



**Minutes of the Meeting of Billingshurst Parish Council
Wednesday 10 January 2024
7pm at the Billingshurst Centre**

Present

Cllrs Ken Peters (Chairman), Faye Algar, Edna Bengler, Paul Berry, Sandy Duck, Trevor Leonard, Deepak Mahal, Caroline Beresford Pratt, Steve Thomas, Doug Waller and Sarah Wilson.

In attendance

G C Burt, Clerk to the Council
District Cllr John Trollope
1 member of the public

01/24 Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman wished everyone a happy New Year and advised that

1. The meeting was being streamed to the internet.
2. Cllrs wishing to speak should raise their hand and speak loudly and clearly.

02/24 Apologies.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Phillip Day, Craig Gale, James Marchant and Roy Margetts due to prior engagements. On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** that the apologies and reasons given be accepted.

03/23 To Receive Declarations of Interest and consider any requests for a dispensation.

None.

Adjournment for

04/24 Public Session (Members of the Public may speak for up to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman).

Mr G Commins highlighted the forthcoming changes by West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) which would mean that visits to the Household Waste Recycling Centre would need to be pre-booked. There were seldom queues, meaning that the change was unnecessary. It had been suggested that WSSCC had undertaken some consultation but he was not aware of any. (Billingshurst Parish Council (BPC) had not been consulted.) Councillors were in broad agreement with the sentiment conveyed and the Clerk would ask WSSCC what consultation had taken place, and suggest that the booking system, whilst appropriate for some sites, was not needed in Billingshurst.

05/24 Reports from:

- a. County and District Councillors.
County Cllr Amanda Jupp had submitted a written report, previously circulated.

District Cllr John Trollope reported that he looked forward to the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting on the 7 February when the Draft Local Plan would be on the agenda. The Cabinet Member for Planning, Cllr John Milne planned to attend to explain Horsham District Council's (HDC) rationale for choosing *east* over *west* as its preferred strategic housing site in the parish. He added that HDC's council tax increase in April would still mean it levied the lowest council tax in West Sussex. He spoke of additional funds that HDC might be making available to support new infrastructure in the parish.

- b. Council Representatives on Outside Bodies.
Cllr Trevor Leonard reported on behalf of Cllr Phillip Day who had attended a meeting on Climate Change hosted by HDC. Attached - Appendix A.

*Resume Meeting***06/24 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 November 2023.**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2023, previously circulated, were taken as read. On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and signed as a correct record accordingly subject to the day being changed to Wednesday in the heading, and that 92/23 be changed to reflect that the meeting was being streamed to the internet.

07/24 Clerk's Report.

The Clerk reported that the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) Katy Bourne would be addressing the Annual Parish Meeting of Electors on Wed 6 March 7pm. He hoped all Cllrs would be in attendance.

08/24 To consider RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. From the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 12 December 2023 to approve a revenue budget of £644,931 for 2024-25 (Minute 127/23 (b) refers)
On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Sarah Wilson, **RESOLVED** to approve a revenue budget of £607,723 for 2023-24.
- ii. From the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 12 December 2023 to approve a precept of £513,010 for 2024-25 (Minute 127/23 (c) refers)
On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Sarah Wilson, **RESOLVED** to levy a precept £513,010 for 2024-25 upon HDC accordingly.

Note

This represents an increase on the overall precept of £22,424 = 4.57%.

For an average Band D property this equates to:

£113.03 per year = £2.17 per week.

a rise of 3.33% per annum

a rise of £3.64 per annum

7 pence extra per week.

09/24 To receive the External Audit Report for 2022-23, consider any issues and refer to F&GP Committee if appropriate.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Edna Benger, **RESOLVED** the External Audit Report for 2022-23 be received. No matters were raised requiring consideration, and the Chairman thanked staff and Cllrs for their input into well-run finances. NOTED

10/24 To receive Minutes *en bloc* as approved by the following Committees:

The following approved minutes were received:

- a) Planning & Environment Committee of 5 October & 2 November 2023.
- b) F&GP Committee of 25 October 2023.
- c) Working Practices Committee of 14 September 2023.

11/24 Neighbourhood Wardens - to receive Wardens' Reports for October and November 2023 - previously circulated. NOTED. Cllrs expressed their appreciation of the Wardens' hard work.

12/24 To appoint a Cllr to undertake the Clerk's *End of Year Review*. (Standing Order 19b).

On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Steve Thomas, **RESOLVED** that Cllr Doug Waller undertake the Clerk's *End of Year Review*.

13/24 Date of Next Meeting

7 February 2024 (Extraordinary / Local Plan response)

13 March 2024 (Ordinary)

The meeting finished at 7.26pm

Chairman

Date

APPENDIX A**Report on the PC/NC Meeting of Monday 7th November 2023 at Parkside, Horsham.**

The Climate Action Network was created by Horsham District Council (HDC) in November 2022. It is the successor to Climate Action, an earlier initiative from HDC.

The meeting was a workshop, with participation expected. The aim of the workshop was to determine the extent to which progress had been made since the launch of the initiative. The first talk discussed volunteer support, how to identify, recruit and retain volunteers. HDC, through their internet portal, set up The Knowledge Hub for information sharing, and hosts a volunteer-matching service. They also advertise paid positions in their newsletter.

The second section comprised talks from members of three different parishes about the actions they had implemented in relation to Climate and the Environment,

The first Parish Councillor, from Rudgwick, described the activities that he had undertaken and the successes and failures of the initiatives. In summary, his message was that, whilst his council had declared a Climate Emergency, the span of potential activities is enormous, far more than anyone could address other than piecemeal. The key was to select a few actions that appeared capable of execution relatively easily, quickly and at low or nil cost. The second and third speakers concentrated more on the publicly available databases and processes that they were using to bring some order to their deliberations. Whilst describing their experiences, two items of interest emerged. Firstly, there is a CO₂ map available from the Centre for Sustainable Energy that identifies the level of CO₂ by parish. Secondly, there is available a thermal imaging camera at HDC that can be borrowed free of charge by parishes to use in determining the level of heat loss for buildings.

As part of HDC's Climate Action activity, we were all given two documents. One was a short-form listing of what were thought to be "Easy Wins". These were produced to help people get started on the exercise of determining what to do first. Secondly, they produced a comprehensive activity list of possible actions, segmented into possible objectives and the degree of Parish involvement in each area. For instance, under the main topic "Reduce energy demand from buildings", the activities were categorised under four headings:

Direct Control – e.g. Institute warm spaces for people

Procurement – e.g. Acquire double glazing and/or solar panels to council properties

Place shaping – e.g. Lead by example – have council offices low carbon user

Engaging – e.g. Hold energy advice clinics.

Phillip Day

8 November 2023

Circulation – Billingshurst Parish Council members for Council meeting 10th January 2024