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**Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting** held on Thursday 22 May 2025 at 7.30 pm at Hurstpierpoint Village Centre.

**Members Present:**

Cllr Malcolm Llewellyn (Chairman)
Cllr Michael Avery
Cllr Helena Browne
Cllr Susan Dyke
Cllr Rodney Jackson
Cllr Claire Majsai
Cllr Duncan Ranger
Cllr Bob Sampson
Cllr Julia Shorrocks
Cllr Annette Street
Cllr Lindsay Thompson

**Also Present:** Sarah Groom, Clerk to the Council. Apologies were received from Cllr Dennis (WSCC), Cllr Bennett (MSDC) and Cllr Zeidler (MSDC).

**C25/26.001: Election of Chairman of the Council:** Members received one nomination for the Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year, proposed by Cllr Ranger and seconded by Cllr Jackson, and with all Members in favour, Cllr Malcolm Llewellyn was duly elected Chairman of the Council. The Chairman of the Council, Cllr Llewellyn signed the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chairman of the Council, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ELECTS Cllr Malcolm Llewellyn as the Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.**

**C25/26.002: Apologies for Absence:** Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sarah Baldey, Cllr Helen Bedford and Cllr David Evans, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ACCEPTS the apologies for absence for Cllrs Baldey, Bedford and Evans.**

**C25/26.003: Declarations of interest:** There were no declarations of interest.

**C25/26.004: Election of Vice-Chairman of the Council:** Members received one nomination for the Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year, proposed by Cllr Ranger and seconded by Cllr Sampson, and with all Members in favour, Cllr Claire Majsai was duly elected Vice-Chairman of the Council. Cllr Majsai signed the Vice-Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Vice-Chairman of the Council, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ELECTS Cllr Claire Majsai as the Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.**

**C25/26.005: Committee Structure & Responsibilities:** Members considered the terms of reference, responsibilities and accountabilities of each Committee and Working Group. It was agreed to amend the wording on the Terms of Reference for the Planning Committee, Events Working Group and Sustainability Working Group. It was noted the Parish Strategy Working Group would be put on hold, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES the terms of reference, responsibilities and accountabilities of each Committee and Working Group, as amended.**

**C25/26.006: Committee Membership:** Members considered the Councillors to serve upon the Council's Committees and Working Groups. The Chairs of each Committee were also elected. The Vice-Chairs to be elected at their next meetings. Upon consideration, the following arrangements were agreed:

**C25/26.006.1 Planning Committee (10 Members):** Members considered the membership of the Committee for the following year, and it was:

**<u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Planning Committee Membership of 10 Members was duly AGREED as: Cllrs Avery, Baldey, Bedford, Browne, Dyke, Evans, Sampson, Shorrocks, Thompson and one vacancy. Cllr Shorrocks was elected as Chair.**

**C25/26.006.2 Community Engagement Committee (9 Members):** Members considered the membership of the Committee for the following year, and it was:

**<u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Community Engagement Committee Membership of 9 Members was duly AGREED as: Cllrs Avery, Baldey, Bedford, Dyke, Majsai, Ranger, Sampson, Street and Thompson. Cllr Majsai was elected as Chair.**

**C25/26.006.3 Finance, Governance & Estates Committee (9 Members):** Members considered the membership of the Committee for the following year, and it was:

**<u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee Membership of 9 Members was duly AGREED as: Cllrs Browne, Evans, Jackson, Llewellyn, Majsai, Ranger, Street, Shorrocks and one vacancy. Cllr Ranger was elected as Chair.**

**C25/26.006.4 Hurst Meadows Working Group (4 Members):** Members considered the membership of the Group for the following year, and it was:

**<u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Membership of the Hurst Meadows Working Group of 4 Members of the Parish Council, was duly AGREED as: Cllrs Llewellyn and Majsai, (Mr Allan Brown and Dr Georgina Judd) and two councillor vacancies.**

**C25/26.006.5 Events Working Group (4 Members):** Members considered the membership of the Group for the following year, and it was:

**<u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Membership of the Events Working Group of 4 Members of the Parish Council, was duly AGREED as: Cllrs Bedford, Dyke, Majsai and Sampson.**

**C25/26.006.6 Sustainability Working Group (4 Members):** Members considered the membership of the Group for the following year, and it was:

**<u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Membership of the Sustainability Working Group of 4 Members of the Parish Council, was duly AGREED as: Cllrs Dyke, Majsai and Sampson and one vacancy.**

**C25/26.006.7 Staff Panel (3 Members):** Members considered the membership of the Panel for the following year, and it was:

**<u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Membership of the Staff Panel of 3 Members of the Parish Council, was duly AGREED as: Cllrs Llewellyn, Ranger and Shorrocks.**

**C25/26.007: Council Representatives:** Members considered appointing Council representatives to outside bodies for 2025/26 and noted the representatives assigned to informal groups. It was agreed Cllr Browne would represent the Parish Council on the Sayers Common Village Association, and it was:

**<u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Council AGREES the Council representatives to outside bodies for 2025/26 and NOTED the representatives assigned to informal groups, as amended.**

**C25/26.008: Meeting Diary:** Members considered the time and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council and Committees, up to and including the next annual meeting of full Council. It was agreed to add the Village Centre venue where applicable, and it was:

**<u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Council AGREES the time and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council and Committees, up to and including the next annual meeting of full Council, as amended.**

**C25/26.009: Standing Orders:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's Standing Orders. Amendments were agreed to Paragraphs 14 and 18 as advised by NALC. Paragraph 4d (v) now includes the Chairman and Vice-Chairman being ex-officio members of all standing committees, without voting rights. Paragraph 4d (vi) now refers to introducing substitutes for Committees and it was agreed that the substitutes for the Planning Committee would be Cllrs Llewellyn and Majsai, for Community Engagement, Cllrs Browne and Shorrocks, and for Finance, Governance and Estates Cllr Thompson, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's Standing Orders, as amended and AGREES the substitutes for Committees.**

**C25/26.010: Financial Regulations:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's Financial Regulations. It was agreed to amend Paragraph 5, as advised by NALC, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's Financial Regulations, as amended.**

**C25/26.011: Code of Conduct:** Members reviewed the Members' Code of Conduct, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's Members' Code of Conduct.**

**C25/26.012: Delegations to the Clerk:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's delegations to the Clerk, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's Delegations to the Clerk.**

**C25/26.013: Previous Minutes:** Members received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 24 April 2025, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the minutes of 24 April 2025.**

**C25/26.014: Committee Minutes:** Members received and where appropriate, considered the recommendations of the:

i. Planning Committee (28 April 2025). There were no recommendations for Council.
ii. Finance, Governance & Estates Committee (15 May 2025). There were no recommendations for Council, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: The Council RECEIVES the minutes of the following Committees and Working Group:**
> **i. Planning Committee (28 April 2025)**
> **ii. Finance, Governance & Estates Committee (15 May 2025)**

**C25/26.015: Income and Expenditure for Year Ending 31 March 2025:** Members reviewed the final Income and Expenditure figures for Year Ending 31 March 2025, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Income and Expenditure figures for Year Ending 31 March 2025.**

**C25/26.016: Fixed Asset Register 31 March 2025:** Members considered the asset register dated 31 March 2025, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Fixed Asset Register dated 31 March 2025.**

**C25/26.017: Internal Audit Report Letter dated 29 April 2025:** Members reviewed the Internal Audit Report Letter dated 29 April 2025 from Mulberry & Co. It was noted there was one recommendation in the report which had been actioned. The team was congratulated, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Internal Audit Report dated 29 April 2025, noting that the one recommendation had been actioned.**

**C25/26.018: To consider and agree the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2025:** Members reviewed the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2025 ensuring it accurately presented the financial management of the Council as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as follows:

**C25/26.018.1:** Members reviewed the signed Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/2025, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council NOTES the signed Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/2025.**

**C25/26.018.2:** Members reviewed Section 1: The Annual Governance Statement 2024/25, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES AND ADOPTS the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25.**

**C25/26.018.3:** Members reviewed Section 2: The Accounting Statement 2024/2025, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES AND ADOPTS the Accounting Statement 2024/2025.**

**C25/26.018.4:** Members reviewed the period of the publics' right of inspection will be 3 June to 14 July 2025 (the Regulations require the period to include 30 workings days and the first ten working days of July), and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES and ADOPTS the period of public inspection of the accounts as 3 June to 14 July 2025.**

**C25/26.019: Insurance:** Members reviewed the arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks. Members noted 2025/26 was the second year of a three year agreement. Cllr Street queried cover for data breaches, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES the insurance cover and renewal cost with Clear Council's Insurance at a cost of £5,200.28.**

**C25/26.020: Internal Controls:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's Internal Controls, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES the Parish Council's Internal Controls.**

**C25/26.021: Direct Debits:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's direct debits, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES the Parish Council's direct debits.**

**C25/26.022: Subscriptions:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's subscriptions and agreed to add the 'Action in Rural Sussex' payment of £150 and amend the total, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES the Parish Council's subscriptions, as amended.**

**C25/26.023: Health and Safety Policy:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's Health and Safety Policy, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Health and Safety Policy.**

**C25/26.024: Freedom of Information:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under the Freedom of Information legislation. It was agreed to change the heading of Paragraph 1.2, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Freedom of Information Policy, as amended.**

**C25/26.025: Data Protection:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under Data Protection legislation, and it was:

> **RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Data Protection Policy.**

**C25/26.026: Risk Management:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's a) Risk Management Strategy including the Risk Management Policy Statement, b) the Risk Register, c) the Emergency Plan and d) the Business Continuity Plan. It was agreed to reformat the Risk Register into landscape format and to add Pension liabilities and expand the cyber security protection. It was also agreed to add contact details for local tree surgeons to the Emergency Plan, and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Risk Management Strategy including the Risk Management Policy Statement, b) the Risk Register as amended, c) the Emergency Plan as amended, and d) the Business Continuity Plan.**

**C25/26.027: Safeguarding Policy:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's Safeguarding Policy, and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Safeguarding Policy.**

**C25/26.028: Councillor Co-Option Policy:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's Councillor Co-Option Policy, and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Councillor Co-Option Policy.**

**C25/26.029: Complaints Procedure:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's Complaints Procedure, and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's complaints procedure.**

**C25/26.030: Document Retention Policy:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's Document Retention Policy, and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's Document Retention Policy.**

**C25/26.031: Employment Policies:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's Employment Policies, and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Employment Policies.**

**C25/26.032: Training and Development Policy:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's Training and Development Policy. A Health and Safety course is still to be identified and should be included in the list of mandatory training. The new Councillor training under the desirable heading will be deleted as it is a duplicate. Wording will be included in the Code of Conduct referring to Councillors completing the mandatory training, and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's Training and Development Policy, as amended.**

**C25/26.033: CCTV Policy:** Members reviewed the Parish Council's CCTV Policy, and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's CCTV Policy.**

**C25/26.034: Adjournment for Questions from the Public:** Members considered whether to adjourn the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders to receive questions from members of the public in attendance. There were no members of the public present, so the meeting was not adjourned.

**C25/26.035: Reports from Other Authorities:** Members received reports from representatives of other authorities:

**C25/26.035.1: Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC):** Cllr Jackson reviewed the recent annual meeting of the District Council where Cllr Mike Kennedy was elected as the new Chairman, and Cllr Christine Cherry the new Vice-Chairman of MSDC. Cllrs Bennett and Jackson had called-in the decision regarding the planning application in principle for the Methodist Church so that the Planning Committee made the decision and not the case officer. The Burgess Hill Town Centre joint venture plans were progressing. Members noted the written report from Cllr Zeidler. The Chairman would be speaking with Cllr Zeidler about street cleaning schedules.

**C25/26.035.2: West Sussex County Council (WSCC):** The Chairman had met with Cllr Dennis and the Southern Water works had been discussed. Foul water had been seeping into storm water drains and this had meant repairs were undertaken to drains in Cuckfield Road, Willow Way and Malthouse Lane. Southern Gas will be working on the Cuckfield Road from 9 June 2025 for ten weeks. Southern Water will also soon be working in the High Street.

**C25/26.036: Reports from Representative on Outside Bodies:** On behalf of the Sayers Common Village Society, Cllr Thompson requested an update on the timetable for the play equipment installation at Reeds Lane Rec. There was no further update from the information given in writing on 16 May 2025. Feedback on the Mid Sussex District Plan meeting held on 20 May 2025 was requested, and the Society still want the Sayers Common village sign embossed. It was previously agreed that this item has been added to the June Council meeting agenda.

**C25/26.037: To note any information items, correspondence received or requests:** The Chairman updated Members on the discussions held at the Mid Sussex District Plan meeting held on 20 May 2025. The meeting brought together: MSDC Officers; Cllr Zeidler (MSDC); representatives of the five site developers for the land at Sayers Common; plus Albourne Parish Council; Twineham Parish Council and Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council. Since the first draft of the Plan was published in January 2023, the Chairman has been calling for a master-planning approach to the 2,000 new homes that are allocated in the draft District Plan to 2039. There was very little evidence that any master-planning had been undertaken despite the (unbinding) "Statement of Common Ground" that the developers had signed in August 2024. Four of the sites are likely to come forward as individual developments over the Summer/Autumn period signalling further indications of a lack of master-planning to create a sustainable community. It was agreed by the Parish Councils that they will write to MSDC expressing their concerns.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.35pm.

Chairman