Communications Strategy Working Group meet annually to review our current communications, and the suggestion of an external review will be taken to the next meeting of this group.

There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting at 21:10