



TO: All Members of Salehurst & Robertsbridge Parish Council

The Council will meet on Monday 18th September 2023 at 7.30pm (Up to 15 minutes will be allowed at the start for public questions and comments).

Venue: **Robertsbridge Village Hall**, Station Road, Robertsbridge.

You are summoned to attend (Local Government Act 1972, Sch. 12, para.10(2)(b)).

Agenda

60. To receive and accept apologies and reasons for absence.

61. Declarations of interest – to receive Members' declarations of interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.

62. Applications for dispensation - to consider written requests from Members for dispensation and to consider the length of time the dispensation should be granted for i.e., as a one-off relating to a matter on this agenda, or ongoing for a set period and relating to any agenda within that period.

63. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 10th July 2023 – to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting.

64. Matters arising from previous minutes: - for information only:

- a. **Explanation of precept increase (119biv)** – currently being drafted, to be circulated/published when complete.
- b. **Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) (123)** – the plaque has now been fixed to the bench.
- c. **Defibrillator for upper Brightling Road area (126)** – installed and registered on The Circuit (national register).
- d. **Bank Mandate Unity Trust Bank 18b)** – agreed changes in progress (including adding Clive Cooke to the approved signatories).
- e. **Lighting upgrades (21)** – installation of the new column 4 with Windsor lantern (beside the Parish Office) was aborted on 25/7/23 due to an error by UKPN on the placement of cones in advance for the road closure. Now scheduled for October half term. The new Windsor lantern on column 6 opposite Belle Flowers in the High Street is awaiting delivery from the manufacturer.
- f. **Bishops Lane drain investigation / Meadow vegetation clearance (24)** – in progress.
- g. **Planning matters discussion re buildings (43I, 26)** – the Chairman has written to the owner of Mustard. His response will be discussed/reported by the Planning Committee 2/10/23.

h. **Vehicle Activated Sign (53a)** – a quote and proforma invoice for the additional equipment and further unit have been received. Payment will be made, and the order confirmed w/c 18/9/23.

65. **Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration** – how to progress this was to be considered at the Business Plan Workshop on 2/9/23. Cllr Todd, Caroline Knight (Tree Warden) and Gill Colquhoun (Assistant Clerk) have all taken part in training/briefings on the matter in preparation. As the workshop was postponed (to November at least), to consider whether to form a Working Group to look at how it should be taken forward, including an audit of the Council's existing assets/functions, public involvement / consultation / signposting etc.

66. **Cllr Paul Redstone, ESCC** – brief report on any current matters (written report circulated to Members by email 5/9/23).

67. **Cllr Sue Prochak, RDC** – brief report on any current matters.

68. **Clerks' Report** – to receive and note (published).

69. **Village Steward** – to receive and note the list of tasks completed and consider any future tasks (published).

70. Accounts and Financial Matters

a) **Receipts and Payments lists** – to receive/approve receipts and payments for July and August (published).

b) **Finance Working Group** – to receive / note the Notes of Meeting 11/9/23 (published), and consider recommendations as follows:

i. **External Audit 22/23** – this has now been completed and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) received back; to receive/consider the Auditor's Report and Certificate (Section 3 of the AGAR) and to confirm that the requirements regarding availability for inspection will be met. (Section 3 of the AGAR published).

ii **CCLA Investment** - To approve the following (detailed) resolution, required to open a Public Sector Deposit Fund account with CCLA Investments, as approved previously (22/23-119bi - insufficient detail for CCLA): To open a Public Sector Deposit Fund account with CCLA Investments, with an initial deposit of £25,000 (twenty-five thousand pounds). The Clerk to be the main contact for the new account, and the three members of the Finance Working Group, currently Nick Brown, Sean O'Hara and David Todd, to be signatories on the account, with any two of three to sign. The account will be administered by email, with the Unity Trust T2 Current account to be the nominated bank account.

iii. **Review of Effectiveness of Internal Controls** – this must be carried out annually and is one of the 'assertions' made by Members in Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). To note that this has been carried out by the FWG, against the checklist in the JPAG (Joint Panel on Accountability & Governance)

Practitioners' Guide. The FWG is satisfied that the Council can answer positively the question in Section 1 of the AGAR for 23/24.

- c) **Request for Donations / Grants** – to consider requests as follows:
 - i. **Christmas Capers** – request from REG to fund (directly to RDC) the Road Closure Order (£100) for Christmas Capers on 1st December 2023.
 - ii. **Annual Guy Fawkes Celebrations** – request by Robertsbridge Bonfire Society to fund the Road Closure Order for the event on 18th November 2023.
 - d) **I.T. Support (including Microsoft 365)** – to consider delegating authority to the Clerk in consultation with the FWG to change our current I.T. support, at an additional cost of up to £500, to Uniserve SouthEast Ltd, who are local, cover all aspects IT, and are also a Microsoft Partner, so can offer support with our Member email account set-up.
 - e) **Risk Management** – Clerk to update on six-monthly review.
 - f) **Football Club (RUFC) new, extended lease / review of RUFC and other fees** – a review of the fees to use the Recreation Ground, including the RUFC fees, is underway by the FWG, (as per 23/24-55). However, RUFC has requested a longer lease than the current annual one, to enable them to access grant funding. Football has been played on the Recreation Ground since before the Parish Council owned the land (over a hundred years?), and there has never been any council intention to change / prevent that, with their lease renewed each season. To consider making this formal, with a twenty-five-year lease, with the same terms and conditions as currently i.e., use of the field during the season, with exclusive use of the pitch area during matches only. It would grant the same rights as they have now, but with the security that they will have access to the pitch as their home ground for the next twenty-five years (or as long as the Club continues to run, if less).
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- 71. **Annual Guy Fawkes Celebrations – post event clean-up** – to consider the plans by the Bonfire Society *not* to use a contractor to carry out the clean-up, but to do it themselves. And to consider whether, beyond the bonfire general attendance litter etc., which RBS will clear, the mechanical road-sweeping element of the contract, facilitated by the lack of cars due to the road closure, is independently sufficiently beneficial to the village to consider funding by the Parish Council.
 - 72. **Legal Matters, including Station Road Car Park Legal Order / land adjacent to the War Memorial** – update from the Clerk.
 - 73. **Noise Pollution Complaints** – update from the Chairman.
 - 74. **Coronation Lasting Commemoration** - to consider whether some form of lasting commemoration should be provided for/within the parish.
 - 75. **Change Management Working Group** – to receive a report from Cllr Todd (published) on progress to date and to consider potential dates for the rearranged Business Planning Workshop. (Draft Strategic Plan emailed separately to Members).

- 76. Amenities Working Group (AWG)** – to receive and note the Clerk’s Amenities Projects / Task List (published) which includes updates from an AWG meeting on 26/7/23, and consider the following specific recommendations:
- a) Recreation Ground entrance** – to consider whether to reconfigure / alter the entrance by moving the fencing, to create a pedestrian entrance to the left of the height barrier, to facilitate access to the playground / car park other than in direct line of vehicles coming out. Expenditure required approximately £700.
 - b) Play Equipment repairs and upgrades** – to receive an update from the Clerk.
 - c) Ash trees in Station Road Car Park** – to consider recommendations from Clive Mayhew, Chartered Arboriculturist) to fell one tree with significant ash die-back (with a possible undertaking to replant). A second tree has less significant disease and could be left for the time being. The trees are in the Conservation Area, so any works would require a Conservation Notice to RDC (who would have six weeks to agree the works or place a TPO on the trees).
- 77. D-Day 80 - 6th June 2024** – to consider whether to take part in any of the proposed events (see Clerk’s Report). Further information here: [D-DAY 80 BEACONS](#)
- 78. Planning Matters:**
- a) Planning Committee Meetings** – no meeting held in August; to receive and note the minutes of the meeting held on 3/7/23.
 - b) Meeting with Rother District Council regarding stalled sites from NP** – report from Cllr O’Hara.
- 79. Reports / updates from Representatives**
- a) Rother Association of Local Councils (RALC)** – minutes of 12 July 2023 will be circulated when available.
 - b) Robertsbridge Community Association (Village Hall)** – to receive and note the report by Cllr Palamarczuk (published).
 - c) 1066 Rail Steering Group** – to receive and note the report by Cllr Palamarczuk (published).



Karen Ripley (Mrs)
Clerk to the Council