 **Minutes of Meeting held at 6.45 pm on Monday 19th December 2022**

**at The Studio, Home Farm, Hart**

**Present:** Cllrs. J. Littlefair, T. Britcliffe, J. Quarmby, K. Brown and K. Park

**In Attendance:** M. Ireland, Clerk, Cllr Cassidy

The Chairman opened the meeting with an apology for the postponement from 12th December, due to the illness of both the Clerk and Cllr Britcliffe.

1. **Public Forum:** No members of the public present.
2. **Apologies**: Cllr Parker, Ward Cllrs Cook and Leedham.
3. **Declarations of Interest**: None
4. **Police Report**: PCSO Hestor had submitted a written report giving statistics for incidents in the whole ward, none of these related to Hart village.
5. **Minutes of Meeting held on 14th November 2022:** Cllr Britcliffe proposed and Cllr Brown seconded the adoption of the minutes. All present being in agreement, it was r**esolved** to accept the draft Minutes a true record.
6. **Matters Arising**: (a) ***Car Park gate*** – Cllr Park informed he would be making the planning application, and that he has received no further comments from residents. After a brief discussion, it was **agreed** to submit an application for a manual wooden gate, with an option to upgrade to an electronic gate later if it becomes feasible.

(b) ***Defibrillator*** - The Clerk reported receipt of a legal transfer agreement from HBC which would pass ownership of the defibrillator to Hart PC. Councillors, having read the agreement, noted this would also pass the costs of maintaining the machine to the Parish Council; Councillors unanimously **agreed to accept** the agreement and it was therefore **resolved** the Clerk should sign the transfer agreement and return it to HBC.

1. **Councillor vacancy:** Councillors noted that those they knew who might have been interested were often working away and could not therefore make a commitment at this time. It was therefore **agreed** to advertise the vacancy on the Notice Board, website, Village Life and Hart Hub. **Action**: Clerk to place notice of vacancy as agreed.
2. **Car Park:** Cllr Littlefair reported concern from residents about vehicles being parked overnight on the car park. After a brief discussion it was agreed that an A3 size notice be erected at the car park entrance, banning overnight parking. The Clerk was tasked with having the notice made by Ords as soon as possible.
3. **Chairman’s Report:** Cllr Littlefair reported that:

* He had been asked if the car park surface could be levelled; he and his men had done this, filling in a number of potholes;
* He had donated Christmas trees to both the church and Village Hall;
* He had attended the Civic Carol Service, held at Hart Church, at which the Lord Lieutenant of Durham and the Mayor of Hartlepool, had been present, though he noted that Hart Ward Councillors were not in attendance;
* Lighting on the A179 was becoming a major concern, with a number of streetlights not working;
* He had spoken with the school about cars parking everywhere without consideration for others;
* He planned to attend the next meeting of the Rural Crime Forum in January;
* He noted that Hartfields Surgery was making it extremely difficult for patients to make appointments.

All present thanked him for his donation of the Christmas trees.

1. **Ward Councillor’s Report**: Cllr Cassidy reported there appeared to be a fault in the line which provided electricity for both the streetlights and signage on the A179; HBC officers were investigating this as a matter of urgency. The Next meeting of the Neighbourhoods Committee would take place on 23rd January and he extended an invitation to all to attend; he noted that due to budget pressures there would probably be a proposal to reduce the level of garden waste collection. Cllr Britclifffe highlighted concerns about the number of leaves on pavements, which were not being cleared, thus making them dangerous – it was noted that the last visit of the road sweeper had been made when the roads were frozen and it could not therefore pick up leaves and rubbish, so a waste of time and money.
2. **Maintenance Committee Report**: Cllr Park spoke to his report previously circulated. Of greatest concern was the lack signage on the A179 indicating the crossroads (Hart Back Lane and School House Lane) which was a safety requirement. Other items included Clevecoat Walk, where overgrown vegetation was a problem at the bridge, and the steps were in need of repair; the defibrillator (covered earlier in the meeting); speeding on Butts Lane – vehicles of all sorts are speeding, vehicles parked on grass verges are causing access problems and HBC have agreed to undertake a traffic calming survey of the whole village; The Chare Wall; the car park and future developments.

The report as noted with thanks to Cllr Park. It was agreed to remove the Clevecoat Walk issues from future reports. Cllr Littlefair reported that the new 40mph limit on Worset Lane was not being enforced. Concerns were expressed about the amount of mud and waste being left on the roads by contractors of developments on the village boundaries, e.g. High Tunstall.

1. **Financial Reports:** The Clerk presented the financial reports, which were **approved.**

**Receipts: £ Payments: £**

Interest 1.86 Pear Technology (Digital Mapping) 120.00

D. M. Ireland (Salary and back pay) 743.52

HMRC (PAYE) 185.88

Bank Charges 5.80

**Total 1.86 1,055.20**

The Clerk informed that she had asked for a quoted from Spanglefish for hosting the website, this had been received in the sum of £130, excluding the domain name. Councillors **agreed** to transfer to Spanglefish when the webhosting was next renewed.

1. **Budget/Precept 2023-24:** The Clerk presented calculations as to the likely financial position at 31ts March 2023, explaining that it was extremely difficult to predict anything with any degree of accuracy given the economy was in a state of freefall at present, the current rate of inflation being 11.2%; she talked through her figures, requesting Councillors consider whether her rationale was sound. All concurred with her forecast. The Clerk then presented calculations for 2023-24, again giving her rationale for each; the forecast, without any increase to the precept would be a deficit budget, but this could be offset by using reserves. All agreed with the Clerk’s rationale for the figures, however there was some concern that not increasing the precept would leave very little capacity to deal with any major issues that might arise in the next 15 months. After some discussion it was unanimously **resolved** to increase the precept required by 3%.
2. **Correspondence:** None
3. **Planning Applications:**

**H/2022/0326 -** 13, Burns Close – **No Comment**

**H/2022/0376 –** Glebe Farm, Palace Row, Hart – **No Objection,** but request developer gives consideration to pedestrians crossing the road and to all villagers by wheel washing to ensure no mud is deposited on village roads.

**County Durham Mineral and Waste Policies and Allocations consultation – no comment**

1. **Matters of Concern to Councillors:**

* Cllr Britclifferaised concern that the proposer of the second BESS had not yet been in touch with the Parish Council regarding issues raised, nor had the proposers of the Electric Forecourt.
* Cllr Quarmby raised concern about the waste bin in the Car Park, she felt it would be better placed near the picnic tables. She also noted the sign at the Field had been knocked off several times, Cllr Park having replaced it each time.
* Cllr Littlefair raised concern that the PC had not yet heard back from Peter Frost regarding the A179 plans – Cllr Cassidy agreed to follow this up. Cllr Britcliffe noted that Mr. Frost had also yet to produce the design options for South View parking.

**Actions:** Cllr Cassidy tospeak with peter Frost regarding concerns raised; Clerk to contact the development proposers; Cllr Littlefair/Cllr Brown to move car park waste bin closer to picnic tables.

1. **Date of next Meeting of the Parish Council:** 6.45pm Monday 9th January 2023 at Hart Village Hall. Cllr Quarmby gave her apologies for that meeting as she would be out of the country.

*Meeting closed at 8.02pm.*