



Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council
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NOTES of the meeting of the **Events Working Group** held at 1pm on Monday 19th May 2025 in the Village Centre Conference Room.

Present: Claire Majsai – Chair
Viv Aloy – Assistant Clerk

Susan Dyke - Councillor
Gemma Porteous – Assistant Clerk

Review of the APM 13th May 2025

Positives:

- There were some new faces due to the extension of invitations to include local businesses and fitness groups.
- There was a fair amount of networking at the end of the evening.
- We had positive comments, including from Hurst Works and Lauren (running group), that they had no idea quite how much goes on in the community and what amazing support services there are working away in the background. Comments from other groups included that it was “good to get people together” and that the advertising all around the village showed that the PC cared about people’s lives.
- The return of the 1-minute talks was well received

Negatives:

- Very few “members of the public” not connected to a local group presenting/displaying attended again.
- The event takes a lot of office staff time, disrupts existing hirers, incurs costs (loss of hire fees, refreshments, staff time, additional report printing) for very little impact in terms of engaging with the electorate.
- The lack of the public is potentially damaging to the reputation of the council when groups have been invited to present.

In terms of the low attendance figures it was noted that:

- While other organisations do attract larger numbers for similar styles of events, these often draw from people outside of the parish. The APM should only target our residents, which is self-limiting.
- Evening meetings, according to the U3A representative, deter the older demographic from attending, and are also difficult for families due to childcare. The time that the APM should be held by law (after 6pm) means that we do not have the flexibility to move it (e.g. to a Saturday morning) in an attempt to increase numbers attending.
- Where people are not attending, it may simply mean that they are not dissatisfied with what the council is achieving.

The consensus at this Events Working Group Meeting was that the format of the APM should be changed for 2026, potentially focusing more on the official council business side. Much of the networking that is achieved is duplicated by the Community Forum, and a further event not linked to the APM might be considered.

Future APM suggestions

- The APM could be a more “round table” event, like the Community Forum, where representatives from local groups are still invited to attend, along with members of the public, but the format is more informal, possibly including facilitating discussion as well as the presentation and questions on the council year

- Members of the public who might not be able to attend in person could be invited to send in questions in advance, which could be read out and answered.
- The event could be forward focused, as well as a review of the previous council year.

In relation to the community side of the current APM format, these groups will be consulted at the Community Forum as to whether they would still be interested in sending a representative to the APM, in whatever new format is decided upon, or whether they would prefer a further, separate, networking event.

Annual Report

It was agreed that the Annual Report was too long and included a lot of repetition between the different Chair reports. It was noted that the lateness of office staff having access to all the reports meant that it was not possible to go back through the full document in detail to make it more cohesive prior to printing.

It was agreed that the structure and content of the Annual Report should be reviewed in conjunction with any agreement on a change of format for the meeting itself.

The notes from this meeting will go forward to Community Engagement Committee on 12th June for further discussion around the format of the APM and the Annual Report, and to make a recommendation to Full Council.

St Lawrence Fair 5th July 2025

Set up/Strike down

Stephen is not available this year, but Hamish will be able to assist with the Gazebo etc.

Displays/boards

- Cycleways, including map from last year
- District plan maps, with a brief paragraph explaining where we are in the process (i.e. with the planning inspector still).
- Plan for the Council year ahead (**Assistant Clerk Aloy to email Malcolm regarding this**)
- Other boards depending on space: Hurst Meadows/Village Centre/Court Bushes
- "What we do" banner
- Competition
- Left over copies of the Annual Report.

Cllr Rota

Assistant Clerk Aloy to email councillors to check their availability for the stall this year and then draw up a provisional rota.

Competition/Game

Various options were discussed, including guess the number of sweeties in the jar and guess the name of the cuddly toy. **Assistant Clerks Aloy & Porteous will do further research** and email WG members with suggestions.