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Parish Clerk: Sam Heynes
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Minutes of the 37th Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.30pm on 5th May 2022

Present: Mr A Burton (Chairman), Mr J Dickie, Mrs A King, Mr S Oversby-Powell, Mr A Podmore, Mrs C Potts, Mr A Symonds and Mrs J White

In Attendance: Mrs S Heynes (Parish Clerk)

Public Question Time: None

FC001 To elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman

Cllr Burton presided for this item. Nominations for the office of Chairman of the Council were called.

Cllr Symonds proposed and Cllr White seconded that Cllr Andrew Burton be nominated as Chairman. There being no further nominations, Cllr Burton was elected as Chairman to the Parish Council for the Council year 2022-23.

Nominations for the office of Vice Chairman were called. Cllr Symonds proposed and Cllr White seconded that Cllr Martin Sheldon be nominated as Vice Chairman. There were no further nominations and Cllr Sheldon was duly elected as Vice Chairman to the Parish Council for the Council year 2022-23.

FC002 To receive Declarations of Acceptance of Office of Chairman and Vice Chairman or, if permitted by Council, before or at a later date fixed by the Council

Declarations of Acceptance of Office and to observe the Code of Conduct were acknowledged by the Chairman Cllr Burton and would duly be signed in the presence of the Proper Officer w/c 9th May 2022.

Cllr Burton then took the chair for the meeting and welcomed members to the thirty-seventh annual meeting of Cuckfield Parish Council.

FC003 To receive apologies for absence

Cllrs Ceccherini and Sheldon offered their apologies which were accepted.

FC004 To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of any matter on the agenda. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest. If you become aware, during the meeting, of an interest that has not been disclosed under this item you must immediately disclose it

None.

FC005 To report any changes to Councillor Register of Interests

Cllr Oversby-Powell advised he would update his Register of Interests, the Clerk would share a new form.

FC006 To review minor changes to the Code of Conduct and resolve to adopt the updated version for the forthcoming year

The revised Code of Conduct was reviewed and adopted.

FC007 To approve the minutes of the of the Full Council meeting held on 31st March and 14th April 2022, and the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 7th April 2022 (previously circulated)

The minutes of the meetings held on 31st March 2022, 14th April 2022 and the minutes of the APM held on 7th April 2022 were taken as read and confirmed as a true record.

19.39 Cllr John Dickie arrived.

FC008 To receive reports from the District Councillor and County Councillor

Cllr Bradbury offered his apologies; Cllr Salisbury was in attendance and opened by expressing his disappointment for the failed bid in application of grant funds from MSDC for the Platinum Jubilee event.

Cllr Salisbury went on to provide the following updates:

Browns lorries were using an access road off the A23 which was allocated for occasional use by farmers only, to access a field which appeared was being used illegally for equipment storage and chalk deposits. MSDC and WSCC were now working together to put a halt to this and have the land returned to its original state.

Cuckfield Golf Course were continuing to build and then put in retrospective planning applications, which MSDC were continuing to oppose.

MSDC was working to resolve the outstanding Deed of Variation with Taylor Wimpey relating to the Buttinghill Site. The timeline note of actions was still outstanding, Cllr Salisbury would share this once it was available.

Cllr Salisbury was unable to go any further with the Denning Place site as it was felt that the hardstanding was causing less than considerable harm. Likewise, MSDC felt it would be deemed unreasonable to proceed with any further action regarding the second internal set of gates.

The sale of the Courtmead Road 'playmeadow' was in limbo due to the right of way through the site. MSDC lawyers were in debate with the purchaser's lawyers regarding this. Cllr Salisbury would follow up with Tom Clark regarding our query relating access rights along Courtmead Road to the 'playmeadow'.

The inspector was prepared to write a final letter asking planners to verify the major modifications suggested to the SHELAA and District Plan; this was approx. 4-6 weeks away.

MSDC was still examining all the sites included along with Cuckstye; Cllr Salisbury felt the housing numbers imposed on the area were far too high due to the ever-rising issue of affordability. There were ongoing discussions with the government regarding the numbers, however if this was unresolved by July the District Plan proposals would have to proceed in order to meet the timelines required to keep it and therefore the 5 year housing land supply live. If this were lost, MSDC would

move back to 'development by appeal' as was occurring up to 2016 before the District Plan was adopted.

Fairfax had pulled out of the rebuild of the club house for the rugby club, but Cllr Salisbury was not aware of this. He was working on obtaining approval to rebuild the pavilion at Whitemans Green.

Cllr Salisbury left the meeting.

- FC009 To receive a verbal report from the Chairman**
Cllr Burton acknowledged the success of this year's Annual Parish Meeting which was well attended and thanked all staff for organising this.
- FC010 To note the Full Council Action List**
All actions were noted.
- FC011 To approve Bank Reconciliation Statements for March and April 2022**
This item was deferred to the next meeting as the Clerk had not prepared the April statement in time for the meeting.
- FC012 To review and (re)adopt Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**
Council resolved to adopt the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- FC013 To appoint members to serve on the following Committees for the Council year 2022-23, and to elect Chairmen and Vice Chairman of those Committees, and review their terms of reference (attached):**
- a) Assets, Community & Environment**
Cllr Symonds was nominated by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Dickie as Chairman.
Cllr Sheldon was nominated by Cllr Dickie and seconded by Cllr White as Vice Chairman.
Cllrs Ceccherini, Dickie, King, Podmore, Potts and White were additional members
 - b) Community Buildings**
Cllr King was nominated by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Symonds as Chairman.
Cllr Symonds was nominated by Cllr King and seconded by Cllr Potts as Vice Chairman.
Cllrs Podmore, Potts, White were additional members.
 - c) Planning**
Cllr Oversby-Powell was nominated by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr King as Chairman.
Cllr Sheldon was nominated by Cllr Oversby-Powell and seconded by Cllr King as Vice Chairman.
Cllrs Ceccherini, King, Podmore and White were additional members.
 - d) Roads & Traffic**
Cllr White was nominated by Cllr Dickie and seconded by Cllr Potts as Chairman.
Cllr Dickie was nominated by Cllr Burton and seconded by Cllr White as Vice Chairman.
Cllrs Ceccherini, Oversby-Powell and Potts were additional members.
 - e) Human Resources**
Cllr Burton was nominated by Cllr Oversby-Powell and seconded by Cllr King as Chairman.

Cllr King was nominated by Cllr Burton and seconded by Cllr Oversby-Powell as Vice Chairman.

Cllrs Oversby-Powell and Sheldon were additional members.

f) Finance & General Purposes

Cllr Symonds was nominated by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Burton as Chairman.

Cllr Burton was nominated by Cllr Symonds and seconded by Cllr King as Vice Chairman.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman were ex-officio members of all committees.

The Clerk would prepare and circulate a Committees list and the terms of reference to all Members.

FC014 To confirm membership of the following Working Groups for 2022-23:

- **Cuckfield Village Hall Redevelopment**
Cllrs King, Podmore Symonds and Sarah Moss (representing the Cuckfield Preschool)
- **Christmas Street Festival**
Cllrs Ceccherini, Podmore, Potts and Sheldon
- **Angela Fox Nature Garden**
Cllrs Burton, King, Podmore and Symonds

FC015 To appoint representatives to and agree arrangements for reporting back from:

- **West Sussex Association of Local Councils (2 representatives)**
Cllrs Burton & Sheldon
- **Cuckfield Museum Trust (2 representatives)**
Cllrs King and Symonds
- **Blunts Wood Steering Committee (1 representative)**
Cllr Podmore
- **Emergency Planning Liaison Group (1 representative)**
Cllr Symonds
- **County Local Committee (1 representative)**
Cllr Dickie
- **Neighbourhood Watch (1 representative)**
Cllr White
- **Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils (1 representative)**
Cllr Sheldon
- **Town & Parish Strategic Liaison Group (2 representatives)**
Cllr Sheldon and Parish Clerk
- **Speedwatch (1 representative)**
Cllr White

FC016 To review and agree authorised signatories on the Council's bank accounts (Cllrs Burton, King, Podmore, Sheldon and Symonds (whose access has never worked))

Council resolved to retain existing signatories, and Cllr Symonds would endeavour again to obtain access to the bank accounts.

FC017 To reconfirm eligibility and approve the continued use of the General Power of Competence (GPC). The Criteria for the GPC as defined in S8 of the Localism Act 2011 (having an appropriately qualified Clerk and at least two thirds of the Council being elected) is met by the Council

The Clerk confirmed that the Council still met the criteria for the GPC as defined in S8 of the Localism Act 2011 (having an appropriately qualified Clerk and at least two thirds of the Council being elected), and Council resolved to continue to adopt the General Power of Competence.

FC018 To approve the continuation of the following arrangements:

- a. current delegation to committees, staff and other local authorities in line with legislation, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Terms of Reference (attached)**
- b. ongoing partnership (including legal arrangements) with other local authorities, not for profit bodies and businesses**

Council noted existing arrangements had not changed and resolved they should continue.

FC019 To consider the appointment of the Internal Auditor for 2022-23

The Clerk advised the Council it was good practice to consider appointing a new Internal Auditor every 3 years, however Council resolved to appoint Andrew Sturgeon as Internal Auditor to the Council for 2021/22. They would consider using an alternative Internal Auditor for 2022/23 accounts.

FC020 To review and confirm arrangements the following items (copies available in the Parish Office):

- a) Inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment**
- b) Insurance arrangements in respect of all insured risks**

Council reviewed and resolved to accept all arrangements in place for the above items. The Clerk advised that new purchases had been added to the fixed assets list, and old items decommissioned.

FC021 To note and approve the effectiveness of the Audit Plan and the Council's Internal Audit and Internal Control Procedures

Council noted and approved the effectiveness of the Audit Plan and the Council's Internal Audit and Internal Control Procedures.

FC022 To receive a Neighbourhood Watch Update from Cllr White

Cllr White had taken over the co-ordination role for the area and was in touch with local co-ordinators; however only 1 response had been received to date, an appeal would be made on social media. It was frustrating that local volunteers do not have a very active role, as they should be sharing updates from the central hub about issues as well as social activities occurring within their local area to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness. Neighbourhood Watch was about creating a community for your local area.

FC023 To review the matter of land encroachment at the Observer Field and consider next steps to seek resolution and reclaim the area of land

A letter had been sent to the owner of the property whose garden had been expanded into the Observer Field but no reply had been received to date. The Clerk was instructed to contact the solicitor regarding the proposed next steps.

FC024 To consider the construction of a new footway on the B2114 Staplefield Road between D163 Deaks Lane and Public Rights of Way path (number 49CR) outside 'North Lodge'

The Council resolved to support the new footway on the basis it would link into other footpaths around the village as well as providing a safer way for Warden Park schoolchildren to use the school bus and walk home in this area. The Clerk was also asked to flag to WSCC that this footpath would be in Ansty & Staplefield, not Cuckfield.

FC025 To note items arising after the preparation of this Agenda which the Chairman agrees to take as urgent. Such matters will be for noting only or deferral to a future meeting only

None.

Meeting closed at 9.20pm

Signed _____

Future Meeting: 16th June 2022