



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST WOOD VILLAGE COUNCIL** held on  
Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023, 7.00 pm at the Council's Meeting Room

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Forbes (Chair), Draper, Haite, Lee, Loveday, Owen, Phillips, Spoor & Tyrrell

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Rebecca Roberts (Clerk), and **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** 0

**ABSENT:** None

**1. a. County and District Councillors' Reports**

**County Cllr Russell and District Councillor Belsey** each sent their apologies

**b. Public Questions – None**

**2. Apologies for absence – None**

**3. To receive Declaration of Interests from Members in respect of any matter on the Agenda:**  
None

**4. Chairman's Announcements – None**

**5. To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of the Village Council held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023** – the minutes were **approved** and were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate account of the meetings.

**6. Clerk's Report** – the Clerk's report was received and noted.

**7. To receive the minutes of Committees and reports from working groups and to consider any matters arising:**

a. Planning Committee – the minutes were received and noted from 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023

b. Finance & Administration Committee – a meeting was held on 28<sup>th</sup> March – Cllr Phillips reported that the Council had started the financial year with a surplus of £69,000, mainly due to the pandemic. The end of the year leaves the Council with £42,000 which is approximately 60% of the precept. There is a reserve fund (a bond) which had £39,000 in it, but £5,000 was transferred to the current account as it was running too low to cover the Council's outgoings. This reserve account should actually be topped up every year, which has not been happening – this should be rectified in future.

Salaries are supposed to be increased each April by a step increment and interim percentage, but the figures are not usually agreed by the unions until much later in the year. It was recommended at the Finance & Administration meeting to put staff who warrant it up by the step, plus 2.5%. There is still room in the budget should the interim percentage be higher than 2.5%.

**8. To receive an update on the Ashurst Wood Youth Club** – Cllr Tyrrell reported that the club has around 12 youths on a regular basis and that the club is covering its costs. There is a full timetable after Easter until the May half term. A regular volunteer has now joined the team and they have been DBS checked.

**9. Highways**

a. To receive an update on the application to West Sussex Highways for a Community Highway Scheme application for a 20mph zone in the village – An officer from Highways has been in contact and a meeting date will be arranged for a visit to the Village regarding the suitability of implementing the 20mph zones. No date has been confirmed just yet.

## 10. Finance

### a. **Accounts to pay**

The accounts payable from 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March totalling £4,162.64 were **ratified and approved by the Council**.

b. To receive and approve the Finance Pack for March 2023 (which includes the RBS income & expenditure report, statutory balance sheet & bank reconciliations) – **the Finance Pack was received and noted**. Cllr Phillips also reported that the RFO had found a report on RBS which will be used instead of the income & expenditure report as it is more concise and easier to follow.

c. To agree staff pay increments and interim percentage increase at 2.5%, as discussed at the Finance & Administration (F&A) meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023 – see 7b above; **resolved – members agreed to follow the advice from the F&A Committee**

## 11. **To consider Grant Applications** – (amount spent so far this year is £0 and the budget was £2,000)

a. Ashurst Wood Community Pre-School – requesting a grant of £500 to help towards the cost of replacing the pre-schools Astro Turf – **resolved; members agreed to award £500**

b. Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance – requesting £300 to fund the fuel needed for an average mission – they attended 331 patients in Sussex alone last year – **resolved; members agreed to donate £300**.

12. **To receive an update on elections** – the Clerk received an update from Mid Sussex District Council (which has now been officially confirmed) that there are only 5 nominations received for Ashurst Wood. This means that no election will take place as nominations are uncontested. The Council must now co-opt 4 more members.

13. **To discuss the items for the Annual Village Meeting (AVM) Agenda** – the date of the AVM is confirmed as 25<sup>th</sup> May. Cllr Phillips suggested using the same template as the agenda for last year. A meeting will be arranged to plan the event

14. **To confirm the schedule and dates of meetings for the ensuing year** – members confirmed the meeting dates, but it was acknowledged that dates could be subject to change.

## 15. Events

a. The 'Blooming Marvellous Coronation' Event, where households will be encouraged to decorate the front of their houses with a Royal theme using flowers, flags and bunting or whatever they have to hand. This continues to be advertised. The Clerk reported that Coronation lamppost signs (from the Royal British Legion) have been ordered to put around the village, plus Coronation Bunting and flags for the office and War Memorial have also been ordered. In addition 2 green plant pots for outside the office are on order. Councillors were asked if anyone was happy to fill the pots with compost & plants; no response received.

16. **Consultations** – None

17. **To receive reports from Councillors who have attended outside bodies** – Cllr Forbes attended a meeting of the Trustees of the Village Centre and reported that the kitchen in the hall is being refurbished, but that it hasn't quite been finished yet, and that the new flag pole will be erected shortly.

18. **Items of correspondence** - Previously circulated.

19. **Items for reporting or inclusion on future agenda:** Co-option and protection for the no parking sign in the car park

20. **Date of next meeting** – Annual Meeting of the Village Council – 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Meeting closed: 7.32pm

Chairman.....

Date.....