

## Cowfold Parish Council

### Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on Monday 20 May 2024 in the Allmond Centre

<b>Cllrs Present:</b>	Reading (Outgoing Chair) Everest (Incoming Chair) Hooper Harsum	Towle French Newman Kingshott
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Lee Dunkley – Locum Clerk  
Cllr L Lambert – Horsham District Councillor

Public: 4  
Press: 0

<p><b>1. Election of Chair and Acceptance of Office</b> Cllr Everest was elected and the Chair of the Council for 2024/25 and the acceptance of office was received. Cllr Reading was thanked for his years of service as Chair and Councillor.</p> <p><b>2. Election of Vice Chair and Acceptance of Office</b> Cllr Hooper was elected and the Chair of the Council for 2024/25 and the acceptance of office was received.</p> <p><b>3. Apologies</b> Apologies for absence were received from Jan Wright (Clerk), Cllr Payne (WSCC).</p> <p><b>4. Declarations of Interest &amp; requests for dispensations</b> None.</p> <p><b>5. Approval of the minutes and matters arising</b> The Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 8 April 2024 were agreed by all those which were present as a true and correct record.</p> <p><b>6. Public</b> Members of the public were in attendance and contributions included opinions on: the Wood Grange development (parking and congestion concerns); that there appears to be speeding and running of red lights particularly at the crossing by the school; ragwort infestation in the village – there are clear guidelines to dispose of carefully, and not in the normal brown bin.</p> <p><b>7. District &amp; County Councillor Reports</b> Cllr Lambert (HDC) reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an update on Maria Miller Private Members Bill (regarding Lithium battery storage and permits within planning policy)</li> <li>• that the Horsham Local Plan is due to be submitted to the examiner in June and due to be made by summer 2025.</li> <li>• A variety of other planning updates and matters.</li> </ul>	<p>Speeding and red lights: Council to request police attention</p>
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**8. Correspondence**

None.

**9. Approval of outstanding payments**

A list of payments was approved.

**10. Standing Orders**

Standing Orders were approved without any modifications. The Council felt the content should be reviewed in the near future.

**11. Co-options**

The Council received interest from two people to fill the two vacancies. Sarah Payne was proposed by Cllr Hooper and seconded by Cllr Everest. John Ireland was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr French. Both were appointed as co-opted Councillors.

**12. Membership of Committees, working groups & representatives to outside bodies**

The following were appointed:

Planning: All Interested Councillors. Cllr Everest responsible for reporting to HDC.

Finance: Cllrs Everest, Hooper, Towle, and the Clerk.

Open Spaces: Cllr Harsum.

Footpaths: D Neville.

Allotments: Cllr Kingshott.

Roads & Transport: Cllr Newman.

Streetlights: the Clerk.

HALC: Cllrs Everest, Towle.

Website: N Williams.

WSALC: Cllrs Hooper, Everest.

Youth Activities: Cllrs Towle, French.

**13. Oak Tree Adjacent to 14 Acorn Avenue**

Per the previous meeting, the Council are faced with the implications and costs of:

- Removing the tree
- Funding the placement of a root barrier
- Funding legal advice

Following correspondence with the insurers, WSALC and others it was decided that the liability on the Council was too great and that the tree must regrettably be removed. It was decided that the Council will give permission to the insurers to pay for the removal of the tree.

Cllr Everest to correspond

**14. Van break-ins**

Cllr Kingshott is reviewing existing Neighbourhood Watch schemes in the parish in response to an increase in reports of break-ins which appear to be organised/targeted. There will also be an investigation into grant funding for community security initiatives from the Police & Crime Commissioner.

**15. Rampion 2 Update**

D Ball reported back on the recent meetings/events on the matter. In particular

<p>regarding HGV traffic matters; it was felt WSCC did not understand fully the impact on Cowfold.</p> <p>Cllr Everest gave an update and a draft written response was considered and, after considerable discussion, agreed which included pressing for independent traffic modelling and other such exercises, highlighting the issues of water neutrality, agricultural impact and others.</p> <p><b>16. Environment</b></p> <p>Cllr Hooper reported that:  Buttefly haven – interpretation signage cost £20 artwork, sign is £90 and and second £48. Other funds may be needed for driving a post and spend of £200 was agreed. The Council agreed to replace a tree at St Peter’s Church and spend of £100 was agreed.</p> <p><b>17. Neighbourhood Planning Update</b></p> <p>The refereundum date is still to be confirmed and this will determine the timeline of other events.</p> <p><b>18. The Allmond Centre – including Village Fete usage</b></p> <p>Cllr Kingshott reported that bookings are increasing.  The Council agreed to fund use of the Centre for the village fete.</p> <p><b>19. Representatives Reports</b></p> <p>Planning - None.</p> <p>Open Spaces – Grass cutting on the field appears haphazard which indicates it is not being cut correctly. Large oak tree has fungus growing on the base but not thought to be a concern at this time. A tree survey for all on parish land will be considered. Plant pots have been planted and topped up and a budget was agreed of up to £200 for further planting.</p> <p>Allotments – some plots have not been worked for quite some time and is now overgrown with brambles, causing an issue for other allotment holders. An update is needed on vacant plots and a waiting list.</p> <p>Roads &amp; Transport – There are issues with craters and potholes on a number of key routes and have been reported. Cllr Everest gave an update on speed sesor data.</p> <p>Footpaths – None.</p> <p>Streetlights – None.</p> <p>HALC – None.</p> <p>Website – It was noted that formal council-specific email accounts/addresses should be pursued, and that it should be iterated on Council documents that people should contact the clerk by email in the first instance rather than individual Cllrs.</p> <p>Youth Activities – A written report will be circulated in due course.</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on <b>Monday 10 June 2024.</b></p> <p>Cllr Reading announced his resignation as a Cllr and thanks were given to him for his services.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">The meeting closed at 9:30pm.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">(1792)</p> <p>Cllr Everest to issue response</p> <p>Cllr Hooper to issue response</p> <p>Cllr Reading to forward cost figure to Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Harsum to communicate with grass cutting contractors and pursue planting</p> <p>Cllr Everest to liase with Clerk</p>
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