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Village Centre
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West Sussex BN6 9UY

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on Thursday 21 May 2026 at 7.30 pm at Hurstpierpoint Village Centre.

Members Present:

Cllr Malcolm Llewellyn (Chairman)
Cllr Michael Avery
Cllr Sarah Baldey
Cllr Helen Bedford
Cllr Susan Dyke
Cllr Shaun Hole
Cllr Rodney Jackson
Cllr Claire Majsai
Cllr Duncan Ranger
Cllr Bob Sampson
Cllr Annette Street

Also Present: Sarah Groom, Clerk to the Council. One member of the public who left after item C26/27.026. Apologies were received from Cllr Williams and Cllr Zeidler (MSDC). **Not Present:** Cllr Lindsay Thompson.

C26/27.001: 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.

C26/27.002: Apologies for Absence: Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Julia Shorrocks, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ACCEPTS the apologies for absence for Cllr Shorrocks.

C26/27.003: Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest.

C26/27.004: 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.

C26/27.005: Committee Structure & Responsibilities: Members considered the terms of reference, responsibilities and accountabilities of each Committee and Working Group. The wording on the Terms of Reference would be crossed checked with the wording on the Committee Action Plans, and it was:

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

C26/27.006: Committee Membership: Members considered the Councillors to serve upon the Council's Committees and Working Groups. The Chairs of each Committee were also elected with the Vice-Chairs to be elected at their next meetings. Upon consideration, the following arrangements were agreed:

C26/27.006.1 Planning Committee (10 Members): Members considered the membership of the Committee for the following year, and it was:

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RESOLVED: That the Planning Committee Membership of 10 Members was duly AGREED as: Cllrs Avery, Baldey, Bedford, Dyke, Hole, Sampson, Shorrocks, Thompson and two vacancies. Cllrs Llewellyn and Majsai were agreed as ex-officio non-voting members. Cllr Shorrocks was elected as Chair.

C26/27.006.2 Community Engagement Committee (9 Members): Members considered the membership of the Committee for the following year, and it was:

RESOLVED: 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 Shorrocks was agreed as a substitute. Cllr Majsai was elected as Chair.

C26/27.006.3 Finance, Governance & Estates Committee (9 Members): Members considered the membership of the Committee for the following year, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee Membership of 9 Members was duly AGREED as: Cllrs Hole, Jackson, Llewellyn, Majsai, Ranger, Street, Shorrocks and two vacancies. Cllr Thompson was agreed as a substitute. Cllr Ranger was elected as Chair.

C26/27.006.4 Hurst Meadows Working Group (4 Members): Members considered the membership of the Group for the following year, and it was:

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

C26/27.006.5 Events Working Group (4 Members): Members considered the membership of the Group for the following year, and it was:

RESOLVED: 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.

C26/27.006.6 Sustainability Working Group (4 Members): Members considered the membership of the Group for the following year, and it was:

RESOLVED: 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.

C26/27.006.7 Staff Panel (3 Members): Members considered the membership of the Panel for the following year, and it was:

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

C26/27.007: Council Representatives: Members considered appointing Council representatives to outside bodies for 2026/27 and noted the representatives assigned to informal groups. It was agreed to add Cllr Street as a WSALC representative; to investigate the Woodland Flora and Fauna Group vacancy; to remove the Sayers Common Village Association; and to remove the GP Patient Consultative Group, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES the Council representatives to outside bodies for 2026/27 and NOTED the representatives assigned to informal groups, as amended.

C26/27.008: 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 amend the November Finance, Governance & Estates Committee date to 12 November 2026 and Community Engagement Committee date to 19 November 2026, and it was:

RESOLVED: 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.

C26/27.009: Standing Orders: Members reviewed the Parish Council's Standing Orders, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's Standing Orders.

C26/27.010: Financial Regulations: Members reviewed the Parish Council's Financial Regulations, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's Financial Regulations.

C26/27.011: 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.

C26/27.012: 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.

C26/27.013: Previous Minutes: Members received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 23 April 2026, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the minutes of 23 April 2026.

C26/27.014: Committee Minutes: Members received and where appropriate, considered the recommendations of the:

i. Planning Committee (27 April 2026). There were no recommendations for Council.
ii. Finance, Governance & Estates Committee (14 May 2026). There were two recommendations for Council:

a) **F25/26.154: Additional Grave Plots in 'P' Section:** The Committee considered a briefing note setting out a proposal to bring into use fifty-two additional burial plots located at the southern end of the cemetery, to be designated as the 'P Section', and authorise their recording and release for use. It was noted that the drainage works will need to be completed prior to the proposal being implemented, and it was: RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the proposal to bring into use fifty-two additional burial plots located at the southern end of the cemetery, to be designated as the 'P Section' and authorise their recording and release for use and to recommend it to Council for approval and adoption. Members expressed their congratulations on the identification of additional grave spaces in the South Avenue Cemetery, and it was:
RESOLVED: That Council AGREED the proposal to bring into use fifty-two additional burial plots located at the southern end of the cemetery, to be designated as the 'P Section' and authorise their recording and release for use once the drainage works are completed.

b) **F25/26.155: Additional Half Graves Plots for Ashes:** The Committee considered a briefing note setting out the introduction of up to fourteen "half plots" within the cemetery for ash interments, to be designated as the 'T Section', with a proposed pricing level of £375, and that no further sales of full-size burial plots for ashes interments be permitted, and it was: RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to recommend the following to Council for approval and adoption:
(i) The introduction of half burial plots within the 'T Section', including up to 14 plots within the 'S mound' area;
(ii) The proposed pricing level of £375 for 2026/27; and
(iii) That no further sales of full-size burial plots for ashes interments be permitted, and it was:
RESOLVED: That Council AGREED the following for approval and adoption:
(i) The introduction of half burial plots within the 'T Section', including up to 14 plots within the 'S mound' area;
(ii) The proposed pricing level of £375 for 2026/27; and
(iii) **That no further sales of full-size burial plots for ashes interments be permitted**, and it was:

RESOLVED: The Council RECEIVES the minutes of the following Committees:
i. Planning Committee (27 April 2026)
ii. Finance, Governance & Estates Committee (14 May 2026)

C26/27.015: Income and Expenditure for Year Ending 31 March 2026: Members reviewed the final Income and Expenditure figures for Year Ending 31 March 2026, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Income and Expenditure figures for Year Ending 31 March 2026.

C26/27.016: Fixed Asset Policy & Register 31 March 2026: Members considered the asset register policy and asset register dated 31 March 2026, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Fixed Asset Policy & Asset Register dated 31 March 2026.

C26/27.017: Internal Audit Report Letter dated 4 May 2026: Members reviewed the Internal Audit Report Letter dated 4 May 2026 from Mulberry LAS. The one recommendation in the report concerning budgeting for bank interest was noted, and Members confirmed they were happy with the current Policy. The team was congratulated, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Internal Audit Report dated 4 May 2026, noting the one recommendation.

C26/27.018: To consider and agree the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2026: Members reviewed the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2026 ensuring it accurately presented the financial management of the Council as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as follows:

C26/27.018.1: Members reviewed the signed Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/2026, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council NOTES the signed Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/2026.

C26/27.018.2: Members reviewed Section 1: The Annual Governance Statement 2025/26, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES AND ADOPTS the Annual Governance Statement 2025/26.

C26/27.018.3: Members reviewed Section 2: The Accounting Statement 2025/2026, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES AND ADOPTS the Accounting Statement 2025/2026.

C26/27.018.4: Members reviewed the period of the publics' right of inspection proposed as 3 June to 14 July 2026 (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 2026.

C26/27.019: Insurance: Members reviewed the arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks. Members noted that the 2026/27 renewal was due on 1 June 2026 but had yet to be received. The renewal would be the third year of a three year agreement, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council NOTES the current insurance cover with Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc, and awaits the renewal costs for 2026/27.

C26/27.020: Internal Controls: Members noted the Parish Council's Internal Controls that were approved and adopted on 19 March 2026 (Minute C25/26.141.2), and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council NOTES the Parish Council's Internal Controls approved on 19 March 2026 (Minute C25/26.141.2).

C26/27.021: Direct Debits: Members reviewed the Parish Council's direct debits, and it was:

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

C26/27.022: Subscriptions: Members reviewed the Parish Council's subscriptions, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES the Parish Council's subscriptions.

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.

C26/27.024: Freedom of Information: Members reviewed the Parish Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under the Freedom of Information legislation, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Freedom of Information Policy.

C26/27.025: Data Protection: Members reviewed the Parish Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under Data Protection legislation and noted the new requirement for a data audit. Members noted the requirement for the formal four yearly data protection training covered by the Training and Development Policy, and it was agreed that the review of the Policy each May was sufficient for the annual refresh training, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Data Protection Policy including the new Data Audit.

C26/27.026: 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. Members agreed to increase the likelihood of "disruption" and "damage to public property" from L(1) to L(2) under Item 16, 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, and d) the Business Continuity Plan.

C26/27.027: Safeguarding Policy: Members reviewed the Parish Council's Safeguarding Policy, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Safeguarding Policy.

C26/27.028: 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.

C26/27.029: Complaints Procedure: Members reviewed the Parish Council's Complaints Procedure, and it was:

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

C26/27.030: 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.

C26/27.031: Employment Policies: Members reviewed the Parish Council's Employment Policies including: Dignity at Work; Disciplinary; Appraisal; Expenses; Equal Opportunities, Grievance; Job Evaluation; Pension Discretions; and Staff Absence, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Employment Policies including: Dignity at Work; Disciplinary; Appraisal; Expenses; Equal Opportunities, Grievance; Job Evaluation; Pension Discretions; and Staff Absence.

C26/27.032: Training and Development Policy: Members reviewed the Parish Council's Training and Development Policy for councillors and employees, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's Training and Development Policy for councillors and employees.

C26/27.033: CCTV Policy: Members reviewed the Parish Council's CCTV Policy, and it was:

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

C26/27.034: Sustainability Strategy: Members reviewed the Parish Council's Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan.

C26/27.035: IT Policy: Members reviewed the Parish Council's IT Policy and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's IT Policy.

C26/27.036: Media & Communications Policy: Members reviewed the Parish Council's Media & Communications Policy, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council ADOPTS the Parish Council's Media & Communications Policy.

C26/27.037: 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 still present, so the meeting was not adjourned.

C26/27.038: Reports from Other Authorities: There were no written reports from the representatives of MSDC or WSCC. The Chairman confirmed that time would be allocated at the 25 June 2026 Council meeting for the District Councillors to update Members on the draft Mid Sussex District Plan.

C26/27.039: Reports from Representative on Outside Bodies: To receive reports from Representative on Outside Bodies.

C26/27.039.1: Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils: Cllr Street had circulated a written report of the meeting held on 6 May 2026 which covered Policing statistics, local government review and planning issues.

C26/27.039.2: St Lawrence Fair: Cllr Majsai asked all councillors to respond to the request for their availability to staff the St Lawrence Fair stall on 4 July 2026, by 11am on 22 May 2026.

C26/27.039.3: Hurstpierpoint Society: Cllr Dyke was unable to attend the Society's AGM on 27 June 2026 and would be grateful if other members could attend. The Chairman of the Society had confirmed that her role was not in conflict with her new District Councillor responsibilities.

C26/27.039.4: Town Twinning Association: Cllr Hole had attended the Association's meeting on 4 May 2026 where the Chairman of the Association was confirmed. The AGM will be held on 17 June 2026 in the Conference Room at the Village Centre. A successful fundraising quiz night had been held on 6 May 2026. A Petanque competition will be held at the Summer Fete on Reeds Lane Rec on 13 June 2026. Cllr Hole confirmed the events planned to celebrate the visit of colleagues from St Martin from 3-6 July 2026 including golf, bowls and a visit to Nymans Gardens. From 21-24 August 2026 a delegation from the Parish will visit St Martin. The Association will attend the Santa Saturday event on 28 November 2026 and is also approaching St Lawrence Primary School to discuss opportunities for closer relationships with pupils in St Martin.

C26/27.040: To note any information items, correspondence received or requests:

C26/27.040.1: Local Government Re-organisation (LGR): There were currently two consultation exercises on the Government's latest proposals on LGR, from the Government itself (deadline 15 June 2026) and also WSALC (deadline 25 May 2026). Following a detailed discussion Members agreed to feed back their preference for the solution that best addresses costs, supports the most vulnerable, keep representation and accountability local and that governance is not too physically remote from the Parish.

C26/27.040.2: Draft Mid Sussex District Plan: The Chairman updated Members on the latest developments and discussions held, regarding the draft Mid Sussex District Plan. Following the Planning Inspector's public examination hearings in February, the Inspector had written to MSDC to ask that they re-visit sites that had been excluded from the original site selection process. This was required to help meet the un-met need of both Crawley and Brighton and Hove. Sites should be assessed on the basis of harm, versus the benefits of the development. A large number of sites have therefore been brought back into consideration and these can be fact checked by the site promoters/developers, before formal public consultation over the Summer. The sites will then be re-assessed by MSDC to agree which can go forward and be included in the final draft District Plan. Further information will be sent to Members in advance of the 25 June 2026 Council meeting when this will be discussed in more detail.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.48pm.

Chairman