

COCKING PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
3 FEBRUARY 2025, 6.30PM

PRESENT: Cllrs Miss F Russell (Chair), A Cornwell, D Imlach, W Renney and D Summerfield.

IN ATTENDANCE:

G C Burt, Clerk to the Council

Dis Cllr Hannah Burton

Approximately 8 Members of the Public

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Cllr T Carter due to a prior engagement. The apology and reason given was approved.

(A belated apology from Cllr Mrs J Jackson was noted.)

2. Declarations of Interest

Members and officers were invited to make any declarations of pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda and were reminded to make any declarations at any stage during the meeting if it then became apparent that this may be required when a particular item or issue was to be considered.

Cllr W Renney declared an interest as Chairman of the Village Hall Committee.

3. Questions from Visitors

The Chairman permitted several residents to comment during consideration of the next item.

4. SDNP Local Plan Review ref. land in north east Cocking for housing - to receive any updates or new information.

The Chairman reported on the presentation by the SDNPA held in Midhurst on the 22 January. Cllr Andy Cornwell and the Clerk had attended the exhibition that followed. The Chairman also reported on the site meeting she had with our planning consultant, together with some other local residents. It had been very productive and she had been impressed by the consultant's grasp of the issues and knowledge; she felt we would be very impressed by his report when it arrived. The Clerk would circulate this as soon as it was received. It was agreed that the March meeting agenda would be light so as to give maximum time to proper consideration of the draft report. Hopefully the consultant would be able to deal with any questions or queries on the night by phone, which could be put on speakerphone. The Clerk was asked to contact the consultant to see if he felt additional reports on biodiversity and archaeology should be sought to bolster our case. The Chairman had made contact with the Sussex Bat Group, who had provided some useful information on bats in the vicinity which may form part of our submission.

Midhurst Town Council had been asked for their views on a housing allocation south of Midhurst, in Cocking Parish. The SDNPA had been asked to amend the description of this site so it was clear that it was in Cocking Parish.,

5. To receive reports from County & District Cllrs.

None.

6. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the 6 January 2025, previously circulated were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7. Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on recent correspondence instigated by a concerned local resident about the condition of the former rail overbridge in Bell Lane. National Highways, who were responsible for disused railway structures had been very helpful in responding and confirming that such structures are inspected at least annually.

8. Planning

There were no planning applications to consider.

9. Highways Updates

- a. Footpaths & Footways – Slippery footway at entrance to *The Croft* had been reported. The Clerk would report fly-tipping at the entrance to *The Croft*.
- b. Cycleways – Nothing to report.
- c. Traffic Calming – Cllr Andy Cornwell reported that a session had been undertaken in Cllr Tim Carter's absence. It was suggested that perhaps the Council apply to WSCC to reduce the speed limit through the village to 20mph.
- d. SID – The Clerk reported that he had sourced a highway consultancy to devise a detailed specification in the sum of £112.50 for the proposed locations for new SID posts, which would assist in seeking quotes. Specification to be approved by Council before quotes invited.

10. Updates on Parish Matters

- a. Playground – The annual ROSPA inspection report had been received and Cllr David Imlach would report back on works required. The Clerk offered assistance if required.
- b. Village Hall – Discussions between the Hall Committee and the developer of an adjoining site were ongoing.
- c. Policing – It was reported that there had been several incidents of vandalism at the church.
- d. Blue Bell - Cllr Andy Cornwall reported that thanks to the generosity of well-wishers far and wide, a public appeal for funds had reached its target very quickly, meaning that the pub had been able to reopen the previous weekend.
- e. Other meetings attended
The Chairman had attended a meeting of CDALC which had discussed the devolution deal and likely local government reorganisation. The Clerk had attended the CDC All Parishes meeting where local government reorganisation was also on the agenda.

11. Finance

- a. Payments since last meeting were **RESOLVED** and any receipts NOTED – Appendix **A**.
- b. Bank Reconciliation to 13 January 2025 was **RESOLVED** – Appendix **B** and the corresponding bank statement was subsequently initialled by Cllr David Imlach.
- c. The Clerk reported that since our previous internal auditor Rachel Hall had retired and passed on her case load to another company, he had to keep chasing for responses. He had obtained a quote from April Skies Consulting, with whom he had had experience, to undertake the 2024/25 Internal Audit in the sum of £250. **RESOLVED** that the quote from April Skies Consulting be accepted accordingly.

12. To review the Council’s Corporate Risk Assessment.

There had been no changes since last year, therefore **RESOLVED** as presented.

13. To review the Council’s Asset Register.

There had been no changes since last year, therefore **RESOLVED** as presented.

14. Annual Parish Meeting of Electors

To note the arrangements: Friday 21 March 2025 7pm – Speaker Andrew Griffith M.P.

NOTED. It was agreed that only wine and squash would be provided on this occasion - Cllr A Cornwell to arrange. Publicity would be enhanced for this year’s meeting.

15. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 10 March 2025 6.30pm

The meeting closed at 7.25pm

Chairman:

Date:

APPENDIX A

COCKING PARISH COUNCIL						
INCOME & EXPENDITURE SINCE LAST MEETING TO 3 FEBRUARY 2025						
EXPENDITURE				Net	VAT	Gross
03/02/2025	G Burt	1129	Clerk salary - Jan	£373.52		£373.52
03/02/2025	HMRC	1130	Clerk Tax - Jan	£93.40		£93.40
				£466.92		£466.92
INCOME						
06/01/2025	CVHC	BACS	Grant towards fireworks	£711.25		

BANK RECONCILIATION**CASHBOOK**

Balance brought forward as at 01/04/2024		£8,778.43
Add Total Receipts		33,014.68
Less Total Payments		(19,065.05)
TOTAL		£22,728.06

**BANK**

Lloyds Treasurers A/C (13/01/2025)		23,344.56
Less unrepresented cheques		
1073	144.00	
1128	£472.50	
		-616.50
Plus unrepresented deposits		-
TOTAL		22,728.06

**TALLY**