



The Queen's Hall
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Parish Clerk: Sam Heynes
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Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Council held at 7.30pm on 29th June 2023

Present: Mr A Burton (Chairman), Mr P Ceccherini, Mrs M Dormer, Mr R Gill, Mrs A King, Mr A Podmore, Mr M Sheldon, Mr A Symonds and Mrs J White

In Attendance: Mrs S Heynes (Parish Clerk), Mrs N Ripert (Communications & Admin Officer)

Public Question Time: None

FC027 To receive apologies for absence

Mr Oversby-Powell offered his apologies which were noted.

FC028 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.

FC029 To approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 18th May 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2023 were taken as read and confirmed as a true record.

FC030 To receive reports from the District Councillor and County Councillor

The Council noted the report received from Cllr Malcolm and noted the update against actions that had received support over the past month including reinstatement of the dog poo bin at Whitemans Green, re-opening of the pool at the Recreation Ground and ongoing discussions regarding changes to the current District Plan. The Clerk was instructed to write to Malcolm to express concerns that Cuckstye would be added back into the plan as a development site, as Ansty & Staplefield Parish Council had been advised that MSDC were looking to remove the site at East Grinstead from the plan and reinstate Cuckstye, triggered by the recent political changes caused by local elections in May 2023.

FC031 To receive a verbal report from the Chairman

Cllr Burton expressed concern regarding the hosepipe ban imposed by SE Water when at the end of May Ardingly reservoir had been full. The Clerk was instructed to write to SE water to ask where the resilience in the water provision was, as a few weeks of hot weather should not lead to implementation of a hose pipe ban. Furthermore, how could any additional development be approved given that SE water could not service existing residents. It would appear that the SE Water management plan relied on people using less water, which was untenable.

FC032 To note the Full Council Action list

The action items were noted.

FC033 To review the Communications Strategy prepared by Breakthrough Communications and consider next steps

Daniel Purchase of Breakthrough Communications joined the meeting and provided an overview of the goals and measurable objectives of the strategy. The priority was to work to implement the items in appendix on p24, looking at what we Cuckfield Parish Council already did whilst adding to that to improve social media and content offering. Two additional things to implement were an e-newsletter which would be sent out to residents who had signed up, which could be achieved at little to zero cost (depending on software used to set it up) and sent out on either an ad hoc or monthly basis to people who were interested. Quick bulletins could also be sent out to notify things like road closures, flooding, events etc.

In addition to building our Facebook presence, a link to Instagram would be created to provide more engaging pictorial messages; as posts could be made concurrently this would be a quick win and may have the benefit of reaching a younger demographic.

Breakthrough Communications were offering to provide 1 year's free support to implement the proposals, which Council accepted.

In order to track the success of our communications metrics could be used to monitor how many people were opening emails and visiting the website. Another way to track was to put requests for action into the printed newsletter to see how many people engaged with this.

Council resolved to form a working party including Cllrs Burton, Ceccherini, Gill and White along with the Communications & Admin Officer to work with Breakthrough Communications to formulate an ongoing detailed strategy; the quick wins would be taken forwards as a starting point. Progress update reports would be offered at future Full Council meetings.

Engagement with young adults at the local school was also discussed as an aspiration.

Council resolved to accept the plan and take the outlined strategy forwards to develop it further.

FC034 To note and approve the Internal Auditor's Report

Council resolved to accept and approved the Internal Auditor's report.

FC035 To ratify the recommendation made at F&GP Committee to approve the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2023, Section 1 – Annual Governance Statements 2022/23

Council reviewed and resolved to approve the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2023, Section 1 – Annual Governance Statements 2022-23.

FC036 To ratify the recommendation made at F&GP Committee to approve the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2023, Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23

Council reviewed and resolved to approve the Annual Return for the year ended 31st

March 2023, Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022-23.

- FC037 To approve Bank Reconciliation Statements for Unity Trust and CCLA accounts for May 2023**
The bank reconciliation statements for May 2023 were reviewed, approved and signed.
- FC038 To review and approve the current year to date budget and expenditure for 2022-23 (to 23rd June 2023)**
The current year to date budget and expenditure was reviewed; the only item of concern was the increased cost of utility bills which were higher than that forecast for 2023/24. The Clerk would continue to monitor this throughout the year. Council noted that it may become necessary to review and increase hall hire charges to offset some of the additional expense being incurred.
- FC039 To consider the proposal to transfer funds from the Unity Trust bank account to the NS&I account and the CCLA account to earn additional interest and protect the Parish Council's funds**
Council resolved to transfer £50k to CCLA and £50k to NS&I. The Clerk would also check the NS&I signatories were up to date.
- FC040 To further consider the S106 application submitted for the Court Meadow Site to implement car parking at the Village Hall and the legal costs that would be payable by CPC to submit a Deed of Variation to enable the transfer of funds to MSDC to use for the expansion of parking at Cuckfield Recreation Ground.**
Council resolved to proceed with the change as the S106 funds of £10,185 would likely more than offset the legal fees incurred. Council instructed the Clerk to proceed with legal changes, however if the costs were to go above £2,000 this item would be returned to Council for further consideration.
- FC041 To consider the next steps regarding the Observer Field land appropriation**
Council resolved to wait until registration of the land with the Land Registry was completed before taking any further action.
- FC042 To receive an update regarding the Angela Fox Nature Garden**
The work on the upper level of the garden had commenced with the logs being removed and the site levelled. Steps would be installed in the top left corner, as well as pathways around the area and retaining walls to support the ground beneath the hedges and mark the difference in levels. Garden maintenance work would commence on 13th July 2023
- FC043 To consider the Preschool grant for 2023-24**
Council considered the grant application and, due to the high inflation and increase in utility costs, resolved to increase the hourly rate equivalent to £10 per hour and award a grant of £3,977.60 for 2023-24.
- FC044 To receive an update from the liaison with the High Street Businesses**
Cllr Gill provided a verbal update of his conversations with business owners on the High Street, and advised that some were critical of the future and culture of Cuckfield. Some businesses were doing extremely well and some were not, and key sentiments were the reliance on Ockenden Manor and their guests. Cllr Gill would write a short paper outlining core recommendations for consideration as part of the business plan.
- FC045 To consider the Clerk's attendance at the SLCC National Conference on Wednesday 11th and Thursday 12th October 2023 at a cost of £499**
Council resolved to allow the Clerk to attend the National Conference.

FC046 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

The Clerk provided a verbal update regarding the Observer Field cemetery assessment, which would be added to a future agenda for consideration.

Meeting closed at 9.45pm

Signed _____

Future Meeting: 21st September 2023