



Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council
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Village Centre
Trinity Road
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West Sussex BN6 9UY

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday 12 December 2024 at 7.30 pm at Hurstpierpoint Village Centre.

Members Present:

Cllr Malcolm Llewellyn (Chairman)	Cllr Barry Forster
Cllr Michael Avery	Cllr Rodney Jackson
Cllr Sarah Baldey	Cllr Claire Majsai
Cllr Helen Bedford	Cllr Duncan Ranger
Cllr Susan Dyke	Cllr Julia Shorrocks
	Cllr Annette Street

Also Present: Sarah Groom, Clerk to the Council.

Cllr Joy Dennis (WSCC), Cllr Alison Bennett (MSDC) and Cllr Geoff Zeidler (MSDC) sent their apologies.

C24/25.105: To receive and accept apologies for absence: Apologies for absence were received from Cllr David Evans, Cllr Bob Sampson and Cllr Lindsey Thompson, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council **ACCEPTS** the apologies for absence for Cllr Evans, Cllr Sampson and Cllr Thompson.

C24/25.106: To receive and record declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest.

C24/25.107: To receive and accept the minutes of the previous meeting of the Council held on 28 November 2024: Members reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council **AGREES** the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2024.

C24/25.108: Adjournment for Questions from the Public: There were no members of the public present.

C24/25.109: Reports from Other Authorities: Members received reports from representatives of:

C24/25.109.1: West Sussex County Council (WSCC): Cllr Dennis was not present and there were no questions for WSCC.

C24/25.109.2: Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC): Cllr Jackson reported that the Section 106 excel spreadsheet had now been sent to the Parish Council, rather than just the PDF. The Clerk will circulate it to all Members. An update on the planned Parking Consultation was discussed although no firm dates are yet known. The MSDC Cabinet Member, Cllr Chris Hobbs had recognised the unique characteristics of each village and would ensure the consultation consultants would take this into account. The new name for the Centre for Outdoor Sports is "The Arc". The new "1,2,3" waste collection scheme will be rolled out to all 70,000 homes in Mid Sussex. This means collections will be weekly for food waste, fortnightly for recycling and three-weekly for general waste. The Parks Capital Programme has confirmed schemes for sites outside of the parish. The Air Quality at Stonepound has apparently improved, so it is not now on the watch list. Cllr Shorrocks was concerned that she had always understood that the Parish Council was told there was "no problem" there, so now it appears there had always been a problem that was being monitored. MSDC if offering cyber security advice. The Chairman thanked Cllr Jackson for his report.

C24/25.110: Committee Minutes: Members received the minutes of the:

C24/25.110.1: Parish Strategy Working Group (2 December 2024): There were no recommendations for Council. Cllr Forster clarified that the Strategy would also include geographical objectives.

C24/25.110.2: Planning Committee (2 December 2024): There were no recommendations for Council.

C24/25.110.3: Finance, Governance & Estates Committee (5 December 2024) There was one recommendation for Council:

F24/25.079: Draft Council Budget 2025/26: The Committee reviewed and assessed the Parish Council budget requirements for 2025/26. The Committee agreed to amend the staffing costs for the Assistant Clerks and to remove the Grade 2 full time post. The Parish Council Management Fee to the Village Centre charity was recalculated based on the average hourly rate (including Pension and NI) for all 5 employees for 13 hours a week, 52 weeks of the year. The project budget in Recreation Grounds was increased to £11,000 for the South Avenue Drainage Works. Street Lighting will include a new Property Maintenance budget (5400-204) for £3,000 to allow for some structural testing, routine maintenance and cleaning. The Committee agreed to recommend the budget requirements to Council, as amended, and it was: **RESOLVED:** That the Committee AGREED the Council budget requirements for 2025/26 as amended, and to recommend them to Council for approval. **The recommendation for Council was set out in the briefing note under Minute C24/25.111 below, and it was:**

RESOLVED: That the Council RECEIVES the minutes of the following Working Group and Committees, and AGREES the recommendations where appropriate:

- i. **Parish Strategy Working Group (2 December 2024)**
- ii. **Planning Committee (2 December 2024)**
- iii. **Finance, Governance & Estates Committee (5 December 2024)**

C24/25.111: Draft Council Budget 2025/26: Members considered the Parish Council budget requirements for 2025/26 as recommended by the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee of 5 December 2024. The Chairman highlighted that since the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee of 5 December 2024, the staff costs had been re-calculated with the Grade 2 full time post removed and with the impact of the resignation of the Assistant Clerk (AC1) taken into account. This had resulted in a reduction in staff costs despite the significant increase in Employers National Insurance contributions and a lowering of the threshold at which they apply. A budget had been included for planned maintenance of the streetlights on a phased basis and for drainage works on South Avenue. Members considered the budget requirements and agreed to add £3,000 to the South Avenue Projects budget (202-5720) to increase the budget for the drainage project which along with the Earmarked Reserve for South Avenue should provide sufficient funds for the drainage works. Members also noted that the 2025/26 budget did not include any costs at this stage for the Methodist Church, so the precept requirement would not be submitted to MSDC until after the 24 January 2025 Council meeting, in case further changes were needed, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES the Parish Council budget requirements for 2025/26 as income of **£110,591**, expenditure of **£442,452** and a precept required to balance the budget of **£331,861**. Based on the tax base figure of 3350.6 this equates to a Band D (Precept) Council Tax payment of **£99.05** (an increase of 3.95% on the 2024/25 figure of **£95.28**). However, the precept requirement would not be submitted to MSDC until after the 24 January 2025 Council meeting, in case further changes were needed.

C24/25.112: Calendar of Meetings 2025/2026: Members considered a provisional list of meeting dates for 2025/2026 to be ratified at the May 2025 Council meeting. Members agreed to amend the 2026 Annual Parish Meeting date to 12 May 2026 and to swap the venue of the Community Engagement Committee meeting at Sayers Common Village Hall from 13 November 2025 to 12 June 2025. The Court Bushes venue for the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee on 18 September 2025 was removed, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES the provisional list of meeting dates for 2025/2026 as amended, to be ratified at the May 2025 Council meeting.

C24/25.113: West Sussex Pension Fund Update: Members noted the Pension Fund update and illustrative funding position assumed by the Fund actuary, ahead of the three-yearly valuation (on 31 March 2025). Member noted the positive position that the Fund was in, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council NOTES the Pension Fund update and illustrative funding position assumed by the Fund actuary, ahead of the three-yearly valuation (on 31 March 2025).

C24/25.114: Reports from representatives on outside bodies: Members noted the reports as follows:

C24/25.114.1: South Downs National Park Authority: Cllr Jackson will attend a meeting of the SDNPA on 22 January 2025, concerning their Partnership Management Plan engagement and the Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation.

C24/25.114.2: Hurstpierpoint Society: Cllr Dyke reported the Society will be paying for the new lime trees for South Avenue Recreation Ground and remain interested in the future of the Methodist Church. The Chairman had also received correspondence about the groundwork commencing in the field behind Kemps by Thakeham Homes. This had been reported to MSDC's Planning Enforcement Team who had visited the site.

C24/25.114.3: Sayers Common Village Association: Cllr Forster updated Members on the progress the Association is making on the designs for a new village centre.

C24/25.114.4: Twinning Association: Cllr Shorrocks updated Members on the recent successful activities of the Twinning Association and noted their expectation that the Parish Council becomes more directly involved.

C24/25.114.5: St Lawrence Fair: Cllr Bedford updated Members on the professionalism of the planning committee and the positive relationships being developed with for example, the Santa Sunday organisers.

C24/25.115: Information Items: Cllr Majsai informed Members that the January 2025 Wassail event would be on January 11th, to meet at 5pm in the Millennium Garden. Further details are available on posters and in the January Hurst Life magazine. Cllr Baldey informed Members of the development at the old JanTon Newsagents on the High Street. The Hurst Works are expanding their wellness activities into the barn and are holding an opening event on 20 December from 3-9pm.

Members 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:

C24/25.116: Kiddie Capers Proposal: Members considered a request from Kiddie Capers Childcare regarding the use of Court Bushes Community Hub. Following a lengthy debate a way forward was agreed, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council AGREED it remained committed to Court Bushes Community Hub as a community venue and would explore ways of meeting the demand for larger indoor spaces.

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

Chairman