

## Rusper Parish Council



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Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 7.30 pm. This meeting was held at Rusper Village Hall.

**Present:** M Cooke (Vice Chairman), G Fleming, V Hanstad-Pilcher, F Maitland-Smith, G Sallows, S White

**Absent:** K Nagle (WSCC) and T Hogben (HDC)

### 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs G Adams, V Saunders, M Fillmore, R Gatt and G Hussey

### 2. Declaration of interests

No declarations of interest were made.

### 3. Minutes of previous meeting

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

### 4. Open Forum

There were no members of the public present, and no Open Forum took place.

### 5. Climate Emergency

To **ACKNOWLEDGE** that there is currently a climate emergency, and to ensure that all decisions made within the meeting have consideration to this.

### 6. Appointment of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the appointment of the new Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer as recommended by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

### 7. Exclusion from meetings

The proposal from Cllr Sallows had been circulated in advance of the meeting, and he spoke to emphasise the key points within his proposal, drawing attention to relevant case law and the key principle of no councillor being pre-determined on any matter.

Cllr Cooke confirmed that she had discussed the matter with the HDC Monitoring Officer, who has confirmed that the exclusion from a meeting of the Chair of a lobbying group was in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.

Cllr Maitland-Smith acknowledged the complexity of the matter and provided examples of similar situations in other local parish councils where the Code of Conduct guidance appeared to have been interpreted differently.

All councillors agreed that the situation is complex and relying on how other parish councils interpreted the Code of Conduct was not confirmation that this was correct.

It was **RESOLVED** to contact the HDC Monitoring Officer to request a meeting to explain the circumstances of individual councillors and obtain clear guidance to apply to future meetings.

## **8. Reports from representatives**

Cllr Hanstad-Pilcher reported that he and Cllr Cooke had attended the WSALC meeting held in Billingshurst last week. Among the items discussed was a presentation from WSCC Highways, where they were challenged on their performance.

He also attended a meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner where issues with anti-social driving were again raised as a concern within the Parish.

Cllr Cooke reported on behalf of Cllr Gatt from the Village Hall Committee that works were out to tender for the roof replacement, with estimated costs of around £120,000 plus VAT. It was hoped that the work would be completed during summer 2023. The snooker club are vacating the Hall and moving to Newdigate, and two snooker tables have been identified as belonging to the Parish Council.

Cllr Hanstad-Pilcher added that he had made contact with Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS) at the WSALC meeting, who provide advice and support to village halls and could be of potential help to the council in the future.

## **9. Clerk's report**

There was no report from the Locum Clerk.

## **10. Financial**

- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the report, including the bank reconciliation
- The draft budget was considered, and Cllr Cooke agreed to speak with the RFO to raise the questions circulated by email and during the meeting. The updated budget will then be further reviewed at the December 2022 council meeting and agreed along with the precept requirement at the January 2023 council meeting

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## **11. Schedule of payments**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments:

<b>Payee</b>	<b>Reason for payment</b>	<b>Amount due</b>
Various	Salaries	204.92
Countrymans	Grounds maintenance	398.28
Instantprint	Remembrance booklet	112.37
R Allen	Website/email support	90.00
Forest View Tree Surgery	Tree surgery – playground	160.00
RBL Poppy Shop	Wreath	23.98
	<b>Total</b>	<b>989.55</b>

The meeting closed at 20.50 pm.